

Brief Visitor

Day
Passing into night
Bears a momentary child
Called evening.
Frail and delicate ~
Soft and warm ~
Loved
By the land ~
Courtied
By the wind ~
Wed
To the horizon.
The stars her mourners
The moon her epitaph

Michele Burke

The son of Michele Burke sent this poem as an epitaph for his mother who died in 1997.

the lobster trap

in the shallows of the atlantic.
cape cod settles down into the sea.
webbed crates sunk hanging onto a
buoy above
flagging down the tides.
tiny fishes fight curiosity as they scurry
in between the cob webs.
a big handed crustacean trapped
peering out the black hole it came
through.
she has red eggs clinging to her within.
the gloucester gull dory pulls up aside,
the fishmonger old man yanks the
line.
up she comes suffocating.
only moments pass and she starts to
breathe again
before she sinks down to the bottom of
the ocean.

Charlotte Hampton

Charlotte Hampton named the Shining Sea Bikeway when she was in kindergarten.

Upon A Midnight Clear

The night is still,
Save for the whispering whistle of the wind,
A phantom piper's Siren song
That stirs the soul and calms the mind
And brings to me my childhood once again.

The room is dark,
But for the candles' glow.
Light from the hearth, opalescent and serene,
Flickers soft upon the gently falling snow
That decorates the transom of my windowpane.

Gleaming white beyond the tree
And smiling at me through the years,
A spectral host of Christmases past I see,
That reaches out and through reluctant tears
Calls memories, fond and painful, back from where they've lain.

What is the Voice that calls us on this Special Day
To sit serene, at once awake, at once at rest,
And wonder where the boundaries lay
That shield us from the ones we've loved and lost, lest
We should know, too soon, all that there is to gain.

I stir, as others stir in countless rooms
Before their fires from without, within,
Our song is joined. A joyful chorus fills the gloom
For but a moment now, before the din
O life draws once again the veil that keeps us sane.

Peter Collom

Peter Collom is a Woods Hole poet.
He is former Commander of the
Woods Hole Coast Guard.