Spring 1986

from Sabbaths

Wendell Berry
II.

The pasture, bleached and cold two weeks ago,
Begin to grow in the spring light and rain;
The new grass trembles under the wind's flow.
The flock, barn-weary, comes to it again,
New to the lambs, a place their mothers know,
Welcoming, bright, and savory in its green,
So fully does the time recover it.
Nibbles of pleasure go all over it.
Wendell Berry

III.

Thrush song, stream song, holy love
That flows through earthly forms and folds,
The song of Heaven’s Sabbath fleshe’d
In throat and ear, in stream and stone,
A grace living here as we live,
Move my mind now to that which holds
Things as they change.

The warmth has come.
The doors have opened. Flower and song
Embroider ground and air, lead me
Beside the healing field that waits;
Growth, death, and a restoring form
Of human use will make it well.
But I go on, beyond, higher
In the hill’s fold, forget the time
I come from and go to, recall
This grove left out of all account,
A place enclosed in song.

Design
Now falls from thought. I go amazed
Into the maze of a design
That mind can follow but not know,
Apparent, plain, and yet unknown,
The outline lost in earth and sky.
What form wakens and rumple’s this?
Be still. A man who seems to be
A gardener rises out of the ground,
Stands like a tree, shakes off the dark,
The bluebells opening at his feet,
The light one figured cloth of song.
IV.

To Mary

A child unborn, the coming year
Grows big within us, dangerous,
And yet we hunger as we fear
For its increase: the blunted bud

To free the leaf to have its day,
The unborn to be born. The ones
Who are to come are on their way,
And though we stand in mortal good

Among our dead, we turn in doom
In joy to welcome them, stirred by
That Ghost who stirs in seed and tomb,
Who brings the stones to parenthood.
VIII.

The dark around us, come,
Let us meet here together,
Members one of another,
Here in our holy room,

Here on our little floor,
Here in the daylit sky,
Rejoicing mind and eye,
Rejoining known and knower,

Light, leaf, foot, hand, and wing,
Such order as we know,
One household, high and low,
And all the earth shall sing.

—Wendell Berry