



Judith Ann Levison

Marry Me

Throw away that breezy-toned
Letter you scrawl on for lack
Of one true hieroglyphic
And marry me
Why go to a house where
Linen lies thin as paper on drawers
And silver reflects remote eras
As you hear kids squabbling outside
Hoping they never turn out like you
Without a secret kingdom
Where one goes to find this single

Courageous, precious self
Pitted against life's fury

Your hells are small
You dream of ancestors whose
Bold, hawkish names shrivel
You down to a stale pillow

It's now unimaginable to you
We are playing cards on the floor
Interjecting: *honey, sweetie*
My maiden name on luggage by the door
I hint with a stamp of my foot
We must surrender to that kingdom
Where we will find our essence
Wondrous and upside down

Judith Ann Levison has published poems in many publications, including *The New Yorker*, *Barbaric Yawp*, *Chiron Review*, *Darkling*, *Earthshine*, and *Orbis*. She also has poems in the 2011 anthology *Literary Town Hall*.