



## Inside the Construction : The Reason for Painting

A poem by Alexandra Matraw

Your paintings like a rocking horse, or the story where a boy rides his death every night. Gambles his colors for a soul. Back roads stretch cacti push and prick. Taste cattails and trains. Gardens hang beer bottles and broken Spanish. Every shard a thread— a puppet I hold. To mimic you mimicking. Tightly our fleshy palms sweat the jukebox wine. Coughs swill elms and reddened wolves that paint you painting them. Nicotine incisions. Hank Williams. Hot dog cart bells rounding each window. New moon slants lean two children in a yard. They laugh. Brown fenced wet newspaper and birches weep their skins. My sticky hands. You mouth swollen dahlias from drunk sidewalks. Morning punctures your front door hinge. Sunlight hems the skirts between our hands. Every photograph you tried to paint. Even the dirt under your own nails that grow even after—