

“I Have Learned”

I have learned that when it comes to animals and plants, communication happens without words spoken aloud. There can be no communication if your human mind doesn't allow space for it. Let your human mind be still or become like the water running in the ditch in a continuous quiet rhythm. Then, there you are....”

–Joy Harjo, note on the poem “Frog in a Dry River” in *Weaving Sundown in a Scarlet Light*

Young Voices

Cool, dew-wet, sun-dappled dawn emerges
Like a fawn, mother-licked to life and to breath
In the tall grasses of hidden verges
Too far from the path to know human steps.
Yet we make our way from dreams to waking
While, undreamed, anemone, trillium
Wild leeks, skunk cabbage, bloodroot are slaking
Winter's thirst for rest from hope that spring come.
Yellow flowers yield to summer's green leaves,
Pooling on the ground in shadows full of light.
Spring passes, but no loving mother grieves
A growing child whose heart is strong and bright,
Whose soul she shapes with love and loving words,
The poems of our children, the songs of the birds.

Under the Bough

Children's voices tell
Stories of home, hearth, heart, here.
Listen: find your way.

–Sandy Carlson
Woodbury Poet Laureate
Poem for the First “Under the Bough” Poetry Competition
23 April 2023