

Carole Mertz

Lethe's Slim Threads Caught

I.

Birds flew in across the hearthstone
out again across the fields
Buds of memory lapped at her feet
stealing away molested
and unprotected thought
How to snare and nurture
the fleeting

II.

Heart and hands ached for the recall
reaching out to no avail
clutching pale slabs of empty air
“Yours for the taking,” winged creatures
taunted and scoffed. Swoosh! she swiped
at the thieves, murderous in her rancor,
wiped the blood on her sleeve

III.

Where will you go with your unprotected
mind, with whom share the
minuscules you've known? Certainties, those
rarities, often rendered as lost,

and beyond recall. Yet that single certainty,
that singular small thing to which you cling,
will not change. It lingers as sure as a song
In the Blue Ridge Mountains
Frost paints the conifer bulbs
frigid beneath an isoprene haze
Ruddy Fox greets me as I huff and
puff along rugged Rocky Knob
wondering who owns this ridge—
confident but wary four-footer or
scholarly geologist, taken up residence
and lost in the beauty of the scene

Poet and essayist **Carole Mertz** has recent work at *Eclectica*, *Into the Void*, *Muddy River Poetry Review*, *Page & Spine*, *The Ekphrastic Review* and *Writing in a Woman's Voice*. She is Book Review Editor at *Dreamers Creative Writing* and serves as voluntary reader in prose and poetry at *Mom Egg Review*. A semi-retired musician, Carole resides with her husband in Parma, Ohio.