

Fruit of Spring

Trees were newly in leaf, but through a blur
of alders and willows, soft green and hinted yellow,
a bone-like oak stood up, reluctant, unpersuaded,
without a bud.

And sorrow, unheralded,
a new pain of loss, a new love, sprang up through me,
to know the bleak branches would soon be taken away,
buried for six months under the green leaf-world.
Buried, those sticks, cold flesh the colorless color
of metal corroding, twisted among themselves
like ruts over a bare rain-ruined country,
but companions of my winter.

Perhaps it was easy in April,
my mouth plunged deep in the soft nursing air,
to offer thanks and praise for vanished pain;
perhaps it was easy in full possession of that gift,
that mood of calm espousal
given to me by winter's long barrenness,
to love the giver and want it back again.
But so it was. Out of a backward longing,
love leapt the coming of fruit and fall to winter,
and not to its brilliance, blazoned white and blue,
but poverty of bare twigs and frozen mud.

— *Albert F. Moritz*