How a Woman Describes Hope in Midlife [1]

January 21, 2019 Writing and Faith [2] Poems [3]

Two Poems by Chelsea Dingman



How a Woman Describes Hope in Midlife

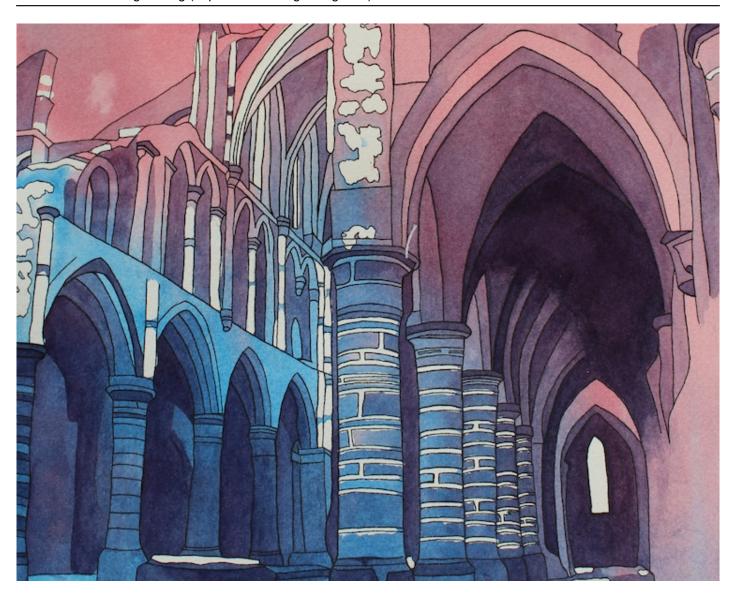
Not yellow. Not feathered or winged. Not breathing. Not a breast. A womb. The feckless night. Not a man. Not the gruff north wind. Not the prairie. Not the Gulf. Not the places fled in the dusk. Not the places fear builds in the mind.

 $(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m)\{i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]][function()\{\ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)\},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),\\ m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)\ \})(window,document,'script','https://www.googlege 1 of 5 analytics.com/analytics.js','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-18260536-1', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');$

How a Woman Describes Hope in Midlife

Published on Talking Writing (https://mail.talkingwriting.com)

Not the relentless thump thump thump of my dumb heart. Not the wheat fields, the silos, the oils sands. Not the dead, whom I miss so fiercely at this distance. Not the faint light of the streetcars, the wildfires, the suicide sky. Not the bridges that forgive water levels. Not the rain, unburied. Not the little I have left to look forward to, except the child that empties of me like the body from a lake. Not even these, my deaths, which some days sound like the bells in the belly of the goat that still roams the alleys of my childhood, starving. Instead, notice the trees. How they ask for nothing, except to be, for centuries.



Address

For the first time in years, I don't know light. A family of rabbits lives

in the alleys and fields behind houses. The sun has gone out. The world, at war.

I try to remember what I want. Connection. Someone close enough to see. And yet

distance is the animal sky, always in retreat.

I miss God some nights. How easily we give up on things

we can't see. Staggering, the dark seems to hold all that exists

How a Woman Describes Hope in Midlife

Published on Talking Writing (https://mail.talkingwriting.com)

now. I don't know how the world ends, but I know fire

lies. Somewhere, the trees burn to wicks of what they once were.

I can't think about the sound as they burn. There is so little left worth listening for.

Art Information

• "Sunset" and "Archways" (details) © Jocelyn Pike; used by permission.



Chelsea Dingman's first book, *Thaw*, was the recipient of the National Poetry Series (University of Georgia Press, 2017). She is also the author of the chapbook *What Bodies Have I Moved* (Madhouse Press, 2018). She has won the *Southeast Review*'s Gearhart Poetry Prize, *Sycamore Review*'s Wabash Prize, *Water-Stone Review*'s Jane Kenyon Poetry Prize, and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association's Creative Writing Award for Poetry.

For more information, visit Chelsea Dingman's website [4].

Source URL: https://mail.talkingwriting.com/how-woman-describes-hope-midlife

Links:

- [1] https://mail.talkingwriting.com/how-woman-describes-hope-midlife
- [2] https://mail.talkingwriting.com/tw-issue-themes/writing-and-faith
- [3] https://mail.talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/poems
- [4] http://www.chelseadingman.com

(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o), m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m) })(window,document,'script','https://www.googlege 4 of 5 analytics.com/analytics.js','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-18260536-1', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');



 $\hline (function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m)\{i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function()\{\ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)\},i[r].l=1*new\ Date();a=s.createElement(o),\\ m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)\ \})(window,document,'script','https://www.googlege 5 of 5 analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');\ ga'(create', 'UA-18260536-1', 'auto');\ ga'(send', 'pageview');$