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AS I WALKED THE ROAD

*trees made a sound
like brushed drums
begging a dance,
coaxing the clouds
to bring down
ponderous rain.
Long lanes opened
from the sky,
and spillways
down the leaves.*

*Sudden as a dragonfly
lightning slashed
across the road,
shivered a maple
just yards ahead
of where I walked.
Storm clouds plunged
on over foothills
as if this
had never occurred.*

*But the tree
was on fire
and smoke tangled
in crosswinds
through ragged veins
at the backs
of my eyes.*

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We shall come forward singing,
Our hands curved to the plow handles,
Our eyes raised to the light.

— *James Hearst "The Grail"*

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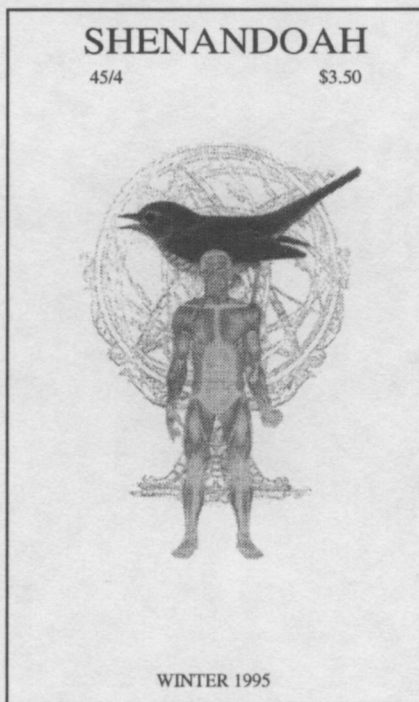
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