

Harlequin
by Linda Morse

Always in unexpected entrances

Brought in by a shrill wind of want.

Like a barker at a carnival
He begs forgiveness and respite.

Seeker of carousels and wishing wells
He juggled grandiose delusions
In cold reality of spent light and hall
Of mirrors with shards of death and fright.

His world of dreams now crushed
By wild parade of troupes in masquerade,

Bright masks of hope on visages of

Dangerous drugs and marijuana lights,

A giant ferris wheel with magic fools,

Where rides of fortune turned him upside down.

Returning now as harlequin of broken dreams

To shattered scenery and voices he can drown.

His deck of cards dealt from losing hands,
The ace of diamonds turning up as clowns.
Is this the last frenetic ride, the final spiral down?

And will his colored lanterns
all turn dark in mystery of sham?

Linda Smith Morse grew up on the Zollinger Fruit Farm just east of River Heights where her love of nature, literature and art began. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English from Utah State University in 1966; in 1988, she returned to USU and earned her Master's in Human Resources and began working part-time as an instructor in the Department of English, also serving as the Internship Coordinator for English until September 2015.

Linda was Editor of the USU literary magazine, *Crucible*, during her junior year and has been published in

several other Crucibles as well as receiving several poetry award's including the President's Award at the Annual Spring Festival of the Utah State Poetry Society in 1990.

Oil painting is also one of Linda's pastimes. She was a charter member of the Artists' Gallery in downtown Logan and displayed her paintings there until 2018. Currently her work can be viewed on [instagram@lindasmorse.art](https://www.instagram.com/lindasmorse.art). She can be reached by email at lzmorse@gmail.com.