## Marge Piercy – Three Poems

## After the garden party

All the guests have departed shouting noisy goodbyes stumbling drunk down the drive and vanishing, soaked in twilight.

The silence is violet and has an undertone of palest green like blanched celery. It smells of white peonies speckled with blood.

I am satiated with talk as if I had been run over by cows. I look at the ruins of the repast and go to bed leaving it all

for the joy of raccoons to scatter through the bushes. The garden looks astonished as light fades and eyes no longer poke.

I like to give parties but I like to have given them even more. Tomorrow's sun will sing to me of beautiful nothing to do.

## **Contemplating my breasts**

Strange, these soft lumps on my front. Like men with their pricks, women whose breasts are large tend to be somewhat obsessed with you.

We are always having to watch out for you, pick out bras with the care men spend selecting a new car. Can't lie on my stomach for long. Watch you don't get bumped too hard. Notice blouses won't button when otherwise they fit just fine. Men stare at them when addressing

me as if my nipples were talking. Some of us are self conscious, wearing muumuus and sweat shirts or layer over layer. Others

seek clothes that show you off. My identity contains a streak of you. But sometimes I feel as if I walk around behind you

like a person behind a parade float, just tagging along.

## **Sun in January**

An icy wind down from Quebec freezes the homeless teenager sleeping in a carton under the rumble of a highway bridge.

Walking in High Toss, I find the corpse of a dog some hunter shot. By accident? In anger? For sport. To

the dog, why would that matter, the paws outstretched as if to beg, head chin down between them, flies swarming.

A friend is back in chemo. All food tastes like metal, she says. I have no appetite. It's the third time of poison.

Today the whole world shines as if someone polished every single twig. The air is vanilla ice cream. We are warm together.

So much can go wrong

we are almost afraid to be happy.

Knopf has published the paperback of **Marge Piercy**'s 18<sup>th</sup> poetry book *The Hunger Moon: New & Selected Poems*. Piercy has published 17 novels, including *Sex Wars*. PM Press just republished *Dance The Eagle To Sleep, Vida*, and *Braided Lives* with new introductions by Piercy. PM Press will be bringing out her first short story collection *The Cost Of Lunch, Etc.* in Spring 2014. Her memoir is *Sleeping With Cats*, Harper Perennial.