

The Jewelry Box by Joan Colby

A red Chinese box
Like a pagoda in the forbidden city.
As a child, I'd sneak to look
At all the shiny loot.

Before the vanity, she'd enlist
The tortoise shell combs
In the smooth army of her hair.
She was glamorous
In cultured pearls.

It was years before I could
Unearth the buried treasure
Of her youth. Coral, turquoise,
Amethyst, garnets, sapphires,
Gold bangles or just glass.

The wedding ring she said
Was lost or stolen
Hidden in a velvet coffin
With a crystal rosary
I'd meant to put in her folded hands.

Joan Colby has published widely in journals such as *Poetry*, *Atlanta Review*, *South Dakota Review*, *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, *New York Quarterly*, *the new renaissance*, *Grand Street*, *Epoch*, and *Prairie Schooner*. Awards include two Illinois Arts Council Literary Awards, Rhino Poetry Award, the new renaissance Award for Poetry, and an Illinois

Arts Council Fellowship in Literature. She was a finalist in the GSU Poetry Contest (2007) , Nimrod International Pablo Neruda Prize (2009, 2012), and received honorable mentions in the North American Review's James Hearst Poetry Contest (2008, 2010). She is the editor of *Illinois Racing News*, and lives on a small horse farm in Northern Illinois. She has published 10 books including *The Lonely Hearts Killers*, *The Atrocity Book* and her newest book from Future Cycle Press—“*Dead Horses*.” FutureCycle will also publish “*Selected Poems*” in 2013.