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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**