

## Lot's Wife

by Margaret Inman, Pascoag, Rhode Island

"I know, I know we have to leave  
but in such haste? Can I not have  
one brief moment just to look  
at what I'm not allowed to take,  
all that I must leave behind?  
Even if you can't understand  
(for no man could) I do still  
need a little chance to grieve  
the memories that now fill  
my mind, the friends and things I love.  
(What is this stiffness that I feel,  
this lethargy?) Your God, or fate,  
is so unkind to me. Wait—  
oh wait! I cannot move my feet!  
I cannot move..."

## October Arachnid

by Margaret Inman, Pascoag, Rhode Island

No "cowerin', timorous beastie" you  
but a large feisty spider trapped  
between my window pane and screen,  
and it is I who am the "mouse",  
afraid to open the window, admit you  
into my kitchen's warmth to find  
comfort on sill or counter.

For you are wild, and I must let  
no wild thing in to discompose  
my ordered equilibrium. Last  
night brought frost, and I was  
sure I'd see you stiff and dry  
as winter grass this morning,  
but when I pulled the curtain back  
you reared so fast inside your narrow  
cage that I instinctively  
flinched as if you were a bear,  
threatening me so bravely.

I admire your spunk and your impressive  
web, but I will without  
mercy watch each day's increasing  
chill begin to bite into your  
vigor, and like God will know  
ahead of you your death, despite  
your present fierce vitality.

So I look on you with fear,  
with pity, and a kind of guilt  
as you spin out your scant span  
of life. But now, look! The morning  
sun renews and boosts you cunning  
strength: you swell—you crouch and lurk—  
poised, you wait for prey.

# October

by Margaret Inman, Pascoag, Rhode Island

As the year ages  
so do our dreams  
quicken.  
Old expectations,  
blurred  
by summer's sweet inertia,  
regain hard focus,  
and desire  
bites  
like frost.