

Strawberries

Strawberry shortcake with biscuit and whipped cream,
strawberries and cream, strawberry mousse,
wild strawberries – Hannah and I found a patch
on a path near the cottage
and ate them as we picked.
Effie brought me a box the summer my father died,
Sally made jam for Jim,
Kay picks them but she can't eat.
Roberta met a bear and her cubs while picking –
she walked backwards very slowly,
her bucket swinging.
The berries are sweeter here because
they come as a surprise,
a gift from friends and neighbours
who love to be in the fields picking
after a long dreary winter
where the ice is still in at the end of April,
the trees still bare on Victoria Day Weekend.
These women are not concerned about spring cleaning
Or weeding the garden.
The sweet, juicy, wild, red berries call
and they answer with joy.

Barbara Ormond