LITERARY SECTION

POEMS

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About the Author
Mary Kennan Herbert, American poet, was born in St. Louis, Missouri and now lives in Brooklyn, New York where she teaches literature and writing courses at Long Island University. Several collections of her poems have been published by Ginninderra Press in Australia. Her work has won awards and appeared in literary and theological journals and other periodicals in over twenty different countries around the world. She is currently the poetry editor for West View, a newspaper in New York City.

BOREDOM IN GEEZERLAND

Been there, done that, these pills will keep us happy, that one will kill the bad cells in one’s ticker. By the way, we want to write, still. How many more decades will we receive from the Deity? If the sky stays blue for thee, how many days remain? Will you watch us cry, or get bored with our stories? It’s getting repetitive in swift decades. We could easily quote morose wits, Pope or Twain in epigrams, skits, anything to keep our audience here. The Three Stooges or Lucille Ball skip onto our stage to bring you cheer. Embrace fading peers, give one last leer.
NOT POSSIBLE TO COMMUNICATE JOY

It was advised in April 1865
to permit Confederate cavalry
to keep their horses, so they
could go home and plow, alive,
turn the sweet earth again into hay.
War and peace spin in their orbits,
 presidents and shahs live and die.
We have written so much poetry
to keep their names alive, their wits
part of us, words flowing into estuaries.
An unstable environment: the tides
of life and limb ooze into us
and out again, a visual and verbal mess.
And, singing, a poem once again rides,
 promises to deliver, to confess.
SPRING SEMESTER

Dude, it’s a segue from inner
snows and winds like knives
to late spring’s thunder
and sweat, then summer lives.
Winter’s hostile faces
melt into May’s benign
diffidence. Sunlit classes
even become, well, just fine.
Last lectures may loom
like Mr. Death’s bad breath,

but his air-conditioned tomb
is erased soon enough.
Bikini wax, sounds of surf,
a sandy decolletage, combine
into Shakespeare’s rough
magic, a B+, a master design
the template of which, you may
recall, was in the typhoons
at mid-term. At last, a merry
end, like the Grail, ours to take.
GRILLED BY A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

“Why do the forties fascinate you so?”
The therapist’s eyes were lasers. Our words, webs.
I was the token poet. “I was a child then,”
came my lame reply. “That was my decade.”
Dancing around years, I proffered harmless answers.
But a shrink won’t accept platitudes. I was pinned.
“If you had been in the army, I could see it, men
writing about WWII, but a child remembering?
A young girl on the home front describing bomber?”
I confess. The ideas came from lost times,
rhymes from another time, clichés, ill-advised images
so old-fashioned as to be flags of my obsessions,
my age. A time when there was a door open,
a future, when I would eagerly reach for my pen.