

But—how to forgive someone who won't apologize?

But then I consider that every little forgiveness I've managed for the small wrongs—the receptionist's rudeness, the nurse's unkindness, the lover's betrayal—they've all built to this. To forgive my mother. And send her on her way. And perhaps in forgiving her, I might glimpse what her apology could have been.

"Mummy, what are you doing?"

"I'm thinking about Grannie."

"My Grannie?"

"Uh-huh."

"Your mum?"

"Yes. Do you remember her name?"

A careful pause, then a proud smile.  
"Christine!"

Forgive. Yes. For her, for my children. For myself.

*Jenny Morrow is a writer, mother, and consultant who lives in Sioux Lookout, Ontario.*

## SUSAN MCCASLIN

### Demeter's Epic Smile

Like a spar suddenly rising  
from the depths of a turbulent sea  
to offer itself as a raft  
for a swimmer who has heaved  
her last breath after hours  
and relinquished her limbs  
to the downward pull of the waves

so to me the image of my daughter  
advancing toward me  
in the full flesh and flower  
of her womanhood.

*Susan McCaslin's poetry appears earlier in this volume.*

## RENEE NORMAN

### Spill of Trees

Morning. Bare limbs on trees. Grey skies with a hint of light to come. The promise of Spring. The circle of ice on the outdoor table melted for now. A shine of windows across the creek. Two fat squirrels heavy with maple nuts waddle across the fallen leaves now more mulch than foliage. Houses, rooftops form the backdrop for skeletal branches, criss-crossing in patterns that speak of paint spillage: random, beautiful, permanent. Here and there a hair gnarl of knotted branch. A last leaf bereft of its original shape. Still the grey light entices, reminder that winter too has more than darkness.

Last night I could not sleep, thought of daughters. How content I am they swirl around me still. In and out between their work, projects, concerns, cups and wineglasses left for parental pickup, stray underwear strewn by bathrooms, clothes left hanging to dry, the basement pantry their shop-at-home-free store (the price is right). And I would not trade one unmade bed from a sleepover, nor the blueberries that find their way under the depths of the fridge, nor the opened wine, or the cranky hurricane takeover of my bathroom, for anything else.

That promise of Spring is not for bargaining. The Jackson Pollack spill of trees is only one canvas I love.

*Renee Norman's poetry appears earlier in this volume.*