

Jane Burn

The Tree That Stayed

My roots delve where sun does not go and mulch-voiced worms probe.
Rubber-slick and mucky nosed, they eat between my buried threads.
I take my time to grow and the taste of soil is good. These many years

I have learned much from this same patch of sky. My study has been
the infinite tones of blue, of grey—of scarlet sunsets, pink dawns.
I have contemplated night and what each spell of darkness might mean.

I wear the joy of birds upon my head. Their tittle-tattle thrills my leaves,
each one an ear, living-green and eager to scoop the wonder of their song.
I hold their heartbeats as gently as clouds are carried upon the film

of a pond. When they lift from my arms I wish them joy in everything.
Autumn ends and cold plucks away my crown—each leaf lies at my foot,
nourishes my naked self. This is my time of great sleep, of needed rest.

I have taken the atmosphere of man, returned it refreshed. My form,
thrown against the dusk is balm. A poet's ideals are birthed in the scratches
I leave upon the sky. It seems I am sunk into bleakness, yet spring comes

and I sprout new buds. Show you a way to re-live.