

Classic Poetry Series

Elizabeth Holmes
- poems -

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Elizabeth Holmes()

Elizabeth Holmes is the author of two books of poetry, *The Patience of the Cloud Photographer* (1997) and *The Playhouse Near Dark* (2007), both published by Carnegie Mellon University Press. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Gettysburg Review*, and many other journals.

She is also the author of two novels for young readers, *Pretty Is* (2007) and *Tracktown Summer* (2009), both from Dutton Children's Books. A graduate of Davidson College and Cornell University, she works as a writer and researcher in Ithaca, New York.

The Fathers

Traditionally, the same actor plays Captain Hook and Mr. Darling.

-- The Picture Book of Peter Pan (c. 1930)

Something's familiar about that villain
striding the deck of the Jolly Roger, chest
puffed out under the fancy jabot --
a bit like, yes, like Father huffing around
before an evening out, proper shirtfront
outthrust by an important bay window.
Particular about his cuff links as a pirate
about lace at his wrists. Same air of dashing
yet dastardly middle age. A penchant
for issuing orders and threats, and tying
up uncooperative dogs or Indian princesses.

No wonder we sons and daughters laugh
when Hook sits on the hot toadstool
over Peter's chimney, when Tinker Bell
flits out of his grasp. And especially
at his slapstick flailing through the sea,
pursued by that confident long-jawed beast,
time ticking loud in its belly.

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