

learning to unread

by Jeff Swanson

learning to unread books

page by page, we unread books
not backward, per se, that'd be satanic
but page by page, peel off the words
and unlearn the plot
roll up the plot
and put the characters back in their holes
what happens to characters when their readers traverse the veil?
when they leave their flesh behind to rot, or nourish the newborn

leaves?

some say all earthly things, books, music, etc., these memories
reside in flesh

in the bones, in the muscles, in the blood maybe
and they seep back into the earth which wifed them
to which they, arguably, belong

so now they belong to the trees
and every tree over every graveyard is packed with memories
the fruit of every tree, apple, pear, quince
over every white picketed, overgrown graveyard in our fair

country and overseas

these trees are bursting with memories, songs, books, characters,
plot points, revelations, turns of phrase, marvelous ironies, second
glances, evil twins, hidden enemies, dastardly deeds, and righteous
justice

