

# Ring Around the Poesy

Volume II

A Cycle of Children's Poems & Illustrations  
Written and Illustrated by Gerhild Krapp

Ring Around the Poesy, Volume II  
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## *Dedications*

In loving memory of my father, Gerhard Krapf, who gilded my childhood with his fantastical, fairy tale poems; to my mother, Gertrud Krapf, from whom I learned how to spin straw into gold; and to my beautiful daughters, Nicole Bruse, and Jessica Monson.

Many thanks to Richard Blazek for his elegant, beautiful, and sensitive book design.

Finally, deepest thanks to my husband, Michael Brau, for his endless patience and support in all things. He makes my life possible.



1

## *Birds of Paradise*

Twenty-fourteen was the year  
That this story came to ear.  
It's about some feath'ry creatures  
With some truly marv'lous features.  
Yet, I scarcely have the words  
To do justice to these birds.  
So I'll do the best I can  
In my role, as loyal fan!



Olivia Oriole and Ollie  
Lived in Swan Son's Golden Folly.  
There they had a swanky pad  
That they got from Ollie's Dad.  
Orie was their only son,  
And was friends with everyone.  
Quite a happy fam'ly, they,  
Who were blessed in every way.



Hannah Hummingbird and Herbie  
Both were just a tad bit wordy.  
They could buzz and buzz non-stop  
Until all their friends would drop.  
So their nest was far away.  
They could buzz all night and day  
And not bother anyone  
In their nest in Duckbill Run.  
(But their hearts, they were so gold,  
They were stunning to behold.)



Now, to Ruby Wren and Randy:  
Both of them were very handy  
With the string, and sticks, and such.  
They were builders with a touch  
Who could brighten any nest,  
And transform it for the best!  
So they lived in their remodel  
In a tree in Henry's Hovel.  
It was cozy warm, but small,  
Yet they felt they had it all:  
"We have love and food enough!  
No, we don't need no more stuff!  
Just a peck right on the cheek,  
Every day of every week,  
Says we're loved for who we are,  
That's the best of things, by far!"



So, you see, these birds were glad  
For their nests and lives they had—  
Each lived in a different way,  
But were grateful every day  
For their happiness and health,  
Which they treasured more than wealth.  
Now, my story—let it start.  
It's a story of the heart.



Summer days were winding down.  
Ori Oriole went to town.  
Soon vacation would be over  
With its honey and its clover.  
Back to school Oriole would go  
To learn all that he could know.  
But right now his wings were winging,  
As his little heart was singing,  
To Rorie Robin's Ice Cream Stand—  
Bestest ice cream in the land!  
Orange sherbet—just a nip  
Makes it worthwhile—the whole trip!



Thus he savored what was coming,  
And his heart kept right on humming.  
Then he landed with a glide,  
And prepared to walk inside.  
But before his feet could do it  
And his hungry beak got to it,  
He was stopped right in his tracks,  
And his eyes grew small as cracks.  
He was squinting now to see  
What was leaning on the tree.  
Just a crumpled little doll?  
No, perhaps it was a ball?



As he neared he saw its color:  
It was golden, like no other,  
With a little trace of black  
On its side and on its back.  
Then it moved, and he saw eyes,  
And then he saw it try to rise.  
Then the "it" became a "she":  
Goldie Goldfinch by the tree!



“Goldie, goodness, what is wrong?”

Orie’s voice was a sad song.

Softly Goldie tried to speak,

“Orie, I am, oh, so weak.

I’ve not eaten in long whiles

And I’ve flown for many miles.

We have tried our very best

But there’s no food in the nest.

Gilliam is weakened, too.

There’s no more that I can do.”

Orie screamed, “Oh, do hold on!

Stay right there while I am gone.

I’ll be back with food for you

And of course for Gilliam, too!”



In an instant food was there,  
And all kinds of other care.  
Gilliam had been in their nest.  
Goldie joined him there to rest.  
And while they recuperated  
Orie Oriole remonstrated:  
“We have been so super lucky—  
Luckier than Lucky Ducky.  
Don’t you think that we should share?  
Can’t we offer them our care?”



