M: It is my everlasting pleasure to live in the rural community of Merville, British Columbia. Once a settlement for returning soldiers from the Great War, who probably did not think it was so great a war or so great to be rewarded by rocky acres of blackened stumps and slash. It is now inhabited old hippies, fundamentalist Christians, badly aging cowgirls, redneck loggers, and urban defectors with new plaid shirts and attitudes. We are half way up Vancouver Island, a tectonic fragment off the left shoulder of a restless continent. When I first came on to our land 30 years ago, the fit was so ideal that it was like slipping on a pair of old shoes. The realtor sat in his hot car and waited, so I walked without his badgering sales pitch. Not that it was needed, for I was quickly told the narrative of place. It was late August and the land sung and sultry summer voice. In the lowland, black cottonwood leaves rattled in the outflow wind, releasing that balm of Gilead scent, which evoked my childhood on the hot prairies where trees were rare. Rising from the marsh to a slight ridge, the acreage was trying to heal itself from the logging which preceded the sale. Valiant red alder grew thickly with the healing root nodules infusing the soil with needed nitrogen. Brash and exuberant, full of confidence as only youth can be, they promised to make the land well again, if only I would give them time. 3 decades have passed. The piper alders and the succession arising from the millennia of divine rehearsal have given way to understand the Douglas fir, citrus spruce, and red cedar. We have raised our sons here. Got them on the richness of the glacial loam, vegetables, fruit, and animals, then sent them into the world to make of it what they would. Tomorrow, one is visiting with his daughters who will leap from the truck and race to the garden to scavenge strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. They will return with sticky smeared faces and hands to us, sitting in the deep shade of a prairie burogue, planted as a seedling my late mother brought out, wrapped in a warm brassier, deep in her suitcase, where even the bravest security agent would never dare delve.