



My Mother's Sky

The poetry of Allison Crayhurst

Allison Crayhurst

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Allison Grayhurst

Edge Unlimited Publishing

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The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst
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(Eileen (Lee Porter) Grayhurst 1930-2024)

The Death Journey

**Space around the memories,
walking the cul-de-sac,
house to house, in a dream
where the small school stood and the field
is just the same where you linked arms
with your teacher and talked,
bright with your awakening into literature.**

**The trees are stronger, thicker-trunked,
living non-violent as they expand
and take up more ground.**

**Space from room to room and five hawks
fill the sky, then merge with the sky over the lake
and the vast line of clouds, changing temperature.**

**She drives her last car drive,
into this emptiness that does not hurt
but offers no comfort.
After the drive
the love in her blazes refreshed
as she sits in her lazy boy chair,
forgetting her sickness and old age,
blazes the whole scope of her magnificence,
strongest in her compassion.**

This last journey we will have together.

**We will overcome together until the end
and even then
there will be no ending, just a change,
space, I cannot fathom,
space added between us, space experienced
sometimes as a shedding of plumage,
sometimes, as a wasps' nest touched,
accidental unbearable sting.**



**Before I remember
blank days, atheist days
that left me sombre-hard,
but these days
are brim with harrowing storms,
prayers and keepsakes infused
with intractable meaning, memories
ripe and revered as a newborn's flesh.**

**Before, my soul was below, breaking
through the body regularly, in pieces,
but these days it sits on the surface,
intact, a glass sphere without protection,
thrown and rolling, like
a lightning fuse, cracked.**

**These days there are no pointed steps,
but each day is like the first sun rays seen,
heightening my energy to be as kind and capable
as possible as the bringing pulse lives in a jar,
is taken out of the jar, and dying takes its fill,
and death runs in circles around the dream
and everything within the dream
that is real and everlasting is quenched
when the days are these days
sober and groaning, rising
break-and-fall, cresting hard
with this shining golden sharp
hurt, breath-taking.**



**Tricky blood dripping
into upper wall cracks,
through the grout tracks
and into winter's foreboding
months ahead.**

**How does it take so little to examine
the underside and know it is rotten,
flesh covered but disintegrating
underneath?**

**How many hands have to wash
at the same sink until the basin gets cracked
and the taps only release a trickle?**

**Tomorrow is today is
a slow-moving line bruised
with intensity and trauma,
clothed in brackets that shift then fall
then plateau before they fall again.**



**What seems unending
will end and when it ends
an ocean of emptiness will
consume. The dragon's nest
will be disturbed and
heat will flow its lava-reach and hot depth
into the ordinary, the extraordinary
and everything in between.**

**This star is imploding into a vacuous
vacuum-suck and spiral break, spinal break
that breaks any chance for mobility.
When it ends it will be my end,
orphaned, no hidden curses, icons will be broken,
and saints will be laid bare, naked, exposed before God.**

**So end, my mother, but do not end,
be like a songbird blasting her song
before the sun even rises, glorifying,
and watch the heavenly bodies
surrounding, lifting your soul gently,
transforming you naturally
to breaststroke through
sun-bearing ridges
rising, dipping
divine dimensions.**



The backside of the shadow
is awake, and losing ground again
burning in the sinkhole, into
a conclusion of harsh hard
cause-and effect.

Eyelids lower, sleep is never rest
but a patchwork horror-show
of violence and loss and things
once perfect, stolen
behind locked doors.

Underground, the circus continues
and I will never find my way out
of this mirrored maze.

I know that if I lie flat in the stark silence,
mortal eroding flesh is inevitable.

Extravagant love always has a price.

The price owed has been paid and I must leave
the turning circle, step past the fissure-groove
and sink into a faith abiding.

I will walk with you reckless
over this abandoned lake,
skipping across veiled skin ice,
thinning, seeing through, skipping,
and somehow never a crack will form
and never your toe nor my heel
falling through.



**The smell of worms.
A feast that rages inside
the system-nerves, taking
the body to extreme outerspace,
thresholds of reason
and waiting in the death-year
the year of exhaustion - one day brushed
with energizing hope, and the next,
crumbled, withdrawn.**

**What is deception in this playing field?
What is an honest ascent that will also
echo into the roots and stay there?**

**The distance to carry this weighted reality
is unknown, the duty within it, and the love,
is immediate and unquestioning.
So I stay, pressed against the mountain,
pressed against this aching uncertainty.
Pressed and moving and mourning
each conversation, trusting
that the sharp pointed misery
will not pitch, that peace will expand
until peace overcomes.**



**Arrow stream
in between existences
splashing between shores,
forced to confront her ancient
criticism that has wrapped
my mind-frame and grown
a shadow as cumbersome
as a heavy chain.**

**This land she demands me to walk on
crowns me with gruelling labour,
hijacking my dignity and sense of equality.
It is a constant place of servitude merging
with guilt and a dismissal of my strength
and true worth.**

**This red line drawn is crossed over,
onto hot sands without sandals.
Mine is to give but not to neuter
my prayers - rage and pity colliding.
I will give but I will not have
my music reined and whipped
and tossed like a dusty bag
with the rest of the clipped toenails.**

