

## Cycles

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The last leaves of fall  
cling to the branches,  
trembling in the tumult.

The wind whispers a challenge  
and they answer it.

In the end they are ripped apart,  
carried away in the gusts.

Their perseverance is no less noble for it. Things begin to change.

Encrusted with daggers of ice,  
caked with snow,  
the empty limbs  
refuse to snap in the wind.

They wait in silence...

Their tenacity is not in vain.  
Small green specks  
push through the thawed bark,  
giving way to timid, brilliant white petals.

They grow.

Summer  
brings fragrant air  
and swelt'ring nights,  
cooling breezes,  
leaves green and bright.

Eventually, though,  
this too must end.  
The colors fade  
and fall returns to consume what's left.

Etcetera.

Each year leaves the bark a little thicker,  
the branches reaching farther in pursuit of sun.

The seasons move quickly,  
they move slowly,  
but they never stop changing.

The saplings steady themselves,  
dying and being reborn,  
then dying again,  
swaying in the shadow of the evergreens.

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