

Laurels in September

In blue dresses, they ache
to the river, cigarettes

at the ready. On the slope
each turns tree, slants toward

a sky not sunlit. Lustily
young branches reach

for other leaves, birds' nests.
Through the bus window I'm whispering

feeble assurances: No one will open you
up to your whiteness.

Now, tree-girl, sweet sister,
you are saved.

Kejt Walsh