

LIFE & TIMES



Marion Kennedy

HOLLYHOCKS

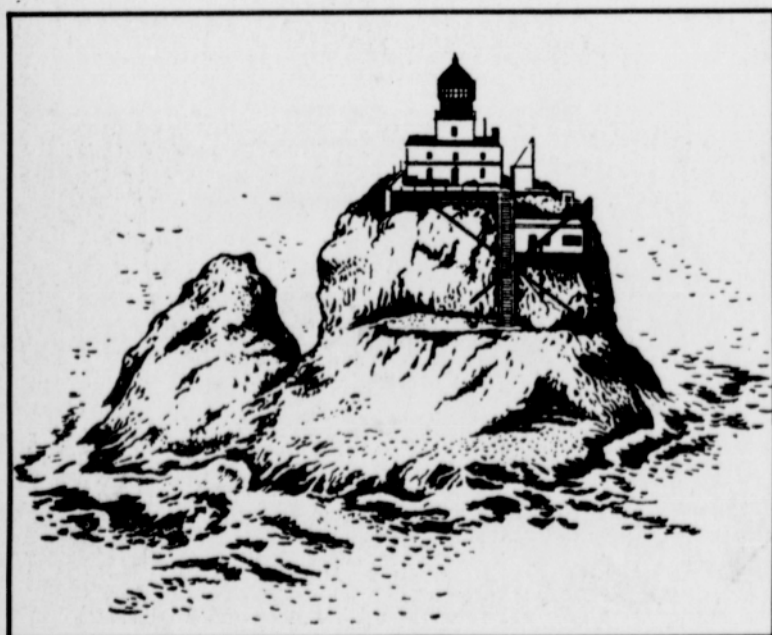
They blossom in April,
a pastel green prepared for life,
purple and white flowers
like kites or vivid compasses
pointing out bees.

Toward the end of August
the bloom begins to fade,
petals fall away revealing stems
curved like arms that pour
dew into the cups of leaves.

Late September,
the changing face of the sky
bends close over the magnetic pole
as the Great Whales swim
into the spiral of their feed.

The spears of hollyhock
sink to their knees.

JOHN BUCKLEY



THE KEEPER'S ODE

I climb the stairs
again
again
Of my loyal lighthouse friend
Reaching toward the moaning calls
Eminating from the wall
Of thickened mist
Cradling each ship
Feeling its way
Along the bay;
Guided — gently led are they
By her unfailing golden beam
Glowing through the drops
Of hazy moisture;
Passing o'er each helpless
Craft, that left alone
Would never pass on by....

LOIS MINER

MIDSUMMER



FOOTNOTE TO A 'SORROWFUL SPRING'

The eyes drift
as if winter never happened,
much less worsened,
as though
in some larger ritual a rose
is a sop tossed to frostbite,

and moss revives
varicose in cracked walks.

Now banks buy their own loans back:

the next house fits
the last like a fist
tenderizing a palm no one
cares to read

— all vacancies are vandalized.

In this hour of the heart's
moving sale clocks
lap themselves,

saving time,

and downwind
a black dog trots its
budpink hardon

in perpetuum,
oblivious to its tongue
panting like a lost blossom,

past cardboard signs
and rummaged porches

where inchoate shades
wander endless remissions,

their eyes glazed
with unmet expectations,

and a lucidity approaching indifference.

DOUG MARX

DELICATE QUESTIONS

To ask:

1. The Cold

Have you come here to live
as the shadow lives when it meets its snow?

Does the snowfall hold you whiter to its heart
than the snowfalling wind?

Blanket of ice across my bed in the corner of the barn...

Were you born with a taste of rust
or did you kiss that iron pipe with your bleeding tongue?

2. The Vacant Room

Are your four washed walls, ceiling
and the floor all you need to make you whole?

... your sleep in peace when I leave you alone
with a curtain door.

Or the lightbulb singing its dark lament
for the burnt-out sun?

Does the window close its one crossed eye
to your naked space?

Is there dancing?

3. The Curtain

Whose pretty print skirt? Did you undress the sun?

Organdy birds we can just about fly clear through.

Is your blue the wildest hyacinth of the Ganges
wearing rouge?

Did you undress the moon? Tell me,

is there a certain breeze that makes you sway like that
on fire in the open dark?

4. The Window

What are you looking at, why are you staring at me?

... your face both the inner and the outer
source of this dim, smoky light.

Isn't it your eye, that ancient witness of sand
to the creation of the earth by fire?

Your mouth the flies pass through to attain
life in the here-ever-after...

Why do you squint when I open up in front of you?

What are you looking at?

5. The Blind Wall

When it's snowing do you pretend
you're a mirror and let go with your hands?

Now do you think you're the only standing wall?

CRAIG CZURY



Your kisses
warm in the morning
I can see your
heart beat in your face

I like your arms around me
I like to invite your
seed here
real deep

MARION KENNEDY