

NOW,

by [Peter Cooley](#) in the [January 30, 2019](#) issue

after a first moment in eternity

I turn around. I'm back in my backyard,
the weeping willow dead, the bottle brush,
the southern flowers I planted, novelties
to me, the northerner, dead, dead, all dead.

And on the branches of the dead magnolia
the dead birds perch, swallow and nightingale,
their dead eyes holding reflections of the flowers,
genus and species, dead, sere, leaves cracked, dead
all crawling things, all flying, speechless, dead,

waiting and hollowed out with harrowing.

I lay my hand among these shadowings.

Because she always answered, I choose her,
this mockingbird. I sing her my first word.

The rest is heaven, endlessness of grace,

the skyline of the backyard limitless,
my old broken eloquence of song aligned
with certain resurrection's aftermath,
this minute to be repeated and repeated
repeated and repeated my bird sings.