

A refuge

By Leanne Fournier

I step outside, inhale deeply, my foot slips
These are the days we need to move cautiously.

Foolish me, thinking the threats of the long winter have passed
The sun in the sky laughs at our clumsiness as we trip toward its warm embrace.

My pup tears ahead,
shaggy coat dragging through the mud,
pebbles cling when he rolls in the dust

We are all ungroomed in isolation,
pale shadows of our socialized selves desperately lifting our faces
awakening to the new season
like the grey jays boldly feeding

Like us, they were here through it all
the mid-season mess is a temporary doorway through the darkness of our quarantine.

Wind brushes over me sweeping the shadows away
the feeling of new grass
the garden's rich deep earth
the greenhouse, a refuge

Inside now, my steps are firmer,
it's early in this season so I make a fire and lean into its comfort.