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## Three Poems

by Bethany F. Brengan

### Snow White Preserved

All day she has been canning  
little red apples  
into sauces and butters in  
clear glass canisters.

She learned about keeping things—  
in Mason jars, in old cookie tins,  
in coffee cans, and jewelry boxes  
with wobbly ballerinas—from her first  
best friend, who gave her a yellow and green  
embroidery floss bracelet. “Promise  
you’ll keep it forever.”

She had a decision to make:  
Wear it every day, until the braid  
unraveled in a public swimming pool?  
Bury it in the backyard with a fake  
gold ring and her favorite plastic comb?  
Or smuggle it into adulthood, dragging the chain  
from house to apartment to house, forgetting now  
who wove the strands together,  
but unwilling to toss  
any trinket that proves  
once upon a time  
someone loved her.

She wakes with a start  
and strains against the silence.  
She lives alone and she thinks someone  
has just whispered in her ear.  
*Pwuh!* like bullets, like lips releasing  
from kisses, the gold lids pop  
all night as the glass cools  
and the hermetic seals tighten.

### It’s Raining Men

Martha Wash would have testified  
at the top of her lungs,  
but Magritte murmurs the news  
around his non-pipe  
and folds back the paper  
to read about the false  
lure of diamond mines.

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Winter/Spring 2008

Editor's Note

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## Whirligig Soldier

I don't know if he's retired,  
or if he's always lived here  
between the gladiolas and the bottle  
tree. He has obviously stood a long time  
under the sun, under the rain too, I suppose,  
and whatever snow there might have been.  
He does not march, or even carry  
a musket. He exercises his arms  
each morning on the lawn, scooping  
the air with long, flat hands. Once,  
a grasshopper landed on his hat.  
He is older than the other residents,  
the four-winged birds (who think him dull),  
the pinwheels (whose thoughts are as unreadable  
as those of daisies or park benches), and the true  
birds (who don't think of him at all). He is not trying  
to take flight, escape. He has nowhere  
to be. But when the wind changes  
he will be ready.

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**Bethany F. Brengan** is a freelance writer and editor. She lives on the internet and occasionally on the Olympic Peninsula. She blogs very badly at [www.readingwritingraptures.blogspot.com](http://www.readingwritingraptures.blogspot.com). Her poetry has appeared in *The 2015 Poet's Market*, *Poetry Quarterly*, and *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*.

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