



"Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king."

— Thomas Nash



"April's wonder
is worth it all."

— Sir Henry Newbolt

The Poets See One Face And Sing — The April Gardener Sees Another, And Mutters In His Beard

APRIL is beloved by poets, of course, although because of the vagaries of verse, the name must be put in the middle of a line and not at the rhyming end. What poets like about it is the *idea*—the end of long winter, the imminence of the fey, gay, way of those flowers of May. To be sure, poets are people, and as such deserve attentive hearing and perhaps a little money for wine and espresso. Poets, however, cluster in places like Greenwich Village. There everything is done for them, a janitor providing heat, a corner cafe providing meals.

What, in effect, do cloistered poets know of April as it really is? Can they legitimately be called spokesmen for that so disordered month? Undrenched by showers, undisturbed by the need for a new roof, new sump-pump and ten pounds of grass seed, they can be spokesmen only for poetical illusion. They should try the suburbs some time. Let them come out this week-end, say, and help clean the place up. Pick up. dig

The Two Faces

up, rake up—all in meter, if they wish it that way. —

Setting down the virtues of April, the dogged illusion stresses many things, including pleasures. In cool, mountain streams, it says here, the trout are biting fiercely. This carries the inference that due entirely to April, the trout are so eager they gulp down fly, hook, leader, line and part of the rod. Could be, could be, but a suburbanite can only read of this, not see. In nearby baseball stadia, it continues, they are knocking them into the stands, everyone in the line-up batting .400. This too, could be, although the proof necessarily must lie elsewhere. The suburbanite has something closer at hand, requiring his attention.

Now that it is April, step over to the window here and glance at the yard. During the long months of winter, it has become a shambles. Strolling packs of dogs have littered its once neat surface with mounds of whitening bones. These are of shanks, legs, ribs, and if some mad restorer put them all together, what would he get in the way of beast or fowl? A caricature of a poet, perhaps, come to an April end after writing sentimentally of April. Scattered among the bones are rusted toys and tin cans, dropped by tearing packs of children, and twigs and branches dropped by trees with tired chlorophyll.

At intervals across the yard are great lumps of earth, like anthills. Frost, trying to heave up subterranean stones, or what? Possibly in the far distant mountains of Tibet, the Abominable Snowman has frolicked with such enthusiasm as to cause bulges this side. Be that as it may, bones, toys and wood products must be picked up, and a heavy roller must

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"Proud-pied April ...
bath put a spirit of youth
in everything."

— William Shakespeare