

## Clinging On

by Fran Duffield

Dearest girl, you are not  
able to know  
how it was, my green time,  
clinging on, from day  
to broken day

We clung to books, brushing off  
the dust, and to our friends,  
shaken by each night's scything  
of our town; they reminded us  
that we had another part  
to us, not just a skimpy coat  
stretched over old clothes

not just a hungry stomach,  
and a hungry mind  
with so little sustenance,  
not just waiting to be  
an orphan  
or a widowed sweetheart

we were made by it  
and destroyed by it,  
we would never be young again  
as we should have been

we wanted to give that  
lost time to you,  
but you didn't understand,  
wanted a different time  
where you live now,  
and we are just scarecrows,  
with our broken insides  
drifting away like straw  
in the new wind

I give you all willingly,  
the bright fields,  
the loud music filling  
your ears, your streets

with no understanding,  
but with much love,

from your Mother