

Please recycle to a friend.

ORIGAMIPOEMS.COM
or email:
origamipoems@gmail.com

Cover art by Gerald J. Meylor
Painting on family barn

Origami Poetry Projects

What Remains

by Julia Meylor Simpson

© 2010

What Remains by Julia Meylor Simpson



What Remains

In this emptied-out place
of hot white light and rich black earth,

in this hallowed place
of giving up and moving on,

in this sacred place
of remembering and returning,

only the wind remains
to tell our stories,

to whisper our names,

to save our souls.

Heading Home from Omaha

Take Mormon Bridge east
over Big Muddy's flowing skirt.
Cottonwoods rustle.

Two asphalt ribbons
uncurl as Iowa shimmers.
Turn on cruises, A.C.

Soybeans-pond-hayfield-
cornfield-cornfield-town-cornfield:
wide blue sky unfenced.

Sun slides below grain
edging everything in gold.
Even rental car.

Turn at Sioux City.
Stars, farm lights flick on ahead.
Forty miles to go.

Landmark

The windmill
in the south pasture
marked the corner
to turn north

for the farm place.
Deep breaths
of wind made
wide paddles whir.

scaffold tremble,
metal scream
against metal
as it roused

unstrutted darkness.
As it leaned
against nothing.

Today, eyes sweep flat-line horizon.
Nothing stands to shout: Turn here!
Not even a severed skeleton defies
baked blue sky. So you just drive on.

Acknowledgements:

"Memorial Day Morning in an Iowa Cemetery" - 35th Annual Mississippi Valley Poetry Contest, May 2008

"Racing a Tornado on Gravel"
Sliver of Stone, 2010

"Landmark"
Sojourn, Univ. of Texas at Dallas,
Fall/Winter 2008

"Heading Home from Omaha"
Blue Earth Review, Mankato State
University, 2009

"What Remains" first appeared as
"A Prayer for the Wind," *Prairie
Poetry* website, May 2003

Racing a Tornado on Gravel

Jagged rage flicks overhead,
grumbles in primal throat.
Maddened cloaks of sea green
shroud tunnels of tall corn.
Tuck headlights skitter over
splintered cottonwood sentries.
You look back at rosy sunset,
then grin clutch
spit gravel.

Memorial Day Morning in an Iowa Cemetery

Stray scraps of gray wool weave
above ancient humus, new grass.
Purple irises in aluminum foil
guard names on ordered marble.
Breeze embraces earthworms,
lilacs, a child's laughter shushed.
Old farmers finger dull medals,
shattered boy memories unvoiced.
A family encircles a slight stone
leaving them wordless long ago.
Minister's wife assembles children
to place plastic wreaths on cue.
Taps from lone high school bugler
patter off grain elevator on Main.
Later, iron gates keen in rusty alto,
meadowlarks resume their matins.