

Utah State Poetry Society Book of the Year

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2009 *The Frozen Kingdom* by Gail G. Schimmelpfennig \$19.95

Excerpt:

The New Language

We are pleased to have you
join our tour.
It is time to learn
the language.
Say it with me:
breast cancer,
invasive ductal carcinoma,
lumpectomy,
sentinel node biopsy,
prosthesis.

Next you will need these words:
adjuvant therapy,
radiation,
chemotherapy,
oncologist,
Cytoxan ®,
Adriamycin ®,
heart toxicity,
nadir,
antiemetics,
tamoxifen.

Now repeat after me:
survival.
Survival. Feel the warm breath of it.
This is the word
you must remember
when you feel lost
in the new land.
Survival.

2008 *Edges Disappear* by Helen Keith Beaman

\$12.00

Excerpt:

Search Gray

The butterfly, American Painted Lady,
is not gray, but brown, orange
and ochre. In the garden, the rose
that looks like a cup of butter
is not gray—not the grass compressed
in a square in front of the house,
not the eyes hung as crystals,
not the cat that flashes tawny and ginger
among the dried stalks that hide grasshoppers,
which traded green waistcoats for tow,
to match the grass.

The slate path meanders past day
toward night leading into a labyrinth
of half-tones. After the brilliant vermilion
splash that quickly dwindles, evening
covers everything until, at last,
fireflies spark signals to their lovers.

There, where shadows wrapped in flannel hover,
I continue to look for your bright coming.

Excerpt:

Eberhard 4H

In high school, I owned a favorite pencil,
Eberhard 4H, lead light and even on the page,
and I remember a strange appreciation
for quality in something so trivial—
that the lead would not break in mid-sentence
or leave an ugly smudge if my hand slipped.
Perhaps it was the idea of certainty
during those uncertain adolescent days.

This pencil had no eraser, a rare breed
that required a degree of thinking
before attacking the blank page,
the kind that left no room for error,
no pink or green attachment
with its quick fix for tomorrow.
I only know that I was aroused
by the immediacy of snap decisions
when certainty was an outcast never to return.

Suppose a lumber mill
shaved a giant redwood
down to a single pencil.
If that were its sole purpose for existence,
it would stir my blood,
knowing how small things can lead to something great,
and how great things can be brought down
to almost nothing.

2006 *Shouting From the Book of Orange* by Sue Rangelack \$10.00

Excerpt:

What a Poet Calls Her Moles

They dot the pale ocean of my flesh –
miniature brown volcanoes
quarrelsome beneath the surface,
each a tiny time bomb that serves to remind me
of codas written into every one of my cells.
Dark as mushrooms, vulgar as eyes on potatoes,
they are little deaths hitchhiking on my body.

At night I am a negative universe,
a luminous backdrop for those dark constellations
you trace with the tip of your finger
into recognizable patterns;
Cygnus on my shoulder, Lyra on my flank,
Eridanus bisecting my thigh.

They are the cinnamon in me,
my periodic desire for ebony skin,
for the press of a dark succulent night
pregnant with the scent of hibiscus,
throbbing with the throaty calls
of cicada and tree frog.

It is a disconnected picture of who I am,
notes on white parchment
transposing the opus that is me.

Excerpt:

Our Fathers' Leisure

Our fathers took their leisure late that night,
strong drink and smokes beneath the lantern's glow.
We'd look for homesick calves at morning light.

We eavesdropped from the cabin as a slight
September breeze blew through the door, as slow
as fathers in their leisure late at night.

Large moths clung to the screen, their fights
arrested, tapping fervent prayers as though
they'd found moth-Mecca bathed in morning light.

Old crickets. Hoof on rock. The canyon writes
an Oquirrh lullaby with subtle notes
as fathers take their leisure late at night;

cocoons of random rhythm wrapping tight
around each one and warming each to close
the day. We found our calves at morning light

back when our autumn days were long and bright;
before the cancers brought our fathers low.
Another took his leisure late last night,
his calves still wander through the morning light.

