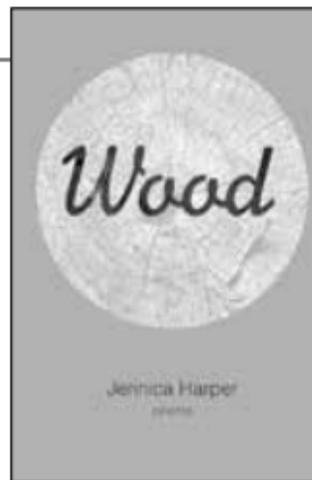


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FEVER

When he's gone she clicks the link, submits
her criteria through drop-down menus:
2 or more bedrooms under 500 K.
She waits for red dots to appear, a pox
she hopes to catch. No unique questions here:
do we want a lawn to mow? We would need a lawnmower.
Do we want a Korean girl in the lower, practicing her
violin? No matter: no hits. At best it's three quarters of a mil
for a teardown. Or an East-side special, kid sister with a lisp.
Still, there's hope in the glow ... she rejigs, refines
her search, such fun at first, she knows she should stop when
the rub turns raw. The grass always greener in Dunbar.
But maybe. Maybe today there's a high enough ceiling.
Once more, knock wood for the happy ending.

— Jennica Harper

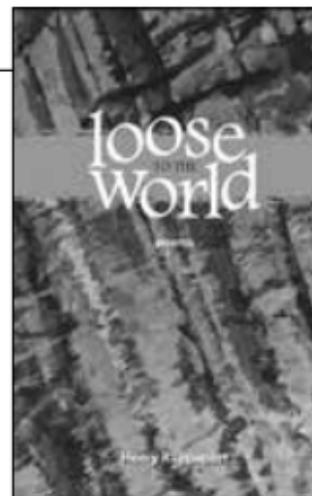
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GLIDING

If I were an airplane
I would be swift
if ash

I would float on moods of air
empty of joy
of care.

— Henry Rappaport

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from **WILD SEEDS**

we have love, we have grief
these two are guaranteed

we have birth
we have death

these, too, are promised

we have wild poppies on an island
nestled between a massive landbase

and a smaller landbase
and the sea

and although these
were not promised

this is what has grown
from the wild seed

— Joanne Arnott

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PROGNOSIS: 50-50

—To ride as hard at life
as that ten-year-old girl
galloping flat-out over the prairie!

Because that's how hard death
is thundering at you,
his knuckles white
on the black pommel;
too late you'll see
the east gate has been shut,
spurs glitter
on his needle-toed boots.

— Elise Partridge

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from *TUFT*

The animals leave the shores of the river. lope down curbs. peer into gardens. their teeth gnash and sparkle in the reflecting pools of fluorescence. the creatures that live in their fur and between their toes tangle in the alleys. the city and the animals flourish – together. coyotes, skunks, raccoons – nightraiders lull the streets luminous. when you see the animals you forget. the city translates.

— Kim Minkus

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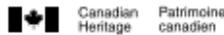
from **MIGRATORY
PATHS**

The consolation of biology: everything has a use, appetite, expiration. Songs and photographs, our sheets, littered inboxes of computers—all gnash gears, endeavour to slow decay but it travels the body like blood, quickens us. Birds repeat themselves, declare victory in the sky while below arteries are jellied with fish eggs that our daughter pops between finger and thumb. We are tokens of cellular recall laddered through spines and follicles, spectres of desire for variation, as though we could offer the role of tree or harbour for decades, promise roots, branches, tributaries. Look, we say, here is the world! You'll see it all once; the rest is memory.

— Laisha Rosnau

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EXHIBIT (1985): TWELVE.

Bombay girl—there is no record of her running—
the long beaches of Juhu, past high-rise apartments,
villas stained bougainvillea red—girl bordering into woman,
boundaries not yet formed,
with her cousins she's in Montreal
they help pack sarees, jewels—
the night before her first solo journey
she dreams of waterways, a path leading down
to the St. Lawrence,
in the wash of the river, she'll find two pieces of flat rock.
At the airport, alone past security, she fingers, not pebbles,
cool metal ridges: her suitcase.

Status: unable to locate body

— Renée Sarojini Saklikar

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A WEEK OF SILENCE

This is where our narratives diverge.
You went down that dry riverbed.
I climbed to the mountains.
Some say monks hide there
and that their clothes are ugly.
I found the spring and washed my face, feet and hands.
A deer with the eyes of my kindest sister
stopped near me.
All my advice fell like brittle leaves in a dying forest.
I had never felt less alone.
The green glow of ferns and nettle, water droplets on moss.
I do not wish to keep anyone
from their scheduled visit to the underworld.
So please, friend, continue on without me.

—Jen Currin

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OLD MAN VACANAS, 11

The old man
takes his choppers out
when chicken sticks to them.

He parks them in a glass
of blue fizz.

DNA from fossil bones
tells us we're siblings to Neanderthals—
and the small arrangements
we make? Language, travel, art? Props
in a little, local, theatre of light.

—Jane Munro

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from CHARITY

Now, stepped from decades of gleaning gutters,
he'd returned to what was possible, a man
grown into his fate like a foot into a boot.
Who knows what losses he had suffered,
what oceans crossed, mountains climbed to arrive
at such a state (I've seen him since, half-soaked
in mythos, boarding the morning bus
in bleak confusion, once pushing a cart
under the drawbridge where ragged souls,
guardians of the moat, huddle at the footings).
Yet that day he wasn't seeking pity.
From beyond the backdrops of our city
he'd returned – still short, spunky – to visit
his mom, he said, and hadn't brought a coat.

— Catherine Greenwood

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