

One Sunday's Rain (After Word of My Father's Illness)

Dixie Partridge

All morning: rainwater
off the roof onto pebbles
washed smooth of pale soil
in the garden.
After weeks of dust,
vowels and spilled consonants
of water. . . .
I stay close to the sound

like my father in the Rockies,
who would camp only
where the madrigal stream
could enter the cocoon
of his fire and his sleep
and move on

and move on
with the night
standing still.
All morning I listen
behind arguments and laughter
of children, the ragtime
my son plays at piano.

DIXIE PARTRIDGE's second book, Watermark, won the 1990 Eileen W. Barnes Award and was published by Saturday Press (New Jersey) in summer 1991. Her poetry has appeared widely in journals and in several anthologies. She and her husband, Jerry, have six children and live in Richland, Washington.

I carry the rainwater
sound through each motion,
through late traffic and wind,
the stretched silence
from the wires
that brought us the news;

ladle it
like eternal life
into bowls on the table—
each portion a clear,
silvered tone
of the water.