Excerpt:

Gentian Violet

(For Howard, Always Age 10)

Through Rocky Mountain
summers, fringed gentian
survive in clumps, a few
bell-shaped flowers, violet
blue, topping each green
stem. Come winter, pressed
under shrouds of snow,
they pretend to be dead.

Like knives on the loose,
the silver runners
of your Flexible Flyer slice ice
above them. The gentian don't see
you hit a snow bank. Your black
knit hat tips, then slips off
in their direction as you tumble.
They don't hear
the taunts of playmates,
your bald head violet
in its blossoming.

The hat signals
ringworm for weeks. We shun
your rosy misfortune. You try
home remedies, weak
voodoo: circles of black ink;
juice from walnut hulls;
pennies steeped overnight
in white vinegar, their morning
magic rubbed over spots
until they seem to disappear.
But relentless worms die
only when gentian
violet invades the DNA
of your cells, from skin
to muscle to marrow
to the white perfection
of bone.

One day I mock until you hit
first, a dry stroke. My fist jams
your mouth. Blood dazzles
on snow crystals. That night
I witness your scream
when truck lights cut
your eyes like lasers, tunnel
through your head, explode
outside where tires
leave scarlet contrails
on asphalt. In darkness
I add salt to the violet
spray about your feet.
Half a century later
I still feel pain
in my jaw, ghost
bruises buried
in wrinkles.

2003 *If I Could Speak in Silk* by Judy Johns - expanded copy available at Amazon.com

Excerpt:

If I Could Speak in Silk

I wish that I could speak in silk,
so cool and sleek
my words would wrap around you
like Oriental paisley.

Or cashmere,
so warm and lush
you'd brush your cheek
against the elemental warmth and fiber
of what I had to say.

Or velvet,
so rich and touchable
that kings would war for just a syllable
of what I'd say to you.

But I can only speak in denim,
so plain and colorless
that all the words to tell you
how I really feel,
come out stonewashed.

2002 *Furnace of Affliction* by Evelyn Hughes

sold out

Excerpt:

Infinity

How wide the sea,
how broad the sky,
and in between the two
am I.

A speck so small,
how can He hear
my daily prayers and know
my fear?

Excerpt:

Saluting the Flag of Inspired Forefathers

Abyss of night and yellow moon
begin to pale behind the Sand Hills
as families of silos silhouette into view,
scattered at random to guard the land.
We drive true-north through Valentine
into South Dakota dawn on the Fourth of July.

A saffron yolk of sun appears
to pin-stripe alfalfa fields with fire-bloom —
a crimson, throw-away glory that quickly fades
as the daystar soaks up all drafts of cooler air.
Again, the earth has not wept her dew
before the implacable heat returns.

We drive fast, attempt to escape time
as it drums on palpable space of open plain.
In Mission we breakfast on blueberry waffles
while Elton sharpens the maple-syrup air
with the half-cry, half-song of *Indian Sunset*
and Donovan tries to *Catch the Wind*.

At Murdo, a Lakota brother fills our tank.
We turn west, burn full-throttle into afternoon.
Food and friends overflow a picnic area
in Badlands Park, where we're expected
to consume more celebratory fare. We sleep,
then wake to the crickets' rhythmic clatter

as winds churn smoke-phantoms along
the skyline, where the delft of dusk
deepens behind white lines of cirrus —
patriotic stripes alternating with fiery welts
of sunset's red glare. We tense in readiness
for a star-flagged sky to appear.

The winds settle, the blaze cools above
wounded knees of hills stained deepest purple.

Excerpt:

Choosing A Casket

Today we have choosing a casket. Yesterday
we had sharing the shock. And tomorrow morning
we shall have what to do at the burial. But today,
today we have choosing a casket.
Sparrows flutter, lift to twitter on low branches.
And today, we have choosing a casket.
*This is the English oak. And these,
the brass handles, whose use you will see
when you have chosen the oak. And this is the clasp
which we grasp will be used once.*
Beyond the window, branches hold promises
in their delicate tips, life
which we do not grasp.
*This is the grain of the wood. Hand rubbed
to a gloss. But please, do not touch,
warm prints leave a mark. You can see
how its strength holds the form.*
A whisper of wind sighs through trees
fluttering wings whose prints never leave a mark.
*And this you can see is the satin. The purpose
of it is to cushion.* The smooth white
will never be sensed. But, oh, the consolation
it gives. All the folds, and the feather pleats,
for deep rest. And they call this consolation.
And, oh, how it consoles when you see
the satin, and the brass, to be used once,
and the wood, how its strength holds the form.
Wind rustles feathers of birds quick
to flight. Whose comings and goings
are somewhere numbered.
But today — today we have choosing a casket.

