4. Just Past a Railroad Trestle

Yesterday lingering ice lurked on the edge of the path. Today water takes a different form. Liquid air drips drops drapes forest's floor. Reaches river's edge, road's ribbon. Passes through the worn wood of the split rail fence just beyond the trestle. Breaches the boundary between gorge and bluff, drop off and overlook, mowed turf and glacial till. Envelops everything. River, road, trestle, tree, boulder, fence, asphalt, me. We are not lost only unseen. Even the car that crashed through the split rails and was caught by a tree hides, unnoticed for hours. Too soon we will all be found.

A single light carves
a circle in the thick fog.
A bike approaches.

5. Too Far Below a Sprawling Oak

Way down here, the tunnel of trees feels deep and dark and endless. Inside its thick green walls haze hovers. Garlic mustard invades. Cottonwood fuzz floats then falls, lining the path, coating throats and noses. Mosquitoes feed on blood, gnats on tears and sweat. Dog barks rise up from the gorge, wheel whooshes sink down from the road. All caught, hemmed in by maples and humidity. When it rains, the green drips and steams and swells, narrowing the small slash of sky hanging on the hill and hiding the oak that waits at the top by two old rocks.

Just out of reach, oak
leaves breathe. Thousands of little
lungs gobble up air.

6. Above the Ravine

Even now with the green glut gone, the bare bones of forest exposed, the ravine is hidden. Leave the paved path near the road and descend a set of worn wooden steps. Follow the remnants of a chainlink fence deeper to a grated walkway not quite above a seep of water slicking the metal slats. Stand still, listen up. Hear the water dribble out of the sewer pipe, over the limestone ledge, down to the river. Imagine that the painted keys, fastened with wire rings to the wrought iron fence in the summer of 2017, are still there, offering a way in.

Sometimes when you want
to enter, all that's needed
is a key that fits.

Audio Tour Locations
Download at
missgorge.room34.com

Legend:
Highway/Street
LRT/Rail
Bikeway
Bike/Ped. Path