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Valentine for a Wife

Clifford Wood

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VALENTINE FOR A WIFE

*The soft light threads of summer coming show,
In roots and veins who've learned a wintered trust,
That fear at least's a season lovers know.*

*Children of april sleep in autumn, go
Thin through pain to wake the next green thrust
The soft light threats of summer coming show,*

*And find in sunlit beds the force to grow;
To seek a withering strength forget, as they must,
That fear's at least a season lovers know.*

*Elders turn from april, shiver at the glow,
And pack a tinseled dream against the crust
The soft light hearths of summer coming show,*

*Unless it break and let the green fire flow
Out a thick stain, fusing them in its lust:
At least that fear's a season lovers know.*

*But why run, you and I, whose pulses slow
Their five green rains to warm a tendriled rust?
The soft light hearts of summer coming show
That fear's the least of seasons lovers know.*

—CLIFFORD WOOD

MUSEUM PIECE

*Ships in bottles, embryos in solution,
Mummies wound — could a tourist's stare
Resist such unity, such involution?*

*Once a tooth unhatched from the weathered care
Of its sandstone pillow (the skull's parenthesis)
A bandaged Folsom squats in his tidy lair,*