

Everything Around Here Is Ephemeral

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Today a cardinal poured out of the woods, redder
than arterial blood. When my husband died, I got cards
saying this slash of scarlet is a loved one returning,
but I know it's just a bird and he isn't coming back.
This January sky has softened, a hint
of early spring. Every item in the news is dire,
so I turn it off, try to remember that nothing lasts,
that the iciest winter bleeds into spring, spring into
summer, etc., etc. Until we alter the climate so much
that everything burns. Please let me be wrong about this.
Let every red bird find his olive drab mate, let them
build twiggy nests, fill them with speckled eggs. And
let those nestlings flap their unsteady wings, disappear
in the hedgerow, then lift to the sky.