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Intimations of Springs

R. L. Boyer

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(Author's Note for "Marionne": I had long intended and long wanted to write a poem in the memory of my mother, who died in November, 2010, but I never could find the words or the form. Often it struck me how much of what I did and enjoyed in life was a gift from her. This year, as I worked on a study of Dante, I remember that it was she, after all, who had first awakened my interest in Dante by giving me a translation of his *Divine Comedy* when I was a teenager. It then struck me that she was a "Lady of Gifts," and I should write a poem for her in Dante's meter, *terza rima*. A few other notes might explain some references in the poem, and the facing picture. My mother's name was Marion, but in going through her writings after she passed away, I found that she had spelled her name "Marionne" for a short time during her youth, and this made me see another way. She was my mother, but in her last years, I felt protective of

her, as if she were a child, but also, despite her age and wisdom, even though difficult times and illness, she retained a child's wonder and enthusiasm in her view of the world. My mother and I shared an interest in writing, but she also worked with visual arts. She studied, drew and painted portraits, and also worked did quilting quite seriously. She made several quilts to upon various themes, especially family history, but she also did some based on my own stories, published and (mostly) unpublished. She never spoke to me about the quilting piece presented here, but I suspect it was meant as a portrait of a character from one of my stories. I recognized some of the material she used in it from some costumes she made for me, so perhaps it was an idealized interpretation of which she wished I might look like if the world had been very different!)

Intimations of Springs

by

R. L. Boyer

In the depths of Winter, a steady rhythm of
rainfall whispers sleepily over the desolate

landscape, promising new life; whispered
voices of the woodland seem restless, like

hushed murmuring of the dead. Deep in
the damp womb of the forest, a fragile

newborn fern takes root, sprouts skyward,
unfurls at the heart of the greening world.