Olivia and Ollie, then,  
And Randy and Ruby Wren,  
And the buzzing Hummingbirds  
Listened and exchanged some words.  
“Well, our nest is big enough,  
And we do have lots of stuff.  
We could let them stay in style,”  
Ollie offered with a smile.  
And the Hummingbirds did buzz,  
“We have lots of nectar, ‘cause  
We are buzzing night and day.  
We will share it right away!”  
And the Wrens said they once more  
Would assist with the décor  
In the room that Ollie gave them.  
“With this help, it’s sure to save them!”



Orie chirped and laughed and sang,  
“Thanks for being a great gang!”  
“We’ve been blessed with everything,”  
All the happy birds did sing,  
“It’s our joy to share it, too—  
It’s the least that we could do!”  
Now there’s happiness around,  
As the Goldfinches rebound.  
Sharing gifts with others freely  
Is the key to all joy, really.  
In a Paradise they live—  
Those whose hearts have learned to give.



## 2

*Blackbird  
and Swallow*

Blackbird with the red, red wings—  
He thinks he's the king of kings!  
And the swallow—that guy, too—  
Thinks that he's a whoop-de-doo!  
Why I think they think they're swell—  
That is what I now will tell.  
Summer comes, and it's such fun—  
We can bike, and trike, and run!  
All around, o'er hill and dale  
We can ride and we can sail!  
Oh, forever we could fly  
If it weren't for that darned guy!



June comes to an end, you see,  
And our path's no longer free.  
Out of nowhere comes his sailing.  
That small bird, he's really railing.  
As he plummets like an arrow  
Aiming for my head, the narrow  
Swallow takes a sudden dive.  
Is he coming for my life?



Then the king of kings gets riled  
And he flies too, really wild!  
Kamakazi bomber, he,  
Also takes a run at me!  
His chattering and chirping clatter  
Make me mad and mad and madder!  
All my fun, it's torn to bits!  
Now I'm really having fits!  
Yes, this has me quite irate!  
Who are they, to violate  
Summer fun by bike or run  
That should be for everyone!?  
What in heaven is the reason  
They're aggressive in this season?



Let us ponder this a while.  
What's the reason for their style?  
Oh, I think I've got it now,  
And it's reasonable somehow.  
See, their babies hatch in June.  
That's the reason for their tune,  
And their diver-bomber flying.  
All of this just serves their trying  
To protect and guard their nest  
So their chicks can safely rest.



It's not different anywhere –  
On the ground or in the air.  
Tiger moms or Mama bears –  
Don't you wander near their lairs  
When their babies are in there –  
Or you'll learn how much they care!



And with human moms and pops—  
Their safeguarding never stops!  
It's their job to keep you whole,  
Safe and happy—that's their goal!  
Likewise, too, those birds, I guess,  
Only do what all profess.  
Maybe I should not get mad.  
What they do is not so bad.



# 3

## *Ant and Bee*

What is it with ant and bee  
That is, oh, so plain to see  
As a common trait between 'em  
If you've even briefly seen 'em?  
Captains, they, of industry—  
That is what is plain to see!



Yet, the world is partly blinded.  
As an ant I'd really mind it.  
"Busy as a bee" we hear,  
But for ants it's not so dear.  
What is said: "Ants in your pants,"  
Means you're "antsy," said askance.  
Sure, the bee works night and day,  
But the ant does too, o.k.?  
"Active as an ant" should be  
Added for posterity.



# 4

## *Doggies*

Little snouts with stubby tails,  
Forceful barks or plaintive wails,  
Shaggy hair or curly “do’s,”  
Ears that flap or point—you choose,  
Brown or black or in between—  
All these features we have seen.



English sheepdog, Irish setter,  
Rottweiler—it can't get better;  
Oh, but then there is the poodle,  
And of course the golden doodle;



Bigger bulldogs, little pugs—  
Yes, their snouts belong to thugs;  
German Shephard or Great Dane —  
They are nothing if not sane;  
Doberman or Labrador —  
These are dogs that guard the door;



