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Cubicular Memo

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Cubicular Memo

The oak that shaded our office window
has dropped its finest limb—the one that kept
the two o'clock sun from making our screens
unreadable. Come Monday they'll chainsaw
what's left of it down. Let's lament its demise
for all the tragic, old self-serving reasons.
We oughtn't miss such a chance for regret.

Had that seed been borne to the cache
of a different squirrel, the weck you see
before you might have grown toward love
or even fame in some Kinkadean grove
that shaded generations: meadows of buffalo,
farmboys resting from work on the rock wagons,
an Amishman watering a brace of Belgians.

Or it could've, carried to the heart of a woods,
been grounded in a church of its own kind,
lived its century surrounded by its kin,
safe in a place without sprinklers or wind,
endured a quiet life in the relative bliss
of oakness, held in the support and boredom
of membership, growing old, gnarly, confident.

Well, enough of that. The big damn branch
cracked right off and split the damn trunk,
and now they'll cut the whole damn tree down.
I'll put in a request for some better shades,
more opaque, and, given the efficiency we love,
have them installed in six or eight months.
G'bye, tree.

-William Jolliff
Newberg, Oregon