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On a Rock of Atlantis

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JAMES HEARST

WILDERNESS TOKEN

Wild grapes tied their vines
in a loose knot to the branches
of haw trees strung with berries,
spiced the air with broken clusters
swelled by rains, plundered by bees.

Dry paths led the boy with a gun
through tangled sumach to the creek's
edge where a pool hugged the roots
of leaning trees and handful of yellow
leaves sprinkled the black water.

Indian still he stood, two wild ducks,
a mallard drake and hen, filled his
hunter's eyes, iridescent and shining
they kissed the black water—the wilderness
held its breath, the gun kept silent,
the pair started a single ripple

and swam deep in a boy's October memory,
honey clear air and gold leaved sky,
until a cold November wind shrivelled
the last grapes, and love fell with broken wings
after a short flight through a man's heart.

ELIZABETH BARTLETT

ON A ROCK OF ATLANTIS

Five. Between each the ages
that separate, yet unite
the pillared span.

The oldest leads and guides
as the short, crooked thumb
of long experience.

The others follow. Up and down
to the last small boy
trailing behind.

Unevenly they stride
through the gray, silent dawn
towards the sea

Where the waves still breathe
of sleep, and empty miles
unwind the shoreline.

Five figures probe the wind,
the tide. They pace their length
along the sand

And pause. No light breaks.
The stillness keeps, as though
the current

Deserted, had suddenly ceased.
With poles, hooks, bait in hand,
the five move on.

Heavy with clouds, the sky
broods behind a mist,
leans on cliffs

And frightened by its dream
of a dead world's beach,
begins to slip.

Until five fingers rise
on the promontory's tip
and lift their poles.

Upheld, the morning wakes,
pours gold. Fish leap.
The land's alive.

Poetry Contributors

☞ Author of the recent collection *It Takes Practice Not to Die*, ELIZABETH BARTLETT has also published *Poems of Yes and No*, *Behold This Dreamer* and *Poetry Concerto*. Mark Van Doren sees her poems as "clear, swift, and strong; and witty, too, in the best sense of that word"; Richard Eberhart calls them "mature" with "a bite to them"; Marianne Moore admires this poet's discipline. She has been anthologized in *New*

Poems by American Poets III, *New Voices II*, *The Golden Year*, *The American Scene* and *Poésie Contemporaine aux Etats-Unis*; recorded by Yale, Harvard, Fairleigh Dickinson, Stanford, the Library of Congress; published in many magazines. ☞ Not all of STANLEY COOPERMAN'S greatest experiences stem from his Fulbright lectureship at University of Tehran, 1959-60, yet the Hadjee Theater at night, the