



Image from Where the River Meets the Ocean

Judith Ann Levison

Sheepscot River

Glory river, diamond river,
scallop waves cresting in blue glitter,
seagulls screeching, wild in the air.
I see cat-o-nine tails', their soft brown
brushes in the green marsh—
faraway a boat like a smudge.
Catch me the river says!
Glory river, diamond river,
bringing beauty and the pain of vagaries
I want to drown.

Patio With a View

Sitting on the patio with coats, usually a benign watch,
we see squirrels chasing others' tails,
amidst a web of gray limbs in cold spring.
Suddenly, a hawk with brown and cinnamon feathers,
soars down, in seconds its scab-like talons
kill a squirrel, hold it dangling from a limb

like a hairpiece.
The restless hawk eyes his universe; his neck
moving in sharp turns. Unfurled wings rise up,
then are absorbed in pink clouds,
tail red as faint rouge.
The squirrel untouched crashed to the ground.
How needless, the way man kills.

Poetic Voice

Fortunate to have a poetic voice, words shimmer on a snowy page.
Years ago, unable to articulate, splendor now lifts my body,
images follow, building small worlds.
The sun languishes, evening shores up a thin violet horizon;
I see its glory moment.
Reality does not impede me for the poems are drenched
in moods distilled by dreams reconfigured long ago:
music, drops of honey, a thrilling chill before the cold.

Shame in Youth

Ashamed of many things in the past,
still the sun and moon trade places
in the sky.
A circle of misgivings and guilt, no advice
from elders—young then, forgive!
Oh, I cannot, for someone in that raven and rock
town still remembers.
Fragrances at dusk unbearable, conscience
seared with old longings---
for love in the shape of a bird,
for flight in the movement of deer leaping out
of the forest where my secrets are buried deep,
then rise in the mist of the wet willows.

Judith Ann Levison was born into a logger's family and raised on coastal Maine. At fifteen she was published in *The New Yorker*. Inspired by her poetry, a high school teacher assisted and guided her toward higher education. She holds degrees from Mount Holyoke College, Hollins University, and Drexel University.

