

Schneeglöckchen

So early this year she
announces to nobody but a blackbird
who rattles his response. *Candlemas bells and not
even Christmas*. Crouching and wind-curved, she tilts a milky bud
towards her, half-blind, tight-lipped, silent in the leaf-strewn mud.
No longer seeking hope or the promise of spring, she considers
picking one, taking it in - just to disprove her mother's foreboding
of flowers for the dead. Besides, she doesn't fear anymore, no,
sees nothing to dread from endless slumbers, snug in a clay bed.
February fair-maids, dingle-dangles, dewdrops, death's flower.
Granny's schneeglöckchen growing greenest of green, ringing in
spring, but this soon – with autumn leaves unscorched by frost,
unsucked by worms? *Winter's not winter anymore*
she mutters, then squints at the sky, waiting
for the blackbird to offer
his reply.

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