

## Flash Fiction

### *Thrush*

by Norbert Kovacs

I hear the thrush high in the trees at a distance, his song like a clear, airy flute playing. I do not move as I listen to him. From the rest of the wood come other sounds. I hear the squirrel running, stopping and running again through last autumn's leaves. The bee buzzes past my arm. In the trees, the robins sing their familiar notes while perched in the branches. The crow caws in the sky. I listen to the sounds announce one after another, sometimes together. They are of a great number, too many to know. The forest goes quiet then and I hear the thrush. His song comes without answer from squirrel or robin or crow. It holds the air alone. I stand and listen to its fine, pure notes.

Across the clearing are tall maples with leaves only at the canopy. I believe the thrush is singing in a pine fifteen yards behind them, so I walk towards the tree; I mean to see the bird in the upper branches. The thrush sings, grows quiet, and sings again. I step down the tall grass before me. A fallen birch I pass raises a bonelike limb skyward. Beyond the clearing, I stalk without slowing over lime-colored moss by the maple roots. Up ahead, the thrush has gone silent. I arrive at the pine and think to look above. Before I can, I hear the thrush

sing a short, two notes. These come not from the pine but the dense, shaded wood beyond it. I realize my thrush has flown. And that perhaps he never had been in the tree at all. I scan the dense woods and cannot guess where he might be. I wait and wait, but no bird sings. I take it as a message—from thrush or wood, I do not know. I bow my head humbly beneath the pine.

#### About the Author

*Norbert Kovacs lives and writes in Hartford, Connecticut. He has published stories in Westview, Thin Air, STORGY, Corvus Review, and The Write Launch. His website is [www.norbertkovacs.net](http://www.norbertkovacs.net).*

