

Green Thoughts With Participles

Perched on a tree stump,
Trying to admire
The lobster pound woods.

Looking at the gunmetal pond,
Grey ashes dancing above
Like skeletons rubbing shoulders.

Watching birch trees surrender their white
Snow sticking in shady spots,
And tired ancestors of ferns waving goodbye

Hearing no birds call
Except for three gulls circling the pond
And screaming at the wind.

Smelling old air,
Not even smelling the balsams,
And noticing no signs of what's to come.

But, deep inside, knowing
And saying a prayer of thanks
For the gifts of imagination and memory—

The twin blessings of the human condition
That each spring survive
The dismal days of March in Maine.

Green Thoughts

I perch on a tree stump
And try to admire
The lobster pound woods.

But below me the pond is gunmetal.
Above me grey ashes dance
Like skeletons rubbing shoulders.

Around me birch trees have surrendered their white.
Grainy snow sticks in a shady spot at my feet,
And the tired ancestors of fern fronds wave good-bye

I hear no bird call
Except for three gulls that circle the pond
And scream at the knife-edge wind

The air smells odd.
Even the balsams are subdued
I can't find one sign of what's to come.

But some part of me knows.
So I say a prayer of thanks
For the gifts of imagination and memory—

The twin blessings of the human condition
That each spring carry me
Through the dismal days of March in Maine.