

## *Truncated*

There is a tree, branches cut bluntly, abruptly  
enormous limbs stopped  
still massive  
but chopped, sawn, lopped  
remnants of the heavy struggle  
against gravity against time  
giant rippling sinews  
holding up nothing

It's for your own good  
say parents, say nurses  
said the men with saws  
dreams into space once fully realized  
had become too big  
reached out too far  
cost too much  
could not, finally, be upheld  
it's for your own good  
this may hurt a bit  
and it was, and it did

Still one considerable branch gnarls out to a side  
spewing branches and more branches, a luxuriance of leaves  
a tree of its own that started sideways  
had many second thoughts,  
dodged this, reconsidered that  
froze its twisting path in space  
fluoresced in all directions  
all that remains of it all  
diminished  
enduring and green

In its branches shelter birds

burrow insects

play children

who, for a game

toss the small hard seeds as far as they can

*Ernie Crane*

*(Written while eating pizza at Giovanni's on Carpinteria Avenue)*