

# The Women of Victoria Ward

Category: Poems

written by Muriel Murch | February 6, 2009

## **Muriel Murch**

I remember  
The women of Victoria Ward.

The laughter of Liz,  
before there were good prostheses  
before falsies  
left, right or bilateral  
were built into the cup size of your choice.  
Pacing the corridors  
and knitting.  
Ready to go home.  
Building her strength  
with a strand of yarn  
Tumbled upwards from the empty cup  
against that scarlet scar  
beneath the bodice  
of her bright summer dress.

I remember  
Winnie's eyes  
watching feces pour  
in a torrent  
down her abdomen  
searing her flesh  
until I bathed her body  
changed the bed  
and wiped away  
her tears.  
We named that  
foolish pink protuberance  
her own John Thomas.  
Her slow, shy smile  
heralded victory  
for the moment.

## **About the poet:**

Muriel Murch ([//livinglit@earthlink.net/](mailto://livinglit@earthlink.net/)">[livinglit@earthlink.net](mailto://livinglit@earthlink.net/)) graduated as a nurse in England in 1964, adding a BSN from San Francisco State University in 1991. Her book *Journey in the Middle of the Road: One Woman's Journey through a Mid-Life Education* was published by Sybil Press in 1995. Her prose and poetry have been included in several anthologies including *Stories of Illness and Healing: Women Write Their Bodies* (Kent State University Press, 2007). Muriel continues to write stories and poetry

while tending her organic farm and working for radio station KWMR in Point Reyes Station (90.5) and Bolinas (89.3), California, producing a biweekly show, *Letter From A. Broad*.

**About the poem:**

“This poem began as an exercise I did while attending the Sarah Lawrence Medical Writing workshop a couple of years ago. Poet, teacher and healer John Fox would lead us in early-morning poetry sessions. It did not take long for memories to return and fight for their poetic place on the page.”

**Poetry editors:**

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