

*Not So Scarlet
A Woman*



light & humorous poems
by Winona Baker



54 P on 4500
1st Ed 87
2nd " 89

Minerva Fakes
606 - Fiest & Men
V9R1Y9
Marked copy for
Reading

- Fulghum R: laughter is the only cure for.
- asbestos gelos (a Greek phrase meaning
unquenchable laughter
(57 Pb))
- Picked for B.C. Books for Literacy,
1992. One of 24 books from BC
Publishers for adult new readers
and literacy providers

Buy "lite" verse - no fat
no cholesterol -
just a giggle, a smile
from some fun folderal.

Better than oat bran
or jogging. They say
laughter - not apples -
keeps the doctor away.

Barbara Petocky

from HWUP 92

Barbara Petocky

stimulus.
er 87 min
skin rash
Kimata reported
ty-six men and women with
gies to dust mites were given injections of a
ducing substance. Their skin welts were m
and after the videos.
Kimata said exactly how humour m
the welts is not known.
But Dr. Margaret Stuber, a profess
biobehavioural sciences at UCLA, sai
a lot of sense from a scientific stand,

Not So Scarlet A Woman



light & humorous poems
by Winona Baker

Winona Baker

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DEDICATION

For
Dana, Adam, Cate, Heather, Carmen, Brian
and Aunt Louise, the cover girl.

To raise a good-natured smile was the major part of this work
written.

Charles Dibdin
Tales and Lyrical Fancies 1825

Mona's Smile
 Helen Wilby
 Let's
 Waiting
 Way Birds Sing

many of the poems

BROOMSTICK
 ELDER STATESMAN
 DISCOVERY
 GEMS OF POETRY 1984 - Lessons
 HERIZONS
 THE LAUREATE - Blessings
 LIVING MESSAGE - Easter Hymn
 NANAIMO DAILY FREE PRESS
 NANAIMO TIMES
 NEW OUTLOOK
 NORTHERN MOSAIC
 RADICAL REVIEW
 SALMON ARM SONNET CONTEST WINNERS
 SHORELINES
 STUMP - Blessings Itil Sun Leones
 SEASIDE WOMAN - Kristina A. R. C.
 WHETSTONE
 WOMANSONG

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ORCHIDS AND DAFFODILS
 SIXTY SINGING YEARS
 THE UMBRELLA

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FOREWORD

I'm the author of this book of (mostly) humorous poems but can't define humor. Dictionaries consulted gave unsatisfactory meanings: wit, whimsy, caprice, etc.

Daring to argue with lexicographers I'll guardedly partly define it as the ability to see oneself as un-unique.

Ogden Nash stated it's better to have an abscess or a tumor than a sense of humor. Still we assume it's a good thing to possess and are quick to insist we have one. If tested I'm sure we'd find a great variation in what's really funny in the eye of God. A story that amused A might have B smiling nervously because she realized it was expected of her.

Humor's role in medicine is increasingly being recognized. Norman Cousins, for one, has written books about its part in his recovery. But those bellwethers, writers, have long been aware of that. Mark Twain had one of his characters laugh loud and joyously shaking his anatomy from head to foot, and saying it was money in a man's pocket because it cut down on the doctor's bills like everything.

Or take melancholic Richard Burton:

Humor purges the blood, making the body young,
lively, and fit for any manner of employment . . .
the principal engine for battering the walls of
melancholy

One can speculate that Neitzche and Van Gogh, for example, might have lived more happily and died sane had they possessed the ability to laugh; that great safety valve for the mind at the end of its tether.

Contrast Abraham Lincoln under stress. He had a staggering job: fighting a war, foreign relations, the reconstruction of the Union, a wife who must have made his life hell.

He had always suffered periods of depression that he felt almost unendurable. Yet in society he was merry, telling his often corny stories. Some people were offended; and a congressman rebuked him for apparent silliness.

Lincoln replied, "You cannot be more anxious than I have been since the beginning of the war...I say to you now, were it not for this occasional vent I should die."

Han Suyin has written of the bafflement of Westerners to the reaction of Chinese people to disaster: grief, then the laugh.

I too, laugh at things that ought to shock me . . .
a happy protection that keeps me balanced . . .

