

## LOT'S WIFE

*Cherra S. Ransom*

The advice was good—not to look back—  
But was wasted on the woman, water in a sieve.  
She had spent a lifetime looking backward,  
Remembering the towers of Ur, unhallowed yet familiar,  
The children withering on the march,  
Their graves milestones along the way,  
The sinister new city like some exotic rotting fruit,  
A strange shrill tongue, the hard faces watching,  
New ways hardening into habit  
Like wounds puckering into scars.  
She remembered, but was numb, silent behind her veil,  
Until the sudden flight.

Now stumbling from Sodom to still another exile,  
It was not fear that stopped her in the end.  
It was all those unshed tears that choked her veins  
And hardened round her heart.  
Pausing and turning and looking homeward,  
She could not see the burning plain between.  
The slow precipitate of years  
Crystallized behind her eyes.  
Her sight blurred. Her feet were stone.  
She stood an instant carved in salt,  
A monument that fell  
Before the cities sank upon the smoking earth.