Read the poem below. Draw whatever comes to mind,

In the forest
There was no wind
An old tree
Sunshine green shadows wind and rain

A small piece of land dotted with yellow leaves
In the sunset
An old man
Bent over
Counting the growing mushrooms
On the old fallen tree
This is one artist’s representation of the poem you just read.

How does it differ from your drawings?

Poet: Julianna Swaney
Artist: Ethan Huang
Poet: Joshua Weiner

Artist: John Foster
Hanging Mobile

The parrot’s eye speaks to the sun, my son coos back on his back, on the run.

Mosquito in the shade, the night crows green. Who rings the bell where you’ve never been?

Baby Gus, Asparagus, tips make a fist to knock back the sun.

The parrot’s eye grows with the moon, my son sings a bubble in the bubble of his room.

Rubies in the griddle, the cake falls down, the knife runs for president, the parrot runs the sun.

Baby Gus, Asparagus, who rings the bell when you ring the bell?

Smoke across the bridge plunders the eyes, the wind speaks back what you recognize.

Jimmies rain down the frozen zone, the drops drop green, who dropped the sun?
Song

There is no east or west
in the wood you fear and seek,
stumbling past a gate of moss
and what you would not take.

And what you thought you had
(the Here that is no rest)
you make from it an aid
to form no east, no west.

No east. No west. No need
for given map or bell,
vehicle, screen or speed.
Forget the house, forget the hill.
Cloak
Late May, skin tingled true with riot, the screen door clapping shut behind me on the final days of school. Beneath the dogwood’s white explosion, fragrance of milk floated down and floated up, each petal a portal, a pure cup and sweet pill to cure us of winter and call back the birds. The body dies, but today I am taller, I can tell time (but what will I tell him?) I’m not good at reading . . . Running then not to be late, the dogwood casting one beam like a full daytime moon over shortcuts, bamboo, bulldog, and quiet creek water. A waking bulldozer: who are the sleepless, who do they carry? Nights I felt plagued by my body’s heat I’d strip and climb the dogwood branches. Who wears the final cloak of summer? The son of an ancient seed caster, I was searching for a gate. I worked hard but remained lost among faster numerals interacting through blizzards of feeling. I would not pick my scab to speed the healing. One day, every year, I’d return to find the dogwood blossoms fallen like a great snow cape silencing capacities of green.
Tonight I’m fruit and clove. I’m bergamot. I drop a teabag in the cup and boil the kettle until it sings. As if on cue, a part of me remembers how to brew the darker things—those years I was a pot of smoky leaves scented with orange oil.

Truth is. I don’t remember much of school, the crushed-up taste of it. I was a drink forgotten on the table, left to cool. I was a rusted tin marked childhood. I don’t remember wanting to be good or bad, but only that I used to sink in water and wait for something to unfurl, the scent of summer in the jasmine pearl.
The stores ran out of butter every day. So you ran out, escaped your parents’ house, the crystal vases and the crystal bowls of caviar. You were crystal too, but hollow and ringing to the finger’s touch. Around the corner, you heard a Polonaise pushed from the lungs of some winded instrument. The sky was soot, or else beet soup. So sour you bought the one limp pastry at the bakery, your mouth stuck shut with rose petal jam.

You dreamed of warmth though you were always cold. You dreamed of fleeing west, of white cites where the word for hunger had ten synonyms, and desire was a shopping cart to wheel across the concrete floor. And everything was an open hand wanting to be filled.
COMMON Flicker

Old wall, banding its way
into dark; cracks wide, separate
like a fingerprint, taking
of legs and beak.

When I look up from
my mind I see what
you are: feather. Hooded,
whistled gripped
into the steady perch;

All idea of the lower,
altitudes sprayed
with color, a tower
of claws and wings
and an eye unmark'd.

Wing: Hundred hammer.

Back the framing sawn,
face stopping the hardness
of drumming and drumming,
your song is your name.

This will cure me,
you declare. This will
heal the fractured jaw,
sooth the vibrating helix
so I can't, so I can't sing.

Poet: Michael Collier

Artist: Dan Grzeca
Bird Crashing Into Window

In cartoons they do it and then get up, a carousel of stars, asterisks, and question marks trapped in a caption bubble above a dizzy, flattened head that pops back into shape.

But this one collapsed in its skirt of red feathers and now its head hangs like a closed hinge and its beak, a yellow dart, is stuck in the gray porch floor and seems transformed forever—a broken gadget, a heavy shuttlecock—and yet it’s not all dead. The breast palpitates, the bent legs scrabble, and its eye, the one that can’t turn away, fish-egg black, stares and blinks.

