

# Black Sweater

*by* John Riley

It's colder than hell out there.  
If I decide to climb  
the old oak  
I better wear  
my new black sweater.

You can see me there!  
Big pillowy head held steady—  
arms stretching up—  
legs too short to climb  
onto the next limb.

The children agree  
my mind is finally gone.  
Why, the wife pleads,  
can she never have a moment's peace?  
Beneath my feet the limb creaks.  
I could stay up here all day.

