

STAR IN MY CAR

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Walking towards my car, I smile
at the dark confetti of wet leaves
shaped like stars that lie scattered
on the pavement around my tires.

They look festive and cheerful in the dusk,
glistening and blazing dark red,
though those that are flipped over
reveal a more lighthearted magenta.

They look like otherworldly flowers,
a galaxy swirling with dew drops and rubies,
and I am struck by the realization that
star-shaped things are always beautiful.

I reach my car, stare down for a moment
at the mini-cosmos parading around my feet.
I open my car door, climb in, then notice
I have a passenger. One of the stars

clings to my shoe, then slips off to nestle
on the floor. Where does it think
I'm traveling? Most people wouldn't believe it
if I told them a star fell from the sky

and landed in my car, but then again
most people would just see a damp leaf,
if they even noticed it at all. Funny
how beauty is dependent

on our taking the time to see it.
It doesn't seem right to take this star—
as if I could own it. Stars belong in the wild.

I lift it gently to set it free,
put it back with its family. Together,
even fallen stars can create constellations.