

# *Gunn Hill*

PAT DANEMAN

Given time, a place becomes a thing  
small enough to hold in memory's grip,  
strong enough to struggle free. Frightened

and beautiful, it looks over its shoulder  
as it bolts away. Years ago, I walked uphill  
in snow here, counting the days

until Christmas with each footstep. I hid  
with boys, stained my clothes  
in the wet grass, ran home with leaves

in my hair. I left my children  
asleep on quilts as I wandered deep  
along purple-orange swales

to pick berries. I have tasted the onion sting  
of weeds here, worn a crown of clover.  
Many times, I've slipped a hand into my pocket

expecting to find a dry petal or a stone, forgetting  
that nothing rises from cindered kisses  
or crystallizes out of snowmelt.