

1-1-2008

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Recommended Citation

Miles, Wendy (2008) "Regarding the Redbud," *Yalobusha Review*: Vol. 13 , Article 18.
Available at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/yr/vol13/iss1/18>

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Wendy Miles

Regarding the Redbud

The redbud by the fence will have to come out.
The stump will have to be ground down.

There were no caterpillar sacks strewn through limbs.
No storm glued icy branches to the frozen earth.

A friend tells me a cardinal loops her maple,
hits her back window, drops, ascends.

Twelve times the animal has done this. Maybe
it wants to die. My father did, toward the end.

Through the phone, the expert's voice is deep.
He says, regarding the redbud: *canker*.

It started in the trunk, spread slowly.
I don't ask him this: What could help but die?

From the window, I see the birdfeeder sway, empty.
I listen for, but cannot hear, its once-thick knock.