

The New Criterion

Poems

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Engine work: variations

by [Morri Creech](#)

i

June morning. Sunlight flashes through the pines.
Blue jays razz and bicker, perch on a fence post
Back of my grandfather's yard. His stripped engines
Clutter the lawn. And everywhere the taste
Of scuppernongs, just moments off the vines,
So sour that you would swear the mind has traced
A pathway through the thicket, swear the past
Comes clear again, picked piecemeal from the dust—

ii

Or else it's late—September—and the shade
Thicker than I recall: those cardinals,
Finches or mockingbirds still haven't made
A sound all afternoon, though ripe fruit swells
On vine, or branch . . . or bramble. Thus the frayed
Edge of recollection slowly ravel
Away to ...

Morri Creech's second book, *Field Knowledge* (Waywiser), won the first annual Anthony Hecht prize.

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