

WestWard Quarterly

The Magazine of Family Reading



Spring, 2005

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**IN
THIS
ISSUE**

To our readers . . .

Well, if Spring is when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love, it's also when poets of all ages turn to thoughts of writing poems to express the beauty of the season and a variety of other subjects. This issue is packed as full as it can be! We really had to work to place thirty-seven poems in fourteen pages, plus stories and other features.

New in this issue is our first "Featured Writer" article acknowledging Margarita Engle. Also, we present two pages of some outstanding poetry sent in by a high school creative writing class in the Chicago suburbs that I am sure you will enjoy.

Note that our writing contest this time is for either a poem *OR* a short story. One of our readers asked when we would have a short story contest again because we tend to have more poetry contests. Most of our submissions are poetry and we receive fewer short stories, so in combining the two we give each an opportunity to send their entries. These are separate contests and *EACH* category will receive a prize of one half the entry fees for each contest.

Congratulations go to Sarah LuAnn Jensen, winner of our Winter poetry contest, and to Marlene Kaye Bonney, for First Honorable Mention and Gary S. Elam, for Second Honorable Mention.

Shirley Anne Leonard, EDITOR

Correction!

WWQ will be in the 2006 *Poet's Market*, not 2005.

WestWard Quarterly

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WestWard Quarterly showcases the best work of upbeat writers and poets. Our magazine's philosophy is: "Adversity happens. Find the eternal purpose behind it." Reflect an uplifting, positive or gently humorous attitude in your submissions. Send all letters, guidelines requests, submissions, contest entries, or queries to address above. Send SASE for response.

Maximum Lengths: Short Stories - 2000 words; Essays - 1000 words; Poems - 40 lines. Shorter submissions have a better likelihood of being published. The Editor reserves the right to edit material. For more information, visit our web site, <http://members.aol.com/wwquarterly>.

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Cover image: Point Judith, Rhode Island, 1963. Photo by Richard Leonard.

The Marigold Garden

Sarah LuAnn Jensen, California
First Place

In the garden a blue-bell sound all around.
When Poetry speaks — I listen.

Little songbird among the purple flowers
sing, sing your song. Your notes tell
of a quiet twilight hour. Silvery bells
on purple bushes hang. We are now in spring!

A poetry sky, the stars twinkle, they glisten.
Oh yes, when poetry speaks —
I listen. Luminous shafts of soft moonlight
stream throughout the tree.

Here above the marigold garden,
twelve golden velvet-winged butterflies
so love this garden place.
It's all such a poetry garden.
All so beautiful, the picture
I can't erase . . .

The butterflies dance across the moon.
Next month when the roses bloom
over on the meadow hill . . . they will dance again
in a luminous golden moonlight still.
When Poetry speaks — I listen.

Alibi

Gary S. Elam, North Carolina
Second Honorable Mention

Always much too busy
To help you play with toys
Could not find the time
For those childhood joys.

Sorry that I missed
Ballgames at the school
Long hours at the office
Working like a fool.

Needing time to talk
About a weekend date
Catch me after a while
For I am running late.

Wishing I had made it
When the baby did arrive
Would like to see my grandchild
When I can make the drive.

Going back to my hometown
When father passed away
Many chances now were lost
So much to do and say.



Two Sojourners

Marlene Kaye Bonney, Michigan
First Honorable Mention

Some people new horizons explore
While others dream of these feats. . .
Some live life taking chances galore,
While others watch them compete.

Some people soar to grandiose height
From assuming different quests. . .
Others receive their greatest delight
From records of their success.

Some people forge through uncut trails,
While others embrace the tried. . .
Each is surprised the other prevails,
Knowing HE couldn't like that abide.

Who is most courageous, the most brave—
One who shapes the new domains,
Or one satisfied to watch and wave
While he home fires sustains?

Each temperament has a destiny—
Each learns to live with choices. . .
A great paradox, that one breaks free
From his mold—and rejoices!

It's hard to say one is right or wrong;
Rather let us now concur:
That each becomes a slave to his song
'Til new verses are preferred!



Featured Writer: Margarita Engle

California



Margarita Engle says, "Hoping to write was a natural outgrowth of reading. As a child, I thought of the library as my second home. I read voraciously, then composed my own poems while walking home from school, or daydreaming in parks and gardens. I did not save any of those early verses, but I remember that one of my first poems was about seeing the shape of creation in mountains. I loved nature study and gradually, I began trying my hand at haiku, fables, short stories, and other forms."

In her own words, Margarita was "a creature of my times, an idealist and seeker". A freshman anthropology major at Berkeley in 1968, and born and raised in a big city, she decided to escape the chaos by backpacking in the wilderness. Eventually she studied agronomy and botany and married Curtis Engle, an entomologist who manages an agricultural research farm. They have two children, Victor and Nicole, both now grown and in college.