**I will tell her what I cannot tell her,
by not owning her hierarchical demands
as I give, as I am placed within
this imprisoned place
as her sickness and drug-induced mania
takes control -
her petty compulsions incurable,
but my love for her
so much more.**

*Kaleidoscope flaming,
her eleven colours remaining
mixed and pure and still swirling,
undimmed
by suffering's panicked toll*



**Too much dust and debris
filling the vents, my lungs.
Twisted plots of imagined problems
flung across the river without
factual explanation.**

**So I endure and I count my numbers
to hold in my anger, hold back my tears
and keep doing the soft servitude and
diligent care I am accustomed to,
instead of doing what I want to do -
withdraw, fold up and out
for at least a good week.**

**Too much drug-induced insanity whispers,
whispering accusations that hold no water,
but cut and kill just the same
all my good will, my enduring effort
and my exhausted heart that believed at least
it has kept itself true.**

**The crow almost hits the moving car,
almost goes under the wheel. Instead
it somersaults and avoids being clipped
by inches, flying in front of the car window,
raised away by maneuvering a mounting wind.**

**Too much blood without redemption.
Too much condemnation for a false claim,
a winter blank and brutal,
not of my own making.**

**Remember, remember -
the crow caws and reverberates
into the white cells, red cells
or your bloodstream -**

**Remember
God gives nothing easy,
nothing worthy of keeping
that doesn't first eviscerate
before reseeding
your radiant core.**



**How can I rock
between the eaten bread
and the rotten leftovers,
filling plates with putrid smells
and locked-in rage that rages in
an insomniac relentless punch
and tilt - twisting the bowels,
concerned only with petty victories?**

**How can I keep my self open
while needing full-on protection
from her drug-induced distancing eyes?**

**How can I live through another day
of exhausting intensity, with unveiled
shameless fears filling space and
the brutal-swerve
of a lingering inevitable?**

**How can I hold on until the end
hold out until permission is granted
to at last collapse flat out,
unfold, fold?**



**Last days, these days
roll like a slow-moving stone
across a stony terrain -
many bumps, inclines, declines
and turns.**

**Last days, restless then at peace
then restless again
as limitations close in so only
the essentials remain.**

**Last days are these days
soaked with this blazing wound, continuing.
These days there are no more plans
but to live through the days letting in
the undefiled grace that rises like vapour at dusk
through the balcony-door crack,
through her smile which she still manages occasionally,
keeping pace with the clawing hunger for relief
and the undercurrent smells of sickness.**

**These days are the last days
I can love you,
and how I love you, my mother -
your bright sailboat stalled
in the maw of this menacing wave
surging.**



**It is clear
that finally we are
adopted into the universe's time frame,
that time is not counted by cards
or the constellations.
Clear that light is not light-weight
but heavy
when it transforms.**

**Cracked leather belts tighten like nooses,
dreams crack then shatter and scatter
their fragments down the drain.
God is in the laundry room.
God is in her laboured respiration
and in her smile she now only shows
to strangers.**

**It is clear dying is not death.
It is its own journey -
a body breaking, a soul struggling
and losing
no matter the effort
to keep itself here, whole.**



**I wish I was a snail
robbed of its shell, squished
underfoot, drying up in the
sun
so all that was left
of me was a thin crust of skin
that found its way into pavement pores,
and I could be disintegrated, be no more.**

**I wish I had no responsibilities
but to my solitude, my own thoughts
waking and sleeping.**

**I wish I never tried to love
because now I know
I have failed at love, to love,
to be strong when open, protecting
not only from the outside but inside too,
taking on others' spiritual burdens,
not out of kindness
but out of cowardice and the delusion
that the world is anything but
a lulling zone of harsh beggary
and bully imagination.**

**I am a broken toy kicked to the curb.
I am nothing. I have nothing and
I wish I was a snail, dried up,
sensory-dead, flat
and inconsequential.**



I don't know how to sing.
My legs have become old
and there are no more believers
around me.

Clasped in a never-opening lair
with active lava and no windows,
I cannot find the cave through the narrow incline,
trapped, submerged.

I cannot sing or breathe or be here
as I am broken down
bloodied and maimed.
I cannot continue to move,
pretend the feeling light is inside me
when it isn't, when most days
I wish it was over and the throne of my failure
would burn with myself along with it.

Chaos, eroding sickness,
and the brutal cold reign supreme.
Everything I have done
is shattered in a pit
with no way to reassemble or resume.

I don't want to be here.
I don't want the natural law
but only God's mercy.

I cannot sing.
My memories are false, used-up
and dissipating.



Exhausted like a willow tree
is exhausted after a storm
but the storm keeps thrashing
and scooping all strong things once rooted
to the ground, releasing them across
the lawn like a brick thrown to the head,
like a dream inhabited in its ghoulish
madness, running but getting nowhere.

The suffering, the need
and the love that keeps
it together but not always.
Nerves dosed in gasoline -
fire just feet away but still at bay.
Breathing for one day, taking no messages, hearing
no extreme complaints. The doors are closed.
The balcony window is open. I step out,
there is a sky and a hawk merging with the clouds.
How much more can I hold?