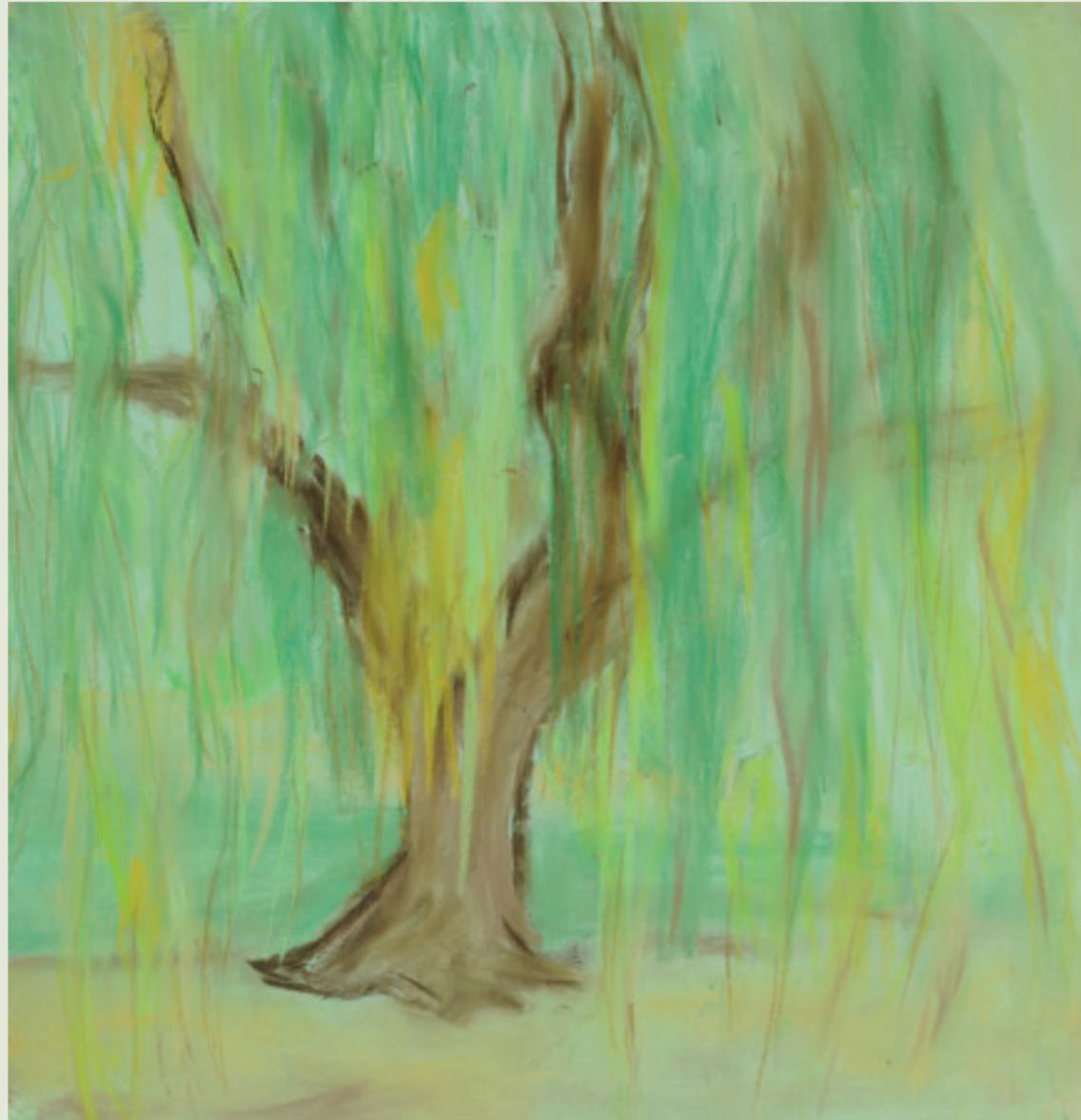
Newfoundland or Malamute —  
They are dogs *and* mops, to boot;



And, the dachshund—he is long—  
Longer than the longest song;  
The retriever gets his name  
From his favorite throwing game—  
Ball or stick—it matters not—  
What you throw, he soon has got!



Then there is the great dalmatian—  
Firefighter for the nation;  
On and on the list could go—  
Countless doggies you would know—  
Each one with a special station  
In the realm of all creation.  
There's not one that we don't love!  
All are gifts from God above.



# 5

## *The Weeping Willows*

Are the willows really weeping?  
Or are tendrils gently sweeping  
Down to kiss their Mother Earth,  
Grateful they were given birth  
In her rich and fertile ground?  
Barely audible, the sound –  
Swishing whispers on the breeze,  
Rustling canopies of trees –  
Quiet songs of joy and pleasure,  
Gratitude beyond all measure –  
Echo in the leaves around.  
Sweet contentment knows no bounds.





