

# The New Criterion

## Poems

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### “In heaven it is always autumn”

by [Elizabeth Spires](#)

—*John Donne*

In heaven it is always autumn. The leaves are always near to falling there but never fall, and pairs of souls out walking heaven's paths no longer feel the weight of years upon them. Safe in heaven's calm, they take each other's arm, the light shining through them, all joy and terror gone. But we are far from heaven here, in a garden ragged and unkept as Eden would be with the walls knocked down, the paths littered with the unswept leaves of many years, bright keepsakes for children of the Fall. The light is gold, the sun pulling the long shadow soul out of each thing, disclosing an outcome. The last roses of the year nod their frail heads, like listeners listening to all that's said, to ask, *What brought us here? What seed? What rain? What light? What forced us upward through dark earth? What made us ...*

**Elizabeth Spires'** new book of poems, *The Wave-Maker*, was published by Norton in July 2008.

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