And then it will be over, and I will hold no more,
not her frail hand, not her scent, not her eyes
with my eyes in deep and struggling prayer,
not her body leaning into my arms,
her full weight surrendered.



**A day of reprieve,
wearing a costume and getting
in a car.**

**A day when the light
is unhooked from its source
and no one will say why
We will just carry on as through
this distress is natural
as though it is a wave to endure
instead of a captive fall.**

**A day of reverie,
the last time of gathering
and playing the role
The first Christmas at her home
The first time she will sleep through
most of it.**

**A day that we thought would not come
with her still with us.
So we are grateful
and we take this day
putting our mourning aside
this day - a winter-solstice flower
bearing its last bloom
before the advancing frost.**



After the end,
when the end comes
and speaking is useless,
her home will be a torch
blown out - her turquoise eyes,
curtained. Sorrow will open
like a jar of dragonflies, fireflies
released as one.

And even then, when resigned
to the careful truth, the separation
will ache like a phantom limb,
like a stillborn child held, kissed,
never receiving.

As the end approaches,
I will have to force the basics
of breathe, sleep, eat
for her sake and those around me
who love her equally as I do.
I will forget about hope
and then later I will remember
her eyes, alit with playful joy,
her summers spent on proud
adventures and the way she loved me,
never giving up, generous
as an empathetic and beautiful queen,
loving me
without understanding me
but trusting me
all the same.



**Repeating, the days
knowing a different day will only be worse,
veiling the eyelids, opening an emptiness
that will never be eased.**

**Repeating but not forever, but
longer than anticipated. In spite
of the great love you feel, you feel
used-up, under appreciated.**

**But this is her now, diseased and drugged,
does not diminish her glowing
life-long compassion, her extravagant tolerance
and kindness, connection to everyone, her softness
that still peels away the crust in an instant
when her heart is touched, when faith
is required.**



Duty has made work in the garden
impossible, waking up,
a barren chore.
The mountains have dropped,
flattened out into a steady plane.
Energy I gave up as mine, came back,
surprising me with my own resilience,
stamina to hold the days together one after another
until they became months, a way of life and service.
This gift like a curse like a gift
necessary to pluck
my soul from a rut it had no awareness it was even in
until out, until forced to hold a different tune
and play it until it becomes naturally possible,
a place of unbelievable challenge met,
a place to live without
decisions, conclusions,
live as an open-end-nerve swimming
stroke by stroke upstream -
most times lit on fire,
a few times resting on the bank,
looking around
tamed, soothed.



I cry out throughout the night.
I cry for the thousands due to die
who still remain unclaimed.
A slow step through misery, with moments
intermittent of a pure turquoise glow.
A gradual waking into loss and the definite
abyss of absolute letting-go.
Mid-sleep panic that wakes
me with its red tentacle squeeze
crushing my mind,
and the steady breath I need to endure
another tomorrow.
I cry out but I keep it contained -
my flesh without hope
my spirit committed to this sacred duty
as the rest of me is battered, broken-branched
bearing, feebly carrying
one collapsed body, now another.



**A kiss
A curl
a look out
a look beyond
a rosy anticipation.**

**All things compare to each other
in the dark gloom of dissatisfaction,
meaningless activity
reaching its zenith then back to the nadir and
spinning again.
Painting helps and even singing a familiar song
but these things do not break the loop
or contain more than a flawed and temporary ease.
Hands down, Hands open and the mind saying
now- be brave!**

**Love is deeper than darkness
more unexpected and varied than the checkpoints
of delusion, chaos and dementia.
Love then, widespread.
Take on that love
and place what weighs you down
into the wet cement blocks
of this unhappy nightmarish decline.**

**Do this and inherit
the dreamy peace
and its mortal claim.
Do this and be devoted
to good service, knowing
all else is bloodshed,
must be shed to earn your keep
and beeline your way to
a maturing discipline,
an invincible pronouncement -**

**angelic terror
where only
this slender slice of light exits
to squish through,
beckoning, supreme.**



I do not know
the treatment
the reasons
for such a grand tribulation
I have only achieved this interval
of a tiny budding joy,
a respite from the imploding friction.
I do not know if it is more than
a respite, if it is a crossing over,
a victory over infection and chronic chaotic influences

but today she walks a little stronger, limping still
but improving her gait.
Today the Earth is this simple location,
open to the angels and to recovery.
I did not expect this calamity, collapse of
every dream, but my eyes are lifting.
I don't need a massive harvest, just food
enough to sustain and faith enough
for a mild liberation.



**Melody screeched to a halt,
bubble big, too big, extinguished.
I relinquished my faith for answers.
Gruesomely unattractive
in full sight
in sharp black and white
immutable, I wanted
control like some want pleasure,
like one without restrictions
or moral aptitude.**

**Demons aggressively demanded my trust
underserved, making up stories
to turn failures into victories.
Hell is the steel-illusion-force of truth inverted
where there is no bowing down to the greater
authority, who is God, in charge,
unpredictable, not a pawn to use to
increase power, not a valium pill
to ease my anxiety while
traversing the treacherous unknown.**

**In that journey there is only one activity,
only faith resuscitating,
the outcome irrelevant -
a blue streak across a grey sky,
feasting on surrender.**



Sandbox throughout the vastness
take away the end of time
and I will slide like a globe,
like a planet, bursting stars
as I go, grounding suns and
drowning blackholes in my wake.

