All Things Pretty

Betsy Lewis
St. John Fisher College

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Cover Page Footnote
Appeared in the issue: Winter 1996.
Third Prize Winner

Will They?

The end of the day draws near
   The sun dips below the edge of the earth
   Taking the heat of the summer day with it
   But the humidity remains in the heavy air.

I watch the clouds as they roll quickly towards me
   They seem to claw at the land and devour the sky
   Yet I remain on the side of the hill
   Lying in the overgrown grass
   The dead weeds tickling my unresponsive body.

   The rain beats down rhythmically
   Each drop diving madly toward the ground
   Shattering into a thousand broken tears
   Lightning flashes before my blind eyes
   And thunder echoes in my deaf ears.

   Thoughts escape my mind, sleep takes over
   My saddened heart now rests in sheltered peace
   The storm passes along with the night
   The seasons change and time goes on.

Has anyone missed me? Or noticed that I am gone?
   Will the innocent make love upon my grave
   When summer skies reflect the heavens' eyes?
   Will they run their fingers over the letters of my name?
   Will they subtract the years and wish there had been more?

   Will they wish that I had shared my thoughts with them?
   Or that their body had pressed against mine?
   Will they wish they could have looked into my eyes?
   Will they wish they had been there to lay a rose
   Over my heart on the day of my death?

   Will they listen for my subtle words
   When the wind dances in the treetops?
   Or will my spirit go unheard and my soul unseen?
   Will my body slowly rot
   Collecting the dust of the passing years?
   Forever lost in the folds of time.

-- Katie McNamara

All Things Pretty

Linen napkins, lavender, with cocoa-kissed crocheted cotton lace.
White organza party dress all chocolate-specked.
Black, patent-leather Mary-Jane's protect white tights around my feet
at Gramma's house

A castle on the street where Mamma slept in the front room, right
at the top of the stairs

Where the bureau drawer waits, the one near the floor, for the might of my fingers
on the maple-drawer pull-it opens to delight me with all things pretty

Like satin ribbons in colors-like sunshine and periwinkle in yellow and blue;
like new-born grass, lightly green;
like frosting on cake, all frothy white;
like Gramma's cheeks, sweetly pink

When she tends and twirls these ribbons into finely curled rosebuds and blooms,
prettier than any gardener could do,
on long green stems she plants them on packages she brings to all her girls,

Boxes wrapped in tissue and paper, satin ribbons and rosebud bows, plucked from Mamma's maple bureau drawer, where I sit

Pulling peach-colored lengths to ribbon over my face in swirls, wandering from ear to ear
to tickle and giggle myself till Mamma comes
And puts me to bed, her bed, of feathers and seer-sucker sheets all white and cool like when she was little and sat in the chair by the bookcase in the corner

Where the chair is funny, all covered in flowers and a seat that sticks out so far towards a stool for feet, a good place to read stories with Mamma while getting drowsy for sleep

Like I was with my thumb in my mouth while I watched the chair and its silly seat and it asked me to come so I did

And I curled on its seat and I watched the shelves from the lights of the lamps down the drive at the street that came into my room through glass that can break

Like the ballerina on the middle book shelf, gracefully dancing in pink satin shoes on toes, far below her tutu of lace that Gramma made with her sister, too,

From watered-down clay where they ripped real lace and gathered the flounce around the waist of the ballerina on the middle book shelf, letting it dry hard to paint it

Later while I watched and saw Gramma's pink cheeks and happy blue eyes that smiled at me while I fell asleep.

-- Betsy Lewis

sleep

thief stealing

mind body

pillow suffocating

thoughts movements

water drowning

restoring me

life giving

breath stealing

paramour god

sleep

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-- Monica Bradbury

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