

## VIVIAN HANSEN

### Covenant Explored

in soft mulch and quicksilver river  
ripples of moon as you dip your paddle  
Grace slips over your skin  
like warm cloud

brushes her fingers against your cheek  
floats in the updraft palm of hand that holds  
the hawk  
in time and space  
your spirit joins hers in flight

Grace whispers that you may abide here in  
this valley for awhile  
Grace is an alpine cabin  
of forgiveness and refuge  
from your own error

you don't have to live miserably

Grace feeds you 7-grain bread  
and warm milk from her breasts  
covers you with sweet down  
until you're healed, and banded with her  
circle

Grace is wilderness lost, like a false paradise  
Grace joins you on journey, when the  
loneliness of our flight  
touches down  
on the bone of her outstretched arms

*Vivian Hansen lives in Calgary, Alberta. Her first collection of poetry, *Leylines of My Flesh*, was published in 2002 (Touchwood Press).*

## KATHY ASHBY

### White Silence

During mellow reveries while trudging  
through the snow,  
each snowshoe must lift, push and pump  
from the heart,  
a clear mind can analyse, assemble, collect  
and compile  
with intensity of some philosopher similar  
to that of Diderot  
the excellent whispered thoughts of Dante,  
Swift,  
Voltaire and Rousseau.

Perchance to find embedded an image of  
artistic display,  
like frozen doily designs around a wet icy  
pool  
framed by otter's slide patterns; nature  
saturates deep inside.  
If exhausted by quest and nothing left to  
say  
miles far off, watching evening shadows  
begin their lengths  
ideas by Pythagoras, Descartes, Pascal and  
Pope enlighten the way.

Content with day's search for more frontier  
space to unfold  
and turning to follow the trail home  
using steady quiet rhythm of working body  
parts  
a state of white silent meditation—the only  
goal  
whether under grey skies, sunshine or  
moonlit night  
simply clinging to the process nurtures and  
heals the solitary soul.

*Kathy Ashby is an award-winning hot glass artist since the early 1970s, who now lives and works in the wilderness of Muskoka, Ontario with her husband and son. She has been extensively published, notably as a guest columnist in the Toronto Star Arts*