

THE SPOON RIVER Poetry Review

David Bond

Snake Poem

For Thomas Lux

One woman
so unafraid of snakes
yet hating them
unusual for the sex
designated weaker

but solitude
and tall corn
sometimes alter normalcy
or perhaps she'd shed
that Saganesque
treetop engram
as does the snake
her chosen enemy
its skin.

Ruthlessly she gardened.
No silvered split-tongue
slid past the hoe's shiv
kept accessible, sharp as truth
to snickersnee a reptile
into cold-blooded segments
into snake and lettuce salad.

In a slouching outhouse
(the story goes)
seeking no homonymy
she unsheathed a small red-sided

garter snake like a second garter
curled around her upper calf
snapped it like a striped whip
finished her business.

My aunt, for that she
was, died at one hundred
outlived three husbands
many snakes.