

Marilyn Taylor

Studying the Menu

Speaking of all those things you'll never eat,
my love—could one of them, in fact, be crow?
Of course it could. But you already know
how poisonous it tastes (if bittersweet).
These days you're craving quite another treat:
the one who will replace me. But that sloe-
eyed, slack-jawed creature's surely going to show
you all the nuance of a bitch in heat.

I hope she has the brains of a golden retriever,
the glamour of an aging manatee,
the refinement of a Packers wide receiver
and finds her favorite books at Dollar Tree.
—And darling, may she be a born deceiver,
and do to you what you have done to me.

Marilyn Taylor

Late November

—Barron County, Wisconsin

Frost blooms on grass
Sun drops through pine
Sleet splinters rain
Sod numbs to stone.

Soft air goes keen
Spores pock the snow
Stem dries to stalk
Sioux Creek runs slow.

Clouds dress in rags
Cat-tails spike tall
Bronze berries crack
Freeze where they fall.

Fierce crosswinds slice
Close to the grain
Ice on Deer Lake
Spreads its dark stain.

Night pierces day
With its cold knife
Leaf falls on leaf
Death comes to life.

Marilyn Taylor's poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The American Scholar*, *The Formalist*, and many other journals. Her second full-length collection, *Subject to Change* (David Robert Books, 2004), was nominated for the Poets Prize in 2005. Marilyn is a contributing editor for *The Writer* magazine, where her articles on poetic craft appear regularly.