

Ode to Poison Ivy
by Kailas Ledbetter

When asked about what comes to mind,
given my local area and a specific time,
all I think of is one nasty vine,
poison ivy and its kind.
Leaves of three, let them be,
that is what they said to me.
If only I had learned it early,
I could have avoided you, most surely.
But now I'm stuck here with your itching,
writing a poem, mildly twitching.
My once enjoyable walks are now,
filled with worry, etched in my brow.
I closely watch the steps I take,
as if I might step upon a snake.
No such serpent does exist,
but instead, it is only you that will not desist.
Oh three leaved devil, I hate thee so.
Growing on the ground below.
I'd like to say you had some use,
but I'm afraid, there can be no such truce.
Thrice you've struck me, laid me low.
Your burning rash, I doth show,
upon my back, upon my face,
all because of that one shoelace
that fell a step from the Panhandle trail,
the only place there was no rail,
which would've protected from your oil.
Alas, the local beauty you now spoil.
The forest paths, you've over-run,
taking away all the fun,
of any hike, or jaunt around,
for where I go, you're to be found.
Won't you please just leave alone,
my most dear, Nebraskan home?