March

John P. Freeman

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol26/iss1/14

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in BYU Studies Quarterly by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
March

Who on earth would hope for a new beginning
When the crusted snow and the ice start thinning?
—Luci Shaw, Under the Snowing

The low cloud cover drifts as slowly
as windblown piles of snow.
This is the time
of earliest budding, like the first curds
that rise to the surface in a butter churn,
the time of the hard brown buds
of the willow oak, with its mauve samaras
spreading through the limbs like a low-grade fever.
Though cedar and pine
have held on to greenness relentlessly,
elm branches are empty;
racks of pecan and hickory
are dry sticks against a sky
cold and grey as tin.
Only the dogwood and the redbud
are flowering now, set deeply within
the deadened heart of the woods;
they are coals smoldering, about to touch
the dry kindling of trees—
fire in these flowers, fever in my veins
rising to touch the skin.
Though the fields are still covered by winter straw
rattling in the harsh wind,
tenacious seeds of a hope
thaw in the frozen stupor of the dirt.

—John P. Freeman

John P. Freeman teaches English at the Oakley Training School in Raymond, Mississippi.