

Samuel Smith  
Messiah College  
Grantham, PA 17027

Buck Rub, Thanksgiving Day

The trenchant tale this wounded sapling tells  
is not of enchantment and imprisoned souls,  
but of a big-rack buck and the itching  
of velvet, the scent of spring and the  
generation of life.

The congregation  
of young stripling trees, rising together  
in the middle of this climbing path, now  
isolate the slim pariah with her smooth,  
ivory core uncovered by the horned beast.

Tomorrow cold winds will come, and a spray  
of warm bullets will tear that softer hide;  
but the swaying sapling will never feel  
satisfying vengeance, nor find healing  
in the hurried rush of a twisting knife.

[published in *Spume* 2 (2003): 21]