1999 *Cheat Grass* by Marilyn Bushman-Carlton

\$5.00

Excerpt:

The Basic Tune of Sparrows

Outside the glass that keeps us warm,
the sparrows,
most common of creatures,
of whom the promise is made
that none will be lost,
are content,
releasing out from themselves
the basic, expected
tune of Sparrow.

They intone through the snows
that flesh the limbs
and starch white the ground
where in rust and green seasons
they forage for food,
take in stride the wider design
be it snow or rain, shards of sun,
the discontent of wind.

They expect nothing more,
accept even less.

Brown feather, small bone, unsung
as late love, bare light bulbs,
a white cotton slip,
they yield.

No murmur no envy no pain
leaks from their beaks.

Excerpt:

Pain

Trudi measured her pain
with old metal
measuring spoons joined together
with a loop of wire.
She kept them hanging
from a cup hook next to the sink,
always in view, always ready
to evaluate each problem,
to discover its measure,
whether wet or dry,
to quantify the pain.

Then came the pain she could not
measure. Trudi told the birds.
Trudi told the sky.
Trudi held that pain
in her chest,
felt her heart go dry,
dry as the desert
beaten by summer sun:
no animals or insects came out
to entertain her in that oven heat.

At night the desert comes to life
with cries that chill and haunt.
Between shadowed plants
the snakes and lizards hunt.
The bent-tailed scorpions leave their holes
nightly to breed and dance,
to make their home in Trudi's heart.

She does not sleep well
with that pain
and in morning when she wakes
that dryness unabated
creeps up to her brain.

Trudi's brain dries like mud,
dries and folds and cracks,
but when someone smiles at Trudi,
Trudi smiles back.

Excerpt:

I. C. U. Nursery

The potatoes in the ground
must be dug before it freezes,
so her husband is half way to Idaho
in the pick-up.

Doctors said earlier it looked
like the baby could be weaned
of machines and make it.

His crop in the field
is food on the table.

She stands by the isolet
while the doctors work on her baby.
Sometimes she cries out, "No!"
You always think words like that
can stop something.

When there is no more they can do,
they pull up a chair,
hand her that baby still hooked
up to life and let her rock.
She tells about the baby's sisters, her Daddy,
about potatoes in the ground.
No one breathed till the baby
couldn't.

Farming is risky business.
Mostly it's hard work
and luck in judgment calls.
You never know when a frost
will come over a crop and, like that,
it's gone.

Excerpt:

The Shell in Silk

My father, whitening,
leached of rage and spear of justice,
now leans to my mother.

In his terribly,
exquisitely earned wisdom
even he does not see why he
sheathes his sword,
circles to her light.

Like an alabaster moth,
young and delicately flawed,
she floats by his side,
straining his sorrow,
curving her wings to hear him say
she is beautiful.

In their house above the black cliffs
he rubs her beautiful legs.
Bougainvillea filters the light, the room
in an aubergine wash.
Outside the screens, above the wet grasses,
spirit and rain are sheeting the mango trees.

She is everything he could never desire
or hope for,
a gift in an unopened silk envelope
left on the pillow,
a secret carved in the grain
of the perfectly turned koa bowl
gleaming in the rose and yellow light
of the quiet room.

Excerpt:

Wild Benediction

At false dawn, in winter,
a remnant moon silhouetted
the sharp-shinned hawk,
talons gripping
the inside screen of the patio.
Exhausted from searching
for slit of the entry,
she endured my approach.
Eyes of yellow wilderness
burned into mine,
the beak open but unthreatening.

I was allowed to fold
slate blue wings
close to the body
and carry her to freedom.
She lifted and vanished,
soft as a whisper,
where I, wingless and unfinished,
could not follow.

