

**Sarah Thomas**

**Waving at Cars**

There they are, in the yard  
of the house down the street.  
They wave like mad as I drive  
to the grocery store, to the library,  
to dinner out on a Friday evening.  
They drop the ball, the stick  
that's slaying a fiery dragon—  
whatever they're doing and they  
wave as if me waving back  
meant everything.  
They wave as if it mattered.

And then, sometime around thirteen,  
they just stop. They turn cool, quiet,  
even aloof and they don't wave as I drive  
to the doctor, to the grocery store,  
to an appointment I hate to keep.  
There is no hand raised like a flag  
that says, "Hey, I'm here and so are you."

But wait. Grown men in ball caps  
driving trucks hauling hay  
or lumber or an old lawn mower  
that'll never run again raise a finger  
from the top of the steering wheel  
and they tilt their heads—  
up now down in a salute that says,  
"Hey, I'm still here and I see,  
somehow, so are you."

## **Bones like Letters**

Last week, the dog killed a snake  
just there—in the path in the woods  
we walk most every day.

Today I noticed the tiny vertebrae,  
like letters from some other language.  
All that's left of that old serpent.

Then it hit me like the gift of tongues.  
Time.  
Time, time, time does pass.  
Snake today, bones tomorrow.

I will likely live to be 40 and this day,  
when I am almost exactly 34  
and one half, will be so far gone  
it might never have happened.  
Probably didn't.

And then I will live to be 58 and 77  
and who knows 102.  
And all I'll have is one moment  
living all around me, coiled  
like a snake warm in the sun.

Standing, looking at tiny bones  
like letters, a breeze easing past me,  
three dogs nosing through leaf litter,  
I find I can read this language.  
I find these bones spell, "now."

## Quaker Ladies

I once read something about how  
the meek would inherit the earth  
and it must be true—only look.

Every child knows the bright names of  
Daisy and Buttercup sunning themselves  
in mountain meadows.  
Black-eyed Susan winks and waves.

But here, in grown over tracks,  
on top of cold, windy mountains  
where color is afraid to show,  
you'll find these.  
Bluets the book says under  
a picture of almost nothing.  
Bluets for bare tinged petals  
cupping a soft yellow center  
like a pat of butter—like light.

Now leave the book and ask just folks.  
They'll say Quaker Ladies  
and I prefer the peaceful point of that.

Nature sows blankets, foamy and soft.  
You'll want to sink down  
in how sweet and simple they are—  
like something that already knows  
how the world will turn out.