

# Green Things

Faith, they say, is a seed that grows.  
It swells, and as a mother I can say  
that things inside swelling are not always  
pleasant. But what sort of growing is always pleasant?

It swells. And as a mother, let me say—  
growing things can pierce inside, an ache most  
pleasant, but what sort of growing is always pleasant?  
Blood happens, and ribs crack as time passes.

Growing things can pierce inside, an ache most  
trying. Young things can die and be cut off  
as blood happens. And ribs may crack as time passes  
and thorns pierce through. A young plant is fragile.

Even in trying, young things can die and be cut off  
when waves of pain move through you, as your insides hurt  
with thorns piercing through. A young plant is fragile  
and if you hold back the water, it will soon die back.

When waves of pain pass through you, when your insides hurt  
because you have been stretched too far to keep  
giving forth your waters, the bud will soon die back.  
It will soon seem to die, but anything green lives still.

Because you have been stretched too far to keep  
a bud alive over winters of creeping doubt  
it will soon seem to die. But anything green lives still  
and if you see green in the stem you cut, it lives.

A plant that lives over winters of creeping doubt  
is a things that can still grow. *Cut it. Cut it.*  
If you see green in the stem you cut, it lives.  
*If you see that green inside, the Word still lives.*

—Sarah Dunster

---

This poem won honorable mention in the 2019 Clinton F. Larson  
Poetry Contest, sponsored by BYU Studies.