

FQA

Types and Shadows



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Poems by Jo Ann Lordahl

The Happy Paradox

Now I become myself, May Sarton says,
It's taken time, many years and places.
Now I become myself, I say, and see
a self firm and amorphous at once. Sure
and unsure, even after blue years of
nightly journeys made alone, and some not
alone, breathing heavy. Young within
a pleating body. Beyond the budding edge
of change and still a self-deluded prisoner
of family blood and habit. Towers
I labored in following my art with
Millay, long years unfolding artlessly.
Now I become myself: loving old friends,
those darting angularities of close
sharing, a hostage to each cardinal.
This group of life's problems solved,
new ones of skulls not yet arrived.
Now I become myself, a happy paradox.

Collected Poems



Jo Ann Lordahl

One

On a pale moon
deep in night
stars too many for numbers
mock me.
On a live autumn Saturday
cattail seeds
in my awed incomprehension
parachute in milky white droves
on Payne's Prairie
never ceasing.
For bass fishing
in Lake Orange
Minnows from the hatchery
are sold by the drained bucket
weighed in their shimmering
thousands to die.
One, as I watch
slips off the pouring to dirt.
I borrow God's eye.
Place it back in water.

No Right

An old young dirty woman
crouches on a Mexico City street
with two filthy quiet urchins
half belonging to her and a
half naked baby with bird opened
mouth and bloated stomach
for rice she feeds by hand
from a tin can too grimy for my cat.

An old woman in red rags
on a city bus going
to the Guadalupe Shrine
plays an out-of-tune Jew's harp,
sings off key for centavos
veins black in her legs, mud-red
dotted eyes no one can meet.

I am guilty for breathing.
I have no right to cry.

Futility

A dragonfly is caught in the skylight.
High above pine trees sing.
The dragonfly beats its wings against
futility insisting clear plastic
change into freedom when all that's
required is retracing its flight.
On a more clever morning
analogies for myself would come clear.
But on this day I wave my arms like wings
and my hands are tiny propellers.

CENTER

To assume a life.
To dance a life.
To methodically
solve your problems
Take up your tasks
with cheer.
Dissipate fear
Play joy.
Visit your extremes.
Stay in your center.
Construct a safe place
to be crazy.

This year (Hooray) I'm hoping you'll help me celebrate *Collected Poems*. Took over 40 years to put this collection together—talk about persistence! Receive your *Collected Poems* copy from Amazon.com. —Jo Ann jlordahl@mindspring.com

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Jo Ann Lordahl is the author of 30 books of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Her website (worth a look) headline says, "***The right words at the right time will soothe the soul.***" She introduces herself as the writer who lived in Hawaii, but has transferred to Gainesville, Florida. The history and culture of Hawaii was the inspiration for her novel, *Princess Ruth: Love and Tragedy in Hawaii*. —the editor