CONFRONTING TENACIOUS FORESTS
ON STEEP SLOPES, WHILE CONSIDERING
THE MEDICINAL YEW

HJ Andrews Experimental Forest
4-Oct-2013, 3 am

Attempting to speak
accurately
of forests

I bump up
   — again and again —
against the close
and closed edges

of my mind — this cage
of attitudes that limits
the forest, by turns,

to young and awkward,
or elegant with age.

Two friends meet cancer
nightly in the cradle of their hips.

These forests – beneficent.
Their tumors – malignant.
Each with no such intent

but relentless, yes,
in their endless
bifurcation and cellular

splitting – by daylight,
by starlight,
and in the shade of bellies.