

November

Each November, I think *Don't squander November*.
The gloom I adore. Slick oak leaves on asphalt.
Obscure biographies, medieval history, street maps
of old New York. Once we get the OK to turn
back the clocks, cold rain says it's time to roast
the season's first chicken, russets nestled in the fat,

Brussels sprouts yielding burnt leaves sweetened
by the heat that burnt them. I call *schnibbles*
the succulent bits roasting leaves behind. *Loony bin*.
Daylight savings. *Extraordinary rendition*. *They have*
a lot of issues. I'd say absurd idioms cram English

full to bursting, but that's a tautology—well, maybe
not strictly speaking, but contemplating even one
idiomatic phrase will conjure vertigo. Each time I read
what my bosses write, I write “English is screaming!”

to my close friends—a redundancy, given my experience
of friendship. The grandmother dead on Halloween
passed *schnibbles* down four generations. The Texas

cousins say “the burnt,” my brother-in-law “crust,”
my wife “crow food” as she tosses out the front door

the *schnibbles* I failed to scarf & the stale bunky to boot.