

Betsy Mars

A 64 Count Box, Sharpener Included, c. 1968

I remember ironing crayon remnants
between wax paper
as the colors melt into Sky Blue sky,
Spring Green leaves, Magenta buds
just then bursting
from Burnt Umber branches.

The box no longer holds Flesh
but the hole is still there, narrowing
with its blades turning color
to a sharpness,

and there in the mist
a memory of Mother emerges:

along the unsealed edge she sings
April Come She Will, her voice muffled,
Bittersweet.

I know her from the scalloped edges
of her sleeves, the Peach fingers
holding up the crepe skirt folds
of the just *Red*
dress only she can wear.

Betsy Mars practices poetry, photography, pet maintenance, and publishes an occasional anthology through Kingly Street Press which she founded in 2019. In 2020, her poem was selected as a winner in *Alexandria Quarterly's* first line poetry contest series. Her poetry has recently appeared in *Sky Island Journal*, *Sheila-Na-Gig* and *Autumn Sky*, as well as numerous anthologies and journals. She is a Best of the Net nominee and her photos have been featured in various journals. Betsy is the author of *Alinea* (Picture Show Press) and co-author of *In the Muddle of the Night* with Alan Walowitz (Arroyo Seco Press).