

DAVID ANTHONY SAM

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Philemon

This eve  
of new-old wars  
and infinite sorrows  
called me to leave my warm  
room and join the mist outside  
in a dark without stars. A rich aroma  
of loam rose to draw me to a place disturbed  
where black night grew from black earth.  
Something had dug here. Something hungry  
had snouted and clawed the barely seen soil  
that lay open now like lips. The dim light of far  
windows cast itself careless through dank air to  
this upturned place where wildness met my  
briefly tamed garden. My hands thrust themselves  
thoughtless into the scenting soil under the dark wild  
night. My fingers became blind roots snaking into earth.  
My arms branched wood, my torso trunked, my graywhite hair  
greened to leaves whose erose points breathed into  
the richness of dark wind. And in the dawn when wars  
made fresh red for sands and ice and unfathomed seas,  
a single chipping sparrow chose to sing its faithfulness  
from  
what  
had  
been  
my sorrow.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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David Anthony Sam is the author of *Dark Land, White Light* (Dark Land Publishing 1974, 2014), *Memories in Clay, Dreams of Wolves* (Dark Land Publishing 2014), and *Finite to Fail: Poems after Dickinson* (GFT Press 2017). His poetry has also appeared in *The Magnolia Review*, *december magazine*, *The Summerset Review*, *Temenos Journal*, and *Two Cities Review*. He currently serves as the poetry editor for GFT Press. A retired college president, he lives in Virginia. Online at [davidanthony.sam.com](http://davidanthony.sam.com).

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