

Two poems by **Sara Epstein '80** (written in April 2020, reflections from the daily walks in the Fells Reservation near her home in Winchester, Mass.):

After the walk, the recall

Like after sex, the cigarette.
Remember that?
Recall at this age just as satisfying.
Ah, there it is, deep inhale,
I am whole again,
the hole is filled with who
said they remembered the birthday
parades around the block
we used to have when the
kids were little.
How good it was to be together,
with the aunts and uncles and grandparents,
the babies in arms and the older ones running
ahead, my dad in the drama of it all,
paper cone hat tilting
like it's a Parisian beret
or New Year's Eve at a bar,
tooting a kazoo as we marched.
Yes, it was my sister who told me,
after I told her that the kids'
Uncle Bruce had just died,
he who used to smoke cigarettes
once upon a time.



Startling beauty and distress

Thin clouds let through light,
a different filter today.
Tiny stream flows around the heart-
shaped red granite rock,
green moss glows.
Pine trees, snapped
in the recent windstorm,
show golden brown splinters
big as bookcases.
Other trees, charcoal statues,
victims of arson, point to the sky beyond,
to live trees spare and temporary.
Paths, worn down by daily walks

and big-tired bikes,
criss-cross the woods
with more and more trails.
Erosion by the reservoir:
tall trees, roots shallow,
insufficient, tip over,
roots still filled with rocks and sand.
That light shines
on broken places.
Each branch and tree
a living, dying body,
like some kind of animal or person
who sparks or screams,
wordless.