



# Naomi B. Patterson

Distinguished Kansas Poet

• [E-mail](#)

**Naomi B. Patterson** a retired clinical psychologist, has published three books of poetry. They include: *Living Out Loud*, *Thinking Out Loud*, and *For Crying Out Loud*.

She has won or placed in several contests and has been the recipient of numerous writing awards including a Kansas Arts Commission mini-grant, Oklahoma State Pen Women award in poetry, 2001 Book of the Year Award--Topeka Authors District 1, and Annual Peer Award, by Prairie Poetry.

Patterson's poetry has appeared in *Inscape Magazine*, *Byline Magazine*, *Mediphors*, *Massage Therapy Journal* and *Topeka Woman*.

She enjoys volunteer teaching with "Kansas Authors in the Schools" program.

## Kansas Wind

It whined all night,  
pestered me to play,  
banged shutters,  
slammed doors,  
howled down the chimney,  
daring me to come outside.  
Not one to bypass challenges,  
I headed east, while  
fifty mile an hour gales  
sped me down the walk.  
My flimsy shadow soared ahead,  
its helter-skelter close-cropped hair  
standing on end.  
I held my arms like giant wings,  
a child, pretending flight.  
Then turning west, to face the foe,  
my timid shadow crouched behind,  
hiding from the blast.  
One giant unexpected gust  
froze my stance,  
like children playing statue.  
Immobilized but for laughter  
that wafted down the street,  
I curled my toes to grip the earth,  
to anchor me.  
The sun, squintingly brilliant,  
acquiesced; eclipsed by wind...  
wind that stung my face  
and blew away stale residue  
of yesterday.

## October Chase

Poems swirled past me in the street  
bright leaves from autumn's journal  
blown aloft by Kansas wind.  
Hands pulled into sweatshirt sleeves,  
I stretched my arms like scarecrow  
wings to catch some bits of verse  
or capture harvest cadence.  
Wind-sock witches swayed from eaves.  
Eager outdoor chimes marked time  
with every gust. Few hunters  
braved the breezy day. Most crouched  
in humdrum shelter, hiding  
from the whirlwind, forgetting  
there were sprightly poems to catch.  
Notes on rusty golden scraps  
escaped my grasp, absconded  
down the street; fresh metaphors  
in maelstroms twirled out of reach.  
My baggy sleeves snapped smartly,  
promising a fruitful hunt.  
But all I reaped was one slim  
verse, found tangled in my hair.  
Poems elude the mesmerized,  
we devotees of autumn,  
disciples of the wind.



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## Drought

thunder teases heartlessly  
making sultry promises  
it doesn't keep.  
Lightning flicks seductive tongues  
against my bedroom wall  
and then retreats -  
while clouds, grown fat with moisture,  
hang heavy with intent.  
We wait for rain that doesn't fall --  
doesn't  
fall

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