But let E.B. White have the last word. He thought analyzing humor was like dissecting a frog. It could be undertaken, but the frog tended to die in the process.

*all real laughter . . . from the belly,
is to some extent a realization of
truth R. H. Blyth*

*Certain poets, certain poetry have a
browbeating effect on us. Arnold*

*laughter explodes when two different
realities collide*

106

w BTL

ON MONA'S SMILE

I know what brought
that expression to her face
during one of her sittings
Leo said to her, "You know Mona
you're very intelligent
for a woman."

218

CAVEWOMAN LIB

She wants
not to talk
but some talk
get hair braid
wear feather
have fun
do stomp, stomp
eat bone roast
drink ferment
and sing song

not hear
wha-aa-t
in cook pot?
where sandal?
where breech clout?

and kid cry

not be
broom, dust pan
not
be naught

3rd

WOMANSONG
BROOMSTICK
AL AU BUL
THEMES FOR ALL
TIMES

INSIDE POETRY

BTL

Sub

3/12/87 Photocopy

(10/07 Demeter)

218
10/07 Demeter

CAN A.A. 2nd Humor, Pub Anth
APY 82
STUMP SPRING 83

I SHOULD HAVE SAID NO WHEN HE ASKED ME TO DANCE

I could have stayed home,
Far worse things there be
Than chat on the phone
Or tea and TV.

Or I could have said no,
When band struck a tune;
Though I love the sight
Of a waltz-moving room.

Complained of sprained ankle
Or migraine so cruel-
Said I'd Pushkin lover
So jealous he'd duel.

But I smiled, took his hand -
Oh he was a zinger!
He believed he was Fred,
Ergo, I was Ginger.

Remember *Red Shoes*?
Dancing maid could not stop?
I was whirling upended
After glide, dip and hop.

We toppled couples
Without even trying,
Set chandelier ringing and
Chairs, tables flying.

Music stopped, the crowd circled:
Their scoldings were fair,
He wasn't Bojangles, Bolger
Kelly or Astaire.

Banished from ballroom
Went our separate ways,
With shrunken shoulders
And averted gaze.

But now that it's over
And can't be undone,
I'll admit for awhile
What glorious fun!

Phone Call 33
VALENTINE FOR VALENTINO

caption
This is no Arab tent,
This is a room;
You never abducted me
I opened the door.

You leaped from your noble steed-
No, parked your car;
Strode over the Persian rugs,
I mean the floor.

You flung your burnoose on skins
Of the unborn goat
No, went to the closet and
There hung up your coat.

We dined on viands that came
On the laden tray.
Just think we had potatoes
And meatloaf today!

Now here we are content
In the double bed,
Valentino lives, no matter
What you've heard or read.

*- Sub 12/15 Tops won 1st Prize Open Heart Contest
1st Prize - Open Heart Box*

BLESSING FOR THE EDITOR WHO REJECTED MY POEMS

Limp from the depths Hephaestus
Forge your strongest chain,
Fasten him to the Urals
Whistle the vulture again.

Shove him into a crater
With lava bubbling hot-
Find underprivileged cannibals
Fill their empty pot.

Sew him into a canvas,
With Sisyphus's stone for a bride,
Steer for the Marianas
Heave him over the side.

17
- Top '25' of 1000
THE LAUREATE
- STUMP
11,800 metres deep - Classical Antigoni
Anthology Pyltron
3/94 Press

SET POETRY FREE

Set poetry free
let it be

in brown furrows
green things budding
horses romping
brown cows grazing
or just resting
under shade trees
in the gold
of wayside poppies

let poetry be

MEMORY BANK

Families too are poems
 Brian catching water
 Dana making footpools
 in the sea-edge sand
 ahead a small red jacket
 Cathy walks alone

Mary breastfeeds the baby
 Don makes up games
 tells fantastic stories
 to the dubious children

Store these moments

106

THE CAT

I don't think
 curiosity killed
 the CAT

I think it kept
 the CAT alive

She kept coming back
 to see how things
 turned out

BLACK CAT MYSERYMA

STUMP

ANIMAL TIMES

193

LIMERICK

There was a poet of Lantzville,
 Who wrote all her poems with a quill;
 When they asked her why
 She said with a sigh,
 "Well ballpoints are so hard to fill."

