

Poetry Porch: Poetry

The Veil

By Richard Fein

In Exodus 34, Moses forgets to put on his veil
and people are frightened by the glare of his face.
But then he remembers to put on the veil
as he gives the people the laws from God,
whom he speaks to face to face, without the veil.

In II Corinthians, chapter 3, Paul explains
that Moses' veil separates the children of Israel
from the true spirit, that veil in the way.
But now we can take in the full presence of God,
Paul explains, that veil not in the way.

In Book IV, stanza 4, of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth
takes an evening walk around his "little lake"
and finds that his soul has taken off her veil,
he naked, transformed with "God-like power,"
breeze, quiet, breath surrounding him near the lake.

From Exodus to Corinthians to *The Prelude*, and further
on to the woman in section 11 of *Song of Myself*, a voyeur
behind the blinds of the window, the veil, whether
removed or worn, plays its role,
like those rhombus-eyelets
of netting magnifying the mystery of my aunts' faces.