

Becoming Deaf

by Carol Hamilton

Becoming Deaf

“I would rather leap
than sit and be looked at”

Rita Dove written of Beethoven

Beethoven bowed
at their applause, hearing nothing.
All too soon our eyes dim,
and our ears no longer startle
to the raucous din.
Escape into landscape
racing past car windows
may become the dream,
to really see the lacy stitches
of redbud, the mottled green
of pear blossom turning
to hard knobs of promised fruit.

If only stark surprise at renewal
could still strike.
Perhaps in youth pursuit
of self has charm, but time
dims the burnish and slackens
the grip. There is a new world
I am seeking. I am watching

and listening, ready to fall
into some strange rabbit hole.
The stark edges of self,
the hard crusts of earth evaporate,
crumble. Will an “Ode to Joy”
arise when all the certainties
have been seared away?