

WHY I AM NOT A BUDDHIST

I love desire, the state of want and thought
of how to get; building a kingdom in a soul
requires desire. I love the things I've sought —
you in your beltless bathrobe, tongues of cash that loll
from my billfold — and love what I want: clothes,
houses, redemption. Can a new mauve suit
equal God? Oh no, desire is ranked. To lose
a loved pen is not like losing faith. Acute
desire for nut gateau is driven out by death,
but the cake on its plate has meaning,
even when love is endangered and nothing matters.
For my mother, health; for my sister, bereft,
wholeness. But why is desire suffering?
Because want leaves a world in tatters?
How else but in tatters should a world be?
A columned porch set high above a lake.
Here, take my money. A loved face in agony,
the spirit gone. Here, use my rags of love.

—*Molly Peacock*

Molly Peacock was born in 1947 in Buffalo, New York and currently lives in Toronto. She is a past president of the Poetry Society of America and the author of five collections of poems and a personal memoir as well as the editor of two anthologies.

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