

Still December Maryland

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Winner of the 1983-1984 Rachael Sherwood Poetry Prize

Nothing redeems like a walk
through still December Maryland.
I used to wax the runners of
my Flexible Flyer, then glide
between glass trees
on slow rolling hills
with snow resting like
lazy clouds, through air
filled with wood smoke and sparrows.

My mother had sad dreams of
dying alone in a big cold house
built for children. She would feel
the house grow as she shrank. I was too young
to know why she hugged me and said she did not
want to see past fifty.

When I moved west I could not stop seeing in
the dry hot wind and dust
her dreams and my past wrestling
alone, together in our big house.

NORTHRIDGE REVIEW

So I've come back to walk
through December Maryland.
Tomorrow I will tear apart
the Flexible Flyer still hanging
on the garage wall.
From the splintered pieces I will build
a small house
and nail it to the dormant maple
near her grave. I want her to see it
filled with sparrows.