

**Bitter This Year**

I do not trust this spring:  
wind as sharp as sorrow  
goading the day to tears;  
snow upon snowdrop,  
hail gleam by crocus light  
and earth colder than wasted years.

Who can forget gone Aprils —  
bitter-gone! —  
each quiet water echoing its moon;  
star-wished on hope  
and the green word growing  
in joy of summer soon.

What hope of summer now?  
rake the dead ash,  
tread the black leaf under;  
nothing for us this year  
but the flung stone  
and the far, dark thunder.

—*Gilean Douglas*