

Poetry Samples

Jo Anne Richardson

Strength

And so, in the evening
in the crisp of the summer evening
with the bamboo chimes dancing together
and the cool of the Pacific stroking your face
you drew a breath
and decided it was time
way past time

to take one foot
and move it
Forward.

Wedding Day

I took a box

and filled it with a thousand kisses.

And when the bride and the groom

opened the box

a million butterflies flew out

as if the gods

had smiled down upon the two of them

and said

Begin.

The Bee in the Grass

My dog watches the bee in the grass
and I watch my dog.

She tires of the bee, after a time, and raises her head.
points her snout, black as coal, to the sky

takes in the smells and the sounds of the world around
her

honeysuckle and basil
heron and turtle
the quiet neighbor pulling weeds on the other side of the fence.

It is summer.

And the world explodes, with

Possibility.

Summer's End

When the leaves fall on Whidbey
and you've closed a chapter in your life

the thing to do is, have lunch in town at the café on Main
order winter butternut squash soup, a glass of Cabernet

watch the old man at the crowded family table nearby
rise, slowly
pick up the baby, then rock her in his arms
while the wool of his tattered sweater
brushes the pink of her face
and the wooden floorboards creak beneath his feet.

When the leaves fall on Whidbey
and you've closed a chapter in your life

the thing to do is, take your dog up the hill
the one that rises high above Greenbank farms

go to the very top, near where the evergreens stand
weary soldiers against the wind
reach down, quickly, unhook her leash
say "let's go for a run good girl"

then fly down the hill together
ecstatic
and at long last
running free.

Before the Winter Came

Now that my vision

has returned

I can see the memories.

shadows and light

edges and angles

buds and blossoms

surrounding the lilies

we planted

in that old French garden

all those years ago.