After working as a professor of agronomy at Cal Poly, Pomona, and later as the director of an irrigation water conservation program near San Diego, she decided to stay home with her children. It was the first step toward a decision to live simply and to write.

Margarita's philosophy of writing is constantly changing. "Every time I say 'never,' God proves me wrong. I think good writing is that which remains true to the writer's unique voice and imperfections. I believe in writing as a calling, not just a commercial enterprise. I am happiest when I am writing, not when I am putting manuscripts in the mail, or receiving them back, either rejected or accepted. Creative writers grow discouraged and the written word loses its soul whenever the preferences of markets are given priority."

Reading is her primary pastime. She also enjoys hiking, travel, and helping her husband with his volunteer work for a search-and-rescue dog training program in which she hides in the wilderness while the dogs practice finding her. She says, "It is an unusual experience that keeps me aware of the terrors of feeling lost, and the joy of being found."

Margarita Engle's work has been published in anthologies and journals. She has several chapbooks, two novels, *Singing to Cuba* (Arte Público Press) and *Skywriting* (Bantam). A young adult novel-in-verse is forthcoming from Henry Holt & Co. Awards include a Cintas Fellowship and a San Diego Book Award.

Her new book, *Word Wings*, is a delightful, whimsical poem/activity book that children will love. Wonderfully illustrated by Marjorie Stevens, it contains joyful verses of scripture and happy, imaginative poems, and lots of fun things to do. There is plentiful blank space which encourages children to be creative with their own stories and ideas. It would be a blessing to any child and, quoting from the book, make their "mind dance way up high". To order, send \$4 plus \$1 shipping to Margarita Engle, 9433 N. Fowler Avenue, Clovis, CA 93619.

Poetry Medicine

Raymond Malmgren, Georgia

Language boiled down to
essence –
where words effuse
meaning
and meaning
stirs
feeling
and feeling
ignites understanding:
“I, too.”

Powerful medicine—
bitter or sweet,
strong or pleasing—
all depends on
those musings used
for ingredients:
how long they took to gather,
how hard they were stirred,
how long they were simmered
in the soul.

Bitter—
too bitter to make one recoil
in disgust,
or mildly bitter—
just enough
to give one a dose of reality.

Sweet—
too sweet to sicken with feigned
ecstasy,
or slightly sweet—
just enough
to remind of love and loyalty.

Poetry is medicine,
you say?

Yes,
strong medicine
sometimes works wonders
and sometimes—
“We’ll see.”



My Time

Kayla Smith, Georgia (Eighth Grade)

Money rules the world
it makes the world go ‘round
it won’t rule my life
and it won’t make me frown
time is money
so don’t waste my time.

Flow

Emily New, Georgia (Eighth Grade)

Water is free flowing
as it goes on its way
tumbling and passing
through life’s hard days.

A Golfer’s Vision

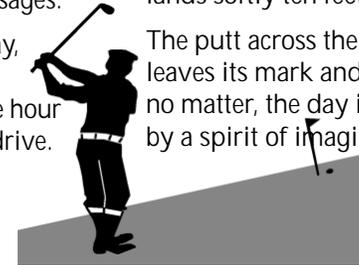
Neil C. Fitzgerald, Massachusetts

I tee off early when dew
lingers on the grass and songbirds
fill the air with melodies
resplendent with strong passages.

I stroll down the first fairway,
gaze up at monstrous trees,
breathe the fragrances of the hour
and approach my accurate drive.

A five iron to the green, not bad;
I swing with a remembered rhythm,
the ball blends with the sunrise,
lands softly ten feet from the pin.

The putt across the wet green
leaves its mark and comes up just short;
no matter, the day is preserved
by a spirit of imagined feats.



Spring

Harry T. Roman, New Jersey

Lazy brown bees
adrift on the breeze
daffodils yawn at the sun.
Squirrels linger long
in the cool grass at dawn
cardinals sing ancient sweet songs.

Dogs sniff renewed earth
somehow familiar
recalling old
scents again.

Pollen specks
tickle
kittens’
pink noses
frisky and
mewing
they prance.

Gardeners rejoice
cleaving the soil
partners with happy earthworms.
Old wrinkled hands
clasp tight their mates
remembering earlier years.
Trembling warm kisses
‘neath blossomed full boughs
turn young thought to love once again..



Difficult Birth

Ray Greenblatt, Pennsylvania

Spring begins with a blush
along the treeline.
Last supply of birdseed
for feeders over hempen ground
under measured sunlight.
Then furnaces stutter on,
sweaters newly dry-cleaned
pulled again from drawers.
Down the striped staircase
a cold well of moonlight.
Dragon’s tail of wind
whips against the door,
tomorrow warm breath.





Spring Sings

Marlene Kaye Bonney, Michigan

Cheerful robin in that tree,
What is that you chirp to me?
Yes, it's Spring, I know it's true;
What does that now mean to you?

A time to sing of God's love
And praise for the sky above;
To feel warmth stir your feathers,
As the sun brightens heather!

