

Aftergrove

Had you known, would you've stayed there,
Light still beading on your skin?
Your Grove now templed, a nave, your forever green April sanctus—
to leave is to begin.

Barely a boy, bruises yet to form, how slow you must have stepped, dew still clotted to your shoes.

They were so Beautiful, so . . .

. . . yet first there was the dark,
it too spoke your name.
Your tongue to stone, petrified.
Only your mind could cry “Father.”

Beyond these trees, child, past the fence there, through town and to the west:
Untold fires, hours and years of hard . . .

. . . your heart of glass to sliver and crack and shatter,
somehow still to shimmer.

’til June of Forty-four, when again, at last, a pillar . . .

—Scott Livingston

This poem won second place in the 2009 BYU Studies poetry contest.