

## **Desolations of March**

Out of a gray depression of sky,  
a cold rain falls. Stark, black branches

shake in rough wind. The birdbath is toppled,  
the wood fence gapped. The garden,

the stonework in ruins. Meanwhile old friends,  
like last year's leaves, are scattered all over,

or under the earth. Above these floodwaters,  
hunched on a limb, a crow now broods.

It's been here before. It knows what to do.  
All we know is to fasten our coats

and bend like a branch in a bitter wind,  
cling like a root to a cold, wet ground.

***Tom Raithel***

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