

## PAULINA'S PLACE

She's collected these things for years,  
exquisite delicate things.  
You can see the decorator touch  
beyond her warped door: here a swag of mist,  
there a shimmer of draped sea foam.  
Silk frost swatches patch the peeling corners.

Paulina's words aren't always plain  
but when she makes pictures, when delight  
invents her smile, her meaning shines.  
She lifts her wilted right arm with the left  
and holds her hand on her heart to convey  
contentment. She laughs like a door chime.

She gathers her clingy cloudlike stuff  
in cardboard cut-out frames, sprays on colors  
through her stencils, and calls  
the finished paintings seines for catching  
scenes of summer afternoons.  
When friends don't understand, she prints

it out-- how some hold the spectrum's stripes,  
and those outside are beaded purses in the rain,  
and on the porch they're fairy awnings.  
After she won state fair prizes for her work,  
people traded words like "weird" and "nut case"  
for "unique," "creative," and "artiste."

Kids don't call her Spider Woman anymore,  
or her treasures nasty cobwebs. They walk  
the woods with Paulina, help her find  
her lace mantillas of moonlight,  
conversation pieces filled with shed petals  
and pastel hope-- the shoring for her dreams.

