

Poetry Collection by Mary McGinnis

Five Acre Poem

From its edge,

I hear cottonwoods high-pitched screaming

Very loud—smothered in mistletoe; it

Envelopes them.

5 Along another edge junipers

Can hardly be seen for the mistletoe; I

Remember how it rained

Each summer in this bosque and wonder why

Pompous, genteel neighbors won't go

10 Outside and pick off the mistletoe.

Even teenagers do not deign to cut and move all the heavy, dead branches.

~~~~~

After all these years,  
the drought did not frighten us--  
looking at dead trees.

~~~~~

Earth

Elves must shield you, elves who love wings and
all birds as well as earwigs; and the
rain must touch you for old time's sake, and
touching you, bring you back, my
hollow, broken mother.

~~~~~

Hooked on Scrub Jays

How he watched the trees while sitting

On the sun porch; how birds

On their trajectory made a

Kaleidoscope rough and clean; how night hawks were

5 Eating bursts of bugs as the hills darkened.

On summer twilights toward

Night the jays' green sound was magical.

10 Surely they would conjure rain-making

Chains of silver

Rolling through the air to dissolve,

Unpremeditated as earth quakes, and the

Buzzing flies would finally stop - and

15 Sleep would overtake him when the

Jays quieted down.

~~~~~

"All Day I Felt Mountains"
--Ann Weisman

As I rolled out the dough,
I felt a mountain coming toward me in the fog.
That was where I wanted to go--
and never make a yeast bread again.

5

I felt a tiny mountain rubbing against my back;
I stood still, feeling, feeling its thin breath:
its breath was warm and smelled of dust and lightning.
We've got to go there, I told you.

10

Go where it doesn't rain except in July,
go where every other neighbor cooks beans,
where the air is light green,
where the purple berries make you sleepy,

15

where we will walk the streets at night
and feel safe, touching carved doors,
drinking Dubonet and laughing to ourselves.
Where we went to the mountain and lay down there . . .

20

Where the apricots were simmered in honey,
where we made lumpy corn tortillas in 1972,
where coyotes still live, where the ravens still eat,
where the snow has returned.

25

Where the mountains are steeped in light,
where I have said goodbye to nylon stockings,
where I have said it doesn't matter,
where some of the apples have a tang.



About The Poet

Writing poetry is Mary McGinnis's joy. Revision is one way she plays. When she began doing timed writing practice, parts of her inner and outer life were unexpectedly revealed to her. She participates in 3 writing groups in which members inspire, support, and write with each other.

Having the disability of blindness all her life challenged her to have a career for 35 years. During that time, filled with counseling and advocacy, she kept writing, no matter what. Living in New Mexico since 1972 brought her connection with emptiness, desert, and mountains. She won two awards for the poem "Desert Stones Talking". Her first full-length collection, *Listening For Cactus*, was published by Sherman Asher Publishing in 1996 .

She attended two month-long writing residencies at the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Red Wing, Minnesota in 1999 and 2002. She was one of the first recipients of the Gratitude award from the New Mexico Literary Arts Board in 2009. In 2012, she was a panelist and reader at the Write Disability Conference in Albuquerque, NM. Besides being published widely in journals and anthologies, she has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize.