

## Two Poems

by Pamela Waterbury

### A Warning

This morning we sit on your bed  
exchanging dreams.  
You tell me of the princess,  
the perfect princess who as you watched  
vomited.  
I recall my dream of the princess of the  
Tarot cards  
whose long flowing hair becomes snakes  
winding about her body, tightly binding  
her.

I watch you paint your lips with mauve  
wanting braces to straighten crooked  
teeth,  
so patterned cheers flow smoothly  
from a practiced cheerleader smile.  
I want to warn you that the hair shielding  
your eyes  
and veiling your face will grow more  
opaque with time,  
gauze tightening to bandages  
wrapping about your head like an  
ancient Egyptian queen's.

Then even a surgeon's knife can not  
cut through invisible wires locking your  
jaw--  
generations of strictures  
silencing your voice to hisses  
through barriers of shoulds and smiles.

### Preservation

Quickly I rifle  
Through the photographs in hopes  
this hiking trip to Yosemite with my  
daughter,  
has been preserved.  
My daughter who for years hid behind  
her closed  
bedroom door, eyes shuttered against me  
and disappeared into secrets.  
Seeing none are ruined,  
I slowly spread them  
across the kitchen table  
like a display of precious stones.  
Here, she stands in Warrior pose on a  
flat rock.  
In the background  
the river rushes, ferns along its bank  
leached of sound and color.  
In the next, Sequoias  
and Ponderosa pines shrink into  
graininess;  
and in the final one she disappears into  
the other tourists  
as the spray and power of the falls fade  
into mountain surfaces.

No pictures of us  
lying on the banks of Merced River  
across from Bridal Veil Falls,  
its back splash growing,  
changing directions in afternoon  
light.  
No image of us  
hiking around Mirror Lake,  
water bottles empty as we, depleted  
approach the ninth mile.  
No photo captures  
her arms wrapped tightly  
around me beneath  
the wild rush of the lower falls.