

Tornado's Path

Walking the tornado's path through Duke Forest,
striding the railroad trestle across the Eno,
clambering down the steep grade of the tracks,
catching myself on upwrenched roots,
I saw, in the flood plain of the river, among the ruins,
those few trees still stretching up and just now budding,
saved by their deeper roots, or by a readiness to bow
before the winds, the most inflexible winds.

- Del Shortliffe
February 1994