

A Tribute to High School English

There is a tree, bowed and bent
as if some boy
had run up its spine.
But there is no ice storm here
just the snow, which baptizes
and the wind making naked
limbs that leaves once covered,
so that the tree bends, not broken
by blooded youth
but bared and weighed out by winter.
With branches held out
as if in supplication,
or understanding.
For nakedness reveals truth.
And what would we swing for anyway?
To reach high, glimpse visions,
and fall again?
Better yet to stand
where trees have broken themselves
where the winds strips leaves and faces.
To see and yet remain.
Then perhaps,
to bow.

—Dan Belnap