

April

Some people have a real problem with April:

“April is the is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.”

“To what purpose, April, do you return again?
Beauty is not enough. . . .

April

Comes like an idiot babbling and strewing flowers.”

“Some things about living still weren’t quite right, though.

April for instance, still drove people crazy by not being springtime.”

They want April to be something it is
not. They want Spring to be something it is
not. When March blows April into town
Spring has sprung; it sprang
more than a week earlier. April
is the trunk of Spring spreading
the leafy branches of May and June;
without April their fantasy of Spring
would prove a barren and bleak doom.

Have they forgotten

“Whan that April with his showres soote
The drought of March hath perced to the roote
And bathed every vein in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flowr”?
Do they not remember even
“April showers bring May flowers”?

The same people want “Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu” to be about Spring, but it is
not *Springen*, it’s *Sumer* that is icumen in.
I can hear them cry, “But it sounds so
nice, and we want Spring to be nice!”
And I say, “Get your cuckoos straight!
The Springen cuckoo is a bird of a different
feather altogether from the Sumer version. In Spring,
‘The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
“Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo!” O word of fear,
Unpleasing to the married ear!”

If it be true

“In the Spring a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love”
then it matters not whether March came in like a lion or lamb,
April might just bite your head off, man! Foolish expectations
are the hobgoblin of minds both little and great.

Fortunately, April cares not a whit
what anyone thinks of it;
it rests easily in its oblivion.
April contentedly splashes along merrily
not giving a tinker’s cuss
what I or you or anyone thinks.
Some one of us or more
parceled out the days and weeks
into orderly little units neatly
arrayed in stacks of twelve and gave
them all pretty names, but
a gift confers no rights, and April
moves true to its own nature
not our notions of what it means.

– Jeffery Greb