

Terri Witek

Night Book

The chair is a book
she folds herself into.

Outside, the laurel oak's book
never closes although,

in the book of sleep,
she becomes another branch in its forest.

Soon the hero will pass.
In the book of his hands may be numbered

the sighs of his mount.
All ride for the ocean,

itself thumbed by what recovers
no word, no spine of sensation--

unlike the mirror's book,
bold-faced over the credenza.

The fragrant book of the past,
propped beside paperbacks,

avoids the narrowing eye of the hour
and one still shut but already burning.

And yours,
although you are written there.

The Map's Around Here Somewhere

Though native to more subtle islands,
contentment skims across the depths to steal us.
If in such company we seem unsound,

it confiscates our local weapons
(usually, flint filagreed with fuses).
Returning to more subtle islands,

contentment floods then calmly fastens
clouds to hills to creeks to sluices.
If in such company we seem unsound,

our huts re-thatch to feature dawn,
strange birdcalls lift or drop to steer us.
Though we're not native to these islands,

we learn to ply new gods with wampum
and dally with the most amphibious.
If in such company we seem unsound

and drowning still, postcards notify the mainland.
When search parties finally row to meet us,
they find no naifs marooned, no subtle islands,
just leagues of green, consoling sound.

Terry Witek directs the Sullivan Creative Writing Program at Stetson University in Florida. Story Line Press published her second volume of poetry, *Carnal World*, this year. Her first book, *Fools and Crows*, appeared in 2003. A chapbook, *Courting Couples*, won the 2000 Center for Book Arts Letterpress Contest. She is the author of *Robert Lowell and Life Studies: Revising the Self*.