TIMES

NEW OUTLOOK

KNITTING A BABY : FOR SUSAN MUSGRAVE

I
am knitting a baby
not, a colicky one
she will not be
wet, smelly, won't
cry a lot

early-weaned, she'll
eat her string beans
never throw up
or down on
my new outfit

she will not say, "No!"
fifty times a day
she will not make
scenes in stores when
I won't buy her
chocolates

she will not get
a runny nose, go
huuuuuuuugh - wipe it
on my sleeve.

she will run off to bed
after kissing us all goodnight
oaths will never pop
from those rosebud lips, she
will impress the boss
curtsey for grandma
and anyone else who
may leave us money

I am nearly done
knitting my perfect child
if she's not so perfect
I can't
unravel her

SUB - cont
- 10/07 Demeter

SUB

Redy
aug 7/83 in Parkville

83 - 3 RDGS { VILLA
PARKVILLE
22 & WORDS

HORNBY HELD

6/81 SEASIDE WOMAN

INFLATION

We had a horse,
We got a car,
Now money doesn't
Go as far.

TRY IT

Roll poems
on your tongue
they may plug a dike
save a town



EASTER CONVERSATION

"Did you see a miracle?"
"No," the man said,
"Three people were nailed
To crosses till dead."

"What had they done?"
"Two thieves they say-
The third? It was politics.
He got in the way."

"I heard he was well-loved."
"Well I looked around
Very few tears
Fell to the ground."

The usual crowd,
Hangers-on for a show,
Could have been others,
But not that I know."

"But you can't deny
That on the third day
From the front of a tomb
A stone rolled away."

He who'd lain dead
Came walking out;
And comforted those
That he cared about."

"Oh you know how
Those stories go round
I've yet to see dead men
Arise from the ground."

Want my opinion?
Here's what I say,
Soon none will recall
What happened that day."

"Did you see a miracle?"
"No" the man said,
"Three people were nailed
To crosses till dead."

copy 2
copies

- Living Messenger 20 Editor Liked & paid
he asked if could put to music & sing

08- FUFON 08³ caused a furor. 21. Poetry site
4 Mary asked weigh in on it - No
- Radio 5/2/82 EBC

*He-
- preted bc then I am. Mary Tremonti re. 76
get the real story

LISTEN WILLY *

You say nuns fret not, but of course they do
Whether they're in or outside convent walls.
A poet can write that they do not do;
But oh, he does lie for I can tell you:
That never was there born a woman yet,
Who sometime in her lifetime did not fret.
About her weight, her legs, her shape, her clothes-
Her hair oily or dry, and oh her nose.
Things awry with sister, boss, or brother;
Something amiss with husband, or with lover.

Oh yes I tell it true, I cannot fib
Not lore nor learning-even woman's lib-
Can change the fact we fret, we women do.
Why would we not? Consider, men do too.

*Nuns fret not

William Wordsworth

3rd Salmon Arm Sonnet

DAFFODILS : FOR DENYS

Daffodils live with mist and rain
Daffodils don't mind if you're staring
Daffodils follow their own timeclock
Daffodils don't like being bulldozed
Daffodils just ignore highrises
Daffodils don't stay on a budget
Daffodils never keep good minutes
Daffodils don't play video games
Daffodils may, or may not meditate
Daffodils dance to apartment music

ANTH: ORCHIDS & DAFFODILS

CRITICS AND BEHAN

t Brendan Behan
 that fine broth
 of a Borstal Boy
 was asked on TV
 what he thought of critics

"They're eunuchs in a harem
 watching and criticizing
 what they can't do themselves."

Spring? Yes, but....

Please, I know you're lovely but
 I don't need another spring.
 Spring just tells me that I have
 Let slip by another year.
 Couldn't time just stop awhile?
 Won't be enticed by your airs,
 I'll shut my eyes and then you can't
 seduce with myriad shades of green.
 Spring reminds me that I am
 That much closer to the end,
 Yes, I know you're lovely but—

Oh yes! I need another spring!