Days later,
I still feel the blessing,
the wild heart
beating against my palms.

1994 *Stretching Toward Wild Swans* by Muriel Heal Bywater sold out

Excerpt:

How Could Young Love Know?

In young love they came,
a straw mattress coddling cold bones,
puncheon floors shivering naked feet
calloused by wild stubble
in prairie plantings.

Her passions sang in harmony
with hearthside melting pot;
concocted love's tunes
while baking cornmeal dodgers
for late night suppers.

He harnessed love sunlong
while plowing furrows or felling wood
until sighs and laughter
beneath the coverlets warmed winter's
old kisses.

How could young love know
it was to be portioned like seed corn
for spring crops, punished as lye-hominy
into something it was not,
dredged in labor's tears and gut hunger?

Yet, love so crazy tired and threadbare
was sustained, hand in hand,
by shining touches of moon
and a child's smile,
sweet as mountain berries
preserved in wild honey.

1993 *Chokecherry Rain* by Margaret Pettis

sold out

Excerpt:

Dark Spot

I know a dark spot in town,
where feral cats perch
on warm stomachs, eyes set
on deep tangles of mouse grass;
where stragglers from school
gather magenta bouquets
of sweet peas; where
nighthawks snip insects
under a lingering harvest moon;
where no star can hide
in the dark folds of night.

1992 *Unraveling The Knot* by Brad Roghaar

sold out

Excerpt:

The Dinner Party

(the nature of finality)

A final toast, a savored taste,
an empty glass set in its place
beside the china plate.
And even now the wrinkled taste
still lingers on the tongue —
anticipating some sweet,
sweet something yet to come.

We rise, we rise to leave behind
that delicious moment – everything
to those with whom we've dined.

The chinking, tinkling
of the plates,
Each doing what we're able.

The thumbling of the
empty glass,
The clearing of the table.

Excerpt:

It Is Good

In the last hour of the first day
at the place where the new earth
and the new sky held council,
God disturbed the first water
to make cloud for a witness
then took resin and fire
for anointing oil,
placed it between
the forehead of earth
and heaven.

Each evening,
as a sacrament between
mountain, plain and sky,
this ordinance is repeated
in the chapel called
Wyoming.

1989 *Downwind Toward Night* by Maryan Paxton

\$5.00

Excerpt:

Running Against the Wind

It is like you
come back
a long time later
to the lane that led
to your childhood home — that lane
which then seemed interminably long;
but now, seen through your adult eyes,
is short, and it shocks you
as it did
when you used to walk along there
and reach for the wild pink roses
that grew beside the way
and discovered the thorns,
and you drew back
bleeding from the prick.

1988 *Sometime Voices* by Sherwin W. Howard

\$5.00

Excerpt:

Sometime Voices

Sometime voices follow me
Whispering old photographs
Forgotten childhood songs
Reciting histories
Of strangers riding on a plane

They mutter in dim meeting rooms
Take face from crowded streets
And wander in and out of dreams
Demanding poet's pause

Nor does their clamor stop
Until I write them down
Proud souls who never were
But might have been
Sometime
Voices

Excerpt:

The Riddlestone

I found the stone
in a mountain stream
and held it in the palm of my hand,
a plain, water-tumbled rock.

I knew it to be a riddlestone,
sacred,
rare as a truffle,
scarce as a snowy egret's egg.
I cupped it to my ear like a shell
and listened to it whisper riddles
of moss and beaver and fallen pine.

Stone,
answers are more elusive than trout,
and I am a fisherman
with no rod or bait.

*Child,
lie down in a river bed.
Let your hair become currents
and your fingers silvered scales of fish.
Observe the way sunlight collects
in quiet pools and rain spills
through splits in clouds
as it bends into waterfalls.
Watch how waves gather
in a wind skein
and serrated edges of stars
cut the night.*

*Remember,
tomorrow is but a ripple of today
and WAS the receding tide of IS.
I am the stone.
Paper covers stone.
Take the paper;
become the pen.
I am the stone;
you are the riddle.*

*Cast out your lines
and angle for the answer.*

1986 *Child In A Sculptured Bowl* by Dorothy Logan

sold out

Excerpt:

A Word From the Caretaker

If I were to lift and level
the sunken stones
or line the rows straight as pews,
who could tell
the first dead from the last?

