

Verse

Goodbye, Which You Prevent

And when I pilgrim
far and briefly (far
and briefly seeming far and long)
your face will be upon
my face as scent

of these plum
blossoms, I will hear
your laugh as a cardinal's call, there
will be your skin to touch
as real as light

in air as light
as the wind's touch
riffing the birch leaves. This the spring
you have arranged will
be you during absence

—then no absence—
and the exile of a summer will at once
be presence of you, promise
of you, spring
for fall . . .

—*John Ditsky*