

RENEE NORMAN

Arthritic Dreams II

first to go
the neighbourhood walk
down to a brief turn
of several blocks
woosh
then driving up the youngest
on a field trip
poof
baseball in the park
gone
doing the dishes
(no real loss there)
if you don't mind the crumbs
no one but me ever sees

I could catalogue
the changes
bed rest Epsom salts
by the gallon
ice packs
siting down to peel potatoes

the most difficult to bear
a disappointed look
in the eyes
when I have to say no
i can't
it's too hard
poof

Renee Norman, Ph.D., is a poet, writer, and teacher who lives in Coquitlam, BC. Her poetry book, True Confessions, published by Inanna Publications and Education Inc., won the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Award for Poetry. Another book of poetry, Backhand Through the Mother, is forthcoming with Inanna Publications.

A. MARY MURPHY

arthritic ambition long folded up
finds it painful and swollen to unfold
slow and limpy to unroll
like an aged novice
out of place with younger dancers
plump little maidens full of promise
beside the puzzled and wizening old dame
with her knobby metaphors
cruelly misshapen bonsai dreams
bent in unintentioned directions
she's a wrinkled drooping Alice
on the other side of the glass
from one side to the other seamlessly

A. Mary Murphy's poetry appears earlier in this issue.

ANN ELIZABETH CARSON

What Child Comes Back

Sitting on a bench waiting,
he watches her approach, arms empty now of
flowers,
his distant grave brighter
in the late afternoon sun. Neither have words
to say why they are here. They meet

and walk away on new mown grass, through
trees,
past monuments, around the quieter inset
stones,
and the harsh newly turned mounds,
some bearing testimony to that tender
housekeeping.

They turn together,
He, with an arm around her shoulders,
head bending towards her hand as she reaches
up
to touch his cheek, to straighten the collar
at his neck.

To wait, to tend, to walk and turn.
To dig, to place a stone, to touch.
To die at once, or piece by piece.
We have no choice of memories

Ann Elizabeth Carson has recently published Shadow's Light, a collection of her early and new poems.