

# a walk on the moon

*by* Jerry Ratch

I know I used to say I'd rather walk on the moon with my own rapacity. And you can easily say things like that, given the luxuriance of youth. But it was a lie, if you want to know the truth. That is only so much hot balloon air, puffed up in the chest, not how it feels later in life when we are swept by cold ghostly winds, filled with longing and mauve oats from our youth up. Chess pieces may walk on the moon, but not I. Magpies maybe, or a red sacrificial heifer. Not I.

If the puffed out worm of your rational mind is still moved by a girl's mane, or the short blonde hairs at her neck, or at her midriff leading up to the navel — in other words, if you are still alive and breathing, and simple songs can affect your heart, to which you used to have immunity — if the stars in their infancy can still exploit you — then I say there is hope in this world. And you and I may still dream in each others' arms one more time, before we come back as something other than ourselves. Something not quite as pretty as we were.

While I, gentle flower, paid great notice, even if you did not. While the new stars swirled in the layers of heat being created between us, while the spent summer throttled my color, and your perfume dried, I tilted back a bit off-center, and floated upwards toward your ceiling like a speckled moth, in a kind of reverse swan dive, floating upward, secluded, while listening intently to my own heavenly sighs.

