



BROWSE

 **Grandma's House**

Bonnie Michael Pratt

Appalachian Heritage

The University of North Carolina Press

Volume 15, Number 3, Summer 1987

p. 10

10.1353/aph.1987.0100

ARTICLE

[View Citation](#)**In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:**

Keeping Company  
Grandma's House Today I want this poem to lie down and keep me company like the childhood friends I had who were not really there. In the veil of quiet self-absorption, now I name imagination, we kept witnesses away, and like the cattle who lie down under trees before a storm we could always sense a change in weather. I'd take us out to fall on soft wet grasses, to feel the turning of the earth beneath our bodies. I told them all the shapes I saw in clouds and taught them to sing with me in rounds. They'd come in on cue, making sweet high harmony, like syncopated dance steps or the silence in a poem when someone working all alone stops and listens for whoever else is going to sing. —Maggie Anderson  
Leaving Home Let's end mid-sentence like prospering writers do, leave the stanzas gaping like old farm gates, the rhymes alluded to. Let's set the ancient timepiece at a pace both heart and memory can withstand and fill this empty space. —Phyllis Price  
Her spirit is ploughed under with the ashes of her home; their energies are joined again. She never knew the house was gone, kept it inviolate in her mind, did not see the consuming fire. But the order was wrong; the house should have died after she did, not with her

thoughts still in it. The new grass is too green, its lush growth the only sign that anything else ever lived here. I want to mark this passage for her with Gabriel's trumpet, but maybe the wind in the grass is enough. —Bonnie Michael Pratt  
Widow Morning arrives like an uninvited guest. I sit at the kitchen table, wordless, watching my mother fidget from table to stove. She clatters dishes, listens for the shuffle of newspapers, the scoot of house shoes on linoleum rug, counts out three cups;— her eyes apologize. I press her hands in mine and remember smooth hands, flesh-filled, that used to wash my dad's work clothes, collect wood and cut kindling for the fire, hands that carried a hoe to the fields and fitted the dark soil around corn and beans, then returned to star verses in her red-letter Bible. Her hands slide away and I feel the valleys of skin between veins. I feel the hollow palms that have lost their grip but search restlessly for past moments to fill them. —Shirley R. Chafin 10 ...

## Keeping Company

Today I want this poem  
to lie down and keep me company  
like the childhood friends I had  
who were not really there.  
In the veil of quiet self-absorption,  
now I name imagination,  
we kept witnesses away,  
and like the cattle who lie down  
under trees before a storm  
we could always sense a change  
in weather. I'd take us out  
to fall on soft wet grasses,  
to feel the turning of the earth  
beneath our bodies. I told them  
all the shapes I saw in clouds  
and taught them to sing with me  
in rounds. They'd come in on cue,  
making sweet high harmony,  
like syncopated dance steps  
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when someone working all alone  
stops and listens  
for whoever else is going to sing.

Maggie Anderson

## Leaving Home

Let's end mid-sentence  
like prospering writers do,  
leave the stanzas gaping  
like old farm gates,  
the rhymes alluded to.

Let's set the ancient  
timepiece at a pace  
both heart and memory  
can withstand and fill  
this empty space.

- Phyllis Price

## Grandma's House

Her spirit is ploughed under  
with the ashes of her home;  
their energies are joined again.

She never knew the house was gone,  
kept it inviolate in her mind,  
did not see the consuming fire.

But the order was wrong; the house  
should have died after she did,  
not with her thoughts still in it.

The new grass is too green,  
its lush growth the only sign  
that anything else ever lived here.

I want to mark this passage for her  
with Gabriel's trumpet, but maybe  
the wind in the grass is enough.

--Bonnie Michael Pratt

## Widow

Morning arrives like an uninvited guest.  
I sit at the kitchen table, wordless,  
watching my mother fidget from table to stove.  
She clatters dishes,  
listens for the shuffle of newspapers,  
the scoot of houseshoes on linoleum rug,  
counts out three cups—  
her eyes apologize.

I press her hands in mine  
and remember smooth hands, flesh-filled,  
that used to wash my dad's work clothes,  
collect wood and cut kindling for the fire,  
hands that carried a hoe to the fields  
and fitted the dark soil around corn and beans,  
then returned to star verses in her red-letter Bible.

Her hands slide away  
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for past moments to fill them.

—Shirley R. Chafin





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grass you can sit and lie, but cationic unchanged.  
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quantum, winning its market share.  
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