

**Rising, Falling, All of Us: New and Collected Poems**, by Thelma T. Reyna  
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National Award-Winning Poet, Author of *The Vast Unknowing* (2012)

Thelma Reyna's poems come from "wounds not sealed; they swim in dreams; they slip soundless from the womb and toddle to daylight". In "About Poems", Reyna refutes the roaring rocketry of Charles Bukowski and his followers and offers a more sensitive aesthetic. Her range is exceptional with themes including, eroticism, culture, childhood, old age, poverty, work, war, nature and natural disaster, suicide, grief.

Reyna's poems tell us she grew up poor. "Quilts" describes sleeping with siblings, cockroaches, urinating on the pile of patchwork quilts the family had to sleep on. "Hunger" shows the distance this poet has traveled, from a grumbling stomach, to a life where her children have more than enough. I love best the work that arises out of motherhood, that most basic of all human relationships. In poems addressed to a daughter and a son, Reyna laments the sense of loss that arises as the child separates from the parent, a process which of course begins with birth, but becomes more evident as each year passes. We are indeed "On Loan" to each other in this volatile world.

So live, connect, cherish the moment, engage, write poems. Such is the unspoken message here and it's the right one.

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