

Poems of the Niagara Escarpment

Three pieces from *The Bruce*, by Lorraine Campbell

The Fox

Hiding in the shadow
of the reeds,
the fox waits as the first wrens
sing to the early dawn that
ushers in the newborn sun
rising
slipping shafts of liquid light
between the feathered trees
where the first breezes fill
the air with fluid sound

Muzzle to the wind he tests
the braid of scent borne on
the gentle wind that wafts
up from the waking marsh
carrying with it songs of frogs
and the promise of food

He waits motionless
for the perfect time
to pad on silent feet
through slender grasses
to pounce and catch in
mid leap and mid song
while untouched
singers fall silent

One
and then one
and then another,
green-backed peepers start up
until the air throbs with the
resonant breath of spring

Soft round eggs safely
buried in the gravel, the
armoured red-ear slider
scrabbles her way back
to the edge of the mud
Clumsy on land, she is
elegance in the water
No ripple marks her passage
as she glides through
the tannin realm –

Beneath the surface of the
marsh her back reflects the
golden light of the morning
and above
there is the shimmer of
a thousand iridescent
wings - insects take flight

Soon the air is pierced
with knife-edged shrieks
Gulls wheel and dive and
feast, wings silver blades in the
sun that throws heat down
to blanket the still
waters of the marsh
to hold the rich dark scent
of life close to the ground
and close to the fox
hidden once more in the
shadow of the reeds

Four Haiku, by Robert Piotrowski

the stones I bring back
from the shore -- beautiful
until they dry

burned
into every autumn leaf
a sunset

a sprinkling
of December snow
pizzelle moon

awake in the tent
I mistake a warbler's song
for a ringing phone

*Robert Piotrowski's poetry
has been published in
Frogpond, Haiku Canada
Review, and GUSTS.*

Above the Niagara Escarpment

by Jennifer L. Foster

Raucous crows at dusk
alight on bare oak branches
rising gibbous moon

*Jennifer L. Foster of Hamilton
has had poems published in
Tamaracks: Canadian Poetry
for the 21st Century (LUMMOX
Press), the LUMMOX, and
Cats Cats Cats and More
Cats (Mini Mocho Press)
anthologies, as well as Quills
Canadian Poetry Magazine
and Tower Poetry. Her short
stories have been published in
Perspectives Magazine (online).*

HOME

Solid rock beneath
my feet, rugged plants
that grow therein
With roots that twist and wind
and weave and seek the cracks
Wherein
To anchor there and
drink the dew
And nourish life above

Trees soar to grace the
earth with dappled light
from feathered leaves
They touch the sun
and change the heat to
cedar sweet perfume
That floats and drifts upon
the breeze, to cloak the earth
And settle
On the grey rocks
Split with passing years,
exposing ancient lives

Thick moss blankets
forest floor to shelter
new-dropped seeds
Pale sedge and grass at
water's edge bow and
ripple in the breeze
Orchids spring abundantly
the colour of the sun
Bear-walker scattered
by the roads, and mint
and columbine
Waves pulse or crash
upon the shore in tune
with shrill birdsong
There's rhythm in the
land and lake
In colour and in sound

This solid rock beneath my feet
The richness of the land
The Bruce is bedded
deep within
It binds me
I am home

Water Song

There's music in the water
The lake sings against
the shore
Fine spume is carried
in the wind
As breakers crash and roar
Their fury hurled against
the rock that's stood so
long through time
Then quietly all is drawn back
To rest
Regroup
Then surge anew
To play upon the stone

Huron is a mighty lake
bounded by the land
–Sweet Water Sea –
The shores were forged
By Nature's gifted hand
Rock strewn beaches
Soaring cliffs
Flat shelves of limestone grey
Boulders hurled by Manitou
Broad arcs of yellow sand

The ceaseless churning
of the waves
Makes lace of countless bays
Where cedars bow
at water's edge
To show where fossils lay
The lake brings music
to the shore
An everchanging song
There's magic deep
within this land
Where Huron makes a home

*Lorraine Campbell of Cape
Hurd is part of the global
movement 100 Thousand
Poets for Change and has a
book of poetry entitled From
the Bruce and Beyond.*

