



Pearl finds a ring
under the bleachers,
Fourth of July night,
cherishes it for five days,
then loses it in the ocean.
No reason to cry: it came
like light, left like dark

TWISTED SILVER

Please recycle to a friend.

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Origami Poem Project

WHEN PEARL WAS YOUNG
VOL. I
by Marguerite Keil Flanders
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Once she made fun of Pearl
for mispronouncing *determined*,
told her to repeat it for another teacher.
She laughed, the other teacher didn't.
Her eyes are stones. When she reads
from the black bible, Pearl makes her
grow smaller and smaller
until she disappears.

MRS. JACKSON, 3RD GRADE

Blue dress, she'll be nice,
Red dress, she'll be mean,
will glare and speak ice.
Her eyes will glisten, she'll shame
the boy who can't sing on key.

On snow days, Pearl
and two friends make animals
big enough to sit on, pretending
to race until their fannies
are wet and cold.
Her friends make snow horses,
but Pearl, only so so about horses,
creates a lump, large, beautiful and
strong, so it can be anything
she wants it to be.
And it is always
one imaginary nose
ahead of their horses.

SNOW ANIMALS

The Junior Choir lines up
for the Easter anthem,
blue robes, white collars.
The mean boy pulls
Pearl's ribbons;
the silky braids fall free.
Her eyes fire with shame
at being so disliked,
singled out. She
doesn't know he
just wanted to see
how they worked.

BRAIDS

DADDY

Daddy does magic tricks
that make her friends giggle.
But he isn't always happy.

At the beach he swims straight out,
away from Mommy and Pearl
on their towels. Will he come back?

At six Pearl makes her first book,
meticulously cuts and folds
little white pages, all empty
except the title on the front:

How To Be A Grouch. She gives it
to her father, knowing how to break
his heart. Years later
he will give it back to her,
knowing how to break hers.