

Tree City, A History

she said we don't rock
in the rock, the river, the river
and rock and the long

gone ulmus americana
that lined the streets still
line the streets like a stack

of photographs you look
at only on christmas, or
when the black dog bites.

all love poems, i know:
core samples, inadequate.
i want you to want me

long enough for the fried
chicken line at the grocery
to subside. for the elm

bark beetles to carve
subtler signs in cambium.
i want you to be and so

if only the once and future
would come, crest we never
see fleshed with pulp,

pocket-hole in the kreg
joint and the 2xs flush.

lunch break not long enough

even when we spend it jawing
quotes from physicist clickbait
about everything we know

that says we know time hasn't
run its course, that we step in
the same river twice and always.