I will peel back tomorrow,
compost it into a Sunday secret
gasping for a solitude it will never find
or play-in again.

Take the hunger from Infinity and
I will be open as an abyss, spending money
like everyday is my birthday, my death day.
I will give birth away from
the tempting waters of deception
that conceal choice in hesitation
that drive the mystic to forsaken symbolism,
that pull the spine from its vertebrae, rotating
in one split-second choice,
while looking at it, desiring it, looking like
something worth the price of a soul.

Boredom demands at least a breeze,
at least a far-off flutter to speak the hope
that angels are real.

Take us out of this passageway,
underground mazes, mole homes
that imply safety. The sun is a sea lion.
We will ride beside him and he will coach
us to swerve and flip,
avoid the jellyfish and the stingray.
Meaning will pour like rain on the top
of our surfaced heads –

**a storm, this sickness, just another high wave,
just another necessity to dive deeper,
lungs and cells heavy, heavier
to avoid the overhead storm.**



Inside, full of hot nerves
sinking without the sight of tentacles
or a slice of coral
to latch onto.
Your faculties, twisted,
breaking logic into shards.
Freedom came like a larger stone to carry,
duty like a sunburn, burning, causing
the first and second layer of skin to blister.
Useless music passes, cannot be kept
or remembered. The space is traveled
knocking against corners, bruising bones
and the remains of visions.
Stings on the pads of your feet
in the white of your eyes.

Inside, we are a tall-tower rubble,
a stack of concrete broken blocks
and bodies
and grief that lasts generations.

Inside, there is a ship enticing
we cannot board,
a mutual weariness,
a ghostly outage blackout,
blinding us from seeing
sharp corners, soft cushions,
the way to retrieve
a glass
in the kitchen, on the counter
of already poured, useful water.



**Blended
into this scenery, this sick bed
and the watered-downed horizon.
It is weak with over-empathizing
tearing crusts off until all protection
is gone from my soft mushy core.
I cannot acclimatize to this grief,
her life-force-fading drawn into my own
bruised blood of doom, dooming my
own cells and strength into this unfair despair,
unsoothable scorch and decay.**

**A washing down after every visit, care-day
so I do not mimic the symptoms
of death and dying and the aching
anguish of helplessness.**

**This path will not lead
to a garden but to a cliff,
a farewell without ever coming back.
Each step toward the edge is torture
when taken, is forced not taken because
there is no standing still against it,
no turning around, the inevitable is absolute.
This path is darkness, and this darkness
is complete love - heavy, high above,
a terrifying incarnation.**



**Turn to me, I turn
skinned,
striking a blow
to the inner circle.**

**My soul is a peanut,
two parts, shelled, asymmetrical.
Unity is divine, to kill
is never excusable or brave or
holy.**

**The bloodwind is the wind
that turns to defeat every journey
in disaster.**

**Take a mouthful - swirl the grey slime
of decline and the sharp spikes
of uncertainty, to swallow and know this
is what is meant to be
and what you have is this moment
to love and this moment again
to love
and the rest is not worth one thought,
is too much to take in,
so take in and yield to its power.**



**Chips of clear and broken glass.
Will I make this destiny-duty
intact or burn out on a hospital bed,
drained to the point of no return?
The stones are joy. I keep my smile
pressed on, my impatience under breath
and my dignity on a wire - pulled and tugged
by her unnecessary necessities.**

**When I am tired
the guilt pores in like
castor oil, down the wrong pipe
into the windpipe as I struggle
to regain our once synchronized flow,
but it will not return or rewind, as her love
only shows in momentary flickers now
before she dives again into these catacombs
collapsing.**

**She is owned by the morphine
pumping into her bloodstream
at regular intervals, pumping its purpose
to nullify her pain, while twisting mental foreign
tracks through her brain that torture her
with their relentless sticky grid
and serpents' faces rising, telling her
she is owned, robbed of her
treasured independence, confined to home,
watching her once happy socializing light darken,
and you love her, you know her. You know**

**for a while
the monster will chomp at the moon,
will take the glow from her view,
soil every brilliant horizon,**

**will capture her honoured seat,
even conquer her spiritual home,
for a while
death's rotting belly
will do what it must do,
bloat and swell
foul, naturally cruel.**



**Dream-self
destiny-self
never align**

**As soon as the shackles have cracked,
a new cage has formed,
taking away the morning light,
a chance to see the phenomena
of untainted being.**

**I have fallen into usefulness
like a bottomless sewer pit, falling, nothing
broke, just the drain of gravity in my bones
as I fall, lacking
the gift of appreciation and the possibility
of a safe landing.**