I like the way they lean
each to each.

1985 Timepiece by Patricia S. Grimm

sold out

Excerpt:

From the Chrysalis, Small Voice

Oh!
this is a lovely place!
Warm. Snug.
Safe.
Twig among twigs.
Rap on my woody door.
I'll not answer.
Nobody's home –
at last!

It was awful out there,
the World.
Inching along
slow and soft,
vulnerable. Don't
give me that bit
about protective
coloring.
Nothing escapes
the bird's eye view.
Ask an amoeba
frantic on a slide
or the star pulsing
in a lens.

I'm growing so light
in here.
Losing my baby fat.
Those wet, finely folded
thrusting things
pushing from my sides
bother and itch.
I've heard about
the brevity of flight.

Excerpt:

Albertson's Interrupted Meadow

There is a way leaves fold in wind
like the soft pale underbellies of green lizards
sunning, points and edges, veins and stems like tails,
like tongues.

Tall summer grass grows unminded
in Albertson's sloped meadow, hinged and ringed
like bamboo, all sharp with purple bullthorn blossoms
and scattering foxtails and thistles.

In Albertson's briared meadow
water runs, wind dips loosely clasped sheaths
and stems, and waterdrops hang ready to shower
sudden wriggling, skating stoneflies.

He stands at the meadow's edge, where
the land is interrupted, fenced, cut back,
watching shallow underwater shadows move like tadpoles,
feeling whisperings

of darker, wilder things, untrimmed,
slithering lizardlike beyond the fences,
their blowing silky tongues
licking . . .

Excerpt:

The Witch

Sometimes children taunt me,
small eyes whispering
behind hands extended
like open Chinese fans.

“Her face is smooth.
She is not old at all.”

But I am old.

Old as the rocks
on the Greek shores
of my birth.

Old as your fear
of the unknown,
unopened box
of my smooth face.

Guard your fear.
This distance
between us
may be the only separation
preventing you
from becoming me.

Excerpt:

The Shrouded Carousel

Under its canvas cover
the Merry-Go-Round
stands in the park
where the autumn leaves
are drifting indolently
into the frowzy grass.

The horses are sleeping
in the gray-green gloom;
still, in their wooden dreams
the summer days go round and round
and up and down the small hills of pleasure
on their polished pistons.
Through the slats of the floor
trash litters the sour earth
where nothing grows from season
to turning season.

The calliope is silent,
its rusty songs replaced
by the winds that thump the canvas
like a bible belt preacher.

Rains will soak the canvas hood,
snow will fall softly
until the shape is that of a fairy hut
where the dreaming of children
and music and sunshine goes on
with ghosts of endless, circling songs
praising mindless young love
in summer colors.

Excerpt:

Before She Sleeps Again

tonight this house
behaves like a woman
widowed fifty years

she cannot sleep
she senses strangers
in her bedrooms

she paces the midnight floors
confused by furniture
that does not belong to her

she checks the lock
on the attic door
she will not sleep
we are not thieves I whisper
not vandals nor arsonists
she listens from the hall

it is only my family and me I say
until my sleeping wife stirs
because I have spoken to the house

the old widow does not believe me
she shuffles
to a far corner

and there she settles
on old rocker marks
worn into the rug

through half closed eyes
she will look at me all night
it will be weeks before
she sleeps again

1980 *Furrows Of Renewal* by LaVerde Morgan Clayson

sold out

Excerpt:

I Knew the Scorching Sun

After she died,
Drought scourged my life.
Like wilting fields
I knew the scorching sun,
Dessication,
The scar of burning land.

Then you stood beside me
And I knew rain.

1979 *Mosaic* by Randall L Hall

\$5.00

Excerpt:

Night Was All Day Long

Night was all day long within the tree,
The apple tree with curious, tooled bark
That rose above the waist high grass.

