

A worn quilt, feather pillows  
 Wet grass between bare toes  
 Papyrus nests abandoned  
 The tickle of a praying mantis' legs  
 A raw potato against a wart—another  
 Old-time remedy.  
 The pop of ripe gooseberries in the mouth  
 Warmth under a hen's wing  
 The soft wrinkled feel of Grandma's check.

**II.**

In the kitchen window sit  
 Mason jars of sage.  
 Coffee boils in a speckled pot,  
 Sausage sizzles on the stovetop.  
 Baking powder biscuits bake  
 In the oven of the keroseene stove.  
 Down in the musty basement  
 Piles of dirty laundry—  
 Oily overalls  
 Dinky boxer shorts  
 Sweat-stained undershirts.  
 From the wringer washer tub,  
 Mrs. Stewart's bluing  
 Scents the air.

**III.**

The screen door,  
 Wood-framed, bounces shut;  
 Rag rug for mud.  
 Outside,  
 Weeping willow branches  
 Veiled in green buds.  
 Devil's shoestring—  
 Trumpet vine—  
 Bangs hummingbirds.  
 Blackberries stain lips.  
 A spider, yellow-black-  
 White, writes its web  
 On the grape arbor.  
 A calico apron hangs  
 On a nail.

**IV.**

Mounting doves coo  
 In branches above hens  
 Clucking as they peck grit.  
 The robin's song springs  
 Bold as thunder.  
 Mice scratch scratch in the gran.  
 Newspaper pages rustle,  
 A slurp of coffee, then  
 The cup clinks  
 In the saucer.  
 The porch glider  
 Squeaks back and forth.

**V.**

**I.**

Cold well-water gulped from a gourd.  
 A dose of brown sugar and turpentine -  
 An old-time remedy  
 To keep away worms.  
 Cod liver oil from a cold metal spoon.  
 Buttermilk cornbread baked  
 In a cast-iron skillet.  
 Sun-warmed tomatoes and peppers,  
 White corn on the cob  
 Rolled in butter.  
 Pan fish fried on Fridays.

**HOME: Ohio, 1950**

By  
**Nancy E. Brown**



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**Origami Poetry Project**

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