

The Disappearance of Breath

It isn't the wear and tear of getting older
even though it began over years and not
days when I was still hiking mountains.
Along with the occasional fire and stiffness
in my knees and hips and neck I noticed that
I could no longer breathe deep during meditation
so I abandoned meditation out of frustration
gradually, and thought no more of it until that
sunny Thursday I ascended Cardigan.
My friend ran when the summit was in sight
and I followed until I felt the tightness,
my lungs pushing against immovable ribs.
I could not move I could not scream I
could not make a sound I could only
slap my chest universal sign for lack of air.