Behind me, sitting in a chair, his head resting in a pillow, a friend recites Lycidas to prove it’s not the tumor or the treatment that’s wasted what his memory captured years ago in school.

Never mind he drops more than a line or two. It’s not lean and flashy songs he sings though that’s what he’d prefer—his hair wispy, his head misshapen.

Beyond the window, the wind shakes down the dogwood petals, beetles drown in sap and bees paint themselves with pollen. “Get up! Fly away!” my caption urges. “Get up, if you can!”
Common Flicker

Old nail pounding your way into bark or creosote, intermittent tripod of legs and beak, derrick, larvae driller,

when I look up from my mind I see what you are: feather-hooded, mustached, gripped to the steady perch;

an idea of the lower altitudes sparged with color, a tuber of claws and wings and an eye unmarred.

Wing-handled hammer packing the framer’s blow, face stropping the hardness, drumming and drumming, your song is your name.

This will cure me, you declare. This will heal the fractured jaw, soothe the vibrating helve so I can eat, so I can sing.
Turkey Vultures

The red drill of their faces, pink tipped, grubbed in gore, cyclopean in their hunger for the dead but not the dying, lugubrious on their perches from towers, in trees, where they convene like ushers on church steps.

Heads sculpted to fit cane handles, claws to dibble seed, to sort out the warp of sinew from the woof, unwind the gray bobbins of brain. Assiduous as cats as they clean, wing scouring wing, until the head polished like a gem gleams and the ears no more than lacey holes are sieves for passing air or molecules of gas. These birds, who wear the face of what will last, congregating but not crowding, incurious and almost patient with their dead.
Poet: Elizabeth Arnold

Artist: Hero Design
The soldier dreamed he was a clay jar, the kind shaped like a female body.

Had he been hit? He didn’t know. He stood in clay.

Spring came, but with the trees eviscerated, you could tell the Earth moved forward only by the birds, the cold’s momentary incinerations.
What if everyone were eyeless and we could only hear, feel space, so that that feeling eclipsed seeing, roared it to the side?

Old men’s voices, chanting, channeling, choruses in cathedrals
To appear, to shine is to be a face.

Love possible without one?

Effacement’s closer to death, the face wingless,

nothing but a wing.
Goose Blind

Wild reeds woven to a small room, dying tips brown-gold and whispering in wind-rattle. Porter, whose farm is bare, fields married to water, honks as if the earth is talking, his old gun hugged to him, his bone nose up for two dipping fly-bys. They veer, but glide around. “Mated pair,” he says softly.

I think of us, forty years ago, side by side, going south on 17, Dismal Swamp’s bogs all green lace because March is done, April’s warm inlet calls us, because we lay on the sand, car radio booming James Brown, joyful news. At Nags Head Bridge we turned back, just married, tiny boats half-sunk in marsh.

Shivering, wondering why I am here, a guest among floaters over marsh, chopped corn where oysters were, each wet black eye that knows only rising, falling with the sun’s time, unafraid, like you, once, saying let’s go so far years drift, pile where all is surf, roofs, the horizon we watch go dark.

Round and round the two fly, wanting to eat, afternoon graying, wanting to lie with the field’s others, wanting home’s fixed, swaying silhouettes. On sky’s stair-steps, like guests, pairs slip from V-lines, tumbling. They just just can’t go on, Porter says, honking urgent cries they seem not to want to hear.
June Bug

The carapace—is that it?—shrugging forward like a Roman war-wagon, dark gleam from the sloped shoulders and the lowered head, itself helmeted, swaying from side to side, as if the great weight, with one slip of purchase, might haul everything backward, the massive thighs and horn-embraced legs that dig ponderously, the tip-toe forenails that grip surface, least or best, and those already wounded, so they seem, trailing appendages, brogans dragging. To this, under the fore-armpits I tie my string, sun like an egg’s center, and wait.

No sound. At first, no movement. Wait. Then the big head, slippage until some crack in the earth appears, and slant rays of light leveraging it forward, grass blades bent, twigs gone over like bodies, small combatants scurrying aside, now and then a pause, the heavy hold on air I think is death until, at last, it rises up. Shrugs on. Soon it will be dusk, dinner. The earth is darker, a coolness floats. Already the story breathes me. So I wait as the string plays into darkness until all is tug and touch, imagined, the big thing breaking off.