

**A hillside thaw. New York. The Poets' Guild [ca. 1930].**

## A HILLSIDE THAW

To think to know the country and not know  
The hillside on the day the sun lets go  
Ten million silver lizards out of snow!  
As often as I've seen it done before  
I can't pretend to tell the way it's done.  
It looks as if some magic of the sun  
Lifted the rug that bred them on the floor  
And the light breaking on them made them run.  
But if I thought to stop the wet stampede,  
And caught one silver lizard by the tail,  
And put my foot on one without avail,  
And threw myself wet-elbowed and wet-kneed  
In front of twenty others' wriggling speed,—  
In the confusion of them all aglitter,  
And birds that joined in the excited fun  
By doubling and redoubling song and twitter,  
I have no doubt I'd end by holding none.

It takes the moon for this. The sun's a wizard  
By all I tell; but so's the moon a witch.  
From the high west she makes a gentle cast  
And suddenly, without a jerk or twitch,  
She has her spell on every single lizard.  
I fancied when I looked at six o'clock  
The swarm still ran and scuttled just as fast.  
The moon was waiting for her chill effect.  
I looked at nine: the swarm was turned to rock  
In every lifelike posture of the swarm,  
Transfixed on mountain slopes almost erect.  
Across each other and side by side they lay.  
The spell that so could hold them as they were  
Was wrought through trees without a breath of storm  
To make a leaf, if there had been one, stir.  
It was the moon's: she held them until day,  
One lizard at the end of every ray.  
The thought of my attempting such a stay!

ROBERT FROST

The Unbound Anthology

The Poets' Guild Christodora House, 147 Avenue B New York City.

From **New Hampshire** by Robert Frost.

With permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

---

**BROADSIDE PORT. 133 No. 59**

---

**133/59**

---

**2199F 3??64**