

Editor's Notes

In this issue of the *ARM Folio* I am pleased to present the poetry of Priscila Uppal. In her powerful long poem sequence titled “Poem for a Runaway Mother,” Uppal explores the loss of a mother who is not described as a particular mother, for no actual description is given of the mother. Rather, the poems explore the nature of invention as a consolation for grief. “Poem for a Runaway Mother” is a detective story; the daughter narrator refuses to be “tricked” by memory, and invents her own physical evidence of her mother’s existence. She invents her mother’s character and her familial identity, to the point of imagining siblings. So much has been destroyed in this daughter’s life, therefore everything must be created and imagined. The narrator’s travels to hunt down her runaway mother occur not by the aid of memory, but through the imagination, in “the last place she knows you will look.” These poems are beautifully crafted, haunting and poignant. They evoke in the reader a deep sense of mourning, made all the more surprising sometimes in the face of the unflinching voice of the narrator. Eloquently articulated, these poems demonstrate Uppal’s skill as a poet in her attention to spareness and a measured precision of language, poems in which every word carries its weight. Priscila Uppal’s “Poem for a Runaway Mother” is fascinating in its response to the loss of the mother, a provocative exploration of the role of the imagination in the face of grief.

—Rishma Dunlop