

JENNIFER MARTELLI

Gigantic Maples

I miss the maples on my block
because a witch lived in each rotted

hollow trunk. The trees
kept so silent, even when storms

tore off their muscular arms
from axillary knots, flung

them down onto the electrical wires,
never made a sound, not

when, each autumn, they would die
an alcoholic's death: red, bleeding inside,

aware, all witch in their sweet
sugary wooden veins. Persephone, queen

of witches, understood a god could tear
holes in the earth's hot mantle, become

marble, snake-like, anaconda-
noosed, could drag her down to pomegranate

shade: the flowers glowed at night:
moon flowers, Jessamine, hemlock.

The maples on my block housed
one witch, two witch, three witch, four.

They asked only for invisible silk
strands of webs hanging from their old

fingers, tiny green worms, phosphorescence.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jennifer Martelli is the author of *After Bird* (Grey Book Press 2017) and *My Tarantella* (Bordighera Press 2018). Her poems have appeared in the *Aeolian Harp Series*, *Superstition Review*, *Tinderbox Poetry Journal*, *Glass*, and *The Bitter Oleander*. She is the poetry editor for *Mom Egg Review* and a book reviewer for *Solstice Literary Magazine* and *Up the Staircase Quarterly*. She lives in Marblehead, Massachusetts.

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