

OWL

1

The owl sits in the tree. The owl rides the tree bareback. The owl and the tree are old friends. The tree is dying. The owl will be there when he goes.

2

One, two, three, the owl jumps off the tree. The owl jumps over the moon. The tree is dead, the owl is moving on. Sharks keep swimming, the owl tells himself. The moon is a blank space in the night.

3

If an owl wears a hat, it is made of another owl. If a tree wears a hat, it is an owl, alive. Trees and owls are in an open relationship. The tree wants to wear the owl. The owl wants to wear other owls, but only dead ones. Their relationship is problematic.

4

The owl flies over the suburbs; dogs bark at him from their homes. The houses are warm and yellow inside. The moon is the color of indifference. In a dumpster behind Burger King, a cat is having kittens. The owl counts them, one two three. He lands on the roof, listens to their noises, which are still tangled up in each other: a collective, unsorted mewl.

5

If you are an owl then maybe you wear a shawl. Maybe your shawl is made of wool. Maybe it's made from other owls. If you are an owl, do you get cold? Maybe your tree is dead too.

6

The owl takes the long way around the forest. He has a new route to avoid the tree, who is still dead. Trees don't bury their dead, so the tree is still standing there making homes for little bugs. The owl could visit the tree if he wanted to, but he doesn't. Dead trees are even worse at talking than live ones. They're almost as bad as the moon.

7

Nobody knows if owls bury their dead because owls have a different definition of both the word bury and the word dead.

8

If I am an owl and you are an owl then we are probably all owls who drink from the same ceramic bowl. Painted on this bowl are one two three rabbits fleeing or chasing the painted moon. Some owls root for the rabbits, others for the moon. The joke is on the owls. They will never catch the rabbits, to say nothing of the moon.

9

The owl is thinking about what he wants for dinner. The tree is not thinking anything. The rabbits are thinking about the moon. The moon is thinking about something, but I'm not allowed to write it down.

10

The owl flies over the tree on his way out of town. The owl flies past the Burger King, past the barking dog, past tree hats and owl hats and all the painted rabbits. The owl flies past the moon, past the sky, past night and dreams and your bedroom window. If you are an owl, he scratches into the glass. His scratching makes a sound that you hear from the other side of sleep, and from there it could be anything. It doesn't matter. Your sleep takes the sound, swallows it whole.