

TWO POEMS BY J. D. CARPENTER

Lost in the Funhouse

The wonderful thing  
about department stores  
she was often heard to say  
at bridge club or after church  
is that one could live in them

She would imagine herself  
locked in, parading in furs  
eating sweets by the fistful  
touring the silent, untenanted store  
— a babe in toyland —  
with only mannequins to address  
undress, dress Donning ski  
apparel, bridal gowns, or modelling  
in mirrors accessories of alligator  
chamois and silk, she would plunk  
at a Steinway, or make her face  
and those of her quiescent company  
in shades she would otherwise  
disparage

The afternoon she died  
her husband out of town  
her daughter still unmarried  
she was seen to twirl  
in an aisle of cosmetics  
her face a confusion, a fright  
She was the child in the funhouse  
as the carnies pulled  
at the walls

## Carreglwyd

In this heart of fields  
a small wood stands

— from Llanfaethlu  
all is seen as a cloud of green  
in a yellow sky

and in the wood  
the great stone house  
an apron of lawn  
the lily-padded pond, the boat-house  
the walled garden  
— a garroted pigeon, caught among peas  
twists on twine, reminder to its brothers

Broken bells in bush  
two gazebos lean

On a far rise  
— a ruin

Nettles prick

Sheep people the fields like little cars  
and the horses breach, the fences  
to reach the farmers' barley

At the footbridge  
a row of weasels and stoats  
spiked on barbs  
shrivel and dry, while hedgehogs  
squat in death like seaplants  
and spiders cloak the head and eyes  
of a jackdaw jammed on branches

It is a medieval place —  
the dead glower from walls  
and Lulu rants in the kitchen

In the punt on the pond  
we row to the weir  
and back to the bank  
The springer barks

The children bowl on the green  
Willow snorts from a dank and cluttered stall  
and Lulu nods in her chair  
waiting in trees  
like this house  
for a final end to things