

Chris Childers

Inaugural

for John Foy

*From that tree on the left, as I have rightly named it,
temple and wasteland be mine.*

—from an archaic Roman augur's formula, Varro,
De Lingua Latina VII.8

To *contemplate*, you first square off the skies
from your horizon. Say, "The boundary
shall be from this tree to that other tree."
(Always face south.) Now let your spirits rise:
this is your *temple*. Sit. Relax your eyes
and wait. A bird may come. A plane. A free
clearing of blue. Sunlight. A certainty.
Or maybe not. Be open to surprise.

Don't ask what it all means—that knowledge comes
late, if it comes at all. Just wait with patience.
Let the wind riffle pages of the air
and the sun scatter its few, golden crumbs.
When you've completed these your contemplations,
don't leave the temple. Take it everywhere.