

THE  
SPOON  
RIVER **Poetry Review**  
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*The 2000 Editors' Prize Contest Winners*

**Kathleen Lynch**  
**First Place**

Apricot Tree

A child in the crook  
of a tree. A book in her lap.  
A galleon outlined in red  
tilts full sail on the blue  
cover. No shore  
in sight. Below her,  
a man with a rough song  
is eating the shade,  
the little spoons of light.  
His tune grinds down  
to a curse against air,  
against tatters of wind.  
Pages lift and sigh  
in the leafy shamble.  
She does not know enough  
words for things. So many  
small orange worlds  
hang with her. So many  
small orange bodies rot  
on the grass. An ocean  
of yard stretches between her  
and the door. The sky watches  
with its many eyes. Don't move,  
it whispers. And the tree  
tells her, Hold still, like this.  
Hold green. Hold dark.  
Like this.

## Human Terms

The albino calf stands  
in the pasture, shining.

Autumn. Last spring's  
birds are back.

They must be exhausted.  
Isn't this the luck

of life—to see the one  
thing, then the other?

It's all right to fall in love  
with the idea of that gleaming

freak with its pink-  
rimmed eyes, its near-

blindness. So young. *Nearly*  
*spirit* I might say. *Other-*

*worldly*. But don't let me  
turn a white calf into myth.

The creature shoulders  
into the dappled herd.

Something nameless pushes  
the strange one forward,

pulls the birds  
back to us, to nothing

to do with us. We can't help  
wanting to be the story.

I stole figs today  
while watching cows.

They loosened  
into my hand easily

and opened, as if they had  
been waiting for me.