

## Trespass

They say you could tell the success of a place  
by the condition of the fences,  
white-limed paling spires  
or aged grey longers, pocked  
from the frost-sprung nails of each year's repair.

They kept no one out; they kept names in your head;  
it was a recitation said each time you climbed  
a fence, or jumped a stile, or ran  
meadow to meadow, the names a story  
of Mr. Joe and Mr. Stephen and Mrs. Mary Agnes.

October: I walk these fields; the shadows  
of old cabbage beds are hinted under frost  
and I try to recite the names that go with holes  
where fenceposts were. But there's an erasure  
going on, and I'm too young to care.

Later, I will mourn how my father's fence was  
knocked down  
a month after he gave the house to the past and  
summer visits;  
I will think of marauding cars and vandals and hard  
years  
as another bit of the story of ourselves, who have  
forgotten much  
and remember more it's better to forget.

*Carmelita McGrath*