

The Pantoum (from *Rodin's Eyes*, Copyright 2004)

D. A. Feinfeld

Hidden in the lines of a tree-cleft
as wind whips clouds over a bare moon,
the shimmering Pantoum waits to spring
with quicksilver claws and fangs.

As wind whips clouds over a bare moon,
ghost rays dapple the swart coat.
With quicksilver claws and fangs
the phantom cat balances on its branch;

ghost rays dapple the swart coat,
ripples repeating through dark fur.
The phantom cat balances on its branch,
holds each panting muscle in check,

ripples repeating through dark fur.
Caution, paced by lean seasons,
holds each panting muscle in check.
Night plays rhythm of stretch and release;

caution, paced by lean seasons,
risking all on one stark leap.
Night plays rhythm of stretch and release:
white light splashed over black flanks.

Risking all on one stark leap,
hidden in the lines of a tree-cleft
white light splashed over black flanks,
the shimmering Pantoum waits to spring.