



NO ONE I KNOW AND THE TREE

The tree nobody I know can name  
grows from cement atop the top  
of all subway platforms.

It won't stop growing from crumbled concrete.

The one nobody I know can name  
has many names, but it's not the "tree of God";

I've found it in poems by many friends  
though none of my friends are poets.

My closest friends are a ghost and a cloud.

Every tree I'm talking about is a painting  
written by a poet,

just as all poems are trees written by painters.

For how do we call the recently noticed tall one  
out on the fire escape?

Before I looked out the window

it was in nine poems, half a film treatment and  
at least four of my last seven meals.

Sacrificing the possible beauty of its name,  
what can they say about that?

The tree nobody I know can name  
doesn't need encouragement,

but I encourage (if by nothing else)  
by not discouraging it.

The one year head ache you didn't know you had,  
till you didn't have it.

The concrete continues to grow.

-Tom Devaney