TWO FOR SPRING

THIS SPRING

Brash sun breaks through and drums the earth
With fists of gold, awakening it;
Now sleeping things aroused, uncurl
To grow toward his warming touch.

Have I too, been long asleep?
Should be persuaded from my dreams -
To reach, to stretch, and then to grow -
How far? I won't know till I try.

SPRING? YES, BUT

Please, I know you're lovely but
I don't need another spring,
Spring just tells me that I have
Let slip by another year.
Couldn't time just stop awhile?
Won't be enticed by your airs-
I'll shut my eyes and then you can't
Seduce with myriad shades of green.
Spring reminds me that I am
That much closer to the end,
Yes, I know you're lovely but-

Oh yes! I need another spring!

*Living Message
Van Free Press
Broomstick
Discovery
Suck
11/07 11/07/07
2/09 NR PL13
window poem*

PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY

Yes Dali
it persists

what I thought
forgotten
left far, far behind

was really only waiting
in the purlieus
of my mind

THE DANCE : FOR MATISSE

They climb the hill
a place of delight
naked are bathed
by the sun's light

Rest there until
kindled by sun
five figures rise
join hands each one

Step hard then soft
soon are entranced
building to this
spirit of dance

201

BTL

WHEN I'M PERFECT

Someday I'll be perfect
rise at five to jog
a cold shower - meditation
I may levitate

I'll become a vegetarian
lose my beer belly
my hair light, straight
worn in a classic knot

cupboards with co-ordinated linens
gleaming wood reflecting
polished silver, I'll join clubs
with royal names, greek letters

My children
will speak of their
angel mother who never raises her voice

I'll think things are pre-ordained
instead of being sure some s.o.b.
with free will is getting jollies
by annoying hell out of me

Someday when I'm perfect

STUMP

RADICAL REV

SOME EXCUSES FOR CORDELIA *

Robert Graves these lines did pen,
"Why do lovely women marry impossible men?"
I'll tell you Robbie why it's done
Half an oaf is better than none.

R. Graves wonders why
Cool chick weds weird guy,
Bob this should come as no surprise
He puts that old gleam in her eyes.

"Why," Graves ponders late,
"Do lovely ones with real clods mate?"
Bobbie boy I must be blind
Mean to say there's another kind?

Bobbsie since your lines I read
Your question lingers in my head;
Wish I'd never read the poem
Pick up your verses and go home!

- * For Robert Graves who asked the question, "Why do lovely women marry impossible men?"

CENSUS

Are you young, are you old?
Are you fat? Are you thin?
Are you married? Divorced?
Are you living in sin?
If you worked what
Amount did you make
This last year?
When was the last time
You bought any beer?
Do you prefer wine,
Whiskey, vodka or gin?
Does your navel bulge out
Or does it poke in?
Do you like to work nights
And sleep in the day?
Don't use crayon or pen
But pencil's okay.
Do you buy from boutiques,
Department store racks,
Do Goodwill goodies
Cover your backs?
Hurry! Reply!
Get this back quick
We'd like to see what
Makes Canadians tick.

ONE WOMAN'S LIB

"Shouldn't have married,"
I said, I said.
No one held
a gun to my head.

"Should have had no child
although a wife."
I knew how to
prevent a life.

"Should have had
an exciting career."
Chances are taken
not given, my dear.

"I want to be free,"
I said, I said.
I wasn't trussed
to the double bed."

OGIM (OH GOD IT'S MONDAY)

On Monday no stockings match,
No one can find clean underwear,
Monday you're faced with cleaning up
And jobs for which you just don't care.

Monday's the day you gain five pounds,
What you finally ease into
Pops a button off the band--you're
Out of bread, the milk's done too.

Monday you try to rest awhile,
But pesky calls come all the day.
The postie brings you dunning bills
That you somehow forgot to pay.

Monday you feel you're catching cold,
And acne blooms upon your chin,
You're in-laws call, and that's okay--
But there's a mess and nothing in!

Monday of course the car won't start,
Grey shows in your gritty hair,
You're sure if you laid down and died
Not one soul would really care.

Monday should be stricken off
The calendar I really think.
I could say so much more--but -- *dash*
This pen just ran out of ink.

