

Step Mother

A pure white suit, a blood red flower
grace upon you strong as stone
you chose a sacrificial hour
to care for children not your own

grace upon you strong as stone
perfumed with gifts of godliness
to care for children not your own
knower of thorns and humanness

perfumed with gifts of godliness
gathering up the tattered grief
knower of thorns and humanness
drawing a circle of belief

not of your bones nor of your blood
you chose a sacrificial hour
a silver slipper in your hand
a pure white suit, a blood red flower.

—Carol Clark Ottesen

*This poem received a third place award
in the BYU Studies 2005 poetry contest.*