Blackbirds brought it,
Abruptly
In feathered patches coasting down
To join the remnant shreds of shadows
That were shuffled out upon the limbs and leaves
By the flicking wrists of wind.

It elongated, slowly,
Growing out elastically toward the east
Until suddenly, yet with no surprise,
It was simply everywhere.

1978 Frame The Laced Moments by Pearle M Olsen

sold out

Excerpt:

The Lilt of a Lark

The meadowlark was part of morning;
Enchanted, when a child I heard
Its lilting lyric — spring on spring,
And I adored the bird.

A meadowlark is part of evening;
I hear it in the shadowed park.
It has the power to lift my sight
To meet descending dark.

1977 *Intrinsic Tapestries* by Clarence P Socwell

sold out

Excerpt:

Meditation on Loneliness

In pristine woods burned bare an black
I knelt to brush cool ashes back
Where new green burgeons pushed upright.
No shadow lives without its light.
In lucid pond a silver fish
Regaled until a seagull's swish
Changed fish commotion into flight.
No shadow lives without its light.

I wait for you in solitude
In hopeless, melancholy mood,
Yet, memories console my night.
No shadow lives without its light.

1976 *Lasso The Sunrise* by Caroline Eyring Miner

sold out

Excerpt:

Moon Walk

No marks in the sky;
no signposts.
Uncharted sea, the gray depths.
Breathlessly we awaited
the awesome mystery,
the first footfall
on the moon
by Icarus;
clumsy,
but unerring as the dawn.

Excerpt:

The Last Outpost

Out of the deep quiver of the sunset
comes an arrow's pierce of gloom.
I see the eyes of a coyote
burning in the red rocks around me.
The Holy Mountain humps its back
like a great dying buffalo.
Tears of maidenfern hide in pink cliffs.
Sparrows twitter in nervous clusters
through the red bud trees.
Lizards scatter; the blind snake
wiggles in the dust.
Grains of sand sift into a painting
I offer on the altar of my ancestors,
The Ancient Ones,
who still beat out their dance of war
beneath the shadow of the eagle's wings.
I too, beat the drums with bleeding fists
and sob into the sky;
drink the liquid fire that warms my belly
wrapping me in a blanket of forgetting,
then close my eyes to the gray edge of the cloud
setting over the old men with their sheep;
the catfish struggling against a current of mud
in a river once silver as moonlight.
The night hawk circles over the ghosts
of the old ones.
Their chants are in the wail of winds
raping this Navajo island of grass
where once wild seeds were sown.
The streaking of black power lines
designed across a sky of flame
remind me of my mother's rugs
woven on a wooden loom.

The sun drips red in these long hours;
the smoke rests across my people's doom.
I cry from this last outpost
in the wilderness of time,
from its end to the very beginning . . .
this land was mine.

1974 *Beyond This Hour* by LeRoy Burke Meagher

sold out

Excerpt:

Harvest Hour

October warm
We climb the laddered trees
To pick the harvest there,
And fingers reach across the sun
To find both spring and summer sealed
Inside an autumn pear.

1973 *Bell On The Wind* by Geraldine R Pratt

sold out

Excerpt:

Imbrication

The tops of thick-furred spruce upon the mountain
Are like the rounded tips of eagle feathers
Or flashing scales upon a fish's side.

The plates of serpents form an imbrication.
And cloud on cloud with overlap climbs thither
Where troposphere and stratosphere divide.

The mood-washed beaches lapped by ebbing tide
Bear shingle after shingle. Aeons of weather
Similarly pattern ancient stone.

On wind-scoured prairies, sea-born sandstone lathers
Into imbricated layers. Cascading fountains
Are frozen in caverns upon stalagmite bones.
Artichokes and pine and thistle cones
Repeat a thought of God's in his creations.

1972 *A Lamp To Shine* by Maxine R Jennings

sold out

Excerpt:

Sunflower Gold

I knew a mountain that reached for the sky
Until sunshine spilled over its slopes,
And made sunflowers bloom near crags rugged and high;
“There’s gold at the top,” I said eager to try
My stout shoes and my skill with strong ropes.