What a season filled with joy —
New beginnings now employ
As nature blends in one voice,
A chorus proud to rejoice!

The cold is gone, warmth begun,
Flowers blooming, foliage strung;
Mankind breathing freshened air —
Hoping, yearning for God's care

Cheerful robin in that tree,
Trilling for humanity
That we trust in God alone
To provide our needs foreknown.



Eden Glimpses

Shirley Anne Leonard, Illinois

Roses by my door at dawn
and star fire
on the hills at night.
Days when all creation wears
a golden haze of light.

How beautifully
the willows bow
their heads with humble grace,
and sunlight sketches on the grass
her needlework of lace.

What Master Artist passed this way
and blessed my careworn world
with Eden glimpses in my yard
and flowers that unfurl
their dazzling colors
labeled with
PETALS MADE IN HEAVEN?



Winged Sprite

Richard E. Zwez, Louisiana

*Our little visitor has arrived,
So eager with invisible wings.
We're glad we planted the flowers
That make his gullet glad.*

*Its iridescent hues evoke the rainbow
As the sunlight brightens its flight.
The steady worker steers its way
To heighten each blossom's delight.*

*How great a joy to see it come;
Our hummingbird, like ultramarine glass,
Is a lens into nature's brilliant beauty,
An eternal treasure for mankind.*

Once Upon a Story Time

Robert Black, United Kingdom



Once upon a dawn
in a garden far, far away
'neath an old oak tree
stands a green garden shed,
where a brownish bear
by the name of Ed
softly sleeps . . .

In the early morning light
Ray (an old wooden radio)
crackles like a log fire,
as words begin to form an orderly queue
waiting for their proper turn to be said.

". . . and all is right with the world"
said Ray, "on this fine sunny day.
So brush away the cobwebs
around your head
and come outside and play".



"Right", said Ed,
and the hollowness around him
dissolves in the warm daylight . . .

Afterwards, when precious cargoes
are all safely tucked away in bed,
Rays said, "Parents, who believe
the world revolves around children,
spend huge sums of time, money and effort
trying to make their children happy,
and if their children are happy
then nothing else matters;
but the world does not turn that way
because the world revolves around adults,
and the happiness of good people
reflects in children's faces.

"Every parent", Ray added,
"wants to give their child happiness,
but all any child wants is a happy parent.
So the best gift to give any child
is happy parents".

Guardian Angel

Lanette Kissel, Indiana

I have been blessed with a Guardian Angel
Who is my companion every day.
My Heavenly Father has provided her.
She is to protect me in every way.

Hovering near my bed
She will guard me through the long night,
To ensure that I will safely awaken
To see another morning's light.

Though it may seem that I go through
My life completely unaware,
I am comforted to know that
I am entrusted to her care.



Though always out of sight,
I have never seen her face or form.
Still I know that she is always there
To keep me safe from harm.

I truly believe she does exist
All be it sight unseen.
Knowing that she watches over me
Leaves me feeling quite serene.

Researcher

— addressing a college student, Reference
Shakespeare, as a Performer
William W. Wooley, Texas

He too was much concerned with kings and queens,
And noblemen and princes of the realms,
And conquerors, and all of vaunted worth,
Who strode on through his plays with pompous ease.
He left us wondering just where he stood
Among the dramatists and business men,
And actors and the idle commoners,
Who had no love for any but their kind.
We know he chose deliberately to leave
That wretched outer world—and just as soon
As it had given him the means by which
He might return to settings better liked.—
Perhaps there is no need for us to see
Beyond his actor's right to change his stage.



Wails and Trails

Jim Dahl, California

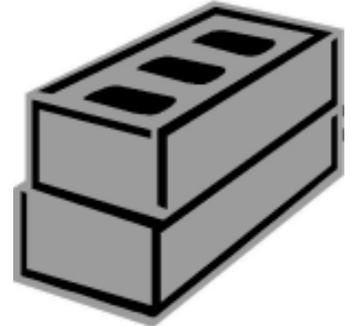
The lonesome haunting wail waxes and wanes
over seas of grain, thru the woodlands eerie
in concert with a questing wolf's communiqué,
stretch'd vapor trails across the alluring horizon
evanesce above dulcet honking migrating geese,
and souls in daydreams' panoramic scope, their romantic
spirits tethered via a myriad of responsibilities,
Lo some perhaps trapped others content, do greener
grasses beckon or heart's home sates, what lies
beyond ones ken, beyond the lingered wail,
the end of the vapor trail

Dreamed of Controlling All Life Around Me

Frank Anthony, Ph.D., Vermont

publisher of *The Anthology of New England Writers*, has created
“BRIK” poems, 13 lines long by 22 words/spaces wide, printed in
Courier font to form a rectangle.

