Leaf

A copper coloured spirit
taps at her window pane,
and she closes her eyes,
remembering mittened hands,
held flat together
as if in prayer
to bring home oak leaves
pristine and unbroken.

He would line them
along the bookshelf
then hold them up to the light
until they became sacred to her
through the lens of his wonder.
She never could bear
to clear them away
would leave them for months
like tiny golden gods
slowly crumbling to dust.

She opens her eyes now
the leaf has gone, drifted on
to some other mother's window
like a truant angel.
But tomorrow
she will go to the woods,
find a dying treasure
to carry home unspoiled.
She will hold it to the light,
wonder at its intricacies
then lay it on the bookshelf
and remind herself again
not to set his place for dinner.

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