

above the mango tree, above the hydro lines, ducking and weaving from side to side like a drunk trying to walk a straight line. "It's dancing too much," said Gilbert. "I'll put some more tail on." I realized that the kite needed to be stabilized and for me, that was no problem. There was plenty more tail where the first set came from, even if it meant tying on a piece of the cane trash to the odd assortment of rags. I had seen the bigger boys do that when they were flying their kites too far away from home to get more tail for their kites.

Gilbert began to reel in the kite and it continued its drunken dance, weaving dangerously close to the hydro lines. Suddenly my heart lurched with fear and apprehension, for as I looked, the tip of the tail was getting even nearer to the hydro lines; then, in a flash, the drunk paused for breath, clinging to the lines. My fear turned to horror and pain for Gilbert was tugging harder, and the more he tugged, the faster the kite stuck. It did not take long for me to realize that the kite would never let go of the hydro line.

The pain was tearing at my insides—my heart, my head, my eyes. The tears were rolling down my cheeks, blurring the picture of the kite stuck there forever. Jesus nailed to the cross could not have felt the intense pain that was consuming my whole being.

There was now no need for me to break my freshly laid egg to see what my future held. The future was now rolled into the present and staring me in the face in the form of an aeroplane kite wrecked on its maiden flight.

*Janet Tyrell is a retired librarian and is currently enjoying the courses offered at the Academy for Lifelong Learning in Toronto. This piece is the result of an exercise for her "Memoirs" class at the Academy.*

## RENEE NORMAN

### Last Summer of Childhood

we are watching What Not to Wear  
in pyjamas and old shorts  
this her last summer of childhood  
before university begins

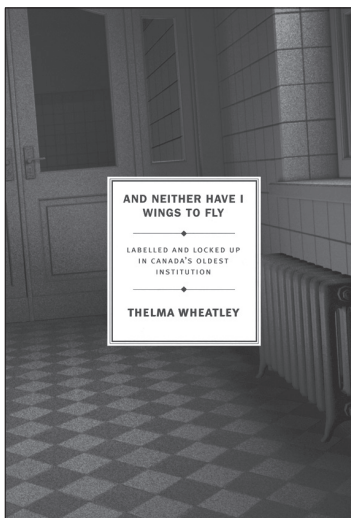
soon enough she will be writing papers,  
walking on campus in the rain,  
wondering where summer went  
and holding her damp coat close  
to keep warm

this is my last baby  
the one I rocked slowly  
savouring, savouring  
her faded cotton sleepers  
smelling of sisters,  
old milk

when we shopped at the mall  
our own episode of What Not to Wear  
again and again she emerged:  
a white eyelet skirt,  
a rust tunic  
my eyes on her becoming  
the transformation taking place  
behind a curtain of clothes

we are watching What Not to Wear  
this *our* last summer of childhood

*Renee Norman's poetry appears earlier in this volume.*



SPRING 2013

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