

Reviving the Wassail

Apple trees' gaunt tines rake scattered stars
from a timeless sky, as heavy wassail jars
splash hot mulled ferment onto knotted roots,
and old incantations carry with the last withered leaves
down the long aisle of trees.

Twelfth Night draws us to earth, the past recalled
in scent of damp soil and sweet decay.
Winter no longer underscores our frailty,
yet, steeped in the shadow of our forebears,
we are born of the land beneath our feet.

We have laid waste too long, neglected to replenish,
deaf to the dirge of bee, the lacewing's lament.
Rewind the church clock, reclaim the almanac
hewn from the rib of a tree, for it is not the night's chill,
but this winter's balmy air, that makes my blood run cold.