SALAMANDER

It was up before us tangled in vines.
We must have past it among the silver birches
mistaken it for a thread of bark or glimmer of light.
When we bore our shovels deep,
separated the asparagus from coiled grass
it began its womb silent climb between roots.

We changed to heavier boots
hitched up the wagon and rode the tractor down.
The trees were felled
dry for cutting.
We talked of the saws, the danger of them,
how quickly the blade will cut.

You took the saw and I lifted the logs.
The blade cut deep and each branch fingered the bog.
I slipped once fearing the chain,
how it tore at the thickness of wood.

When we stopped and carried the wood to the wagon,
you weaved a path of curling leaves.
We were careful to pile the wood in patterns,
then we touched it,
cool skin,
tossed it like a stone.

Beverly De Mario