

The Old Ones

Like us, they lived and loved, laughed and cried,
fought and made up, lived and died,
walked, talked and wondered, told stories
to themselves and each other

were glad for spring flowers and summer breeze,
the tang of winter in the first cold snap,
the sun and clouds in the sky, birds in trees,
fish in water, all the mysterious underground,
sounds and smell and taste, the sense of everything

stories about what they did or thought they did
or might have done if this or that hadn't happened,
so and so hadn't got in the way, as clear as a bell
on the tip of the tongue like it was yesterday,
people they knew places they'd been, stories

others told them or they made up whole cloth,
or tatters or threaded into patchwork, plaid or quilt,
fairytales, mythologies and cosmologies
to entertain and explain themselves to themselves,
what they knew and didn't know and couldn't
hard as they tried and lived their lives doing
whatever it took trying to understand