

**THRESHOLDS**  
**by Linda Pastan**

There is a hesitation  
between seasons  
when the last live leaf, for instance,  
waits to shrivel  
or when spring gathers its green forces  
beyond bare branches.  
There is no odor  
of smoke or lilac;  
the sky is no particular color.  
But in those brief pauses  
we mourn the past  
even as we sense the future.  
Shy as a girl on the blooded threshold  
of being a woman,  
we wait, holding our breath,  
until the earth stirs  
and shakes itself  
and the next thing happens.