

# Art Collaboration with Elizabeth

Created in Spring 2021

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## Round 1

Susan's Art  
(Summer Green)



Elizabeth's Response

### Morning

Along the edge of the thorny pasture  
He hustles, morning, down toward  
The creek the missing kids bleating--  
Stop to untangle his shirttail from  
The greenbrier which in his rush  
He left one edge untucked. Too late  
The vine gobbles up the hem--  
He sees himself attached  
To the dappled parcel of untended  
Grass. It's a lost cause -- he grabs  
A handful of indigo cotton and  
Slices the fabric away, a knife  
From his drop-leg sheath. Behind  
Him the sun lifts over the barn  
And catches on the wavering gloss of  
Birch leaves at the stream's edge.  
He hiccups, tasting the morning coffee  
Once more and jams the shirt into his jeans.  
The kids cry out again--  
Boot pushes into the pliable  
Earth -- a tender blue flag  
Cheers him on.

EH  
03/29/2021

## Elizabeth's Poem

## Round 2

## Susan's Response

Up above me the moon watches over me.  
A half wink but she is attentive.  
This is the first time I've noticed her.  
This is the first time I've noticed  
Anyone watching over me.  
I am resting on top of the  
Undulations at Punta Cana--  
On top of the moon's breaths  
As the tide nudges the day  
Forward. I am spread eagle on the

Bends of the surface--  
For this moment, Mother and I are  
Here together -- I feel her  
Careful gaze and I close my eyes  
Against time -- against the pounding  
Insistence of tomorrow and  
What he wants from me.

Mother holds me. I lay here and wonder

What is blue -- the sky or the ocean? --  
And the thought goes only that far.  
It slithers out with my breath and

I know what the gull knows as it  
Does nothing -- feet aimlessly dangling  
-- as it sits upon the crests.  
I had no mother, none like this one  
Before, none that knew me so well

One that didn't need to count  
My heartbeats or worry after  
Them. I knew no mother

Like this before who holds me

And watches over me and  
Wants what is best.



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Theme: Storefront

Elizabeth's Response

Susan's Response

storefront

objectively, I must be pretty--  
 otherwise you walk on by  
 so Zoe primps my windows  
 the eyes of my soul but you don't  
 know what I have seen -- today  
 a high-end knick knackery  
 for women wanting anything  
 infused with essential oils --  
 but this slender corridor  
 was Kathleen's before  
 amazon ate her where  
 islands of minds drifted in  
 touching spines, cozy with a  
 book pile on leather chairs  
 before making off with one-- was  
 Charley's, where wayward tacks  
 rolled and caught in  
 the floor boards, the hammering  
 soles in time with Margie's  
 machine, she offering  
 alterations out the back -- was  
 before the war a furrier  
 a Mr. Nelson and his  
 partner Mr. Rose who both  
 wore their wares everywhere--  
 on a road once rutted, one  
 destination, skirts bustling  
 by from train to home with  
 stops along the way and here  
 I am, watching the progress  
 such as it is

e. howard  
 13 april 2021



## Round 4

### Susan's Art (Entered into Not Knowing)



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### Elizabeth's Response

At No Remove

What form do I take?  
What shape?

I am of the earth  
Placed in this body

Yet my soul sails  
It goes without

Mantenido sin remover  
En profundo soledad

"Held at no remove  
In profound solitude"

St. John prayed -- each day  
I find myself here again

(Perhaps here), such  
Is the unknown.

Faced with one truth  
I wake again to quiet

The I I know myself to be  
Transforming, and yet

Still. Naught changes.  
The light fixed

Yet color shifting  
Re-shading the landscape

A hill erodes yet  
Still earth rising.

Sun sets. Moon up  
I fall into shadow.

Enter the Unknowing  
16 May 2021  
E. Howard

Elizabeth's Poem

Plain

Out here it's all mostly nothing.  
It's a line of scrub trees;  
A chain link fence to divide that  
Patch of yard from this.

Out here the horizon is a friend:  
She doesn't have much to say,  
Her mind filled with a run-on, tension  
Wire conversation that never ends.

Out here an oak tree is true love;  
And a water tower stands sentinel  
To all the children's dreams of  
Falling, and flying away.

Out here, the overpass goes to  
The softball fields, and the Casey's,  
And the driving range and to  
Plain spoken hellos at an amble  
Speed.

Here along the sidewalk  
The bike path the road the drive  
That heads out  
Home.

