
Life Cycle

I threw some dried, stale crusts of bread
Out on the snow beneath my sill,
And thought may passing birds be fed,
For my wastebox the bread would fill.

With no more thought I turned to sew
And bake my cakes until out there
I heard the creak of stiff-laid snow,
And saw some hungry hounds appear.

They nuzzled wild and gulped each piece,
Then loped away to sniff for more;
When sounds of hounds had come to cease,
Three hares crept from the forest floor.

The rabbits nibbling in the frost
Were spied by dogs as food to eat.
The hounds leaped fast, the fur was tossed.
They drank the blood, in triumph neat.

Thus bread gave life, and life brought death;
So what's the gain if life does kill?
Why should I waste my bread and breath?
I'll let my wastebox overflow.
—Janice Aiken.

Night Brings Solace

The Sun relaxes in her cushioned chair,
And Evening walks into the darkening sky.
All is tranquil, save the throbbing in my breast;
For my disquieted heart is not at rest.

My mind, confused, seeks hard to free itself
From loathsome care and dire despondency
That penetrate the depths of every weary thought.
Can no escape be found for minds distraught?

Yet, as I lie in deep and bruised despair,
Night slips a soothing pillow 'neath my head;
My fevered brow is touched by fingers cool and kind,
And peace, at last, seeps through my restless mind.

—Emma Carol Gandy.

Swinging in the Night

I swing in the night,
And my crude rope swing is
A curved stroke from a comet's brush.
I swing in the night,
And my dark hair becomes willow
Wisteria tresses.
I swing in the night,
And my calico skirt is
A queen's nuptial gown.
I swing in the night,
And my toes brush an aqua star.
—Betty Gene Sanders.

Grown Up Prayer

When I was only three.
My mamma used to kneel with me,
And we would pray
At the end of the day:
"Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take."

Now I am eight—and ten.
Many a prayer I've said since then.
Yet still I pray
In the midst of the fray:
"Now I lay me down to sleep..."

I've outgrown the prayer?
No, my friend—
I am just beginning
To comprehend.

—Betty Gene Sanders.

To a Jonquil in February

Little flower, cup of gold,
Aren't you being rather bold
Thus to flaunt your bright array
On this chilly winter's day?

There you're blooming on the grass,
Nodding gaily as I pass;
Dauntless, as you greet the sun.
In the briefness of life's run.

Yours will be a short stay here
At this season of the year;
But you've filled my heart with love
For all the earth and heaven above.

Just a tiny golden flower,
But your coming at this hour
Makes me smile, and smiling greet
All the people that I meet.

Little flower, cup of gold,
Now your secret has been told;
"Life is short, not here to stay,
So make folks happy while we may."
—Ila Graham.

Life is like a pond in summer.
Even when storm winds ripple the water,
the light of the Sun can transform the ripples into crystals with facets of loveliness.

—Betty Sanders.