

POETRY

We prayed not for poetry . . .
Poem-birth is mystery!
Inspiration's whim and wit and time
Hid in us as inside mothers,
Who are sister-poet brothers,
Weaving verbal images in rhyme.

We can only guess the way
Poems come to steal our day,
Planted by a visionary dream.
Once the Muse has slipped her word in
Pens in hand escape the burden
Solely by submitting to her scheme.

If not Muse, then why the weight?
What compels the lines to mate?
Who can halt while inner thoughts rehearse?
Who can thwart the song that phrases
Pictures into measured mazes
Sung until its theme is born in verse?

Labor pains at day or night
Seize and push us on to write,
Force our spirits far beyond their choice.
But our focused concentration
Bonds us to our contemplation,
Lest we fail to lend our will and voice.

We enjoy the sculptor's fate,
Doomed to chisel and create:
Setting free the statue in the stone.
Poetry's demand increases
Till the pregnant mind releases
What within the poet's womb was sown.

— *David L. Hatton, 4/13/1993*