

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Dorianne Laux: Three Poems

Dorianne Laux · Monday, September 1st, 2025

### A blessing,

when my bunny  
jumps up on the couch beside me  
and offers her small skull  
to be stroked. Often I'm reading, lost  
in the cold world of *Anna Karenina*  
or seeing *The World According*  
*to Garp*. But her world is the only  
world, this couch, these pillows,  
the rug set down on the bamboo  
flooring, her running onto the smooth  
wood and sliding, like a child,  
under the kitchen table to hide,  
or jumping up on a chair to survey  
her queendom as she nibbles  
the ratan. She turns her head  
into my hand, like my husband  
turns to me in bed and nuzzles in  
under my armpit until I stroke  
his head, then lifting his face  
to give me the last chaste kiss  
of the day. He doesn't speak  
like she doesn't speak. No need.  
The eyes turn liquid, bright  
with pleading, and I feel  
his need. A blessing to be  
needed like this, to know  
the heart of another so fully.  
The frailty of love. Our  
helplessness in it and  
before it. The largeness,  
largess, of such silence.  
And then she turns away

and leaps four feet into  
space, hanging on air  
with the faith of all  
land creatures that the earth  
will catch her.

\*

## Girls

At the harborside, the landfill,  
in a ditch beside the railroad tracks,  
they find them, the girls, curls  
snagged in bramble or swallowed  
by mud, seaweed woven around  
their bare arms and broken necks.  
And strung from tree to lamppost,  
piling to piling, plastic police tape flickers  
in the breeze like cicadas in a field.  
Or in a field with cows grazing, unfazed,  
expressionless, the opposite of wicked.  
Bodies dot the vast territory  
of the known world, as if we are a species  
that still practices sacrifice, the clouds  
wisps of wood smoke from the ritual flames.  
And by now it's mechanical, gathering  
evidence, fingernail scrapings, footprints  
or tire prints, a shred of cloth caught  
on a thorn of barbed wire. I never  
have to ask what day it is. It's always  
the day of the dead, 1800 in a year.  
You could fill every pew in the First  
Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
under its Gothic edifice, behind  
its stained-glass windows, below its  
belfry soaring heavenward. Hollywood,  
birthplace of starlets, girls struggling  
to become famous, though they  
will most likely see their picture  
on a Thursday night flashed  
on the local news, their name  
scrolling across a banner, their face  
on a poster in grainy black and white  
stapled to a telephone pole.

\*

## My Monarch

Monarchs die with their wings open.  
The Monarch in my yard that escaped  
her tender chrysalis, tore her wing  
trying to climb the brick wall.  
I put her in a paper bag with lantana  
flowers so she can have a taste  
of sweetness to take with her  
on her next voyage, nectar  
on her long, curled proboscis,  
though most of her taste buds  
are on her feet. She lived for days  
in her flower bed in the papery dark,  
her tongue an unerring arrow, trailing  
her torn coat of many colors.  
We have forgotten  
how often the world is a home  
for the damaged. No matter  
how hard we scrub the kettle  
it never reclaims its shine, day  
after the day the flames carbonize  
calcium, turn the inside of the kettle  
a powdery white. I'm just not myself  
this morning, having found her unmoving,  
but her ruined wings were spread  
in such splendor, as if surrendering  
her beauty, her youth.  
I place her gently in the potted  
redwood I foolishly planted  
a year ago. It's grown two feet tall.  
Spindly adolescent that will mature  
without me. I want to die like this,  
under a sky made for giants, a tiny  
naked being. No confining coffin.  
Smudge of nectar on my lips.  
My arms flung wide  
to whatever comes next.

\*

*(Featured image from [Pexels](#))*

This entry was posted on Monday, September 1st, 2025 at 6:24 pm and is filed under [Poetry](#).  
You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a  
response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.

