

## POETRY

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### Stones

*Loretta Sharp*

The following poems are taken from a collection called *Letting Go* and center on the experiences of three Mormon women, Beth, Elise, and Willene, who are spending the summer in 12N, an efficiency apartment on the upper West Side of New York City. Directly across from their windowed wall is a building where transients come to observe them.

Antonio, the liveried doorman who nods and beams like a scarlet top, has approached Beth. Each night-school exam is a paragraph saying something like "American children watch too much t.v. Agree or disagree." Could she ask Willene to teach him when to agree? Or he'll stay a doorman the rest of his life, and he's already forty-eight. How much might she charge?

Willene complains: she cannot understand half that he says; Beth learned Spanish on her mission, Elise Portuguese on hers; they are English teachers. "He wants you to teach him," says Beth sweetly. Elise grins, knowing how this will end.

"But you and Elise *pray* to bless others; i ask to be left alone." Willene feels a stone roll to the wall that holds her in.

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*LORETTA RANDALL SHARP* established the writing program at the Interlochen Arts Academy in 1975. She has received two NEH Fellowships and a Fulbright Fellowship to India, and she has been selected as a Klingenstein Fellow for 1987-88. In 1984, she received a Michigan Creative Artist Award to finish the collection, *Letting Go*.