

OpenDoor magazine

YOUR WORDS MATTER.



IT'S POETRY
MONTH!
WHAT DOES
POETRY MEAN
TO US?

Theme Poetry

all about

ANTICIPATION

**WHEN LIFE GAVE
US A CORONIAL!**

AUTHOR

FEATURES

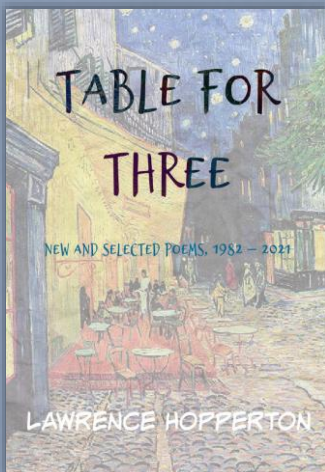
**THE CAPRICE OF
ANTICIPATION**

Larry Hopperton

Author Feature

Lawrence Hopperton lives in the town of Stouffville, Ontario. He is a former editor of the *University of Toronto Review* and one of the founding editors of Nimbus Press. His poetry has been published internationally, most recently in *Tamracks: Canadian Poetry for the 21'st Century*, the fifth *LummoX* anthology, *Sirsee, Sheila-na-gi. Smeuse and Pocket Change*. He has published two chapbooks, *Song of Orkney and Other Poems* in 1983, and *Ptolley Bay* in 2013.

In his non-poetry life, he has authored three college textbooks and, as the founding Director of the Center for Distributed Learning at Tyndale University and Seminary, many academic papers.



The spirit dwells among us in the people we love, in the things we do, and in the places we hold dear. There are numerous memorable poems in *Table for Three* such as "Twenty-four Line Loaf," "Ordinary Sunday," and "Barra." Hopperton proves that love endures in the face of loss and joy prevails against the challenges of sadness. In a voice that balances both the secular and the liturgical, this book presents a compendium of song, praise, celebration, and poetry where the poet comes to grips with grief and how the spirit triumphs. *Table for Three* is an inspiration.

<https://enroutebooksandmedia.com/tableforthree/>

LARRY HOPPERTON – AUTHOR FEATURE

TWENTY-FOUR LINE LOAF

Flour from shelf to table,
powder the bowl measured
by eye. Watered and warmed:
it is active. Sugar lightly now,
salt and sourdough a week-ago's
ingredients. I never guess.

Your palm-dust rolls.
It presses. Cover
with a towel. It rises.
You spend time with me –
rises – you knead it down again –
rises, and the baking stone

warms the rising to the kitchen,
a pan of water at the bottom
for the crunchy crust, you say,
because you like it that way.
Baking dishes I never scrub.
Mushroomed, brown over pan-rim,

It cools on the rack, soon done.
Your arms around me and
our knife slices the loaf
steams the flavor of love
golden with butter. Tomorrow
morning, toasted with honey.

MARTELLO TOWER

It sweated Princess Street to the lake
squatted on Wolfe Island
reflected off the Kingston limestone.
It idled the afternoon –
peeled clothes, burned shoulders, stalled
into evening blanketing tonight.

On dormitory steps every light
feels hot: headlights creep for a slow
breeze, round the corner, reflect
the haze on bushes, bare legs,
the Martello tower.
We become mysterious

responses, separated seeking
our element in the lake,
drop our clothes behind the concession.
Our hot skins finely stripped
approach surrender and wade
into welcome between our pores

and water combining shapes,
textures, temperatures in
concurrent centered circles,
cools our bodies into a drifting
past the harbor lights, the breakwater
between islands to the St. Lawrence.

PTOLLEY BAY

“... her eyes are far already.”

Stephen Spender

Cottage shadows define south, the time of day.
There are deer tracks down the path in. You see them
past the garden you create between the rocks.
Your stone skips seven times. A daring chipmunk
with a bald spot demands another peanut.
You hold one out, tap the deck, and it takes it
slowly, tugging your thumb and finger. You
caress its belly. It runs but comes back.

You swim the island and back – Olympic
pools, maybe three, deep. The bay is like that
one way, ninety seconds, hugging shoulders
“Did it! Didn’t I, Dad!” Your hair, arms, we
grin, something, paddle home
dipping Polaris, our glass lake lullaby.

GREENMAN

Trees with widow-makers shadow
the deck-top, the path to the bush.
You weed beans, plant annuals, perennial
paths in pots from the deck to the dock,
keep the buildings up. Always something to do –

change the water flow under the foundation,
insulate for two more months.
No one comes in February.
They don’t come at night either.
Roads run. Deer eyes reflect

and you might stop. Moose eyes don’t.
They happen like record high
Water. You moved the docks up
and there is no beach anymore.
My son helped drill anchor holes

for low water, your space,
this family place in treetops.
The earth will take you for forest
walks after coffee, soil found in gullies
brought back to bury plumbing

environmentally neutral, except
the wood stove in winter.
Spring stars tend ice holes,
a canoe for your love and leaves
in your hair. You set bugs free.

LARRY HOPPERTON – AUTHOR FEATURE

AGNES

1. Perhaps I do

Misting and shining cobble
tavern lights to sea, peat
smoke, something local. Scapa whisky.
You asked where I'm from. America?
Africa? All too far away too foreign

since you married the neighbor boy
made children, made them sweaters.
Now you stop by this pub each evening
waiting for the boats to come back.
Between the women laughing

smoke and drinks we trading tales:
mine a bit embellished and you
rolled the sea, rolled the sun
across the table lashing
trees you planted, a body

identified by your sweater.
Word came. The boats were close
They would be home soon.
You stood, said goodbye like tomorrow night.
The bar emptied out with you,

a film running down the glass.
But if I had climbed the harbor cliff,
seen your arms locked around your man,
happy the sea had given him back again,
perhaps I might have a better story tonight.

2. Lament

The sun is low wind high and cold.
Seas surge in strife with the sky.
My body in these days alone
drops to wretchedness.

Since my love was taken by the sea
long as a month is every day
long as a year is every month.
Hours lament. I am an old hag.

Before I lost my love to the sea
sweet was intimacy, sweet the days
my breasts full and firm, lips supple
and my thighs could caress a sailor.

It is not evil that I now wear
a veil of white and grey on my head.
It is evil that I never wore
a wedding veil for my love.

Hours with my love were times of colours:
every hue bedecked my head. My cheek
flushed soft to the touch of his hand,
fields waved golden sunshine to the sea.

Now fire provides me little warmth:
No arm cuddles my shoulder;
no lips welcome me to morning;
no warm breath on my cheek.

My strength has ebbed like the last tide
and I am idle in this harbour.
My cheek has yellowed, my arms are old
bony and thin, an old woman's arms.

Even sleep is no relief for me.
I dream motion to mountains, gushing
waves welling, storms careering and fierce
wind combing white the hair of the sea.

I see sailors awash on stormed decks
losing their grips, their breath in the night.
Their panic swells deeming all is lost
they stretch shipwrecked arms towards the coast.

The wind is high and cold. It pierces
me like a spear. The sea runs high
and the sun rides low in its short course.
My poor body totters, my hands shake.

I have been robbed by the siren sea.
Her song bedevilled my love to death.
I wail to the wind on the water
but these cries never disturb the deep.