

pay attention—  
I am not unlike  
this drooping cactus  
forced once a year by thirst  
to bloom

*~ Karen Weissman*

Explaining the use  
Of the participle *wa*  
Your mouth shapes itself  
As if  
Preparing for a kiss.

*~ Paul Bray*

homeward bound  
wet branches glisten  
in the moonlight...  
handing her the salt shaker  
our fingers touched

*~ Larry Kimmel*

in line  
so close to Mother's Day  
longing  
to pick grains of something  
from that boy's matted hair

*~ Joann Klontz*

seven year olds  
excited by the  
missing tooth  
that makes me  
one of their tribe

*~ Tony Beyer*

You think I don't see  
your eyes drift away from mine—  
just a slight side-glance...  
Does someone else pass through your  
mind walking a better walk?

*~ Bill West*

after spring rain  
in every puddle a face  
of the moon  
his moon  
three hours earlier

*~ Alice Frampton*

*to the poet Kawano Yuko:*  
I wanted  
to say how much I  
admire you, but  
we parted there, still  
talking of plum jam

*~ Amelia Fielden*

on a mountain porch  
far from the Yucatan  
where a Mayan girl  
wove the hammock chair  
a blue-eyed child swinging

*~ Elizabeth Howard*

when measuring  
distance to far stars  
do light years start  
at my head  
or the ant's back

*~ Watha Lambert*

no trace  
of its water  
on my face  
the lake  
after reflection

*~ ai li*

produce aisle  
grandmother hums softly  
to each cabbage  
an off-key medley  
of unfinished hymns

*~ Debra Woolard Bender*

The trail descends to the beach  
where ebbside strands a jellyfish  
frightening me  
that this strange life and mine  
are connected

*~ Loretta Chardin*

crows in the parking lot  
finding shining objects—  
their mockery  
as I search  
for my new car

*~ Ruth C. Holzer*

Down the path,  
not thinking of  
surprises  
until my face  
breaks the web.

*~ Thom Williams*



just to know  
that it is orange  
inside this cantaloupe  
is enough  
for now

*~ Harold Bowes*

back in utero  
problems seem to float away—  
perfectly relaxed  
insular until my stop  
jolts back re-birth on the bus

*~ Joan Payne Kincaid*

Sudden downpour  
catches the spectators  
unprepared  
I too am caught out  
now you have gone

*~ John K. Gillespie*

the jays search through  
last night's peanut shells  
between their screams  
I toss and turn  
and search for sleep

*~ Grant Savage*

The heat  
of this long afternoon ~  
home sick  
on my birthday, reading  
your card one more time

*~ Pamela Miller Ness*

late evening  
in school yard's  
playing field  
    near home plate  
    a dusty blue sweater

~ *Ronan*

daughter's wedding past  
husband's pocketbook empty  
I ease off my shoes  
and push away the thought—  
he's not right for her

~ *Madelyn Eastlund*

my younger sister  
now sends me her castoffs  
    from the cardboard box  
    the cloying scent  
    of Estee Lauder

~ *Margaret Chula*

cardboard sign  
I want to hand him my evian  
but I don't  
the terrible inertia  
of having things

~ *Michael Petracca*

packing my suitcase  
a steady rain obscures  
the peak we climbed  
all I see are clouds  
my sister plans next year's hike

~ *David Rice*

Wild mustard in bloom  
on the cemetery lawn—  
sequins on green silk.  
Will you wear such fancy dress  
when you come, my Lady Death?

*~ Rafael Jesús González*

past midnight—  
rising beyond the trees  
moon for a nighthawk  
light-shapes imperceptibly  
softening my shadows

*~ Melissa Dixon*

faded now,  
the yellow towels  
I bought to brighten  
this place  
without you

*~ Phillip Howerton*

summer has ended  
and we have parted  
yet spiders continue  
to spin their webs from  
one dead stem to another

*~ Margaret Chula*

long autumn night  
incense sticks burning  
down to nothing  
outside a few crickets  
left chanting

*~ Stanford M. Forrester*

Monday morning  
an apple on my workdesk  
Winesap  
back in New York  
a friendship rekindled

*~ Ginger Legato*

The river runs away  
yet never leaves its source—  
always with me  
the tang of days when I walked  
another path

*~ Carol Purington*

one by one by one  
leaves are falling  
that never fell before...  
how many autumns have I  
been hiding in these hills?