Setting up my sections
philharmonic orchestra
they just as sensitive
as a turn of the screw
actually for ten years
a Windsor one-man-band
on my five town boards
watching a world go by
exerted my own control
continue orderly chaos
was all I had to serve
my satisfactory result
in my never never land



Drink Knowledge

Vincent J. Tomeo, New York

Bend the camera's lens
Listen to your ears speak

Open the dark
Taste words

Hold the sun in your hands
Cleave yourself from the
cave

The earth is a bulb
Water it
The callow will bud . . .

Puma Dreams

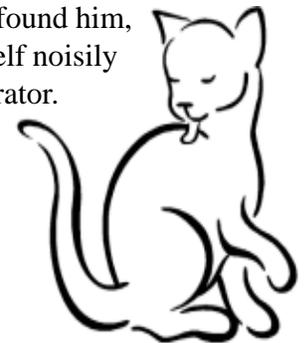
For Pinkie

Nancy E. Martindale, Ohio

Stretched out in his armchair,
he raptly watched her in the magic window,
sleek she-cat beauty
graceful and deadly at once.

Then he slept,
limbs, tail, whiskers twitching
In his twilight, primeval slumber.

Next morning I found him,
Grooming himself noisily
Atop the refrigerator.





The Tulip Tour

Joyce I Johnson, Washington

The cars drive by my usually quiet country home, in endless procession. The chartered buses, with their multiple eyes gaze at me as if I were on display for their benefit alone. I try to cross the road for my daily mail pickup. The carrier is late, the traffic has delayed her. The annual Skagit Valley Tulip Tour has begun. It will last for four weeks this year.

My home is in the northern part of the Puget Sound area of Washington State, about sixty miles north of Seattle. It is an agricultural area with fertile soil and there are vegetable, seed, grain and flower crops raised here. I consider every season in our mild climate to have its own individual charms, but spring is especially magical.

The first of April has arrived and, for the next four weeks, the Skagit Valley will be in the grip of tulip mania. We structure our lives accordingly. We schedule our doctor appointments, or other unavoidable trips to town, for early or late hours. And if we must travel during the heart of the day we allow time — plenty of time — for the trip. It has taken me a full hour to make the four-mile distance from my driveway to the edge of town, when I have been foolish enough to venture forth during the heaviest volume of tulip traffic.

My huge yard has been mowed twice, and I have been weeding the flower beds. But with a late spring and the many rainy days, I am not as prepared as usual for this torrent of visitors. Dressed in my less than flattering garden clothes, I try to find an unobtrusive spot in my gardens that needs my attention. It is useless. I look up from my task to find someone has sought me out to ask me one of the endless questions about the fields, about the garden centers, about my own place in the scheme of things. Perhaps he or she wants to set up an easel in my backyard to paint the beautiful sight, or a professional photographer asks if he might use my yard to set up his camera.

Pleased that my home is in the center of this beauty, I retire to my living room to watch the parade from there. There will be no boredom in our valley for the next four weeks, only frustrated farmers trying to maneuver their massive, slow moving machinery down the road and through the traffic.

The daffodils have been filling the fields for weeks with their many shades of white and gold. It is now the tulips' turn to shine, and they outdo the daffodils with their rainbow of colors.

From my front window I can see a field of solid, glorious pink. The back fields are strips of red, purple, white and many of the shades between. Cars are stopped along the fields and the occupants are taking pictures and oohing and aahing over this scene. In their eagerness they have ignored the signs asking them to stay out of the fields.

Roads have been made at intervals for the convenience of workers, and the sightseers may use these if they want to get closer to the beauty.

I happened to be tuned to a Seattle radio station one day when a man who was talking about a near-death experience of his was asked, "Will you describe Heaven for us? What did it look like?"

He had a bit of trouble finding the right words for this incredible happening. "Oh, it was wonderful, there were flowers every where. You know, it looked like the Skagit Valley."

I was delighted. He must have been here during our wonderful tulip time.

The annual tour was the brainchild, not of the farmers who are busy and would rather be left alone to tend their crops, but of the merchants. It brings in a lot of tourist dollars and they have many exciting events planned during the weeks of the tour. I see by the latest brochure that the name has been changed to Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and all of the towns in the area are competing to be the one with the most attractions. There is a salmon barbecue by the Kiwanis each weekend. There are Art Shows, Pottery Shows, Quilt Shows, street fairs among others. There are several display gardens, featuring the lovely tulip and the residents of the area are showing off the bright tulips in their yards.

Bicycle tours have been planned. Walking tours, bus tours, and automobiles, take your pick — the world is coming to my doorstep, by one means or another.

What is it about this transitory scene that draws viewers from all over this country and many others? They know this is not a permanent wonder. Even before the four weeks of glory are over, farmers will send workers out to top these beauties. The flowers that show their color and draw the visitors are too mature to pick. Blossoms in bud have been harvested to sell in roadside stands to the visitors, or bundled and shipped to far-flung markets.