Orioles are like the sun –  
Fiery orange, every one,  
With a voice of liquid gold –  
A celestial song, on hold.  
Goldfinches are brilliant yellow,  
Gently darting, very mellow.



Cardinals are red with hats –  
They're pontifica in spats.  
Robin redbreasts get the worm –  
(Earlybirds, we can confirm).



Redwinged-blackbirds, with their screech,  
Have a wide, imposing reach.  
But it's parrots that do chatter  
All the time, on any matter.



Nuthatches – they do trapeze –  
Upside down, in all the trees.  
Hummingbirds have two propellers  
And a long, and pointy smeller –  
Ruby throated, hornet green –  
They are stunning to be seen.



And the tiniest – the wren –  
With a voice beyond all ken –  
Large and wide and luminous –  
Pours its heart out just for us.  
Mrs. Owl, with bloodshot eyes,  
Sits up nights and slowly cries:  
Who, who, who . . .  
True, true, true . . .



Turkey has a gobble wobble —  
When he flies it's more a hobble.  
Turkey vultures — they are bald —  
Red, their heads — just like a scald.  
But bald eagles, bald are not —  
On their head, or any spot.  
And they soar on outstretched wings —  
Strong, majestic — just like kings,  
While the heron stands one-footed  
In the pond, where he is rooted.



Such diverse nobility,  
Dazzling pomp and luxury,  
Splendor, grandeur, opulence,  
Magnificence, and Elegance,  
Of the heavens' feathered friends,  
Leaves us humbled, in the end.  
Mute we stand in wild elation,  
At these marvels of creation!



# 7

## *The Unseen*

Teeming life is all around us.  
What we see – it does confound us.  
Miracles in grand dimension  
Challenge our comprehension:  
Geysers hiss and sand dunes shimmer,  
Dusty sunsets fade in glimmer,



Corn stalks grace the rolling hills,  
Country air in birdsong thrills,  
Lightning strikes in golden crags,  
Thunder answers back in lags;



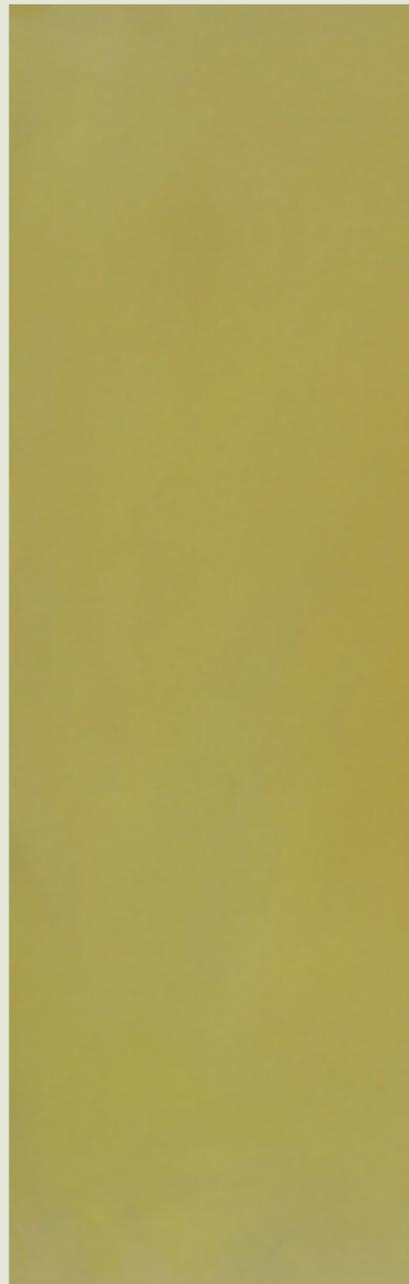
Greening clover scents the grasses  
In the plains and mountain passes,  
Alpine brooks feed fresh wildflowers,  
Clouds are washed by summer showers,



Canyons carved in ancient ore  
Tell us stories from before.  
Mountains tower over us —  
Handiwork of the Cosmos.



Only dimly do we sense  
That the unseen is immense.  
What we see in blind elation  
Is a fraction of Creation.  
Seeds of life are under cover.  
In a raindrop they might hover,  
In the soil, or in a stone,  
Or inside a bleaching bone.  
But beyond this earthly plane,  
Is the start of life again.  
There, the spark that is the soul —  
There, the Love that makes us whole.  
There, the source of all of Being —



... We must know it without seeing.



















Iowa City