

## **autumn**

BY ROB COOK

*dedicated to GW170817, the first observed merger of neutron stars*

watching a couple nestling  
through a confetti of golden leaves  
feeling your hand no longer in mine  
your gold still here on my finger  
*forever* you said when you put it there

but even it is bound to the procession of days  
the day the jeweler fashioned it  
the day the miner pulled it from the depths  
the time before days when its atoms were forged  
in the fiery union of two neutron stars

and today — this one particular day  
leaves dancing to an autumn air  
world fading in the lingering light  
time flowing relentlessly along  
everything eventually succumbing to its wake

even gold  
even you