**Selling parts secretly owned
but never named. Scraping off
the daily dread to find a hope.
Hoping her suffering soul
will be reconciled in a flash,
unscathed when the new one begins,
budding, blooming into the opening,
the center of the ring,
enveloped in tenderness eternal.**

**Then the peace she gained by her natural
good heart will expand and blot out her
anxieties, her struggles for control.**

**She will be unharmed, in a state
where joy overwhelms with a constant
ecstasy sustainable and God is beside her
within her and all around her, swirling, caressing,
like God has always been, only now with a certainty
that even the most faithful servants
(inside time
inside gravity)
have never known.**



**Purely dying
like the universe
bottoming out,
letting it all go into
a sinkhole oblivion.**

**Purely fear of losing
the definite, the breathing lungs
in the body on the bed
and the heart-seized and blind from
its atomic power.**

**Purely God
holding the stick and strings,
concealed and blanketing,
preparing her soul for this
divine beginning.**

**The hall light is dim.
The curtains rustle forward.
Her eyes, once wet with anxiety's tears,
now see the angels surround, the truth
of boundless love, for her, for all.**



**Last days
Dark days
dangerous death
at my doorstep,
swinging its hips to-and-fro.
Burning body, cracked, gnawed
away by insect bites, rodent bites
and the big blackhole open-mouth, forsaken.
Take what you must, but take it now,
swiftly, cover the core and the extremities
with your weight and then lift that weight
into the light of the sun, glorious
as a sparkle-water-wave-ripple
and a solitary hawk merging with the horizon.**

**Let her go like that hawk, pure in spirit
as she is, kind and soft as a child as she is.
Let her go into a dream that turns from
a dream into heaven's threshold,
where she crosses over filled with your glory,
and my father looking on
with steady, welcoming eyes.**



**Outer nerves,
the madness of rise and decline,
undulating like an erratic wave,
the body joined to the illusion,
to past conclusions
and repetitive patterns remolded but unchanged.
Anxiety and intuition smudged
into one dim light.
I bow to the blowing wind, to the ignorance of now.
I hold her hand more now than I did as a child.
Tears rest for a while but lack any regulation.
Slow as a sloth but unpredictable as a storm.
Each day expends
what once was a normal week of energy.
Downward is the secret.
Bend in the direction of whatever gives.
The night is full of apocalyptic dreams,
solar flares and precautions, preparations
to minimize the coming death-blast charring burn.**



The night season comes
and Earth is mine to hold,
witness its mark
and its gathering decay
while you sleep in an unconscious
darkening - skin around your mouth
turning blue, and inside that open circle,
inner lips peeling rice-paper fine
and your tongue like a dried log, that I keep sponging,
trying to saturate and regain its malleable form.

Your eyebrows twitch in what the nurses
promise me is not pain, promised me
you are comfortable
even though
for three days and three nights you
have lingered in a grizzly dehydrated shadow-stasis.

These days are like years, ripping away my trust,
my faith, my understanding of mercy,
solidifying the power
of bone-chiselling dread.

I love you, more in your helplessness,
in your patience for the final command, lingering,
red sores forming under your eyes,
fingers cold, purple pale and never grasping.

I stay with you in that place, even when
I sleep, I never sleep without you with me.
I love you and I hurt for you
and I want your release from this
brutal collapse of your form.

**Why or even how you are lingering so long,
even the doctor can't say.
I think you are buffering us from the pain of your loss
I think sometimes maybe mercy burns
hotter than punishment.**

**And these times
life surpasses understanding,
when the bottom current over quicksand thins,
breaking the chrysalis, clearing the way
for an unwanted redemption.**



**I am lifted
Blood on a field Blood in a cloud
and then so many
streams flowing, unassuming.**

**I take your hand, lean
over you and kiss your forehead,
weeping, praying, saying
again and again I love you, thank you.
Your breaths are short, coming from below
not from your chest, but from your deepest gut,
stillness, ease, a letting go.**

**I drop like a bird on your shoulder.
I know you are leaving. You know
it is a beautiful alchemy, accumulation
of a life so gloriously lived. I tell you
to take Jesus' hand and he will take you
to the golden tender light of eternal heaven.
You take his hand, and God
has become the atmosphere,
encapsulating, removing time.**

**Your last breath is more
a soft sigh than a breath,
not a cross-wind of struggle,
not a brush-stroke of "But wait.."
You are gone.**

**Seagulls fill the view from the window,
circling, joyful in their angelic form.
You are free.**

**My heart has merged with yours,
forest blue, deep and rich and forever.**

**My mother, my powerful ally,
friend for all ages - goodbye,
the six-month journey to this point
was treacherous, the last weeks, tortuous,
but these final moments were divine,
was God's grace in full view, mercy
that healed all pain gone before,
resurrection visible like spread-out water lilies
or Elysian Fields, sublime.**

**My mother, the sky is again yours,
embracing the seen and unseen spectrums.
Your sky is prophecy, feeding
the bedrock and the water's reflection,
all parts proved sacred, identical
to the immutable moving whole.**





(Eileen Grayhurst aka Lee Porter and Marilyn Monroe) 1952



(Eileen (Lee) Grayhurst 2005)

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About the Author



Allison Grayhurst is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Four of her poems were nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2015/2018, and one eight-part story-poem was nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2017. She has over 1,400 poems published in more than 530 international journals and anthologies.

