

Senior Division, Poetry
Nancy Shepherd Bragg, St. John's
over there

Roots stretch long like years
down the rich marrow of the ground,
reaching through blades of rock and bone
and embedded thoughts.
A weary rampage.

Thick and unrelenting even in the shade,
overgrown-
There where the ground is hard to hold,
and not tended to,
and the bed is not made.

Where a steady shard of light
knows its place
and returns each day
to bleed so bright, it births a bloodline.
An intricate tangle with a pulse
and a throat
and a means to grow.

Raveled veins rise
to the shallow depth of soil-
close but still hard to reach.
Where the air smells sweet,
exposed to the fathoms of the sun,
to the ceaseless cycles of seasons and the constant strain.
Where there is a slow, vagrant, release of
a familiar scent
that I cannot know or
place
or recall from where it came.

And there I will be-
over there,
stemming from the silent riot below.
I will remain
an extension without recognition,
nameless but here among you
above ground in a cluster of strangers,
Spread open
and sucking on the sun-
cast quietly in full bloom.