

JEN HIRT

ASTER YELLOWS

Is the name of a disease that kills the coneflower with cankers
the adjective in drag

Is the disease of a name, a surname turns a flower
full of center to
a bristle bloom exploded.

Sends full infected flowers to the burnpile.

Let stems be beat back by the smoke cure
fix this pagan mass

But pagan is a stem so smart it tricks the
purple cone. Cone purples
the third shape shading the second dimension
after squares and triangles
the square witch which is after
the third craft of crippled leaves

mutates flower petals into dumb fireworks
green thistles
burr cones.

It peddles anomaly, for no witch, which
a garden basket of weak brooms
if yellow is a promise of luminous yolk or doubloon disease,
spreading,
if promise is a Byron at thirty and six and *my days are in the yellow leaf*,
ending,

then I will spend years rewriting the name of this thing.