



Mulch Oblivion

Kelly Gilbert and Ben Winderman

Anonymous and discarded, naked corpses, severed by saw, maneuvered through doorways, swung and tossed to the curb; this is January 11th.

Glistening pine needles not Dirt Deviled from around the tree which once held ornaments and heirlooms; silver bells and bedazzled shells that find their way snug into newspaper cocoons packed into basement boxes, safe and kept, secure if not demure. December will discover; *how darling and decorative... Your tree is always so beautiful*, beautiful but soon the heave-ho; horizontal has-beens that point to sidewalk cracks and slanted speed limit's signs, sad piles of lifelessness and lovelessness. We should reconcile this ritual with respect, resurrect these trees with tradition.

Two youngish men of differing heights and fluorescent vests hang from painted poles on the back of a dump truck. Alternatively they're dismounting into the street. Bright orange rubber gloves grasp the severed trunks of discarded trees, stuffing the starless tops into the chipper of mulch oblivion. It's over within seconds.

The shrinking men are perched on the truck's corrugated platform, as Christmas disappears this year.