

JAMES DEAHL

AFTER WEEKS OF CALLING FROM THE HIGHEST BRANCHES, THE MALE CARDINAL HAS ATTRACTED A MATE

Suddenly, in the dark bower of the prickly-ash:
first the bright male, then the female.

Tooth-ache tree, its bitter bark easing pain.
It's here, in this hidden thicket
formed by the lowest branches,
they will raise their young.

All afternoon, first the male,
then the female, sang their psalm of love.