
BERNADETTE R. NORWEGIAN

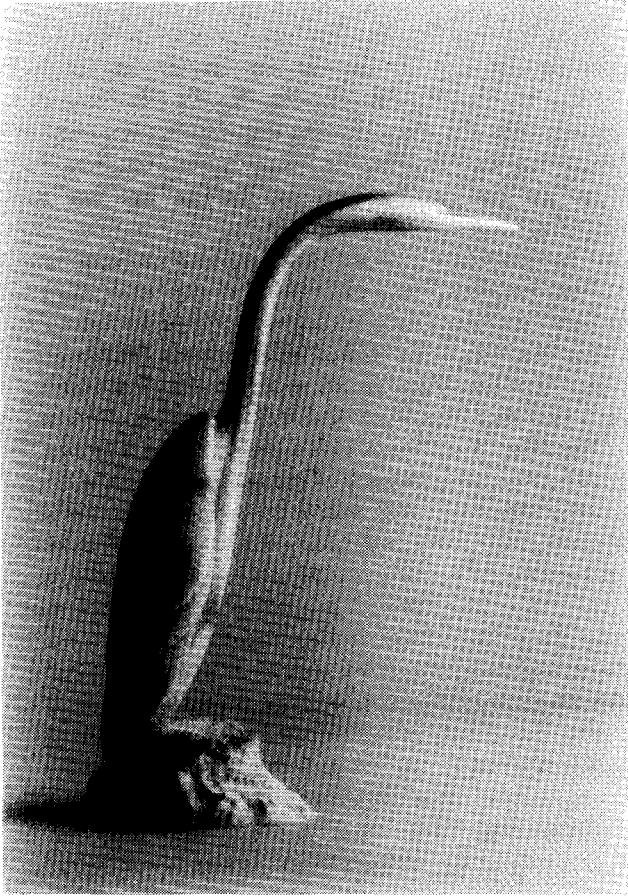
The Shawl

The old woman's shawl
Specks and twigs caught in the pulled threads
A squished berry here, a soup stain there
The fringes half gone
Part of the shawl is thin
And none of it like new

They are both old
She never goes without it
Her cheeks know it soft
Her back knows it warm
Her fears know the edges where her fingers curled
Her eyes know the corners that soaked up her tears

In the late autumn
Clouds of geese fly over
Their wings beat like the soft tom tom of a drum
Rise and fall rise and fall
Like her heart beneath the shawl
Rise and fall

I hear her as the geese over
I hear her say "Oh, I wonder if I'll see them again!"
How glad she is to have seen this one more season
She pulls her shawl tight
Her face is clear like the sky
After the geese have flown by



Maureen Morris, Antler Carving, Courtesy Ward Collection
Photo: Yukon Government

Bernadette Norwegian's poetry appears earlier in this issue.

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