

Petrified Willow Leaves

for William Barnes

O fallsome thing forstoned,
what brangle brought you here?

Thoroughshining leaves once groom,
full-ended now, breaksome with fear.

High-deedy Earth whips lifegrist; your
kin-stem forfrets in checkless time.

A faith-law inholds you with frozen
return-vows to welkin-air's prime.

Fornaughted breath terored the man
who trowed we sow continents to be:

Upcleaming limbs unfriend the bole,
but wind-quickenning still is matterly.

The poem is animated by poet and philologist William Barnes's attempts to remove elements of French, Greek, and Latin from the English language. He felt English had given up useful words for less intelligible imported ones.