

# A Poem for Beryl

Brian Patten

*This poem for Beryl draws on the superstition Lucia told me her parents used to follow of turning over a silver coin at new moon*

## [An Imagined] Reunion

[draft still]

She went out for a last look at the moon.  
It was still there,  
As faithful to her as ever,  
Illuminating the garden from which, as she fell,  
The past rose up up to greet her.  
On the last day of being wholly herself  
She, who encompassed so much more than herself,  
Went for a last look at the moon,  
And in that moon-struck garden  
She saw some ghostly hand  
Turning over and over a silver coin,  
For luck, for magic's sake.  
And it beckoned to her who, eminently sensible  
And brooking no nonsense, followed.

I like to imagine  
It was something other than the wind blowing off the sea  
And up through the orchard that whispered  
'Sweetheart,  
Who kept vigil over all my folly,  
Who tempered the heart's chaos with dignity,  
You were the anchor  
That kept the moon from floating free;  
This way dear muse,  
This way dear one, who kept faith above all others,  
This way home'

Brian Patten

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*Brian Patten read this poem at the memorial service for Beryl Graves, which was held in London at St Paul's, Covent Garden, on 26 January 2004.*