

## Three Poems by Jacqueline de Weever

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### Neil Armstrong

Rain all day on July 20.  
Will we see the landing?

At 9:00 p.m. Spaceship Apollo 11  
approaches, at a snail's pace, the white-grey

spent-pearl surface,  
(no silver apples, though)

millennia-dreams come true  
as Armstrong exits and a man

explores the moon,  
no longer a children's rhyme,

real as he crunches rocks beneath his space boots.  
our 12-inch screen can't hold

the moment of a new myth's creation.  
How have we dared?

Apollo, the sun god, meets his sister  
Diana on a 20th-century playground.

Today the house is empty  
and the snail has died.

## **Fires**

Young people follow his oiled trail  
to Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen,  
escape stone walls,  
flee gardens shriveled by drought  
and sand storms

and now, in October, Malala,  
fourteen years old, from Pakistan  
peers through her bandages at me  
from a Birmingham hospital  
a Taliban bullet in her brain,  
afire with desire to read and write.

I open the garden like a box  
of dried herbs to honor them  
basil, oregano, marigold, and thyme  
rush up to incense their sacrifice,  
the brilliant yellow leaves  
of the ginkgo tree the seal  
of remembrance.

## Nomads

South American, but look:  
heart-shaped leaves, paper-thin  
color saturated: in Morocco

purple, magenta, hang  
    over a white fence; in Sicily  
borders for gardens,

foreigners in alien lands.  
Like them, I, too, come  
from the South, vibrate

in several colors of kin,  
follow the flower's routes,  
drought-tolerant in a parched

landscape, vagabond for  
for pasture in northern lands,  
like a hunter-gatherer

gleaning what I can,  
blooming nonetheless,  
sometimes beguiling,

I root in new soil  
to flower in the  
brilliant hues of

Bougainvillea, trace  
left by a Frenchman  
for southern bloom.

**Jacqueline de Weever** was born in Guyana, South America, was educated there as well as in the United States. She is Professor Emerita of Brooklyn College, City University of New York, where she taught English Medieval Literature for 29 years. Her poems have appeared in a variety of journals. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.