The bulb is the true crop that will be harvested. If the petals are allowed to fall onto the stalk of the plant, they can cause disease. The farmer cannot wait; he must remove the petals, even though there are late visitors to our show who will be disappointed.

The curtain has fallen, the play has had its final performance. The show is over, but as sure as spring, the glorious spectacle will be back on schedule next year — same time, same place.



See Little Girl Blue

Patrick L. Flavin, Massachusetts

Running
between laughter
and tears, she see rainbows
dancing before running down cheeks
Spring-flushed . . .
stopping
she looks up through
April blossoms to view
a blue sky, pure and perfect – seeks
to touch.
Sitting
among the wood's
saplings she feels absorbed
by a sky she'll never forget – speaks
to it.
Lying
face up she tends
to brush away hair wisps
the wind plays with, her eyes
lost in blue that makes her simply
A Child.





Romancing a Memory

Carrillee Collins-Burke, Florida

I carried the old trunk from the estate auction into my antique shop and placed it on a braided rug. I bid on it because I had this weird sense of knowing its contents, and also because I liked the old stickers on it. I was especially drawn to the one dated 1948, from a New York City warehouse. I dropped to my knees and lifted the dome lid.

Folded neatly on the top of a framed watercolor painting were pieces of a World War I uniform. I pushed them aside for a more interesting item — a cigar box. I ignored the trinkets inside in lieu of a small black autograph book with the name, J. W. Knowles, written in gold letters.

The first page contained the message, *Mercy is sweeter than vengeance*, and was dated July 4, 1894.

Nice, I thought. Old autograph books were so nostalgic. Another message was dated 1894, Williams, Ohio. More pages, same date, same town. But, something about that date and town was strangely familiar. Then it hit me. Of course, my great-grandma's stories that centered in and around her childhood home in Williams, Ohio.

I closed my eyes and urged my mind to wander back to the winter when I was nine years old and I sat for hours listening to stories my great-grandma Nettie insisted had been published.

I can't rightly recall the publisher's name, she would answer when pressed to elaborate. *What is done is done, it don't matter as long as it happened*, she'd say, then wade into another tale.

You jest lay your wee head back in that old rocker and I'll tell you about a handsome prince.

Well, I knew she was talking about her beloved Jephthar, so I'd pull my legs up in the wicker rocker and listen intently. I loved that chair and I loved Grandma. They were both ancient, and pure history. I believe my love for antiques began way back then.

I mused as my eyes roamed the interior of my shop. Funny how a date triggered such precious memories. I thought of Grandma's favorite story. It was about a beach vacation and a pink conch shell.

Grandma's mind jumped around while reminiscing, leaving most of it untold. *We had fun that August . . . A wave would wet Jephthar's pants and my linen skirt . . . Yes, yes. Momma hated the ocean but we loved it.* Her eyes would take on a delightful mischievous twinkle.

The pink shell was Grandma's connection to her beloved Jephthar. She would hold it to her ear sometimes and listen and wonder out loud if Jephthar had kept his matching one. She said the shell spoke secrets to her, but my brother said it was only the blood running in her head.

She and Jephthar wanted to be writers. *We had us some great big plans back then*, Grandma said. *Jephthar would be a reporter and I would write books for children. All those stories running through my head . . . And I did it, too!* She was quick to defend her talent.

When I questioned my mother about those books, she said, "Grandma did mail manuscripts to someone years ago she claimed was a publisher, but there was never any evidence her work was accepted."

Mother said I could listen to Grandma but shouldn't believe her tales and all that silly stuff about Jephthar. Mother said he was just make-believe.

But I did believe. I lived Grandma's fantasy of being famous. If she said she was a writer then she was, and someday I would read her books.

I remember clearly our last afternoon together. She confided in me about things I didn't fully comprehend.

People think I'm jest a doddering old fool romancing a memory, but, believe me, Jephthar did exist. He was my prince and if I could jest find my autograph book, I could prove . . . I wrote in his too, you know. She rambled on and on dreamlike. *Yes, I loved him too much. I loved your great-grandfather, too, bless his soul, but Jephthar was always . . . regardless of his, oh my, I knew he took . . . well, child, maybe someday you'll understand.*

My great-grandma Nettie, died that night. She was 94 years old.

Reality surfaced when a streak of sunlight bounced from the gold lettering on the autograph book in my lap, hitting me square in the eye. I slid a finger between the last pages and opened it again.

Dear Jephthar,

I hope in recalling the pleasure enjoyed on the beach in 1890, your memories will be pleasant and loving of that August 19. It is special to me.

*Love forever
Nettie*

My god! Jephthar did exist. My fingers trembled uncontrollably as I scoured the old trunk for more evidence of him.

Wrapped in a New York City newspaper, dated August 19, 1948, and next to Jephthar's name on the obituary page was a pink conch shell.

On the very bottom of the trunk was a stack of thin, square books, each with the picture on the cover of Grandma's white, gingerbread trimmed house I'd heard so much about. She was a published writer!

