

Barbara Brooks – Two Poems

Gravel Pit Pond

To land, the Canada geese
ski onto the diamond water.
Sixteen Mute swans, white
as the October moon, convene.
It is an oasis in winter, snappers
and sliders rest below. Ring necked ducks
splash, tipping their white bellies to the winter sun
before tucking their heads to sleep.
Flashing its white cap, a Hooded Merganser
signals the hen is his. The canvasback
and redhead visit in the harshest of cold.

Both swans and geese nest on the island,
no squabbles over space. Spring brings
flotillas of goslings. Gray in their downy coats,
they glide behind their parents, oblivious
to the snapper, its fist of a head
barely breaking the surface.

Spring warmth whiffs on winter's breeze
as ducks graze the bottom weeds.
Days grow longer, the breeding grounds call.
The ducks, mostly paired now,
wait for the winds that push them northward.
One night, perhaps by the moon,
they leave the pond to the Mute swans.

Under the Sidewalk

Ants, at home
in the crack of a sidewalk,
dig their corridors,
tend eggs. If disturbed,
they move pale eggs further
into the bowels of the passageways.

Their tiny dirt volcanoes
hide this from our eyes.
A road of scent is left

for ants to follow
to the grasshopper;
two or three wrangle
its wing to the underground.
Worker ants store their larder.
Soldier ants will emerge
with the collapse of their entrance.
All this hidden from our turmoil above.

Barbara Brooks, author of “The Catbird Sang” and “A Shell to Return to the Sea” chapbooks, is a member of Poet Fools. Her work has been accepted in *Avalon Literary Review*, *Chagrin River Review*, *The Foundling Review*, *Blue Lake Review*, *Third Wednesday*, *Peregrine*, *Tar River Poetry* among others.