

## **Root Systems**

Give me your coldest winter  
and I will close it in my fist,  
press it  
with the weight of my red fingers  
  
and tell you, No.

The worst winter wasn't the one  
the weatherman warned us about.

It wasn't the one  
whose relentless snowdrifts  
finally caved the curved eaves of our roof,

and broke one by one  
all the branches  
of the centenarian trees  
that stood as sentries  
by the mailbox. They told

anyone who came to our door  
Listen.  
There is peace and beauty here.  
Walk this soft path and  
Listen. Here,  
there is finally love and home.

No.

The most unforgiving winter  
was the one that  
caved the eaves of my insides,  
broke the branches protecting my heart, and  
took the new life you and I had just made  
  
for itself.

Colleen Alles

Inspiration: *Root Systems* by Richard App