Author Asks

from Paula Bohince,
author of The Children


1. The word “brideliness” is used to describe a time in a life cycle. How would you describe this period? Where is it manifest in *The Children*?

2. In “The Dogwood,” there is a line that goes “Misery gave us solace.” Do you think this attitude applies across the book?

3. In the poem “The Children,” a presumably older “we” puts the young lovers’ left-behind rave accoutrements into their own hands and mouths. Why?

4. Nostalgia can be complex emotion. How would you define this feeling? How does it seem enacted in the poem “Nostalgic”?

5. “Flood” is written as a pantoum and without punctuation. What is the effect of these structural choices on your reading of the poem?

6. The poem “Wildwood Diptych” makes several references to Rilke’s “Archaic Torso of Apollo.” How do you see my poem as a response to his?

7. In the poem “The Froth of the Tides and the Further Out,” I assert that “Beauty rescues,” but then immediately ask, “Is that true?” Do you think it’s true?

8. In “Silverfish,” I write that poems of mine were “forgettable because they held no images.” For you, what makes a poem memorable? Is it imagery or something else?


10. If you’ve read my first book, *Incident at the Edge of Bayonet Woods*, what seems to be a continuation and what seems a departure?
Writing Exercises

Exercise A

The poem “Man on Horseback” was conceived because I read that it was a name for a type of mushroom. Try looking through names of plants and flowers to see if any names strike you. Write a poem that melds the literal subject with its figurative name.

Exercise B

The poem “Snowy River Visions” has echoes of Stevens’ “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird.” Read this classic poem and discover your own ways of turning over an image.