possessions. Except for a large painting of fireflies that hung above Jenny’s bed, the room could have belonged to anyone. Walking back out to the hallway, she softly closed the bedroom door.

Several months later a parcel from overseas addressed to Jenny arrived at the retirement home. Having just returned from her brother’s in England, Jenny assumed it was the books she had shipped from a delightful antiques store they had found in the countryside just before her departure. But when she opened the box there were no books. Instead, a collection of photographs spilled out into her lap along with Cassie’s picture and a small pink envelope. Jenny crossed the room and settled before the fire before opening the letter. Her eyes lit up with excitement when she saw the fine gold chain with a delicate firefly made of diamonds lying among the pages and she began to read.

“Dear Jenny…”

Living with her dog in rural Northwestern Ontario, Linda Kmet is a writer and hopes one day to inspire others with her voice. Her extensive work as a crisis counselor for women and children has influenced her stories about the triumphant survival of the human spirit.

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PATRICIA KEENEY

The Art of Friends

I know them best, these lifelong friends in their late incarnations long after children and men.

Melissa of the sad song falling line dropped like a plunged hook from sky to sea

letting the sharpness ferret and grab, tug at her never looking down never taking dark bird eyes and streaming hair off the far horizon, a dance of flute and drum.

The foreign feast she craves waiting for her, always out of reach and only now admitting her joy in the going knowing it can never be except in dream, ringing the bell of herself, soaring from sight and sound making music with those who can

finally free of the lie living in the flight she takes after soap opera and self-delusion hovering in new air

feather-tipped, quick as a humming bird aerodynamic miracle a fin around the globe a streak of beginnings.
* Tough and tender
Katia finds herself
in paint
white birch
and blue lake, the burn
of autumn leaves
rosy colour storming
rough water.

All the ferocious fighting
and loving alive in this
without pain.

A personal mirror pulsing with light.
Fine bones fleeing up, sunk
firmly in mulch, her nature
buried and free.

And AH sunflower
boldness on a stalk
gold with an earthy heart
her own tournesol
back-blocked when fed up.

Azure islands in mist and fading light
she sits magnanimous among her scenes
face forward, a sheen of satisfaction
rounding her out, in age, the flaxen hair
of a careless child

that says: here

I am.

*Marti, poet princess
a flare of hair
the fate that crowns her
writing into and out of love

flying underwater
swimming through stars
moonwalk and sunburst
partnered with desire

Patricia Keeney is the author of nine books of poetry and a picaresque novel entitled The Incredible Shrinking Wife. Her Selected Poems, published in 1996, contains an introduction by the distinguished Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Her poetry has been translated into French (winning the Prix Jean Paris in 2003), Spanish, Bulgarian, Chinese, and Hindi. Her latest poetry collection, Frist Woman was published by Inanna in 2011. Keeney is a professor of English and Creative Writing at Toronto’s York University and makes her home in a 160-year-old log heritage house near Lake Simcoe, north of Toronto.