

Lois Roma-Deeley

The Virgin River Speaks of Loneliness

so deep
are narrow canyon walls,
cut into the heart of Zion
while the cottonwood trees and box elder
stand bewildered and confused.
Where does the wind come from?
and why do these waters rush along?

Look up.
Time leaves a message
on these sandstone cliffs
no traveler can read.

Distance and Regret

I don't know how I found myself
lying in my neighbor's empty bath tub
curled into a ball
like a cat trying to keep warm.
Someone keeps shouting at me
wake up....

But on the back of my eyelids, there is this scene—
one bird flitting among three trees.
Then it's me who's flying
over rooftops and city streets
in a helicopter with no doors and broken seats.
We're soaring over mountains and valleys now.

Helicopter blades make shadows
on the patchwork ground,
a pinwheel illusion
of green fields/white sand/small figures...
Children in cages. Parents weeping at the gate.
I snap a few pictures, jot down a few notes.
The camera's eye adjusts itself
to a finer understanding of distance and regret.

Lois Roma-Deeley's fourth poetry collection *The Short List of Certainties* won the Jacopone da Todi Book Prize (2017). Her previous collections are: *Rules of Hunger* (2004), *northSight* (2006) and *High Notes* (2010), a Paterson Poetry Prize Finalist. Her work is featured in, or forthcoming from, numerous anthologies and journals

including *Post Road*, *Bosque*, *Feminine Rising: Voices of Power & Invisibility*, *Quiddity*, *Zone 3*, *Spillway*, *Water~Stone*, *Artemis*, *Juked* (on line) and many more. Currently, Roma-Deeley is the Associate Editor of the international poetry journal *Presence*. www.loisroma-deeley.com