Her book *Somewhere Falling* was published by Beach Holme Publishers, a Porcepic Book, in Vancouver in 1995. Since then she has published twenty other books of poetry and five collections with Edge Unlimited Publishing. Prior to the publication of *Somewhere Falling* she had a poetry book published, *Common Dream*, and four chapbooks published by The Plowman. Her poetry chapbook *The River is Blind* was published by Ottawa publisher above/ground press December 2012. In 2014 her chapbook *Surrogate Dharma* was published by Kind of a Hurricane Press, Barometric Pressures Author Series. In 2015, her book *No Raft – No Ocean* was published by Scars Publications.

Her book *Make the Wind* was published in 2016 by Scars Publications.

As well, her book *Trial and Witness – selected poems*, was published in 2016 by Creative Talents Unleashed (CTU Publishing Group).

Her book *Tadpoles Find the Sun* was published by Cyberwit, 2020.

More recently, her book *Running, lightwave riding* was published by Cyberwit 2023.

In 2023, her work was translated in Korean and published in “Jnuri Magazine”.

In 2020, her work was translated into Chinese and published in "Rendition of International Poetry Quarterly" and in “Poetry Hall”.

In 2018, her book *Sight at Zero*, was listed #34 on CBC’s “Your Ultimate Canadian Poetry List”.

Collaborating with Allison Grayhurst on the lyrics, Vancouver-based singer/songwriter/musician Diane Barbarash has transformed eight of Allison Grayhurst’s poems into songs, creating a full album. “River – Songs from the poetry of Allison Grayhurst” released October 2017.

Allison Grayhurst is a vegan for the animals. She lives in Toronto with her family. She also sculpts, working with clay.

Some of the places her work has appeared in include Parabola (Alone & Together print issue summer 2012); SUFI Journal (Featured Poet in Issue #95, Sacred Space); Elephant Journal; Literary Orphans; Blue Fifth Review; The American Aesthetic; The Brooklyn Voice; Five2One; Agave Magazine; JuxtaProse Literary Magazine, Drunk Monkeys; Now Then Manchester; South Florida Arts Journal; Gris-Gris; The Muse – An International Journal of Poetry, Storm Cellar, morphrog (sister publication of Frogmore Papers); New Binary Press Anthology; Straylight Literary Magazine (print); Chicago Record Magazine, The Milo Review; Foliate Oak Literary Magazine; The Antigoniish Review; Dalhousie Review; The New Quarterly; Wascana Review; Poetry Nottingham International; The Cape Rock; Ayris; Journal of Contemporary Anglo-Scandinavian Poetry (now called The Journal); The Toronto Quarterly; Fogged Clarity, Existere; Boston Poetry Magazine; Decanto; White Wall Review.

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Quotes

“Allison Grayhurst’s poetry combines the depth and dark intensity of Sylvia Plath, the layered complex imagery of Dylan Thomas and the philosophical insights of Soren Kierkegaard, taking the reader on a fearless journey through the human condition, delving with honesty into death, grief, loss, faith, commitment, motherhood, and erotic love. Grayhurst intertwines a potent spirituality throughout her work so that each poem is not simply a statement or observation, but a revelation that demands the reader’s personal involvement. Grayhurst’s poetic genius is profound and evident. Her voice is uniquely authentic, undeniable in its dignified vulnerability as it is in its significance,” *Kyp Harness*, legendary singer/songwriter, cartoonist, author of ‘Wigford Rememberies’ and ‘The Abandoned’, Nightwood Editions; www.kypharness.net

“Allison Grayhurst is the Queen of Catharsis. Her poems are like cathedrals witnessing and articulating in unflinching graphic detail the gritty angst and grief of life, while taking it to rare clarity, calm and comfort in an otherwise confusing world of deception, mediocrity and degradation. Allison Grayhurst takes the sludge of life, and with fearless sharpness of eye and heart she spins it free of maggots with the depth of honour and passion. Allison Grayhurst's work is haunting, majestic and cleansing, often leaving one breathless in the wake of its intelligence, hope, faith and love amidst the muck of life. Many of Allison Grayhurst's poems are simply masterpieces booming with thunderous insight begging to be in Bartlett's Quotations, lines such as "I drink necessity's authority." Nothing is wishy-washy in the realm of Allison Grayhurst. Allison Grayhurst's work is sustaining, enriching, and deepening for the soul to read... a light of sanity in the world. As a poet, Allison Grayhurst

is a lighthouse of intelligent honour... indeed, intelligence rips through her work like white water," *Taylor Jane Green, BA, RIHR, CHT, Registered Spiritual Psychotherapist and author of Swan Wheeler: A North American Mythology and The Rise of Eros.*

"Grayhurst's rapturous outpouring of imagery makes her poems easily enjoyable ... Like a sear the poet seeks to fathom sensual and spiritual experience through the images of a dream," *Canadian Literature.*

