

PLANT

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When the wind shakes the bush, I notice the blood-red bud on one of its bare branches. It is sized like a piece of gravel, its shape a tiny arrowhead. The sight of it stirs the very life in me. I break the bud off the bush and bring it to the hard patch of dirt beside my back door. I press the bud into the stiff earth, so that it lies covered. Let's see what it might do in this ground, I think, filling with curiosity. I do not water the spot and it does not rain, but soon the earth where I put the bud changes. It darkens as if soaked. The ground softens and fresh cracks snake over it like rivers. A lime-green shoot emerges, wavy and slender as the long cracks that have formed on the ground's face. However, this shoot appears more than the cracks in the dirt. It has its own body, supple and pliant. It rises from the ground even while drawing nutriment from there. The stem of the shoot curves one way and curves another on its upward earth. As the plant grows over the next, many days, these bends find no rest: in its great energy, the plant sends forth leaves, open and wide. I watch these green leaves become eyes and I know each of them looks on a world rippling just like the plant on which they grow. The grass around them swishes and flows with the wind. The birds dip and rise, as waves do, when they fly across my green meadow. The buck deer leap in arcs along the edges of the nearby wood, their calls rolling through the long night. As the plant becomes part of these environs, my friend and I tend the plot of land by its roots. We grow and age as we work, turn our hands, darken and yellow in mood and temper. We stoop and straighten in the perpetual flow of body and mind.

