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December Sun

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KELLI CRAIG

DECEMBER SUN

AFTER *DECEMBER SUN* BY CHARLES E. BURCHFIELD

Aloneness is tranquil sunrays gleaming
behind a forgotten tree in late December.

Only the sun and wind inhabit this place.

Church bells ring in the distance with no
one to hear them.

Where is everyone?

Are naked bodies nestled under mounds of
blankets, not wanting to emerge with the
early morning sun?

Late December brings a time of tranquility
and loneliness that only sun-kissed orange
sunflowers can beat down come spring.

No fires extend cloudy black smoke from the
rooftops, proof of where these families lay.

Like the sullen trees' dying branches, they
entwine among their lovers' legs, arms, faces,
absorbing all the other has to offer.

Children sleep soundly while parents rustle
under covers of warmth and protection
planting seeds that will bloom late summer.

Ravaging each other now, for knowing what
spring brings . . . up before sunrise, tending
gardens, fields, and children.

Now forgotten fields will emerge from
sleeping limbs among the thorny bushes
come spring.