

Evergreens

To walk again through oak and bay woodland,
to finger the striped bark peeling from eucalyptus—
long gray and brown hanks, not unlike my own hair—
and to tease away the gold-red curls of manzanita,
not unlike your beard might have been—is to know
how brief our stay will be. These trees will be here
after we are ash, if they don't burn.

Kiss me here

and here

and here:

touch that fine layer

under the bark

where the sugar runs, even in winter.

Published in The Hopkins Review Issue 15.3 Summer 2022