

## *A Vision*

*If we will have the wisdom to survive,  
to stand like slow-growing trees  
on a ruined place, renewing, enriching it,  
if we will make our seasons welcome here,  
asking not too much of earth or heaven,*

*then a long time after we are dead  
the lives our lives prepare will live here,  
their houses strongly placed  
upon the valley sides, fields and gardens  
rich in the windows. The river will run  
clear, as we will never know it,  
and over it, birdsong like a canopy.*

*On the levels of the hills will be  
green meadows, stock bells in noon shade.  
On the steeps where greed and ignorance  
cut down the old forest,  
an old forest will stand,  
its rich leaf-fall drifting on its roots.  
The veins of forgotten springs will have  
opened.*

*Families will be singing in the fields.  
In their voices they will hear a music  
risen out of the ground.*

*They will take  
nothing from the ground they will not return,  
whatever the grief at parting.  
Memory, native to this valley,  
will spread over it like a grove,  
and memory will grow into legend,  
legend into song,  
song into sacrament.*

*The abundance of this place,  
the songs of its people and its birds,  
will be health and wisdom  
and indwelling light.  
This is no paradisaal dream.  
Its hardship is its possibility.*

*-- Wendell Berry*