

**Sold**

© 2006 by Cindy Bechtold

Writing tonight is painful  
like the west wind screeching along the ridge.

The day was pleasant enough,  
thick grass bending to cushion my quilt.  
Within sound of the river, water  
lapped as patiently as an old dog licks its chops.

Blowing off the last snow, a breeze  
cooled the sun,  
my bonnet finding a home  
on my lap.

Purple thistle stood bay behind the wagon.  
Lines drawn between weeds and sunflower-stained daisies  
sprinkling the field.

Tones in tune, colors meshed.

Thomas clashed.

His chin wobbled  
as he gnawed drumsticks,  
rapid bites  
flinging crumbs on  
my gingham skirt.

He severed hunks of buttered bread with streaked teeth,  
thanking me for the ice,  
leaving tepid water for someone else's picnic.

A fly dropped on the chocolate cake,  
surely wearing brown boots as I shooed  
it skyward.  
Thomas stabbed the piece, gobbling its tracks.

Glib phrases bumped against my nerves,  
his limp hand reaching to caress  
mine.

The box lunch was made for Charles  
dapper  
dimpled, keen humor  
ripping tingles down my spine.

Yards of curled ribbon tied around  
a feast with him in mind.

Heart  
hopes  
dreams

now obsolete.

Next year I'll not try to snag  
the winner.

Goodnight.

Cindy Bechtold

\*This poem was submitted in the USPS contest "Words" Poem. Words incorporated:  
bread, sunflower, purple, water, rapid, obsolete, west, winner, box, tepid.

