



3-15-1983

## Wichita Forsythia

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### Recommended Citation

Roper, Joanna Thurston (1983) "Wichita Forsythia," *Westview*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 3 , Article 16.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol2/iss3/16>

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## WICHITA FORSYTHIA

— by Joanna Thurston Roper

Today I saw the first forsythia,  
Branches willow yellow and bright.  
A sudden sliver of homesickness  
Made a wistful pain ripple through my being.

I saw again the pasture road  
Curling through the new green grass  
Across the brow of a stubby hill,  
Skirting the wiry branches of mesquite.  
And in my memory there floated  
The earthy smell of clear bright evenings  
With the mountain outlining the space  
Between here and the road.  
We walked to the gate before the land grew dim,  
And listened to soft voices tell of other times —  
But we knew no better time than Now.  
The little black dog chased rabbits  
And returned, laughing in cheerful futility.  
When we reached the pasture gate, we stood  
Memorizing again the familiar purple mountain  
Before retracing our pasture route  
Toward the spot where the sun goes down.

Today in one searing warp of time —  
In forsythia's yellow harbinger of spring —  
I saw again that curling pasture road.

ILLUSTRATION BY GEORGE HEJNA