

POEM

Nigel Jenkins

In the lowlands people
disinfect their doorsteps
and swallow their dreams
with the morning news
while high in the high dry desert
he washes her feet
with the first of the snows.

THE VISITOR

Richard Burns

Feathers in her bonnet,
carmine sash about her waist,
she visited us at the joining of decades.

We drank wine, stayed up
late to hear her talk—bright
water colors in motion.

Men of our family followed her
each time she left.

There were no dull times then.

We danced and the piano wore out:
People came from miles around
for the red wine, the news of victories.

With thin arms she led our songs.
She danced like magic, amplified
the little color in our lives.

She always had sad strange eyes.
Long after she was gone,
pieces of the men returned.