



The Book of Hours (Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award)

Marianne Boruch

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"Marianne Boruch's work has the wonderful, commanding power of true attention."—*The Washington Post*

"[H]er patience, her willingness to wait for the film of familiarity to slip, allows her to see what is there with a jeweler's sense of facet and flaw."—*Poetry* magazine

Endearingly strange, unsentimental, and uniquely structured, in true Rilkean fashion *The Book of Hours* questions the meaning and significance of everything from the flaws of human interaction to perfect posture. Unrelenting honesty and exacting description are coupled with the trials of a dying mother, saint shadows, birds, and "shit drying to chalk."

*My mother's body to wires, to tubes
and their liquid, days she turned toward me
or away, winter but so much sun
from car to door. I followed it past nurses*

*at their station talking movies, who's good
in one and not the other. Gown tied
at the back and neck, she slept beside
a window. I wedged my chair there, reading,*

*looking up, reading,—who knows what
I read—her legs bruised, thin, arms battered
by the doctor's needle. Her face. Can I
say this plainly now? There was light*

*as she grew less. She drifted to it.
I'm not hungry, not religious, I'm in a spot,
she told me one afternoon then
closed her eyes to that radiance again.*

Marianne Boruch grew up in Chicago and earned a masters degree from the University of Massachusetts. She teaches at Purdue University and at Warren Wilson College. She lives in West Lafayette, Indiana.

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