

NOVEMBER ROSE

Suddenly
 in this gaunt, forsaken gloom
 among these shattered shapes of age and death
 I find you
 standing, pink-petalled,
 fragrant still!
 as if love's whole lost world
 still pulsed in bloom
 warm in the singing sun...

Mock me no more: what's done is done.
 I have my bright leaves, now.
 I am happy enough.

Carol Halstead
 Burnaby

A WOMAN WAILING FOR HER..WILDERNESS

It has come again
 this otherness keeps returning
 ever more negative and more complete.
 I walk among growing life; I lie open;
 I wait for my mind to unclench, to unwind
 and lie once more like clear water
 soft in the palm of spring's hand
 cradled deep and unknowing
 not needing to know...

But I do not unclench.

It's the tension, now, that is me
 not the warm lassitude of this wind, shadow,
 sea.

Now this world is outside me
 and holds me outside of itself

Now my pines, crags, and moss call me
 "other"

and I can't break the wall any more
 that's between them and me.

My feet that knew footholds are gauche and
 unwieldy;

My ownership trickles away.

Slowly, baffled,

I trudge into exile... ..my wilderness alien
 In the sterile streets of the city
 I must gouge out my niche now
 or die.

Carol Halstead
 Burnaby