*~ John Quinnett*

Earplugs meant to deaden  
my neighbor's snoring  
forbidding  
the sound of  
October rain

*~ Brook Zelcer*

turning  
from my daughter's anger  
to watch  
grey dishwater  
swirling down the drain

*~ Marianne Bluger*



a sudden shower  
hurried the words  
of our goodbye  
and now the raindrops  
still falling in the pine

*~ Yvonne Hardenbrook*

a thick fog  
fills in the canyon floor  
from another room  
only treble and bass tones  
between my husband and son

*~ Cherie Hunter Day*

Touching the strings of her harp  
    she sends golden notes  
    through the waiting room...  
for a few precious moments  
let us forget why we're here  
    *for Roxanne Ziegler, harpist*

*~ Sue-Stapleton Tkach*

an ant  
of no account  
I am—  
to wheeling pelicans  
above this prairie

*~ Kaye Bache-Snyder*

How low  
the pin oak droops  
in heavy rain—  
a small child stops  
to count the leaves.

*~ Penelope Davis Greenwell*

mountain cabin  
living in joy  
till we argued  
all I see now  
are downed trees

*~ Michael Ketchek*

she leaves  
skipping to the door  
another school day  
    my hand so empty  
    walking home

*~ Joyce Sandeen Johnson*

this time that year  
my husband fell to illness,  
I am lonelier  
with the turn  
of the small red apples

*~ Aya Yuhki*

under a dark umbrella  
I turn around to watch  
my footprints fill  
then disappear  
in the rain

*~ Mike W. Blöttenberger*

Canadian geese spread out  
across a large field  
near the ferry terminal—  
cars going home  
stop on both sides of the road

*~ John Elsberg*

a vivid day  
descends to blue  
at dusk  
the cat, stiff and old,  
finds it hard to settle

*~ Kirsty Karkow*

Tossing a stone  
into the dark well, I am  
suddenly five years old  
--waiting to hear from  
the other side of the world

*~ Robert Kusch*

You think the Abbey  
Has yielded all its secrets  
Then look at your boots  
And grow aware you're standing on  
Laurence Olivier

*~ T. P. Perrin*

Christmas Eve—  
not believing one way  
or the other  
    they go to the movies  
    share a large buttered popcorn

*~ Leatrice Lifshitz*

Watching strangers  
talk to themselves,  
I feel  
less alone  
in this world

*~ Andrew J. Hughes*

a dusting of now  
has turned the landscape white  
a blank page  
on the first day  
of retirement

*~ F. Matthew Blaine*

for over a year  
you knit in secret  
the day we part  
I discover the sweater  
too small for me

*~ Larry Kelts*

swept broom clean,  
while awaiting the  
new owners,  
we shiver in the  
house's nakedness

*~ Art Stein*

my favorite old t-shirt  
through the wash  
with my fountain pen in pocket  
has left ink stains to wear  
all around my heart

*~ Thomas. P. Clausen*

he uses them  
over and over  
disposable things  
I was so sure  
he'd hang onto me

*~ Doris Kasson*

Sharply outlined  
by the first light  
the spines of the cactus  
and the fact of  
our separate beds

*~ George Swede*

When our tracks through much  
freeze overnight, crisp, boot-shaped  
indentations gleam  
with concentric ice hollows  
shattering upon contact.

*~ Michael Jewell*

cattle cars  
in the trainyard  
for anyone  
who wants a little  
smell of terror

*~ Michael McClintock*

one secret  
after another  
exposed  
to the gossip  
of the x-ray machine

*~ Joanna M. Weston*

was it last night's *Othello*  
weighing me down and more down  
in the London light  
as if that world of distrust  
left its bruised marks on me?

*~ Sanford Goldstein*

at the airport  
fussing over which  
coffee is which  
my son I won't see  
possibly again

*~ Tony Beyer*

a midwinter thaw  
has opened the waterway  
among the boats  
I see the masthead  
which once bore my name

*~ Barbara MacKay*

you write of lighting  
a candle just for me...  
does the flame burn steady  
or shivering as the moon  
on this winter pond?

*for Pamela Babusci*  
*~ Linda Jeannette Ward*

morning tea  
brewed  
the palest green  
willow branches long  
long before spring

*~ Giselle Maya*

when asked  
after her own health

the silence  
of this small bowl  
of riverstones

*~ Carolyn Thomas*

turning the page  
he reads scribbled notes  
in the margin  
and wonders  
at their yellowing haste

*~ Andrew Detheridge*

dark clouds persist  
snow continues all day long  
the fridge is empty  
you are here and I'm happy  
to eat beans and rice again

*~ Ruby Spriggs*

By the pastor's foot  
at gravesite, a cicada  
exo-skeleton  
wanting to pick it up, to  
kazoo a blues tune through it

*~ Guy Simser*

the whole town  
covered with fresh snow  
is going up  
to the Milky Way  
freed from everything

*~ Mari Konno*

afternoon sun  
through leafless tree  
rising laughter  
fast-pedaling biker leans  
in the curve of the path

*~ Lenard Duane Moore*