

The New Criterion

Poems May 2007

Color song

by Josephine Jacobsen

from The Queen's Songs

God gave us different colors, she said,
That burn in the world alway,
And some, she said, show best by night,
And some by day.

White lieth the dust upon the road
And moons, when they are new,
Be white, and the shroud that a woman sewed
May well be, too.

Red is the tip of the sharp green bud
Where the small bright roses grow
In the August sun, and fresh-spilled blood
Is red also.

In the new-come dawn a pallid blue
Be skies above the ships
Of the fishing folk, and the same is true
Of a dead man's lips.

Green be the eyes of beasts by dark,
And bits of broken glass,
Green grows the moss on the forest-bark,
But greenest is grave-grass.

Josephine Jacobsen's posthumous chapbook of poems, *Contents of a Minute* was published in April 2008.

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 25 Number 9 , on page 32

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