

The Gardener

I watch your head
 caught between light and light—
 a shifting of air
 as the rays fall sideways
 to you on your knees
 in the garden: hands
 plunged in a blue soil
 and bloodied with roots.

The wind like a loose sleeve
 holds your wrist
 as you shovel and sift and shape
 leafmold, water, earth
 until
 your hands are on fire with peonies.

I stand and watch;
 the silence slides.
 I smell the ache of violets
 crushed in secret places,
 and the fierce scent of thyme.

—*Barbara Powis*

Finding Wood Beneath the Earth

Finding beneath dark earth
 red wood
 soft old wood knit by the fungus blind
 I've stopped my spade.
 Someone walked this wood up from the water
 and sunk it in this hill's brow
 wrapped around its treasure

metal iron shapes
 a plow and a propeller
 my treasure's cutting edges

Finding beneath wood
 blades
 I lay my spade aside
 and climb through wood and earth
 to churn the air.

—*Paul Belserene*