Seeing Objects with Fresh Eyes
Grass
By Valerie Worth
Grass on the lawn
says nothing:
Clipped, empty,
Quiet.

Grass in the fields
whistles, slides,
casts up a foam
of seeds,

Tangles itself
With leaves: hides
Whole rustling schools
Of mice.

From all the small poems and fourteen more
Dog
By Valerie Worth
Under a maple tree
the dog lies down,
Lolls his limp
Tongue, yawns,
Rests his long chin
Carefully between
Front paws;
Looks up, alert;
Chops, with heavy
Jaws, at a slow fly,
Blinks, rolls
On his side,
Sighs, closes
His eyes: sleeps
All afternoon
In his loose skin.

From all the small poems and fourteen more
Marbles
By Valerie Worth
Marbles picked up
Heavy by the handful
And held, weighed,
Hard, glossy,
Glassy, cold,
Then poured clicking,
Water-smooth, back
To their bag, seem
Treasure: round jewels,
Slithering gold.
From all the small poems and fourteen more
Caterpillar
By Valerie Worth

The feet of the Caterpillar
Do not patter
As he passes
Like the clever Quick paws
Of the squirrel,
But they ripple,
Stepping one pair After another
And another,
And they travel With his whole Long caravan Of bristels
Down the brown Twig, to a Greener midsummer Dinner.

From all the small poems and fourteen more
Coat Hangers
By Valerie Worth
Open the closet
And there they
Wait, in a
Trim obedient row;

Stirred by the
Air, they only
Touch wires with
A vacant jangle;

But try to
Remove just one,
And they suddenly
Clash and cling,

And fling them-
Selves to the
Floor in an
Inextricable tangle.
From all the small poems and fourteen more
No need even
To take out
A book: only
Go inside
And savor
The heady
Dry breath of
Ink and paper,
Or stand and
Listen to the
Silent twitter
Of a billion
Tiny busy
Black words.
Broom
By Valerie Worth

It starts
Out so well,
Its fresh
Gold straws
Cut square,
Flared wide,

But so often
Ends otherwise,
With weary
Wan bristles
All stubbed
To one side.

From all the small poems and fourteen more
String
By Valerie Worth

A ball
Of string
Is neat
But dull:

Beginning,
Middle,
And end
Are all
The same
Thing,
Thin
And pale,

Until,
Unrolled,
It wriggles
Into

Tangles—
Hinting at
Knotted
Parcels,

Birds’
Nests, and
Cats’
Cradles.

From all the small poems and fourteen more
It is the Curve of their Breezy ribs, the Crook of their Elegant fingers,

Their eyeless Eyes, so wide And wise, Their silent Ivory laughter,

The frisk and Prance of their Skittering dance With never a Pause for breath,

That fills us With such Delicious delight, While scaring us Half to death?

From all the small poems and fourteen more
Pocket
By Valerie Worth
These things
Might go
Into the pocket:
Sea-stones,
A bright
Beetle,
Knitted circles
Of Queen Anne’s
Lace;
These things
Come out
Of the pocket:
Sand, splinters,
Scraps
Of paper creased
And soft
As an old
Face.
From all the small poems and fourteen more