The books were tied together with a faded blue grosgrain ribbon. When I loosened the knot, a letter fell from between the books. It was addressed to Mrs. Nettie Patterson and posted with a 2-cent stamp. I opened the neatly typed letter and read it aloud.

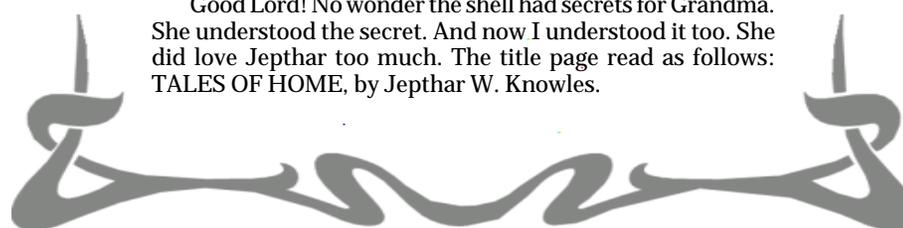
Dear Nettie,

I hope your life is content for mine has been good as a news reporter and successful writer. However, you need to know that I am sorry I used your talent to get started. You should have been acknowledged for your wonderful stories. I sense you know it already, still I must beg your forgiveness. I never deserved your love.

Jephthar

How had he used her and why hadn't the letter been mailed? Maybe it got stuck in a book and was forgotten. I laid the frayed, blue ribbon aside and opened one of Grandma's books to the title page.

Good Lord! No wonder the shell had secrets for Grandma. She understood the secret. And now I understood it too. She did love Jephthar too much. The title page read as follows:
TALES OF HOME, by Jephthar W. Knowles.





Security Blanket

Tatiana Triveri, Junior, Illinois

Bruised, torn and sewn,
a childhood companion
lies wrinkled in the corner of a drawer
awaiting its resurrection.

In the time of youth
it sparkled marvelously white
with sprinkles of red, blue and yellow
to give life to the clowns.

Now it laments for the infant seeking warmth,
for the toddler never letting go,
for the child carrying it only in the house
and the pre-teen turning to it when nothing else would do.

A veteran of companionship,
this retired warrior has braved countless washers,
only to be dried twice as many times.
A true patriot.

Now it lies wounded
with a forgotten gash down the center,
paralyzed but never giving up hope
of yet another battle.



Favorite Hat

Brian McCabe, Senior, Illinois

Scouring the house —
hunting of the lost hat,
checking behind every
crack and corner,
behind every snickering object
all laughing at my plight,
drawing a blank,
I ask for help.

Couch, have you seen my hat?
while tearing its clothes off
making sure it does not lie,
and completing
a full cavity search.
No luck.

Closet, have you seen my hat?
while opening its mouth wide
checking behind every tooth
and under its tongue.
No luck.

Frustrated, I turn to
my most reliable source.
One who never fails.
Mom, have you seen my hat?
A soft smile creases her
face,
she points,
my eyes follow the direction
looking up
on top of my head.



May Pole

Bethany Papciak, Senior, Illinois

*Tap, tap, tap.
The movement of tiny feet
as they flutter across the ground.
The girls appear as if they are soaring
with their arms waving
like swans in flight,
their gentle voices
floating through the air.*

*Wind combs through their hair
with its long, toying fingers.
Their hair glitters
like fine stands
of copper and gold
as the warm, afternoon sun
shines down on them.*

*The skirts of their dresses
spin a kaleidoscope of colors
swaying in every direction
like a field of wild flowers
flashing their petals
in the summer breeze.*



Yearbook

Tom Emody, Senior, Illinois

Dusty off the shelf,
a simple puff of air
reveals the past.
Pages upon pages.
Facts come and go
memories long forgotten,
a timeline of life,
living like all the rest.
Yet each living their own
hair, music, clothing
always changing.
Beliefs, memories, minds
always growing,
thousand of biographies
written with pictures.
Our light may fade
yet the goals are imprinted
and passed on
Forever ...

Coat

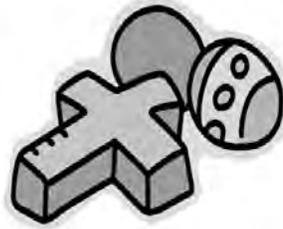
Kruti Patel, Senior, Illinois

It's a protector,
A warrior
Braving the Chicago wind
And the cold New England snow.
On the winter nights
It is remembered for its warmth against the chill
Its softness against the skin
And its slickness against the sleet.
Yet, it's a burden
Tossed carelessly aside
Quickly forgotten on a warm summer morning.
But, come winter
It is remembered again
And picked up from where it was left behind.



Easter Morn

Joyce I. Johnson, Washington



This Easter Morn dawns bright and clear
with all the folks I hold most dear,
coming to spend the blessed day.
The sun is with them on their way.
They accompany me to church this day
as is the ardent Christian way
to listen to the Easter story.
We bow our heads; give Him the glory.