"Her poems read like the journal entries of a mystic – perhaps that what they are. They are abstract and vivid, like a dreamy manifestation of soul. This is the best way, in prose, one can describe the music which is ... the poetry of Allison Grayhurst," *Blaise Wigglesworth, Oh! Magazine: Ryerson's Arts and Culture Voice.*

"Grayhurst's poetry is a translucent, ethereal dream in which words push through the fog, always searching, struggling, and reaching for the powerful soul at its heart. Her work is vibrant and shockingly original," *Beach Holme Publishers.*

"Allison Grayhurst's poetry appears visceral, not for the faint of heart, and moves forward with a dynamism, with a frenetic pulse. If you seek the truth, the physical blood and bones, then, by all means, open the world into which we were all born," *Anne Burke, poet, regional representative for Alberta on the League of Canadian Poets' Council, and chair of the Feminist Caucus.*

"Read at your peril. You will never look at this world in quite the same way again. Your eye will instinctively search the sky for eagles and scan the dark earth for the slightest movement of smallest ant, your heart will reach for tall mountains, bathe in the most intimate of passions and in the grain and grit of our

earth. Such is Allison Grayhurst. Such is her poetry," *Eric M. Vogt*, poet and author.

"Grayhurst is a great Canadian poet. All of Allison Grayhurst's poetry is original, sometimes startling, and more often than not, powerful. Anyone who loves modern poetry that does not follow the common path will find Grayhurst complex, insightful, and as good a poet as anyone writing in the world today. Grayhurst's poetry volumes are highly, highly recommended," *Tom Davis*, poet, novelist and educator.

"Biting into the clouds and bones of desire and devotion, love and grief, Allison Grayhurst basks the reader, with breathtaking eloquence, in an elixir of words. Like lace, the elegance is revealed by what isn't said. This is stunning poetry," *Angela Hryniuk*, author of 'no visual scars'.

"Allison Grayhurst is a poet whose work is characterized by startling imagery and uncompromising emotion, whose pieces have appeared in prestigious magazines. Lights, darks, colors, and passions intertwine throughout the pages of her work," *Louise E. Allin*, *Literature and Language*.

"When I read Allison Grayhurst's poetry, I am compelled by the intensity and strength of her spirituality. Her personal experience of God drives her poetry. With honesty and vulnerability, she fleshes out the profound mystery of knowing at once both the beauty and terror of God's love, both freedom and obedience, deep joy and sorrow, both being deeply rooted in but also apart from the world, and lastly, both life and death. Her poems undulate through these paradoxes with much feeling and often leave me breathless, shaken. Allison Grayhurst's poems are both beautiful and difficult to behold," *Anna Mark*, poet and teacher.

“The breath of roles covered in Allison Grayhurst’s poetry is exceptional. Even poems covering similar perspectives express subtle distinctions, distinctions which add depth to the poet’s larger themes. The cohesive psychology of the poet is clear, allowing for long reads and re-reads.” says author *Patrick Linsenmeyer*.

“Allison Grayhurst’s poetry has a tribal and timeless feeling, reminiscent of the Biblical commentary in Ecclesiastes,” *Cristina Deptula*, editor of Synchronized Chaos.

Books by Allison Grayhurst

Paperbacks with Edge Unlimited Publishing:

Book 1: Journey of the Awakening, 1997, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CH6WO5Y; ISBN-10: 1478189339; ISBN-13: 978-1478189336

Book 2: The Longing to Be, 1998, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CH94ZNK; ISBN-10: 1478197684; ISBN-13: 978-1478197683

Book 3: Death and Other Possibilities, 2000, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHB8M0K; ISBN-10: 1478208163; ISBN-13: 978-1478208167

Book 4: Outliving the Inevitable, 2002, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHBYD1W; ISBN-10: 1478220295; ISBN-13: 978-1478220299

Book 5: Into My Mortal, 2004, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHFGOB0; ISBN-10: 147822858X; ISBN-13: 978-1478228585

Book 6: Red thread - Black thread, 2006, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHQOJFW; ISBN-10: 1478244186; ISBN-13: 978-1478244189

Book 7: The Many Lights of Eden, 2008, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHTR6IQ; ISBN-10: 1478249153; ISBN-13: 978-1478249153

Book 8: Pushing Through The Jelly Fire, 2010, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHXZYOA; ISBN-10: 1478256567; ISBN-13: 978-1478256564

Book 9: The River is Blind, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CICVQ6K; ISBN-10: 1478280131; ISBN-13: 978-1478280132

Book 10: Seamless – A Collection of Love Poems, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CIFTU0G; ISBN-10: 1479304816; ISBN-13: 978-1479304813

Book 11: If I Get There – Poems of Faith and Doubt, a collection, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CIZQGI0; ISBN-10: 1479348740; ISBN-13: 978-1479348749

Book 12: Wallpaper Stars, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00DQBDZAW; ISBN-10: 1490499172; ISBN-13: 978-1490499178

Book 13: For Every Rain - a collection of early poems, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00E6Y47OQ; ISBN-10: 1491065656; ISBN-13: 978-1491065655

Book 14: Jumana and Perfect Love - two poetic prose pieces, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00E74B45A; ISBN-10: 1491081465; ISBN-13: 978-1491081464

