Art

Eric Nelson

October, a woman and a boy, a tumor overtaking his brain, draw pictures in the waiting room.

She makes a red apple as round as a face. Then from her hand a cloud grows and darkens over the apple until the crayon breaks inside its wrapper and hangs like a snapped neck from her bloodless fingertips.

He's drawn two stick-figures up to their necks in falling gold leaves, their heads all smiles.

It's you and daddy, he tells her. Above them a flock of m's fly toward a grinning sun.

When she doesn't answer he says on Halloween he'd like to be a horse with orange wings.

Staring at his picture, she says It looks like Thanksgiving. Where are you?

He taps the sun. I'm shining on you. She hugs him as if trying to press him back inside her.

I'm not crying, she whispers. He looks over her shoulder. I'm not crying, too.