

By the pond, The Juke leans into the trees.  
Tendrils writhe through the dance floor; vines  
flatten their suckers on the windowframes,  
wearing the edges to sweet green. Lizards  
green as leaves fly in and out the door.



## Elayne Sidley

### THE OLIVE TREE

My tenants have an olive tree  
Living in their kneepatch front yard.  
This tree knows how to grow.  
Big, long branches for such a little look-old young tree.  
When the fruit comes it drops and drops,  
And every passing soul squishes purple-black dye  
On shoes and walks and carpets.

I hired a man.

I said, (in pidgin Spanish) "Cut that mother.  
Way back." Back to the twisted, weather-beaten  
trunk that's borne neither storm, nor wind,  
nor temperatures extreme. "Cut that mother."  
So the man cut that mother back.  
Now it's small and, holding in on itself,  
bends back its mutilated little arms,  
Ashamed and sorrowing,  
Its little arms bend back.

There will be no olives this year,  
No mess, no fuss, no bother,  
And the tenants and the man got what they wanted,  
And I got what I requested.