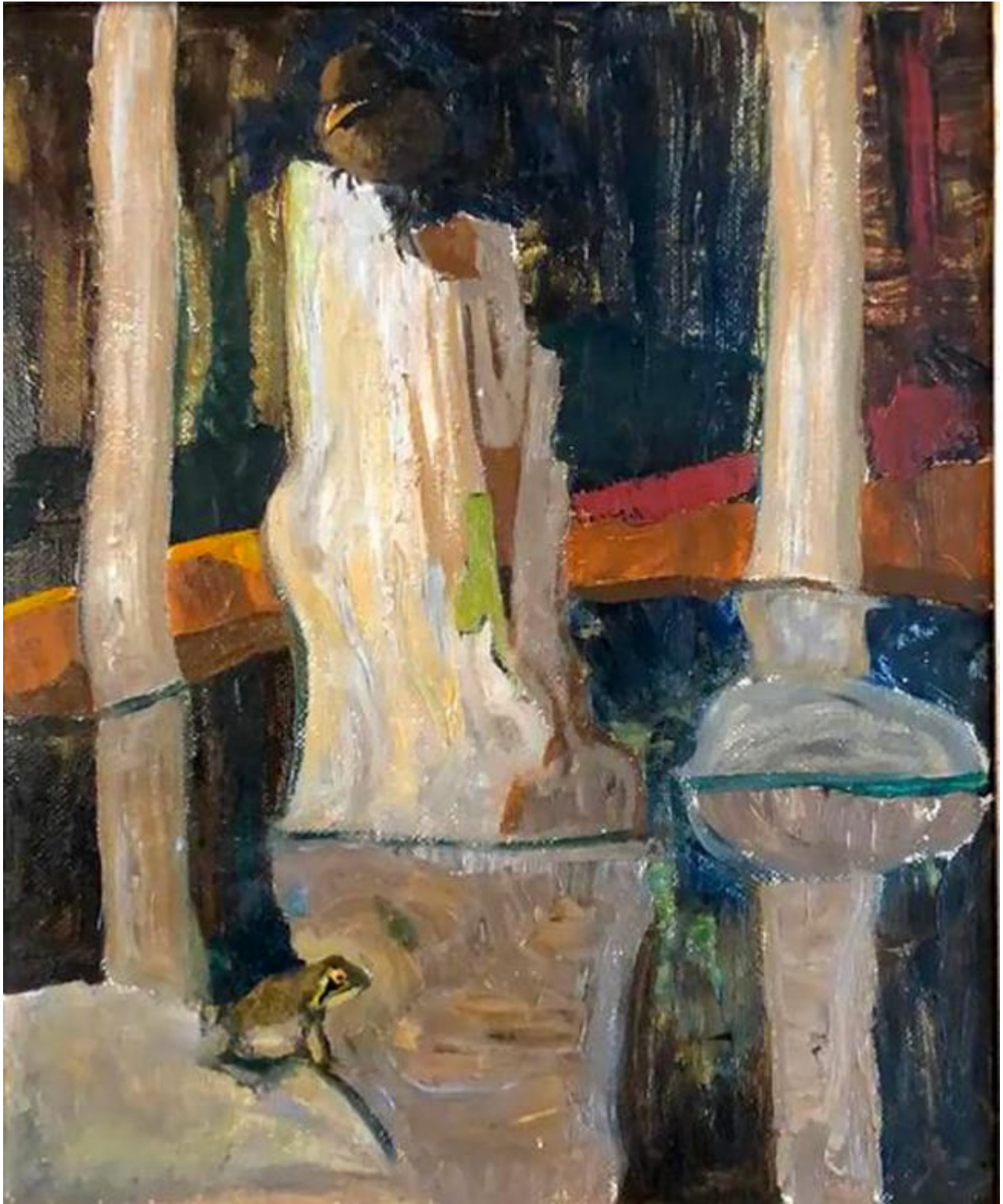


Toad Ode

by [Susan J. Bryant](#) (October 2023)



Frog and Pond, Fredlin Tor Otto, 1940

O warty dweller of the weedy pond,
O cauldron-dodging lodger of the lake,
My happy-ending heart has grown so fond
Of craggy clamminess, I plan to take
An algae night to swim in bulgy eyes
While basking in the choruses you croak.
If pussycats and owls can dine on quince
And float their pea-green boats to heaven highs,
Then I can plant a wince-free kiss to smoke
Your chilly lips and free your inner prince.

I've met a ton of toads, but none like you,
O legend of the frilly lily pad.
They wowed and wooed and cooed and left me blue—
All armed with charm that hid a tad of cad.
Each peachy paramour assailed my eye
With weapons of the flash and dashing kind—
A scorching thrust of lust that left love dead.
And that, O dumpy, dimply one, is why
My inner princess surfaced just to find ...
You ... the toad I'm owed ... the prince I'll wed.

Oh dear, I fear my awestruck heart's forsaken.
I've puckered up with pluck and now it seems
I'm out of luck; your inner prince won't waken—
A snoring schmuck has dashed my princess dreams.
O crinkled critter of the realm of reeds,
O soggy squatter of the swampy sphere,
I've snogged you at the bottom of your bog
Yet you can't meet my doleful-damsel needs.
I now assume a suitor won't appear
Unless I slip your grip and kiss a frog.

[Table of Contents](#)

Susan Jarvis Bryant is originally from the U.K., but now lives on the coastal plains of Texas. Susan has poetry published on *The Society of Classical Poets*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Snakeskin*, *Light*, *Sparks of Calliope*, and *Expansive Poetry Online*. She also has poetry published in *The Lyric*, *Trinacria*, and Beth Houston's *Extreme Formal Poems* and *Extreme Sonnets II* anthologies. Susan is the winner of the 2020 International SCP Poetry Competition and was nominated for the 2022 Pushcart Prize. She has just published her first two books, *Elephants Unleashed* and *Fern Feathered Edges*.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)