

*BLUEBONNETS,  
BOOTS  
AND  
BUFFALO  
BONES*

*Sheryl L. Nelms*



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*Dedicated to the heroes  
of Goliad*







*Bluebonnets*

*Texas Hill Country*

spring is  
working its  
way north  
the meadows  
around Fredericksburg  
are blooming  
full of bluebonnets  
black-eyed Susan  
Indian paintbrush  
and buttercups  
splatters of red  
yellow and  
blue  
flung from  
the artist's full  
brush  
across emerald  
grass

*fresh day*

I hear a rooster

somewhere  
back there in  
the clutter of  
rusty cars  
sunflowers  
cockleburs  
and barbwire

crowing in  
the morning

ready to  
go

*Alto cumulus Clouds*

like ginned  
cotton

dumped  
over the horizon

they trail  
sunset

in thin  
filaments

of iridescence

## *Meditation*

a quarter section  
of hybrid

sunflowers

in a west Texas  
field at sundown

reminds me  
of a congregation

of pioneer women  
praying

## *The Pharmacist's Daughter*

It was August first 1955

I knocked on their glass door  
collecting on my paper route  
for the Sweetwater Register

old man Dimmers owned the drugstore  
and they had a real  
nice two-story house

I started to knock  
again

when I saw Mary Alice  
prancing down  
that staircase

one step  
at a  
time

in her black bra  
and panties

she was sixteen and  
all of her was jiggling

I was ten years old  
and I never  
ever

saw anything  
like that  
before

she swung that door wide open

“Hey, Russell,” she said

“Come on in. I’ll  
find your money”

but I turned and left  
didn’t say nothing

never could catch my breath  
never did get my  
money

## *Wash Day on the Farm*

is a philharmonic  
production

drag out the twin rinse tubs  
the Maytag  
the bucket  
the stool  
and the stick

snap down the wringers  
hook up the hose

add hot water  
homemade lye soap  
and the blueing

then carry in  
the clothes

sort them into piles

lightest by lightest  
dirtiest by dirtiest

pull the red knob  
on the washer

dump in the whites  
clamp on the lid

the symphony  
has begun



*Blue Ticks Eating Asparagus*

five  
killer dogs  
bay and bugle  
in anticipation  
of the green stalks  
she holds  
one by one  
she tosses  
each long shoot  
of asparagus  
off the  
porch  
up into the air  
to be caught in  
a gaping mouth  
to watch  
it slide  
unnoticed  
down each throat  
with the  
“Say what?”  
look  
treat  
enough  
for her

*Spring Soundings*

I hear them

Canadian geese  
up there

in the black

then that veeing  
slipstream tilts  
comes in  
low

over city lights

honking  
spring

North

*Sunset at Eagle Mountain Lake*

ponderosa pines susurrate  
in the gentled  
breeze

fuchsia frosts  
rippled waves

migrating pelicans  
swirl white  
down

onto water

Canadian geese  
squawk over  
the green

of winter wheat

a flock of wood ducks  
seines the shallows  
for snails

as the scent  
of cedar

twangs tomorrow

on the full  
moon

*breathe deep*

whole wheat bread  
baking a crisp crust  
on a December morning

a cedar shelter belt  
after a sudden shower

fresh mown Timothy hay  
under the July sun

hamburgers grilling  
over a charcoal fire

red clover  
blooming  
in a Texas field

apple muffins  
split and steaming cinnamon  
as the butter melts

a Peace rose  
in a crystal bowl  
on my kitchen table

my baby boy  
bathed and powdered  
cuddling against my cheek

life is full  
just breathe  
deep