

Boston Graveyard

Virginia Webster

The dead nest here, earth shadowed
stirring only for the chatter of squirrels
visiting from the Common.
It's the first thing you feel
along Beacon Street: graveyard stillness.
Silence is a cap over city concrete,
sky long buildings evaporate into tombstones
etched with skulls and faces.
Sitting among them I stare;
a progression of grey markers laced with shadows
of black spires from the graveyard gate;
onward to the moving outline of cars
beneath a rough edged horizon.
Squirrels come here to burrow
in wrinkled leaves. Pigeons coo.
A girl traces the face of an angel
from a tilted stone.
Later we walk out together.
She shows me the charcoal rubbing.
"He seemed so sad to be looking away" she said.
"Maybe now he can see outside."
She turns the angel to the city
holding him into grey light.
I tell her out there is our world,
Here we can only visit death.
"Let him visit life," she says. Letting go
Thin paper catches wind
a tombstone rising in light.