

Blue Princess
 it was a sixteenth birthday present
 from her mother and father
 I remember wantin' to rush to install it
 and get outta there before she came home
 from school so she'd be surprised
 on her birthday
 so I'm backin' outta their driveway
 when Mrs. Berard runs to the door and yells
 President Kennedy was just shot!
 and I was on my way to Moran's house
 to install a jack in the upstairs bedroom
 spent the next three hours there watchin' TV
 when I got back nobody said a thing
 about me spendin' all day on
 one princess
 and a jack

Wirring Point Judith
 I was loaned to the line gang
 and all winter in the bitter cold
 we ran cable
 ran one hundred pair two miles
 hands freezin' working in gloves with no fingers
 I climbed every third pole on Point Judith Road
 and down the Escape Road
 to the water at Great Island
 another crew took it from there
 laid it underwater
 I remember lunch at
 George's of Galilee
 how the heat slammed you first
 how good that felt
 then the chowder

A Limit To Service
 I'm
 why do you want me to take my shoes off?
 even in my own house
 I don't take off my shoes
 besides they're clean
 and I'm just doing your inside repair
 I won't be dragging dirt in so
 no I can't take off my shoes
 I'll call my boss
 have him send somebody else out
 to do the job
 the new guy
 might take off his shoes

Class Education
 I ring the doorbell
 telephone man I say
 she opens the door a crack
 you can't come in here
 I can't let you in the front door
 there's a door around the back
 now be a nice man and walk around
 go in the back way
 what will the neighbors think
 seeing a tradesman come in my front door?

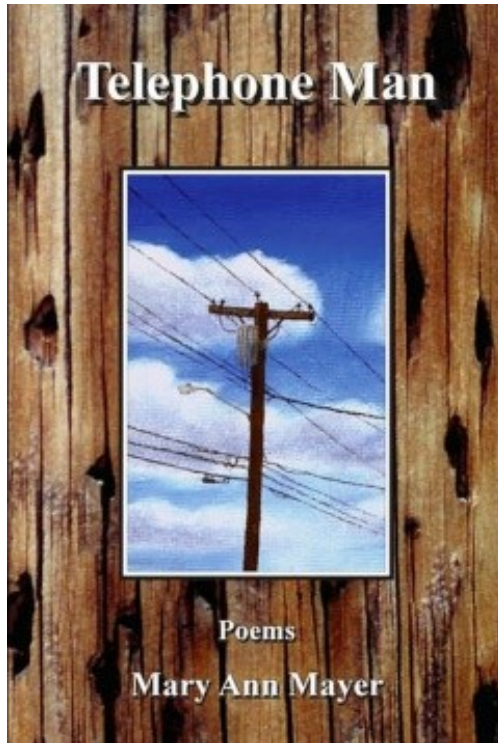
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Origami Poetry Project

Telephone Man
 By Mary Ann Mayer 2010



Excerpted from the book
Telephone Man by Mary Ann Mayer (2005)

Dedicated to my father, Bob Maitland,
 whose stories these are.

Forty years in the Blackstone Valley
 over the road, up the poles,
 repairing broken connections, and
 showing us,

What bounty of humor & humanity in the daily grind!

Somthin for Nothin
 everybody's got a phone
 everybody wants somethin for nothin
 so when you're a phone man
 everybody's always asking
 got any rolls of tape Bob?
 got an extra phone?
 got a longer cord?
 got a shorter cord?
 got a black cord?
 got a white cord?
 how 'bout off-white?
 got a wallplate? got an extra jack?
 got a little time on the weekend
 to help me put it in?
 that's not a lot of work is it Bob?
 hey what else you got on the truck?
 it ain't like stealin'
 it's a big company, right?