John Bursky actually

NDSS: OPEN HOUSE 1976

In the new building
music students
are tuning their guitars

the teacher says
"The guitar is a pretty instrument
unlike some sounds well
even when wrong notes are struck."

Tuned instruments sweet sounds
turned faces the chorus sings
as we listen
in the music building

BATHTUB RACE

Like bright colored fish
netted but not yet
pulled from the water
small boats skitter
in the channel

Annual madness
the Nanaimo to Vancouver
Bathtub Race

*Changal
- Lush V. Nord*

A misnomer, these
darting fiberglass reconstructs
aren't tubs, tho' there's
acknowledgement of origin

? boats

Mock seriousness
the Admiral, vestal virgins,
costumed attendants,
prayers, offerings to gods
critics frown but
crowds gather

Auden's creed: in life
attention must be paid
to work, prayer, laughter

*Stump
Elder Statesman*

266

PHONE CALL

She's seventeen
goes to a party
meets Peter
"But he won't phone."

"He's tall, dark-eyed
dark hair
took our number-
but he won't phone."

"He lives
out of town
we danced, he's nice-
but he won't phone."

"He's smart
sense of humor
said he would
but he won't phone."

"I'll get that phone!"

1990-6
86 AL PD YR - R-11 Humour
ANTH: SIXTY SINGING YEARS
Sub 12/06 Tops

WISH I'D THOUGHT OF IT THEN

Long time
think rhyme
learn to
not do
Prof say
no way
long while
outta style

Appreciate
still some great
wrote that way
not here to stay?
When poem runs
in my head
oft by one
a long time dead

so listen Prof
bug off!

ON THE OTHER HAND

Poetry needn't rhyme
all the time

*an addition to book V1RL.
Image a print junkie reader*

Print Junkie Kicks Habit

Pss-ssst! Hey books
Won't be seeing you— decided
maybe you're not good for me

You've done nothing wrong but
occupied so much of my time
Should get my own ideas, look and
handle other things besides books

I've loved your new smell
slick jackets (some in poor taste)
but book necrophiles read old tomes too
Have loved you indiscriminately
like old Karamazov loved women
Am I a monster to find book people
more real than some people

Oh Library, didn't need to come
and tell you, could have just
cut up my card and left— no!
Won't check out one last book
to celebrate giving you up
we-ll-ll

Winona Baker
606 First Street, Nanaimo
BC V9R 1Y9
wbaker@telus.net

HIC SUNT LEONES *

"Oh you haven't yet seen our lions?
They live in the valley below." . . .
Well it's pleasant enough in the village
No reason, of course, you should go."

"Their great heads are aura-circled,
Golden bodies and paws--
Sleek and staring, look sleepy--
You don't see the razor-sharp claws."

"Oh yes, I've been down with the lions--
And I am not dead, as you see,
But when you have run with the lions
It's a change to come back and sip tea."

* Medieval cartographers used the phrase 'Hic sunt leones'
(trans. "Here there are lions") to identify unexplored territory

STUMP

LESSONS

Numeral, not number," the professor said,
"Get that idea into the child's head.
For ideas of threeness I write down a three-
A name for what's known about, not what it be."

The idea of poem, too is out there
With perfect ideas in rarefied air.
So I can never, no never, write poem
By praying, or fasting, or waiting alone.

Words, not poem, what I write down
(Leap of Nijinsky, or antic of clown)
What I want to incise for others to see
Turns, veiled then clear, where perfection should be.

*Ums of Poetry ^{II Spring} issue 87
Sovereign Cold Lit Magazine 8/94
LCP List 4/02*

CARPING

FOR MCP & QUEEN BEE CRITICS

Boar or sow they're horrid
Those chauvinist pigs
Who in their work
Give unwarranted digs

LETTER

127

Dear Will Rogers
You said you never met
a man you didn't like
I have

Love
Win

shorelines Feb 80
Horizons Dec 89

LINES TO AN ASCETIC

For god's sake shut up,
I'm sick of cleverness
had a bellyful of bygone battles,
wherever fought or won

so you read all the classics-unabridged?
Whee-eeeeee-
ain't that fun

while you did the glowing animals
ate, drank, laughed, made love
beneath an uncomplicated sun

CRITIC

He calls a woman
who writes poems
a poetess

thinks women
should not wear pants
wants them
to act like laydees

longs for
the good old days
when mouthy broads
were burnt as witches

Herspectives

SINNING

"Don't pretend affection
you don't feel," Peg said.

