**Clearcut**

*Shotpouch Creek, Oregon*

Katrina Hays

What does vine maple know,

glowing vibrant and hot,

her crimson a shout

in the torn landscape?

What private language

murmurs her veins,

tells her to change

before even a hint of autumn?

I want to curve my body

over this stubbled hillside; I want

to comb through understory,

find the spiral truth:

*Yield and overcome*

*The shape changes, but not the form*

From the body of stump —

flicker, fox, fire.

*Italicized lines by Lao-Tzu, translated by Stephen Mitchell*