

# Movement: Out of Doors, Out of Town, In Dangerous Times

*Dixie Partridge*

To that lit spot ahead  
is as far as you'll walk:  
open green, bounded by pale shrubs  
you can't name, sky  
in clabbery cloud, light blue showing through.  
Storm coming, your father would say.

You should run, should pound  
heaviness out through soles  
into the earth you know is anything  
but solid: tunnels of moles and mounds  
of gophers, earthworms leaving patterns

---

*DIXIE PARTRIDGE* has two published collections of poetry: *Deer in the Haystacks* (Boise: Boise State University, Ahsahta Press, 1984) and *Watermark* (Upper Montclair, NJ: Saturday Press, 1991), winner of the Eileen W. Barnes Award. Her work has appeared in anthologies and such journals as *Poetry*, *The Georgia Review*, *Ploughshares*, *MidWest Quarterly*, *Northern Lights*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *America*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Yankee*. She received her B.A. in English from Brigham Young University (1965), has edited poetry for anthologies, and is currently poetry editor for *Sunstone*. She is seeking a publisher for her third volume, *Not About Dreams*, and is working on a fourth.

like that early memory of crumpled yarns pulled  
and scattered from Aunt Lila's knitting bag  
across carpet of the ladies meeting room  
in that pine church your father helped build

which is no longer there, far from here,  
and so long ago

you can only be dazed at such an image  
weaving through fifty-odd years  
into this slow motion walk

you had meant to run into exhaustion, into sleep  
which can't really forget  
a certainty come late that all times  
have been dangerous:

blessing or not you hadn't always known,  
like you didn't know the scattered Pleiades  
and staunch Orion you'd loved since childhood  
were in the Bible  
along with burning bush and brimstone,  
angels, Armageddon, pillar of salt,

and pasture, the word now that calms  
as you reach the green slope, a pale drift  
of bushes turned to mounds of white petals  
snowing down . . . .

You stand still, stand still  
as you can in slight movement of air

and the grasses . . .  
the grasses breathe

breathe in and out  
around you