Yes

(and don't pretend that
you don't care or
love may wind up dead)

LADY EDITOR

I don't denigrate her
'Cause a bad mood I'm in;
You could carve her good points
On the head of a pin

*Not so Secret + A Woman
Thank you
- Not her address -*

LET'S

Let's lie a little
say we love each other
Choose our words with care
ask questions
listen to the answers
let's
find the days too short
for all we have to tell
let's be gentle
buy silly presents
write notes
give homemade valentines
let's
go walking hand-in-hand
come back and build a fire
brush each other's hair
let's
shut our eyes and memorize
each other's faces
with our fingertips

let's lie a little--
or do we love each other

- Discovery
- Sub 12/66 fops

CITY HALL : ROCK GARDENS

Beautiful!

Flowers on the rocks
grey rocks various flowers
mostly reds and whites

Lovely are :

birds
butterflies
flowers
poems

and other useless things

WAITING

The couple
married a long time
live in uneasy truce
waiting

neither cares
for the way the house looks

if he were gone
she'd sell his tools
burn bits of lumber

if she goes first
he'll throw out
books and pictures

won't ask
the family if they want them

solicitously inquire
How do you feel today?

273
- Virago Book of
wicked Verse
- Crane Chronicles

PANHANDLER

Go singing
to people

pin poems
on clotheslines
paste them on billboards
on/under bridges

push them in backpacks
take out
full page ads
barter
at bake sales

nail them
on telephone poles
print them
on cell walls

read them
at halftime
panhandle
your poems

11/16/01 sent list poets

PIANO OUTTA TUNE

Doug says piano's
outta tune
he could be right
things tend to fall
apart when you've
been married over
thirty years

shower won't work
though you sing
in tune
in the room

things hum
paint me, fix me
the laurel hedge
grows, threatens me
one day it will
cover the house
like Beauty's vines

garden's poor
rain brings up rocks
we pick them off
enough to build
another Wall

starlings scold
outta tune
aren't frightened by
what I invent
to scare them off

in every storm
old fir tree sways
one of these days
old faller wind
will bring it down

crushing my house
me in my bed
and that piano
that's outta tune
in the back room

AL PO YR 85

STUMP

Anth: Sixty Singing Years

THE WAY BIRDS SING *

I would like to write a poem the way

Steve rode his trike
Helen did cartwheels
Doug played piano
Don studied
Marg told jokes
Art played sports

I would like to write a poem the way

Thor's hair grows
Debbie soars over the high bar
Margie Gillis dances
Ferran sings

I would like to write a poem
the way the Indian swimmers
who've tied a rope beneath the bridge
swing over the water
at just the right time
let go
arc into the river

* I would like to paint the way birds sing
Claude Monet

WHETSTONE

CRYSTAL

Rhonda, haven't seen
or thought of you for years
read an article
'Beautiful Words'
suddenly you're here

We're seventeen
in High School
kneeling over mockups
the paper, the Annual

You ask me
"What do you think
is a beautiful word?"

Wordless I counter
"You first."
"Crystal," you sounded,
"crys -tal."

READING OLD HEADLINES

What Robyn wants is to smile
What you see is me
OK Soupy, a penny for your thoughts
California faces volcanic hiccups
Safer egg hatched in BC
Hot-selling Hunky on the griddle
Mellow Costello sheds angry image
Publishing books is a crapshot
Paopao now is older and wiser
What should an elephant do? Smile?

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DARE TO EAT PEACHES *

These peaches, near perfect
most worthy of attention

Please-
no music unless
there are heralds to trumpet
while they are borne aloft

we'll make do with this bowl
I've none Cellini-wrought
no reticulated Queensware

eat them as connoisseurs
drink wine:
hold up to the light
rotate, enjoy the colors
to the nose, don't sniff
smell that aroma

Then bite
roll morsels in the mouth
crush fruit 'twixt tongue and palate
let juices dribble
pause
roll the eyes
sigh, they deserve no less
now
before some artist
kidnaps them for his still life
eat those peaches

* Dare I eat a peach?
Eliot T.S.

