

## AFTERLIFE:

### *URSUS ARCTOS*



She bares her teeth in recognition.

Her skull halves meet in a suture that flows  
like a meandering river, and

she without her skin and you  
without yours are red cousins.

If she snaps her jaws, you're  
standing too close;

she's nearsighted  
and may knock you down  
for a closer look.

If she claws you open she's searching  
for the forests you swallowed.

Relax. If you die, then

she'll cover you with leaves  
and protect you.