

Surprise Valley Poetry Prize
March's Winner

Prom Queen

By Gail Rudd Entrekin

One afternoon my slightly grizzled but very trim husband
will drive slowly down the main street of our town
in his sweet gold convertible, its top neatly folded back,
and I, my middle aged flesh molded not-too-tightly
into a silver-blue satin gown, will perch on the back
of the seat wearing long white gloves and a silver sash,
and I'll wave slowly, gracefully to the puzzled tourists
strolling outside the shops, and the busy locals,
many of whom will recognize me, will wave back
in surprise and laughter.

My diamond tiara
from the Dollar Store will glitter in my thinning hair,
and my chubby right arm will move gently,
pushing a breeze in a figure eight: *elbow, elbow,*
wrist, wrist, wrist -- my properly cupped hand turning
while my left arm cradles the dozen long-stem red roses
my husband will have nabbed at Albertson's that morning
when he went for coffee.

Or maybe

this will never happen,
never need to happen,
and this poem will be enough.

Gail Rudd Entrekin is of Orinda, California. Her most recent collection of poems, "Change (Will Do you Good)" from Poetic Matrix Press in 2005, was nominated for the Northern California Book Award. She is the Surprise Valley Poetry Prize winner for March.

Honorable Mention

Winter in Wadsworth

By Vivian Olds

The sun hooks up with the wind
And sends circuitous hot spears
Of ice into my face

I pass a man walking a
Tumbleweed
And I can only wonder
If I have been in
Nevada too long.

Vivian Olds is a schoolteacher living in Wadsworth, Nevada.