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## *Pine*

The driver stops and jumps down from his cab.  
Men wander round the side of the scaffolding,  
help him loosen the grey tarp that covers  
the straw-coloured stack.

We balance the lengths  
on our shoulders, trudge through mud and drizzle  
battens bouncing with each step until  
the lorry rattles off into the fog.

The others pick up trowels or carry blocks,  
slosh through water on the concrete screed.  
I rifle through the stacks with tape and pencil,  
feel the knots where branches arched above stumps.

I tick each bundle off. In the van's headlights  
I see the stacks, wrapped in black plastic  
like draped coffins, waiting to become a roof.