

eases growing pains & oatmeal soaked overnight
in cream & maple syrup sticks to ribs like nothing else.

Breezy Clarity

John Repp

*. . . I'd prefer not
to wind up a wind-noise
in an apotropaic graveyard.*
—Jeremy Hoevenaar

Today has gone from breezy clarity peeking between the boughs
of the lone spruce the old ones who de-rocked the acreage
left in the field that slopes to birch dappling a carpet of sphagnum

& thumb-high poplars scattered in the lushness my father
would call *peat* to a gray-blue, sopping blanket just now beginning
to wring itself out. Walt Whitman, you glorious failure,

come on down! The uncut hair of graves does not undulate
in Murray Hill Cemetery, but damp ferns do bend in the wind
& offer curt nods in the rain. Marie Chandler died at two years,

ten months & a vanished-into-cracked-slate number of days
in The Year of Our Lord 1812. How to ward off evil? The dust-motes left
of whomever got laid to rest in a plot where a maple samara

took root in the stony ground & flourished into dense shade
for a hundred years before someone made it a mossy stump
whose cambium layer stopped pressing in cellular increments

a lichened, rough-chiseled, blessing-effaced stone nearly prone
can't say. The day, as do many, has cooked me to logic so circular
the squealing Kingman merry-go-round once more flings me,

Stevie Whositz & Carlo Martelli into a scuffling pile on the gravel.
My Irish great-grandmother taught her surviving children
the virtues of peat moss. Generations later, we learned witch hazel