

The Tree
Holly Day

I wake to the choking sound of electric chainsaws ripping
through wet bark and I know
it's the white birch down the street. I lie in bed
stomach clenched and sick
as the crash of limbs falling against each other
interrupt the morning calls of sparrows and cardinals
in my yard.

I worry about my own birch, how this
will affect the old soul standing guard
surrounded by painted ferns and flowering hostas
once part of a thriving community
of river and paper birch trees, roots reaching to touch
one another beneath tract houses and
old apartment buildings
now the only one of his kind, friends plowed to make room
for parking lots and the new grocery store.

Holly Day's poetry has recently appeared in *Asimov's Science Fiction*, *Grain*, and *Harvard Review*. Her newest poetry collections are *Where We Went Wrong* (Clare Songbirds Publishing), *Into the Cracks* (Golden Antelope Press), *Cross Referencing a Book of Summer* (Silver Bow Publishing), and *The Tooth is the Largest Organ in the Human Body* (Anaphora Literary Press).