

Catharine Lucas

TWO SONNETS

(from an Easterner's first California Spring)

Sonnet I

April is a vague mistake. We try
to feel these days a stirring of the blood
a sting of fresh desire to rectify
our winter stupor. Rising on the flood
of newgreen budburst, dazzling wetblack brownness,
we drink air like wine off fogless bay
eat symphonies of lightshards glancing soundless
from glistening conifers; at night, we stray,
bare heads and undressed arms, through downy air
that touches to invite us beyond reason --
but fails, and only helps us more despair
that Spring is no name for this hapless season.
To make an April magic, disremember
the crystal days we've swum in since November.

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Sonnet II

Lush with wild grass my garden of succulents,
More jungle than garden now, defies repair:
Beautiful in drought, withstanding truculent
Neglect, a garden that should stay, declares
Defeat in this voluptuous Spring's outpour.
Dormant seeds awake to rampant tangle
Green shoots in alpine glow that fails to flower
But spends itself surviving this rich strangle.
On patient knees, with careful probing fingers
I fight to clear my succulents for growth,
Then yield to weary ache when no hope lingers
But that I start again from cleantorn earth.
Morning, I wake surprised from worksweet sleep:
Glad in some part that gardens do not keep.