

# Halcyon Years

Poetry — Laura Dame

The ants like it there, appearing  
every summer as a seasonal curse.

Little borrowers—

different from Mary Norton's.

They listen to the pleas for  
one more popsicle, one more game,  
one less storm.

They stampede in small fluxes  
from the cracks in the walls,  
a quiet bug

in a world of whirring cicadas.

They are not scared  
of thunder and lightning.

They are not singing and swinging or  
peaking, never falling.

purple patchwork dress;  
cool grass under small tip-toes;  
wet laundry, hot breeze.

Moody clouds fill in the gaps  
of all the newly bare trees.

Clouds who look like maybe  
they might hold snow and  
that's good enough, hopeful enough,  
close enough to a promise.

They are the formal invitation to  
make dust of the dry, brown sculptures  
that form a leaf museum  
on the cool stiff ground.

They do not smell the bare air  
so comfy to breath.

They do not cry  
over math at a dining room  
table that squeaks.

They are not trying  
(so hard) and wondering  
who to be.

crisp brand-new blue jeans;  
arm pumpkin muffins to eat;  
flannel sheets on beds.

The frost clings  
to the warped window panes like  
sea creatures from a frozen world,  
peering in at strands of colored lights  
and ornaments that dance  
on a towering, 6-foot plastic tree.  
Little window friends  
who tell sugary stories  
about forthcoming snow.  
They watch the twirls  
in a golden crown;  
they hear the giggles, the racing heart,  
the grinning cheeks.  
They are not enchanted  
by Rosemary Clooney singing so husky.  
They are not hoping  
to get snowed in.  
They are not the most joyously happy  
just because it is freezing.

furred velvet dresses;  
cold air smacking barn red walls;  
car rides, heat cranked up.

Violets  
turn fields into a Monet painting:  
blurs of white, purple, blue.  
Wildflowers for picking  
on new spring days,  
offerings of love  
from one so small.  
They are warm under  
the soft yellow sun,  
begging to be plucked, caressed,  
savored.  
They are the harmony to  
the buzzing of carpenter bees.  
They do not chase  
rainbow bubbles through the yard.  
They are not squealing  
in delight at the feel  
of bright warmth on skin.

lime green tee, bare arms;  
hot rolls for the Easter feast;  
windows open wide.