

**Phoenix Made of Rye**  
by Maria Lopez

The rye covered my eyes  
I didn't see beyond my innocence  
And lived in bliss ignorance  
Of the ravenous flames ahead  
Devouring the time I thought I had left  
off I went  
Reaping wheat fields farther  
Than the eye could see  
Running through roses  
I didn't notice were nicking me  
Spring  
Summer  
Fall  
The rye grew and thickened  
Later dulled and sickened  
Until it died and faded away  
I had lost my hiding place  
From the cold and fear of the outside  
The dandelions I once loved  
Became the weeds  
I forgot they always were

Soft blades of grass  
Grew into shards of glass  
That laughed and bit into me  
Mother Nature drank my blood  
And satisfied her thirst with my tears  
The life that drained from me  
Fed her flowers for years  
But my beloved rye fields  
Crumbled dry under waterless skies  
There I stayed  
For an eon's eternity had passed  
Before I fell at last  
And crumbled to ashes with the last of my rye  
The vast barren field stared back at me  
What I saw was a reflection  
What I saw was plucked and bled dry  
Fed to the beasts, the rest burned alive  
I crumpled like a leaf and sobbed  
I waited for winter's cool breath  
Little did I know  
The sun cried a river for me  
And begged me to survive  
The flood of fire fell and incinerated

My last impurity  
Searing pain cruelly reminded me  
I was still alive  
No matter how many times I'd died  
Through the coldest night  
Snow didn't dare touch me  
Nor the earth try to bury me  
My aura glowed red and fiery  
I was still alive  
I was consumed by rage at first  
Then I harnessed its destructive thirst  
And found the force  
To raise my head to face the night  
At last  
Crimson sunrise rose high  
The red coral rang out my battle cry  
The gold sky shone like candlelight  
From weeping to seething  
My eyes' scarlet taint  
Would forever remain  
With fire as the window to my soul  
My former softness was no more  
I picked up my remains

Raised my voice

Instead of stifling my pain

That now became a burning flame

And the fields obeyed my commands

Maybe tomorrow

Or perhaps in ten years

I'll find myself again

Lying in rye fields