

I Believe
(after Jim Harrison)

I believe in long cold snaps, snow drifts taller than a man
and plowed piles fit for kings, sub-zero temperatures,
the smoke hard wood fires and aged tobacco, frost,
cedar needles rolled between fingers, the lake effect
off Lake Michigan. That I am winter even in summer.

I believe in the divine right of spring, wet earth, the loveliness
of thick ladies, pot holes that can crush a car, spring training,
Irish stouts, Ernie Harwell, play off beards, Bob Dylan's warble,
the Sports Illustrated Swim Suit Issue, that the Oscars
will always get it wrong, that I should've been a farmer.

I believe in heat waves and pools that are worth
the trouble, Lake Michigan's beaches, college girls in bikinis
and cut off jeans, dunes, riptides, storms over Potagannissing Bay,
swells that threaten to sweep water over my little Evinrude
like some Midwestern Poseidon, that the DH is political scam.

I believe in the fall. The paradise that lives in green
turned gold leaves, the Kalamazoo River where it splits
the Saugatuck Dunes, Pearl Jam on the car ride to school,
NPR on the way home, wineries on the Grand Traverse Peninsula.
That here is no birth or rebirth, there is only the is of patterns

scrawled long before man lent hand and mouth to language.