

**Diane Fahey:
Garden Walk**

For my mother

A stand of ivory irises, gold-tongued,
cinerarias in royal velvets.
We pass my father's camellia tree,
its yield of coral cups the first since his death.
Across years. You call it 'the miracle tree'.
Nearby, this mandala bloom: a petalled
frame round the abounding heart, heart-red.

I think of these hopeful, circumspect days
as your harvest won from pain endured;
this garden your rich share of the forms life takes
in its quest for beauty in survival.
At dusk, whether we listen or not, bird songs
will wreath this old house in splendour. Later,
lotus-stars on a black pond of unknowing.

Before the heat

Down the garden, letting the dawn wind
travel through my body, transport me
with freshened sight to here. I pluck weeds,
skirt the pumpkin vine ramping out from
the young apple tree, tapping its strength.
A door slams. Inside I find my mother
beautifully asleep, lying fish-shaped
across her bed, wrapped in a beach towel
the greens of algae and leaf; deep in her hip-bone,
the infection we live to outwit.
The touch lamp is on: light answerable
to fingertips. All night, cool air streamed in.
Soon I'll shroud each window, draw up the moat bridge,
seal us inside this peace we have made.

Breath

Sleeplessness. At dawn, soft rain, the birds,
and music – Pachelbel's Canon played
over and over to soothe a mind still fazed
after a dizzy waking at one a.m. –
an alarm call to check on my mother.
With practised silence I opened her door,
in the quarter light leaned towards her face,
porcelain-pale, the strength of those fine bones,
to hear a breath. The same life-tide that swept us
apart has brought us to this grateful,
elegaic love, the hub we turn on -
Demeter and Kore becoming
each other, held in a graced affinity
between loss and loss. Twilight summer.

*Diane Fahey is the author of eight poetry collections, the most recent being *Sea Wall and River Light* (FIP Press), a series of sonnets about the coastal town of Barwon Heads in Victoria, Australia. A verse novel, *The Mystery of Rosa Morland*, was published by *Clouds of Magellan* in 2008. Her *New & Selected Poems* will be published by *Puncher & Wattmann* late in 2010. Diane has won various poetry awards and literary fellowships. She holds a B.A. and an M.A. in Literature and a PhD in Creative Writing for her study, 'Places and Spaces of the Writing Life'.*

'Breath' and 'Garden Walk' have never been published before. With thanks to the poet.