
POETRY

HOMILY ON ASPEN LEAVES

Pull one leaf from an aspen tree
study the routes charted there
Every spring, as the earth warms
a pilgrim's path unfurls
from each sticky bud
Veins are the ancient atlas
from which the master builder
taught clansmen to gather for prayer
salmon to run for home
glaciers to find the sea

Should maps bore you
then listen
the wind's vocal chords
are aspen leaves
dancing on the end of petioles

If for you this jostling frolic
is but a cacophony
Pull one leaf from an aspen tree
put lips to spring's skin
Taste the sun

After seven rigid months
sap pulsates
through grey-thatch aspen groves
fluffing them into green pillows
as lake ice rots away

Celebrate this spectacle,
learn more of life's architecture
Lift your hands to the sky
Pull one leaf from an aspen tree

- *Rod Thompson*, Box 336, Prince Albert, SK S6V 5R7