

Not As It Seems ~ Pat St. Pierre

Review ~ Robert Allen

The first thing I noticed about Pat St. Pierre's poetry book *Not As It Seems* is that it is attractive at the outset; it is a nicely produced chapbook.

As I read, I was aware that the natural world and its doings were a major theme of St. Pierre's poetry. Frequently in her poems animals and plants and weather appear, with topics reminiscent of Mary Oliver and Wendell Berry.

The author has a gift for emotionally-charged poems. In "Loneliness of the Heart" we are given this: "The magnetically charged air / causes you to uncover the pain" and, in "Memories of You," we read, "The happy times existed / but your rage erased / all the good and created only fear. These poems give a sense of something sad, something longing.

Many of her poems use nature as a guide for imagery and theme. Especially moving is "The Seasons of Love*," where we read, "It was in the autumn that we fell in love / the trees were an impressive array of colors." In "Icy Day", we see "branches from trees / sparkle like crystals."

We also read about owls, turkeys, squirrels, and other assorted birds. We find snow, flowers, rain, lakes, bark, and the months appear and disappear in these poems, guiding the reader through the seasons, whether they represent sadness, or joy. Nature's workings are changeable, and St. Pierre seems to catch an image the moment as it shines, or moves to darker themes. In "Weekenders," she writes: "Summer residents illuminate the lake/emitting a warning to nature."

As in real life as in these poems, nature always wins, and the heart gets broken sometimes.

*"Seasons of Love" has been published in Issue IV of *Kitchen Sink Magazine*.