

CHANGING LANES



**Poetry Throughout a
Woman's life By Peg Hanna**

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ISBN: 978-1-62249-543-6

Biblio Publishing

Columbus, Ohio

[Biblio Publishing.com](http://BiblioPublishing.com)

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for Lynn and Elaine
their encouragement will be missed

INTRODUCTION

Travel/Change

TRAVEL / CHANGE

We move from place to place.

What moves us to move?

We roll over in bed for comfort,

walk into a room for a reason.

fly in the air to cross countries,

ride in cars to cross town.

We travel in our minds,

across time and space,

Enter a story world,

We change jobs, cities, vacation sites.

We outgrow homes, retire, downsize.

Travel transports us.

Life challenges us to move.

DRIVING WINTER'S HIGHWAY

Driving winter's highway, I see
Iced limbs reflecting sunset's oranges
Creating glistening frames to winter's scenes.

My black Jaguar and I
Enter this world
At eighty miles an hour.

Pass black earthen furrows
Rolled over for summer seeds
Now striped with recent snow.

Tall saltbox homes sit alone in open fields
Their candlelit windows
Remind me of families inside.

Flying across Ohio's winter highway
Frustration flows through my feet.
I break the country's calm

Worn wood barns sit quietly above snowy knolls
Like brooding hens sustaining life below
I hear only the hum of a finely tuned car.

Boarded up produce stands dot sides of the road
Awaiting next season's crops.
In my rear view mirror, I thumb my nose at the city behind.

Pass groves of poplars and elms
Sheltering farms from blistering winds
Their sturdy bodies will surrender to saw mills.
I enter this slow-paced world
Away from the fast-paced throw-away city.
Country stores, lifelines to farm families, dot my route.
Approaching my grandfather's fields.
I pass small a small cemetery holding
Relatives who knew the value of the land.
A get-away weekend looms ahead.
My body relaxes.
I pull into the dusty drive of the family homestead.
Now as I sit in my office overlooking the busy city,
I dream of this trip and
Wish I had the time to drive it.

WOMEN, ETERNAL PIONEERS

Move to new homes, new times

New relationships, new stations in life

Unique situations lead us on.

Corporate wives with small children

Annually move into new suburbs, make new neighbors

Enter different school systems, seek new doctors.

Career women, bearing first children

Establish new routines with professional careers,

Face twenty-four-seven childcare, no longer nine-to-five hours.

Older women change health care

Experiment with new medications, life

styles, foods for age-old and emerging

conditions.

Women in men's positions

Write new guidelines for management of

Household, workload and childcare.

Wives suffer down-sizing, loss of husband's jobs

Create resumes, endure through interviews, rejections

Look to women for support.

Mother's caring for grown children

With addictions, diseases, confused sexuality

Enter new worlds, seeking help.

Women of the sandwich generation

Caring for selves, grown children and aging parents

Decide future care for family members.

Women, eternal pioneers.

IN HER MIRROR

My face upon her looking glass
Becomes woman from the past.
Touring her home of yesteryears
I feel her strength, know her tears.

Within her crude household
Of colorful quilts and candle mold
Pot filled hearth, tie back drapes
I see what history's woman creates.

Boarders' dressers and rope tied beds
Tables, benches, where men once fed.
Tiny kitchen, one woman's larder
Widow, seamstress, cook and gardener.

What did she dream?

Did she sew an easier life into a seam

Of a dress a hat a cape?

How did she escape?

As I enter here

Others draw near

Yet, the wind carries into my hand

A sapphire feather from her dresser hat stand.

Her face mirrors mine.

With a gift transcending time

The feather, our kinship born in her looking glass,

We smile, I nod and solemnly pass.

WILSON'S

Farmland filled with clumps of freshly turned dirt

Awaits new crops.

For generations these fields produced

Corn, beans and potatoes.

Now

Wooden frames sprout from its soil

Backhoes and bulldozers

Till the land for planting pipes

Now

From his wheelchair

Grandfather stares at the acres

Worked with his father and grandfather.

Now

Brought by his grandson

For one last look at the land

Before his farm harvests homes.

His eyes mist.

“The land was silent then,” he said.

“Disturbed only by the put-put of a tractor.

Now

Roaring machines drown out his reverie.

“The house stood there.”

He pointed to his left.

“From a wrap-around porch

We watched the land from every angle.”

Now

Builders survey the land from every angle

Studying approved plans

Where drawings tell of

Acres divided into lots

Identical homes to be lined up in rows

Sod placed where chickens pecked

Pavement poured over cow paths.

The development would keep his name

Wilson’s Farm

Known for Quality.

COMPANIONS

Bent by arthritis
Marie slowly descends
Worn wooden steps, stands over
A lone daffodil in her yard.

She reaches into
Her faded apron pocket
Draws out a tissue
Wipes her eyes.

As yellow petals
At her feet
Sway in spring breezes
Marie's head follows in rhythm.

She speaks.

"I remember
Planting many of you
Long ago.

You and I have endured
As families grew and left
The neighborhood changed
You and I are left alone"

She smiles and remembers
Its name from her school days
"Daffy Down Dilly
Thank you for returning."