So I climbed the mountain; I climbed to the top;
But the summit is rocky and cold.
There’s no rise left to climb, to descend is to drop,
And the sunflowers blooming where I didn’t stop
Are all I have seen of the gold.

1971 *Eden From An Apple Seed* by Alice Morrey Bailey

sold out

Excerpt:

Challenge

Green-bannered spring — this bank of daffodils
Whose sun-filled elegance, unmeasured, spills
From up-turned cups of gold — and beauty’s wrath
Is here. Oh, little, sturdy seeds of faith,
If you can draw from mud and rotted mould,
From long-drawn winter’s dark, unfruited cold
And gather strength where last year’s ruins lie
To make a lovely thing — so, then, can I.

1970 *A Morning of Taurus* by Max Golightly

sold out

Excerpt:

Time Rings Us All

Time rings us all as surely as the tree
with lines that meet to mark the growing soul;
sorrow and joy concave us by degree.
Time rings us all as surely as the tree.

1969 *The Deep Song* by J. A. Christensen

sold out

Excerpt:

Desierto Con Amore

Speak to me no more of city street
And steel-bound towers, or gadfly lights that pleat
The umber dawn. Forgetting, I have come away,
Remembering how my childhood found the desert's day.

Once, pale, wild roses bent a high-born head
Above a river's bank (that river now is dead),
And naked playmates tamed the raging stream,
Where now their laughter murmurs like a dream.
We tamed the wild, gray pony; caught her mane
To gallop, whirlwind, headlong down some dusty lane.
In night we etched our childhood in white flame
And song. (The song? I quite forget its name.)

The years are long; I have been too long gone.
The days are swift, and souvenirs pass on.
And so I take the sleepless city from my sight,
And go, once more, to childhood's dreamless night.

1968 *The Amaranth* by Betty W Madsen

sold out

Excerpt:

I Shall Be Late

Blue shadow-fingers resting on the hill
 Will bind my heart more strongly than a chain,
And April's arms in sleeves of daffodils
 Will reach for me again . . . and yet again.
The scent of warm brown earth will follow me
 Long after I have left her friendly touch,
To hold me and refuse to set me free,
 I who have loved all earthly things so much.

I shall be late when angel hymns begin;
 I shall be late when holy trumpets blow,
Though Heaven's gate swings wide to let me in
 And God holds out His hand to me. And though
The sweetest of celestial bells be ringing,
I shall turn back to hear one robin singing.

1967 *Walk the Proud Morning* by Berta H Christensen

sold out

Excerpt:

Housewife Confession

One self of me is disciplined
And orderly her ways
Keeps figure neat and diet-thinned
Time-budgets weeks and days.
In thrifty mood the fruit is canned
The sock is darned, each menu planned.
With curtains crisp as springtime salad
She thinks of neither ode nor ballad.

The other self, refusing tether,
Would walk no charted lane
Saves heart-space for the scented heather
Would socialize with wind and rain.
She lingers on a greening hill
Where broom has never swept, nor will.
Can she who hears the door of autumn turn
Be much concerned if sometimes carrots burn?

1966 *A Legacy Of Years* by Lael W Hill

sold out

Excerpt:

The Visitor

The white horse walked light-shod across my mirror,
showing his other side at the same time
(not often seen). Then up the ceiling
he pranced on a bridge of lace at an east window,
mane streaming into the room –
disguising the flat dark, wall and carpet,
with glittering threads of lightning flash
and shimmer.

No splash, no puddled reflection left
spreading along the glass, could prove my visitor,
but there he came, and was, though beyond my reach:
and in the moment he shied and leaped way
I noticed first
his wings.

1965 *Short Grass Woman* by Vesta P Crawford

sold out

Excerpt:

Strange Names for Birds

Unfathomed now and still, the lone bird's flight
Is curved along the purple rim of night;
Again I think of strange, mysterious words
That may be found among the names of birds.

In reedy places where the waters gleam
The plummy heron wades the rippled stream;
And where the swaying tule marsh is spread
The pearly ibis moves with liquid tread.

These are strange and rhythmic sounds to learn —
Sanderling and avocet and loon and tern;
And one who listens where the morning breaks
Could love a curlew for the name it takes.