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**Today's paper
floating down the stream
is our news.**

**The stream stays with us
only by always going away.**

**This is the Sawkill, it flows
from the lead mines of the Taghkanics
down to the Hudson. Indians
called it Metambesen
early white men claimed.**

**Before that, it flowed
bright with the gold dust of Lydia
and was called Pactolus,
and later, a little later, ran
past Troy as the Scamander
who fought with the gods.**

**And here it is today,
drinking the last snows,
drinking the cold Sunday rain
and flowing fast and wide away.**

That is the news.

30 March 2014

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**Something lost along the way,
sparrow. Something white
breasted under a dark fear
came near. I'll get it right**

**finally, the way weather does.
Finally there is no way
to be wrong. But the bird
at the moment is terrified,**

**will not come to the waiting
finger as its perch. The wind
whips around in the bare bush,
no perch is really safe.**

**Burn incense before the shrine,
drink water before the evening meal.
Leave the bird alone. The bird
has obligations of its own**

you can only grasp by metaphor,

that serpent of a way to think.

**We do not know each other—
that is what love really means**

and where its power comes from.

30 March 2014

DEATH SIGNS

**Wake and a bone claw
reaches towards your face.
Two armless men struggle
to carry a crate of explosives
supporting it between their naked chests.
A light is moving through the trees.
Forgetting the words
halfway through a prayer.
A little light dances at your toes
then climbs up the shin
—no feeling— and perches on your knee.
An empty wheelchair rolls
along the packed wet sand of a beach.
You are walking across a beautiful field
the stretches to the horizon
and there are no trees.**

30 March 2014

EPITAPH

I tried to do the job right to the end

turn everything into poetry.

Everything desired or feared. Every sign.

Everything that happens. Everything that seems.

30.III.14

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**Men working on trees
everybody needs the doctor
pruning branches
we shape things to our liking
one of the men is a girl
interning in Remedial Reality—
make this look the way it should look
for Should is the god of such masters
who nip the branch before it buds.
Who wants flowers everywhere?**

31 March 2014

THE OLD CALENDRIST GRUMBLES

**The last of March
feels like the first
cold wet wind
goes right through you
my mother used to say,
poor chests of the Irish.
I knew a woman once
named March. Why
are no girls named November?**

31 March 2014

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**I'm near enough to the end
to count as a beginner.
Here, my eighty-pond bow,
32 ounce bat, my tattered
copy of *Welsh Without Tears*
volume one. I never really
learned anything, have more
spondees than spondulics.
Yet the rain still makes me smile—
it is such a small thing
but it comes and touches me.**

31 March 2014

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in mem. T.McE. & A.G.

**When they die
they only seem to go away.
The part of them you know
best still whispers in your head
louder, clearer, weirder than before.**

*Come and look with me, they say,
now I am so close inside you,
and we can share beauty's burden
all the lovely stuff there is to see.*

31 March 2014

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**Watching them work
is a way of remembering.**

**A woman with a pruning hook,
man with cinderblock in his arms—**

**all round us dreams,
schemes fell down from heaven,**

their clothes the same color as the road.

31 March 2014

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**True, there may have been
more waiting than leaving.
What can we do?**

**There may have been ink on the arrow
a blue cloud in a blue sky
and nobody knew

and sometimes the sun is a mirror.**

31 March 2014