Otowi House

Marion Dumont

The open window billows
the soft smell of rain and mariposa lilies.
Sunshine and shadow tarry
like gatekeepers at her kitchen door.
Near the-place-where-the-river-makes-a-noise,
a woman stands living
melodies run wild.

Pueblos weather-worn
weave this woman through the years;
Buffalo dance the earth, blue sky corn
fills clay pots, echo the rainsong.

Plateaus rise like fresh baked bread,
Shumo To-tavi, ancient guardians of the land
embrace adobe home.
The heat of pine knots gathers
high on the mesa under falling gold.

Bohrs and Oppenheimer transpose
under pinons, red glare;
ragged with a breaking world they run
to the small house where tables of candlelight
illumine tattered souls, peace and quiet follow
on the scent of juniper and chocolate.
A simple woman, a simple home, simple story told—
Tilano’s washings from the well, thirst quenched
garden bounty and woodstove cooking.
Christmas fires blaze epilogues
of tranquil evenings arduous days
overlooking river, mesa, colored desert hues.

Drawn in close, To-tavi cradles weathered skin.
Near the-place-where-the-river-makes-no-noise
water runs in rivulets seeps into bone dry earth.
Mariposa lilies push skyward,
eyes shine with departing light, breathe soft
the spirit soars high above the mesa
under falling gold.