

This should not be

by [Amanda Ryan](#) in the [July 1, 2020](#) issue

I am familiar with *this should not be*.

Although I've tried to brush it off, its stench  
of weariness and fault and lethargy  
comes off my skin, runs from my veins; it's drenched  
in accusation, and tastes like shame. I see  
it etched upon my neighbors' faces, the loud  
refrain: *This should not be. This should not be.*  
And yet it masks itself in something proud.

Catch the little foxes. Set their tails on fire.

The garden fills with weeds and mulch and rot

And Death, that gentleman, he is a liar.

Do not believe him when he says you ought  
to hear him speak. The winter's passed. Look, see  
that Spring has come and ah! *This should not be.*