

## Exploring Growth through Depravation

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### I. cross breeding innocence with shame

Bright green roots sprout from nothing. You called them weeds. But when the overgrowth found its way to our front porch, we thought we could garden it. Two gallons of water and a pound of fertilizer later, my thighs are still stained with dead peat.

### II. atonement

Tree rings melodize  
the rain, the wear,  
the meat of the forest.  
To grow flowers  
behind your eyes, first  
ask for forgiveness.

### III. bygones and pinecones

I baked in our dry season. You sent me off  
with nothing more than bone white parched lips.  
Consider branching a photosynthetic goal—  
but the boughs must grow too.  
I remember dehydration,  
I remember the only taste on my tongue  
was salt.

### IV. pressurized blooms

nothing grows this way  
bundles of loose graying leaves  
stuffed in kitchen drawers