

Diaries

Joyce Ellen Davis

And again, let all the records
be had in order . . . to be held in
remembrance from generation to
generation, saith the Lord of Hosts.
D&C 128:9

Thou tellest my wanderings: put
thou my tears into thy bottle:
are they not in thy book?
Psalms 56:8

I keep diaries in my head
At night I write on sealed pages
In dream codes a sort
Of dot-dot-dash Morse himself
Couldn't read keeps them private
Old loves recur taller than they were
Twice as bold
Dressed in dimstore suits and ties
I never saw them wear

And my father
Who never heard of Neruda
Gu Cheng or the Cultural Revolution
Rocks calmly on the porch
And speaks to me
Of bread and milk
I'm sick he says
And wants to say goodbye
As if he were not already dead

JOYCE ELLEN DAVIS, currently Utah Poet of the Year, teaches writing classes in Salt Lake City where she lives with her husband and five sons. She has had two books published, Chrysalis and In Willy's House.

This is a book
My grandchildren will never read
From pages carelessly left open
The key is not in my hand
Not even in my pocket
Never will my children say
Mama tell us of Olden Times
And turn these pages that open upon
Old houses old rooms that suck me in

Like Alice through the glass
This world is mine alone
Where the voices and the windows
The old mingling of bodies
And the landscapes are buried what's here
Is one raw nerve exposed
And aching to go where I never can
To grasp the fleeting things
That would disappear