

# Witness

Christian Wiman

Typically cryptic, God said three weasels  
slipping electric over the rocks  
one current conducting them up the tree  
by the river in the woods of the country  
into which I walked  
away and away and away;  
and a moon-blued, cloud-strewn night sky  
like an X-ray  
with here a mass and there a mass  
and everywhere a mass;  
and to the tune of a two-year-old  
storm of atoms  
elliptically, electrically alive—  
*I will love you in the summertime, Daddy.*  
*I will love you... in the summertime.*

Once in the west I lay down dying  
to see something other than the dying stars  
so singularly clear, so unassailably there,  
they made me reach for something other.  
I said I will not bow down again  
to the numinous ruins.  
I said I will not violate my silence with prayer.  
I said *Lord, Lord*  
in the speechless way of things  
that bear years, and hard weather, and witness.



*Christian Wiman* is the author of several books of poetry and prose. He teaches at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. His collection *Once in the West* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014) may be purchased at <http://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374227012>.

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