The table's set with all my best
of china, silver, and the rest.
The food is simmering on the stove
to be served up, garnished with love.
Some come from far, some come from near,
but one by one they all appear.
We fill the dining table twice.
I need a hall; that would be nice.

The colored eggs have been hidden.
Eager children are forbidden
to sneak a peek around the yard.
Not looking though is mighty hard.
At last we say, get set, now go,
to little Kimberly and Joe,
to Jesse and his sister Glo.
They fun so fast they're flying low.

Some eggs are lying on the ground.
Others not easy to be found.
Auntie helps the smallest cousin.
Soon they find the whole five dozen.
With eggs enough for everyone,
there are no tears, but lots of fun.
They show their loot, with shining eyes,
some eggs are filled with a surprise.

A little tiny cross they find
to keep their Jesus in each mind,
to teach them all what Easter is.
The thanks and praises are all His.

Spring

Janet Goven, Pennsylvania

*Gently feeling
my presence
before seeing
the evidence
I have arrived:
warmth envelops
the light that confirms
time has elapsed
you have survived;
the darkness long
one cold grey song
of Winter.
Footsteps now
whisper the sound
on softer ground
signs of Spring
abound;
Pale shades of green
transform the scene
create the serene.
I bring Spirit revived.*

Easter

Vincent J. Tomeo, New York

Feathered clouds
Like lava
Obscure light
Day was night
Then
A Resurrection.

Easter II
A wonder witnessed
The arrival
A first now past
Once now always
The moon
Earth
Just the beginning. . .

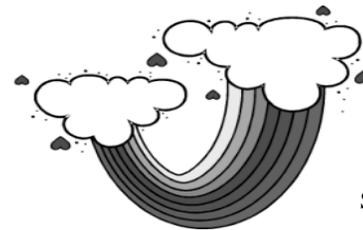


The Spring

Harry T. Roman, New Jersey

The grass and leaves take on a special shade of green—Spring green, if you will. Like the pick of the litter, the first flush of growth seems to be the most vibrant and memorable. Deep within that luxurious green hue is the promise of the season, a renewed contract with youth, that again demonstrates the fertile majesty of Earth's awakening spirit. Old things feel new, and new things feel alive and unlimited. It is a time of warmth, joy, and hope. So many wonderful things will happen to the Earth in so short a time, like the anticipation of prom night for a blooming young girl.

Even the rain is a special thing in the Spring. You can literally smell it in the dust and the dirt, as though it has been waiting for the right time to be unleashed. It had that unmistakable odor when it starts to drizzle down—the kind you sit out on the front porch to inhale and enjoy along with the ubiquitous, aromatic pollen. If you can smell the Earth, you wonder how charged up a bee must get this time of year. Spring rain is not a downpour like the adolescence of Summer, but the steady, nourishing flow a young mother would have for her newborn child. The object is to pamper and care for, not harbor a tantrum of wind and rain. There within the dusty smell of Spring rain is the promise that something good will come from heaven's water—wherever it may have come from originally, or what tortuous and dirty path it must have trod. The Spring cleanses all things.



I hear God's voice in the laughter of a child.
Love and peaceful joy emit from His gentle voice.
I don't see God in buildings, bricks, mortar, stones.
God exists in my soul, my eyes, my heart, my love.

I Mean So Much to Many People

David Waites, Florida

I mean so much to many people
I never lose my way,
My journey seems to never end
They send me every day

I come from many lands afar
From people young and old,
They use me when in trouble
And rely on me I'm told

Wisemen, peasants, kings and bishops
Red yellow white or brown,
The color of their skin is moot
They never turn me down

I know their needs are great and small
I help all of humankind,
But no one knows the trouble I have
Without guidance I am blind

So when you talk to God tonight
Who created days and the world in seven,
Remember I'm "prayer" so utter the words
"Our Father who art in heaven"

I See God

Marie Bleecker, Hawaii

If you stand on your head
And look at a rainbow,
You can see God's smile.
That's what God's smile looks like,
A turned upside down rainbow.
I saw a rainbow on my ceiling.
I knew it was a smile from God.

I see God when I look at butterflies.
Such delicate, lovely creatures, winged by God.
I feel God's warmth radiating from the sun.
I'm embraced in the comforting warmth
Of His unconditional love.



Shared Legacy

J. Alvin Speers, Alberta, Canada

We miss them, but they are part of us.
Though they crossed the great divide,
Leaving us just the memories
Of time with them by our side.

Life must go on, it was ever so,
There are those who count on us here,
As we relied on departed ones,
And in memory hold them dear.

Loved ones who left this earthly plane,
While we journey on in full faith
That we'll meet again when our time has come
To be called away in death.

To live a life that lets no one down
Who trust in our love and care
Is the least we can do with the legacy
That they passed this way to share.

