

AT THE ALMOST-MAY END OF APRIL

We all love the rhythm of Masefield's *Mad March Days*;
Now, late in the fourth month,
Defiantly out of synchronism with the season,
Today's weather is surely madder by far
Than anything fighty Mars blew or threw at us, weeks ago.
For this wind,
Which sieged our door with letterbox rattles all last night,
Comes ice-fresh straight from Spitsbergen.

And, whilst, this morning, we winter-breakfasted ourselves
On honeyed porridge, steadfast with cold-enduring calories,
Our blossom-dressed young pears and apples which,
In yesterday's Mediterranean breezes,
Swayed delicately, all pink and white,
Pretty as dance-loving girls in the lightest of nighties,
Were hissingly broadsided with grapeshot ferocity
By gale-blasted granular snow!

We fret for their setting fruit, Autumn's bounty under threat
Not just from such squalls, but forecasted starry-night frosts as well –
All quite believable, because one of us is sure we cloud-gap glimpsed
Presceli,
Just now, white as Christmas cake upon its tops;
But, 'Nothing we can do about it, today', our mutual shrugs...
However, in case this and much other recent weather defying
explanation
Are possible symptoms of the climate's slide beyond tolerable
variation,
We both agree: more effort needed, and determinedly sustained.

More effort needed, and determinedly sustained,
To force better sense
Into those plotters of the human future who,
Ear-whispered by many-dollared tongues,
Estimate short-sighted self-interest of greater value
Than generous far-horizoned care
For Earth, and Nature...
...And, indeed, if they did but think about it,
Their children's children.

Chris Jessop