

## Desert Woman

Everlasting sand drifts  
Against the thick canvas  
Of my father's tent.  
I drop my burden to the dunes  
And rest. A staid maiden

Adorned with veils  
And baubles, my youth is tolled  
By the passing bells of goat herds.  
Shall I have no sons,  
Relish no daughters?

Remnant of a wicked generation,  
I am wounded in spirit, untried.  
In those desolate cities I would have been  
A prize—sturdy, stalwart,  
Enduring valleys and sandstorms.

I wait for a warrior's venison breath  
To fall hot upon me,  
His voice whispering, "Sariah, Sariah,"  
As the arrows in his quiver  
Catch my thick black braids.

—Helen Walker Jones

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Helen Walker Jones is a poet residing in Salt Lake City, Utah. She is the sister of Jim Walker, whose poems appear on pages 196-97.