

This should not be

by [Amanda Ryan](#) in the [July 1, 2020](#) issue

I am familiar with *this should not be*.

Although I've tried to brush it off, its stench
of weariness and fault and lethargy
comes off my skin, runs from my veins; it's drenched
in accusation, and tastes like shame. I see
it etched upon my neighbors' faces, the loud
refrain: *This should not be. This should not be.*
And yet it masks itself in something proud.

Catch the little foxes. Set their tails on fire.

The garden fills with weeds and mulch and rot
And Death, that gentleman, he is a liar.

Do not believe him when he says you ought
to hear him speak. The winter's passed. Look, see
that Spring has come and ah! *This should not be.*