

VIVIAN HANSEN

Covenant Explored

in soft mulch and quicksilver river
ripples of moon as you dip your paddle
Grace slips over your skin
like warm cloud

brushes her fingers against your cheek
floats in the updraft palm of hand that holds
the hawk
in time and space
your spirit joins hers in flight

Grace whispers that you may abide here in
this valley for awhile
Grace is an alpine cabin
of forgiveness and refuge
from your own error

you don't have to live miserably

Grace feeds you 7-grain bread
and warm milk from her breasts
covers you with sweet down
until you're healed, and banded with her
circle

Grace is wilderness lost, like a false paradise
Grace joins you on journey, when the
loneliness of our flight
touches down
on the bone of her outstretched arms

*Vivian Hansen lives in Calgary, Alberta. Her first collection of poetry, *Leylines of My Flesh*, was published in 2002 (Touchwood Press).*

KATHY ASHBY

White Silence

During mellow reveries while trudging
through the snow,
each snowshoe must lift, push and pump
from the heart,
a clear mind can analyse, assemble, collect
and compile
with intensity of some philosopher similar
to that of Diderot
the excellent whispered thoughts of Dante,
Swift,
Voltaire and Rousseau.

Perchance to find embedded an image of
artistic display,
like frozen doily designs around a wet icy
pool
framed by otter's slide patterns; nature
saturates deep inside.
If exhausted by quest and nothing left to
say
miles far off, watching evening shadows
begin their lengths
ideas by Pythagoras, Descartes, Pascal and
Pope enlighten the way.

Content with day's search for more frontier
space to unfold
and turning to follow the trail home
using steady quiet rhythm of working body
parts
a state of white silent meditation—the only
goal
whether under grey skies, sunshine or
moonlit night
simply clinging to the process nurtures and
heals the solitary soul.

Kathy Ashby is an award-winning hot glass artist since the early 1970s, who now lives and works in the wilderness of Muskoka, Ontario with her husband and son. She has been extensively published, notably as a guest columnist in the Toronto Star Arts