

The Far Woods

The far woods were there
At the farthest outreach of the land,
Emblem of all that had come down to him
From those that had come before him.
There his father had taught him
To hunt for deer.
There his grandfather had taught him
To pick wood for carving.
Green in summer around his hiding places.
Bare in winter, fuel for fire.

The far woods were there
When he went back years later,
The farm no longer his own,
The old house deserted and bare.
His father was gone from the workbench.
His grandfather was gone from the yard.
No voices arose
Where the firewood rotted.
The loose tin on the shed
Banged in the wind.

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