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Alice B. Fogel

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The Hoe · *Alice B. Fogel*

In March the earth breaks open, stirs
from its suspension: Water
puddles and floods
our road. You take your hoe
when we go walking, and you fold
soaked earth into soft pleats,
to let the water flow. You free
the orphaned pools to travel and rejoin
their brooks and streams,
and the braided water leaps
between new wet walls, and falls
over the edges of the road
and into woods.

With your hoe you scoop
sodden leaves into woven walls, so
these floodgates open, this drawbridge unlocks,
these little excesses of ice and rain and snow
run off, without turning back.

I stay, and watch you clear our way,
parting mud with sure true strokes,
leading water to where it wanted to go.