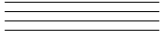


# G H O S T G U M



S T E P H E N E D G A R

Dismantled limb by limb,  
The tallowwood disjointedly comes down,  
As first they loop and trim  
The flexing foliage up in the crown,

Then dexterously snare  
And sling sawn boughs of ever larger girth  
And weight across midair  
By crane, and swing them daringly to earth.

It's like a building site,  
The film of which is played back in reverse.  
A film they must get right  
First take. No second chance here to rehearse.

Even as they delete  
The tree, it's swaying in the naked eye,  
Painted, as by Magritte,  
The colour of the sky, against the sky.