Book 15: Walkways, 2014, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00OR1VVH4; ISBN-10: 1502792133; ISBN-13: 978-1502792136

Book 16: As My Blindness Burns - three long poems, 2014, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00OS7HFZY; ISBN-10: 1502838265; ISBN-13: 978-1502838261

Book 17: Our Children Are Orchards – collected poems about animals, children and pregnancy, 2015, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00TZDDP5K; ISBN-10: 1508582920 ISBN-13: 978-1508582922

Book 18: Fire and more, 2016, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B01BO7P7DM; ISBN-13: 978-1517327279; ISBN-10: 151732727X

Book 19: Currents- pastlife poems, 2016, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B01FV5EYTQ; ISBN-13: 978-1533311269; ISBN-10: 1533311269

Book 20: The Fault of Sages, 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B075JT6X6B; ISBN-13: 978-1544785646; ISBN-10: 154478564X

Book 21: Sight at Zero – selected poems (1988 to 2017), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B075Q7TDJK; ISBN-13: 978-1975894016; ISBN-10: 1975894014

Book 22: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 1 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZTQNX5; ISBN-13: 978-1978078833; ISBN-10: 1978078838

Book 23: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 2 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZSMPMB; ISBN-13: 978-1978106642; ISBN-10: 1978106645

Book 24: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 3 of 5), Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZYQNHP; ISBN-13: 978-1978341272; ISBN-10: 197834127X

Book 25: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 4 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZYG3HV; ISBN-13: 978-1978378766; ISBN-10: 1978378769

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Book 27: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - Collections from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 6), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07713CLWC; ISBN-13: 978-1979275750; ISBN-10: 1979275750

Book 28: The Sculptures of Allison Grayhurst, 2018, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B078TJTY37; ISBN-13: 978-1983534270; ISBN-10: 1983534277

Book 29: Animal Culture (rules of commitment), 2018, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07H1WRD5K; ISBN-13: 978-1719094962; ISBN-10: 1719094969

Book 30: If I Knew This Haunting, 2019, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07VQWS6PZ; ISBN-13: 9781082365133; ISBN-10: 1082365130

Book 31: Snapshots (excerpts of poems on images), 2019, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07PQZV4P4; ISBN-13: 978-1090605115; ISBN-10: 1090605110

Book 32: Ways of Mercy, 2021, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B08YQR3ZQC; ASIN: B08YTRYMWW; ISBN-13: 9798720154585

Book 33: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst – completed works for 2018 to 2021 (Volume 7), 2021, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798740225913; ASIN: B0932GSD5C; ASIN: B093FW56NQ; ISBN: 9798773718482

Book 34: A Wish Alone, 2022, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798803463450; ASIN: B0B7GNMLW4; ISBN: 9798842289424; ASIN: B0B6XNQMFS

Book 35: Comments on The poetry of Allison Grayhurst (from 2011 to 2023), 2023, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798375947556; ASIN: B0BV49Y5B9

Book 36: The Light Given, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798378690404; ASIN: B0D6L7GTDL; ISBN: 9798328036238

Book 37: My Mother's Sky, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798329439182

Paperbacks by other publishers:

Running, lightwave riding (Cyberwit.net) 2023 ISBN-10: 8196316127

ISBN-13: 978-8196316129; ISBN-10: 8182539870

ISBN-13: 978-8182539877

Tadpoles Find the Sun, 2020, Cyberwit; ISBN-10: 9390202558;

ISBN-13: 978-9390202553

Trial and Witness, selected poems, 2016, Creative Talents

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Chapbooks:

**Surrogate Dharma, 2014, Barometric Pressures Author Series,
Kind of a Hurricane Press**

**The River is Blind, 2012, above/ground press; ISBN-10:
1-897224-99-0; ISBN-13: 978-1-897224-99-1**

**Four chapbooks published under the pseudonym of Jocelyn
Kain:**

Jumana, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-36-9

Perfect Love, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-66-0

Before the Dawn, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-11-3

Joshua's Shoulder, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 1-55072-025-2



Allison Grayhurst has been nominated for "Best of the Net" five times. She has over 1,400 poems published in over 530 international journals, including translations of her work. She has 25 published books of poetry and 6 chapbooks. She is an ethical vegan and lives in Toronto with her family. She also sculpts, working with clay.

"Allison Grayhurst's poetry has a tribal and timeless feeling, reminiscent of the Biblical commentary in Ecclesiastes," Cristina Deptula, editor of Synchronized Chaos.

"Allison Grayhurst's poetry appears visceral, not for the faint of heart, and moves forward with a dynamism, with a frenetic pulse. If you seek the truth, the physical blood and bones, then, by all means, open the world into which we were all born," Anne Burke, poet, representative for League of Canadian Poets' Council.

"Allison Grayhurst is a great Canadian poet. All of Allison Grayhurst's poetry is original, sometimes startling, and more often than not, powerful. Anyone who loves modern poetry that does not follow the common path will find Grayhurst complex, insightful, and as good a poet as anyone writing in the world today," Tom Davis, poet, novelist and educator.

