

ensured through adequate funding of the system and access to computers.

Rural literacy programs need support to offer a wide spectrum of services. Literacy should not be too narrowly defined and funding should be able to go towards employment preparation and other services people require. Family literacy programs help reverse the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy while at the same time providing a partial solution to the need for childcare. Interministerial (including OTAB) coordination of efforts could help ensure that literacy program activities don't have to be restricted.

There needs to be support for the development of relevant materials for rural adult learners.

Research must be carried out on the needs of adult learners and barriers to participation in rural Ontario. Successful programs need to be documented and evaluated; key elements should be identified, applied to other rural programs, and then evaluated.

*Written by Andrea Leis with input from the Steering Committee Members of the Rural Literacy Special Interest Group with financial support from the Literacy Section of the Learning and Employment Preparation Branch of OTAB.*

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## NEVADA CHRISTIANSON

He had his  
muddied boots against sheets.  
An arm against her throat.

Wife,  
staring at the white rafters  
remembering  
the collection of glass frogs  
arranged on the windowsill  
above the kitchen  
sink.

*Nevada Christianson lives in Whitehorse, Yukon.*

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## NATHALIE STEPHENS

### Funambulesque

•  
elle avance  
à tâtons  
sur le fil barbelé  
de sa vie  
son corps chancelant  
au bord du précipice  
d'un regard  
détourné

••  
et l'enfant dans ses  
bras se nourrit de la bile  
qu'elle façonne dans  
sa poitrine

elle s'appuie  
contre un  
de ces murs  
érigés en l'honneur  
de l'avancement  
et de la technologie

•••  
alors que le geste  
anodin d'une main  
portée à la bouche  
dessine devant ses yeux  
un collier d'épines  
qu'elle porte autour  
de son cou  
et qui rétrécit de  
jour en jour

je construis ma vie  
dit-elle  
des déchets  
éparpillés dans les  
allées sombres  
de vos coeurs  
alors que le soleil  
perché ainsi sur l'horizon  
consomme ses propres  
feux

sa vie perchée ainsi  
entre l'ici et l'ailleurs  
sur le rebord  
d'un regard  
détourné  
se voulait  
anonyme jusqu'au jour  
où elle s'est écriée

*Nathalie Stephens est poète et écrivaine bilingue.*