Our Last Dance

Robert Donald Spector, New York

When we dance our last dance,
it will be together,
like every other thing
we've done a whole life through.



Why would we want to change
what love has led us to?

Our hearts have listened to
the kind of harmony
that only love can bring.

Those songs the angels sing
that started in our youth
will last our whole life through.

*In the flowers of springtime . . . it's
time to save the children . . . time.
I have known as April song . . .
an April spring.*

Save the Children

Sarah LuAnn Jensen, California

*Make safe the streets, let the children
live . . . free to swing the swing high . . .
to find a bluebird in sky,
When springtime turns to warm color . . .
live . . . love in a universe of one . . .
there is no other.*

*Focus on the future . . . save the children.
Of each little child innocent of your
Day . . . let them run . . . let play.*

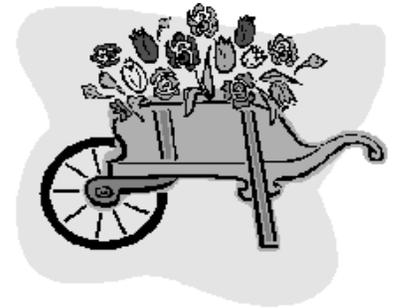
*Little child, I leave you a colorful
rainbow . . . a summer shower. In flowers
of springtime . . . run free in the bright
orange sun . . . for each child
A precious one.*



In the Garden

Donald G. Harmande, New York

In the garden
harmony reposes
peaceful tranquility
among the roses
indigo sky
enhances background
following in its wake
God's love will be found.



Spring Haiku:
Sunshine enhances
morning birdsong entrances
soft breezes stroke cheeks.

WOODWORK

Margarita Engle, California

There are days when each person I see
makes me think of a matrioshka doll
nesting human forms
all carved from a single branch
of one fragrant lime tree or birch
colorful lacquerwork fairy tale scenes
telling a layered story

the happy ending hidden
deep within.



Live Oak Frenzy

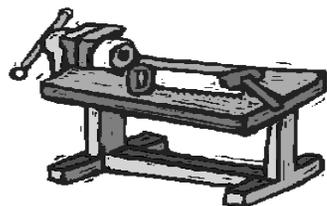
Vivian Bolland Schroeder, Texas

Under the shedding live oak tree
The dazed homeowner stands
Confronted by prodigious leaves,
And wrings his chilling hands.

Its shameless baring, bit by bit
Limbs leafed in browning leather
Is Nature's tardy enterprise
Inspired by warming weather.

Its fellows flaunt lush greening boughs,
Fling catkins to the ground,
Trees out of sync with Spring's design
Bid raking woes compound.





Writer's Workbench

Rhythm and Rhyme

Is there a reason for rhythm and rhyme? In his book *The Pursuit Of Poetry* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), Robert Hillyer states:

Music, dancing, and poetry are the oldest of the arts and came into being before the dawn of history, moving to the recurrent rhythms of Nature itself. They are the unbroken thread between us and the past. A poet, according to the Greek root of the word, is a maker. Verse means a turning, and since the turn must come full circle on itself, we speak of it as a repeating, or recurrent, rhythm, just as in music. Prose rhythm is non-recurrent; hence verse is more natural because it is closer to the rhythms of the universe — and note that universe means a concerted turning. We walk, we breathe, our hearts beat in recurrence; the sun and moon, the stars in their course, the changing seasons — all these are recurrent; we are metrical creatures in a metrical universe.

So in the reading of metrical poetry the reader responds with his own memories and imagination stimulated by the rhythm and phrasing expressed by the poet. A good poem can be read again and again with fresh insight each time. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus observed, "One cannot step twice into the same river." The water has changed, we have changed, the seasons have changed. With each new reading life has flowed past us and we are different people. I remember a poem I read in grade school that made a deep impression upon me. I can remember the time and place and the emotions that I felt. When I read that poem again, I relive that experience enhanced by the knowledge gained since then which makes it all the more meaningful.

A poem can have rhythm — the ordered recurrent alternation of strong and weak elements in the flow of sound and silence in speech. It can have assonance — resemblance of sound in words or syllables, a repetition of vowels without repetition of consonants (as in *stony* and *holy*) used as an alternative to rhyme in verse without a formal structure of rhythm.

Free verse can be good only to the extent that it uses its freedom to express the music that is the heart of poetry. Maybe the fact that it *is* free makes it actually harder to pull off than when working within the framework of structure. Whatever form we use the real question is: What am I trying to say and how will it speak to the reader?

I have written both kinds of poetry and enjoy a good poem in whatever form it is written. Emily Dickinson's short poem "To pile like thunder to its close — Then crumble grand away — While everything created hid — This would be poetry" does not rhyme or have any assonance, yet it packs a lot of punch in its few short lines.

By the way, I would highly recommend *The Pursuit of Poetry* to anyone who would like a better understanding of the subject.

Happy Writing!

—THE EDITOR

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