Peaches

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CHRISTMAS IN CANADA

From wherever you are
Be it mountain or sea,
It's Christmas in Canada
Come home now to me. From
Vancouver Island Totemland
Or Anne's gabled farm,
Or sea-splashed Newfoundland
Come you home without harm.

Are you by the St. Lawrence
With its old Gallic charms?
Oh here I am waiting
With my wide-open arms,
And the cakes are a-ripening
And you'll know you've been missed--
For beneath the white berries
Someone waits to be kissed.

And oh how I've missed you
You've been gone such a while.
Need the warmth of your presence,
Need your voice, and your smile.
For stoney is the path
And so cruel the way,
When those who know and love you
Are so far, far away.

Decorations are waiting
And there's a green bough;
But time it grows shorter
And you're much wanted now.
Come by train, boat or plane
Come in sleigh or in car
Come on horse, bike or snowshoes
Just you come as you are!

From prairie, valley or mountain,
From the ship on the sea,
From the great busy factory
Come you home now to me!
For from the white Arctic
To the forty-ninth line
It's Christmas in Canada
In this land of mine!

Nanaimo Free Press
Discovery
Musicanada - Anthology
Schools

Set to music by the Malaspina
Choir Director. Debut at Christmas
Concert in Gabriola Hall Dec 94.

MINE ENEMY IS GROWING OLD *

She's there in the mirror,
Who can she be?
The middle-aged matron
Who stares back at me.

Looks like she'd be married
Grown children? A spouse?
What is she doing
Here in my house?

Can picture her husband-
Not someone for me.
Likely snores on the sofa
In front of TV.

Can see her with bag
Hunting bargains in town;
Waving her coupons,
I'm more Gurley-Brown.

Her name should be here
On the tip of my tongue,
She's even a bit like-
Except that I'm young.

Can be absent minded
But I'll place her yet,
It could be she's someone
I'd sooner forget.

Can I handle her
If she won't go away?
I have a feeling
She's planning to stay.

Will she live in the past?
Slander the young?
Whine about aches?
Not hold her tongue?

She's there in the mirror,
Who can she be?
That middle-aged woman
Who contemplates me.

• Emily Dickinson

DISCOVERY

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ADVICE TO YOUNG WOMEN

Find yourself
then find someone
you may not even
have to look

LIFE

After all the shouting,
After all the crying,
There is only living,
There is only dying.

A little bit of laughter
And our days have flown;
A little bit of loving
There's the great unknown!

RETROSPECT

Rockets of pleasure,
Mist, pools of pain;
Bright umbrellas
Dance in the rain.

*Northern Mosaic 83
Pioneer News Aug/5 91*

WRITER'S EPITAPH

Once she was in love with words,
Now she lies 'neath grass and stray dog's turds;
On her stone three letters that spell RIP
Death sent not a rejection slip.



Winona Baker was born in Saskatchewan, the sixth child of eight. Like Steinbeck's Okies, the family moved to mainland BC fleeing the Depression. After her marriage she came to Nanaimo where she raised four, now grown children. Jobs held: berry picker, babysitter, teacher, clerk, reader and writer. She has won prizes for haiku, sonnet, modern, humorous and short poems. American, Canadian and Japanese publications have published her prose and poetry. She is the author of the haiku mini-book *Clouds Empty Themselves*.

What the critics have not said about NOT SO SCARLET A WOMAN:

"It should be more iron-ic." Margaret Thatcher

"Frankly, Not So Scarlet A Woman, I don't give a damn." Rhett Butler

"It goes into the bathtub with me." Frank Ney

"I found these poems as interesting as fruit flies." David Suzuki

"Suitable for girls and women." Alice Munro

"I lost years reading it." Barry Broadfoot

"Should help Canadian survival." Margaret Atwood

"Is Winona Baker a Canadian?" Peter Gzowski

"Nah, she's from BC." Allan Fotheringham

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