

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Connie Wanek**

**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

## After Us

I don't know if we're in the beginning  
or in the final stage.

-- Tomas Transtr mer

Rain is falling through the roof.  
And all that prospered under the sun,  
the books that opened in the morning  
and closed at night, and all day  
turned their pages to the light;

the sketches of boats and strong forearms  
and clever faces, and of fields  
and barns, and of a bowl of eggs,  
and lying across the piano  
the silver stick of a flute; everything

invented and imagined,  
everything whispered and sung,  
all silenced by cold rain.

The sky is the color of gravestones.  
The rain tastes like salt, and rises  
in the streets like a ruinous tide.  
We spoke of millions, of billions of years.  
We talked and talked.

Then a drop of rain fell  
into the sound hole of the guitar, another  
onto the unmade bed. And after us,  
the rain will cease or it will go on falling,  
even upon itself.

Connie Wanek

## **Butter.**

Butter

Butter, like love,  
seems common enough  
yet has so many imitators.  
I held a brick of it, heavy and cool,  
and glimpsed what seemed like skin  
beneath a corner of its wrap;  
the décolletage revealed  
a most attractive fat!

And most refined.  
Not milk, not cream,  
not even creme de la creme.  
It was a delicacy which assured me  
that bliss follows agitation,  
that even pasture daisies  
through the alchemy of four stomachs  
may grace a king's table.

We have a yellow bowl near the toaster  
where summer's butter grows  
soft and sentimental.  
We love it better for its weeping,  
its nostalgia for buckets and churns  
and deep stone wells,  
for the press of a wooden butter mold  
shaped like a swollen heart.

Connie Wanek

## Coloring Book

Each picture is heartbreakingly banal,  
a kitten and a ball of yarn,  
a dog and bone.  
The paper is cheap, easily torn.  
A coloring book's authority is derived  
from its heavy black lines  
as unalterable as the ten commandments  
within which minor decisions are possible:  
the dog black and white,  
the kitten gray.  
Under the picture we find a few words,  
a title, perhaps a narrative,  
a psalm or sermon.  
But nowhere do we come upon  
a blank page where we might justify  
the careless way we scribbled  
when we were tired and sad  
and could bear no more.

Connie Wanek

## **Daisies**

In the democracy of daisies  
every blossom has one vote.  
The question on the ballot is  
Does he love me?

If the answer's wrong I try another,  
a little sorry about the petals  
piling up around my shoes.

Bees are loose in the fields  
where daisies wait and hope,  
dreaming of the kiss of a proboscis.  
We can't possibly understand

what makes us such fools.  
I blame the June heat  
and everything about him.

Submitted by Venus

Connie Wanek

## Jump Rope

There is menace  
in its relentless course, round and round,  
describing an ellipsoid,  
an airy prison in which a young girl  
is incarcerated.

Whom will she marry? Whom will she love?  
The rope, like a snake,  
has the gift of divination,  
yet reveals only a hint, a single initial.  
But what if she never misses?

Is competence its own reward?  
Will the rope never strike her ankle,  
love's bite? The ends turn and turn,  
two-handed as their arms tire,  
their enchantments exhausted.

It hurts to watch her now,  
flushed and scowling,  
her will stronger than her limbs,  
her braids lashing her shoulders  
with each small success.

Submitted by Venus

Connie Wanek

## **The Coin Behind Your Ear**

Before you knew you owned it  
it was gone, stolen, and you were a fool.  
How you never felt it is the wonder,  
heavy and thick,  
lodged deep in your hair like a burr.  
You still see the smile of the magician  
as he turned the coin in his long fingers,  
which had so disturbed your ear  
with their caress. You watched him  
lift it into the light, bright as frost,  
and slip it into his maze of pockets.  
You felt vainly behind your ear  
but there was no second coin,  
nothing to tempt him back.  
No one cared to know why he did it,  
only how.

Submitted by Venus

Connie Wanek