

I AM NOT A POET

TO MY PEARL OF HERBALS

A BOOK OF POETRY

TO SPEAK OF HERBALS

POEMS BY LINDSAY WINCHERAUK

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A Poem: Waking
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A bicycle, an old-fashioned bicycle, stood alone on a country road, no rider in sight.

The bicycle's pedals begin moving, slowly at first.

I look down from above. Not as high as the clouds, yet; still above the horizon. I can almost touch the grass in the fields, each blade dancing leisurely in the warm flowing summer air.

The bicycle rolls over gentle hills, casually meandering past farmhouses, meadows, and small towns. Townsfolk line dirt roads, waving at the bike as it passes by. Their expressions, emotionless.

The sun beats down relentlessly. You can see the heat rise off the bike's shiny silver frame.

THE BICYCLE SLOWS

It comes upon a building – not a house – not a storefront – not a church – a combination of all three. The building sits forebodingly at the end of a street, on this bright summer day.

Alone on its porch, a baby lay in a basket. Several faces, ten faces, are pressed against its dark windows. They stare vacuously out at the world passing by. The bicycle continues to slow, and the faces quickly turn and look away. Once passed, a man in a white coat walks onto the porch, holding the baby to the heavens above.

A CLOUD FORMS

Peddalling faster, the bicycle comes to a schoolyard. Children are skipping, running, and playing ball. Not one is smiling.

The pace hastens.

Hills come.

Hills go.

The bicycle comes to a valley.

The sun has been replaced by dark clouds.

They burst.

Rain-washes over the bicycle, and the bike's silver turns into blue.

The bicycle presses on, finding a celebration; a young man is smiling, people are dancing. Across the street glance faces, the same ten as before. Brusquely, they turn and walk away, standing behind them, a man in a white coat.

Time starts moving faster and faster.

Day turns to night, then back into day.

Storms come. Storms go.

The city turns into the country, then back into the city. The intensity of living begins to explode.

The bicycle comes to a cemetery.

People are standing above a single grave.



The bike slows again. Just as it is about to stop, the people turn; their faces are blank. Two graves appear from whence there was one.

The bicycle begins to move frantically.

Snow whips through its spokes as steel turns to ice.

21 A hill sprouts up from nowhere. The sun flashes through the clouds; the asphalt begins to warm. The heat intensifies. The hill becomes steeper and steeper and steeper until it becomes so steep that it touches the sky.

The tires spin with their revolutions raging uncontrollably until they can no longer be seen, only to move faster once more.

Spokes snap from the rims, flying recklessly into the sky.

The sky bursts into flames.

The bicycle keeps desperately trying to climb. It begins to sweat, dripping beads of moisture onto the melting pavement below. The bike slows again; exhaustion consumes it as the effort reaches impossible.

Suddenly, without finishing the climb, the hill levels, and just as steep as the climb once was, the descent is much more vertical.

At the bottom of the hill lay clouds. They're darker than the darkest black; flares of energy spark from the earth.

The once faceless crowd waits at the bottom of the hill. Laughing. So loudly that tears begin to rise from the sky down below.

The bicycle tries to stop its downward fall, and the speed once again accelerates.

It can't be sustained.

At the bottom of the hill, it comes to rest. The laughter ceases as the faceless crowd blends into the earth.

A car rises from below and begins speeding out of control.

The bicycle sits still.

The car continues.

A faceless man is sitting behind the wheel.

THE BICYCLE IS DOOMED

I cover my eyes and scream.

My screams are consumed by solitude.

The car enters the bicycle and then passes through its enfeebled body.

The bicycle lies broken on the smouldering ground.

Its paint is chipped.

Its spokes are gone.

It begins to fold into itself.

Before it vanishes, a man appears from nowhere; he replaces the spokes and paints the bicycle a bright cherry red, the same colour as his shirt.

The frame cools.

The sky begins to clear.

The man winks, smiles, removes his redshirt; he's now wearing white.

A gentle hill appears.

A bird chirps.

The grass waves gently in the warm summer breeze.

The bicycle, no longer old-fashioned, begins to move once again.

Slowly at first, as I watch from below.

The bicycle gradually disappears over the crown of a hill.

A single cloud forms in the sky.

THIS DAY HAS JUST BEGUN!