

## Cotton Door-Knobs

To be still and left and full of emptiness  
Like a cracked shell of lichee nut  
Suspended by a whisper from a withered brittle bough,  
Staring inward  
At its little wrinkled fruit of heart;  
Is like wandering through moss-seaweed-paper doors  
Opened,  
With cotton door-knobs.

--Nina deVoe

## The Second Level Isn't My Affair

really. The best poems go a little wild.  
Adjectives are two-faced. Verbs like to stare  
cross-eyed. Nothing I can do about it.  
Truth will flood in wherever planks are loose  
and captains falter. Though my ship is styled  
to ride the seas that no form can reduce,

logic may drown. That good iambic stock  
won't save it when my bad blood tells its strain,  
my mind lets loose its libelous creature,  
my poem pursues its own instinctive track,  
splintering the stanzas to touch the main  
artery of knowing. No Invictus

insures this brittle craft when the nature  
of all natures storms at the second level,  
below trick and loss, below love and gain.  
What I confess to you is your affair  
really. The old transfusion is complete  
under the surface where all souls travel

in the same white schools, at the same life heat.

--Dolores Stewart