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## HOW MARCH WAS NAMED / *Will Wells*

Slush and mud grapple in the fields,  
and a wren brandishes a twig  
one brown leaf still hanging on  
in tatters, like a battle flag.  
A bundled groom sweeps the stables.  
Between stations, his radio  
garbles weather with "Your Cheatin' Heart."  
The big roan, restless in his stall,  
nuzzles each board, testing for trouble.

The farm hand, patching potholes  
in a rutted lane, pauses, turns  
his back, and gulps a burning  
other than breath. Thawing from drifts,  
pop tabs and shards of bottle glass  
grow vehement with light.  
When he scuffs loose a broken cobble,  
the earth beneath is so dark  
he could rub it in his eyes, a salve.