

RALEIGH WAS RIGHT

William Carlos Williams. 1944.

We cannot go to the country
for the country will bring us
no peace
What can the small violets
tell us that grow on the furry stems
in the long grass among
lance shaped leaves?

Though you praise us
and call to mind the poets
who sung of our loveliness it was
long ago!
long ago!
when country people
would plow and sow with
flowering minds and pockets
at ease – if ever this were true.

Not now. Love itself a flower
with roots in a parched ground.
Empty pockets
make empty heads. Cure it
if you can but do not believe
that we can live today
in the country
for the country will bring us
no peace.

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