

JOHN D. ENGLE, JR.

Early Winter

Time told me that I should expect the frost,
but I did not expect it quite so soon!
(Too many infant flowers have been lost.)
This year has been a day that closed at noon.
The leaves were born for nothing but to fall.
The young streams were anesthetized by ice
before their music reached my ears at all.
The sun now lies, a bleeding sacrifice
on the altar of earth's winter-frosted rim.
The sky is black with disappointed birds
that fly to lands less frigid, suns less dim,
like cold thoughts seeking southland worlds of words.
My chilled heart reaches back toward its brief spring
and finds white frost has blackened everything.