

1941

Autumn, A Bride

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Recommended Citation

Davis Crosno, Maude. "Autumn, A Bride." *New Mexico Quarterly* 11, 2 (1941). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol11/iss2/35>

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Glowed. (Four hours before behind Mt. Mariveles—
 Now darkly grand far across the bay—sunset had been,
 As commonly after the rainy season ended, magnificent.)
 The calm bay sparkled, and a whiff
 From the *estero*, stagnant-rank nearby,
 Almost but not quite overwhelmed the breath
 Of the garden at the end of *Calle M. H. del Pilar*.

But seeing the great constellation of that other hemisphere,
 I felt none of the wide wondering awe that held me
 When as a boy I stood with family and neighbors
 (Near Niagara, North forty-two degrees)
 In our own backyard and surveyed the sky
 Alive with the circus of the Northern Lights.

C. V. WICKER

RETURN IN THE RAIN

We left the heat behind; there were spatters of rain.
 We forgot the dryland in rising to Raton Pass
 and gazing down on the wet trees in the valleys,
 the lupines of indescribable blue enhanced
 by the rain, and locusts pink with clustered bloom;
 and among the red rocks and pines the purple thistles,
 and the mountain flowers I gathered as a child.

Now another dryland valley, with prairie dog cities
 I remember also from childhood; and beyond them,
 my eyes follow the familiar strange shapes of the mountains,
 seen through the unfamiliar and incongruous
 pouring of rain upon these arid hills,
 with the thunder loud in the skies accustomed to turquoise
 and bright sun now metamorphosed into lightning.

I have come to what once long ago was home,
 but now is changed and strange.

Then I see the piñons,
 bringing the memory of smoke like incense

from adobe-walled patios of the past,
with the chiles hung from the vigas, and the Spanish speech
soft to the ear, the white tones of the women
in harmony with the darker notes of the men.

Again I shall hear the speech I remember and speak it,
and my tongue will be slow but eager, and quick to relearn it.
My words will fall with joy into a path long forgotten;
and tomorrow the rain will be gone from the mountains.

IRMA WASSALL

AUTUMN, A BRIDE

Did you ever see autumn undress,
Strip from her lovely limbs
Every brilliant caress
Of color?
Did you ever see her fling
From each finger a ring
So richly set
In ornament?
Watch her emerge white-breasted,
See her snowy neck divested
Of scarlet chains of chile;
See her looking blue-eyed
At mountains in early dusk;
Watch her fling red clouds of hair
That will fade fast enough.

What enchantress this,
Pale at winter's kiss!
With her gypsy robes flung aside,
What lovelier, lovelier bride!

MAUDE DAVIS CROSNOW