

# The Creek at the End of the Lawns

Ira Joe Fisher

NY  
Q Books™

---

The New York Quarterly Foundation, Inc.  
New York, New York

NYQ Books™ is an imprint of The New York Quarterly Foundation, Inc.

The New York Quarterly Foundation, Inc.  
P. O. Box 2015  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York, NY 10113

[www.nyqbooks.org](http://www.nyqbooks.org)

Copyright © 2012 by Ira Joe Fisher

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission of the author except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. This book is a work of fiction.

Gratitude is extended to the editors of the following journals in which some of these poems first appeared: "Age" and "Closing Time," *Entelechy International*; "Aftermath," *The New York Quarterly*.

First Edition

Set in New Baskerville

Layout and Design by Raymond P. Hammond  
Cover Art by Patrick Mooney  
Author Photo by Bill Snellings

Library of Congress Control Number: 2012948205

ISBN: 978-1-935520-65-8

## *Contents*

Be Glad and Sing	/ 13
Dance	/ 14
At Heart	/ 15
An April Day	/ 16
Beginnings	/ 17
Ars Poetica	/ 21
Word Worry	/ 26
Disguise	/ 27
Apples and Salt	/ 28
Hale Farm	/ 31
Glance	/ 33
The Current War	/ 34
Apostrophe to Grass and the Place He Chose	/ 35
Who Better	/ 36
C. O.	/ 37
Bereavement	/ 38
Games	/ 39
The Creek at the End of the Lawns	/ 42
Beneath the Watching Hill	/ 69
I Hate to Come in from a Storm	/ 70
Gone	/ 71
Something Building	/ 72
Antiverdant	/ 73
Rainfire	/ 74
East River	/ 75
North of Manhattan	/ 76
Misplaced	/ 77
New York to Chicago	/ 78
What to Do with Light	/ 79

Anymore / 82  
More Than Music / 84  
Connecticut Testament / 85  
Abandoned / 86  
Swallows Still Visit the Barn / 88  
Descrying / 90  
Need / 92  
The Church of Spring / 93  
A Weary Wait / 94  
Clarification / 95  
O, Allegheny / 96  
Eavesdropping / 97  
Mid-August, Cape Cod / 98  
An Emptying / 99  
A Tree and Time / 100  
Deliquescence / 101  
Stitchwork / 102  
Deciduous / 103  
Catching Autumn / 104  
Growing Late / 105  
O, Church, Invite the Trees / 106  
A Sense of Things / 107  
Leaving / 108  
O, Snow / 109  
Candle in a Window / 110  
At Fall of Night / 111  
Islands of the Night / 112  
December Fifth / 114  
Aftermath / 115

Age / 116  
Old Randolph Road / 117  
Tangible Time / 119  
Looking After / 120  
Connecticut Psalm / 121  
Asking God / 122  
Closing Time / 123  
Elegy / 124

## C. O.

Mister Government, do you still  
hold a fading thought  
that war  
that killing  
that sending them to fight  
is a sin?  
Oh, you still plan war,  
you start war, you rage.  
You still fight.  
You still kill.  
But do you hold a thought,  
a fading thought  
that it is a sin?  
I only ask  
because you still call  
war's objector  
conscientious.

## An Emptying

Night is quicker to fall.  
The temperature is quicker to fall.  
Leaves and light, quicker to fall.  
It's the falling of things,  
an emptying –  
of playgrounds  
and ballparks  
and lakes –  
cooling the year.  
Bright day is still summer,  
still warm;  
but, a chilled thread  
woven of wind,  
in the sun,  
in the clouds,  
and iron gray,  
holds a secret we know  
and pretend we don't.

## O, Church, Invite the Trees

O, church, invite the trees,  
Invite the trees adorned with only leaves  
And cones between the needles.

O, church, open your door  
To squirrel and dog and deer,  
Open your door to the wordless ones.

Pull back your ceiling  
To the blue and sainted sky  
And clouds and holy rain.

O, church, where are the stones?  
And dust? Where are the tufts of hay?  
A creek trilling down your aisle?

Forgive my sigh at the altar gold  
And marble haloed men,  
Mere men frozen, holding high hands

Their palms a blinding white  
While your colored glass hides  
The heaven of the world.



## Looking After

The wind leaned the maple  
over my reading  
and dusk sipped the words  
into what the dusk became:  
night.

Ink is a gift:  
it unwraps a laying-down sun,  
gives a bird a song  
and gives shivers to the rain.  
As that dusk gave all  
to night  
and my book sighed to unseen,  
there were only fireflies  
with their brief, green ease  
to show me in the dark  
how to find home.