

THE OLD BRIDGE, THE WOMAN, AND THE WHITE PIG

Shoeless, a woman in a white pinafore tip-toed
across the old bridge, aware of the soft texture of

moss, fern and strawberry leaves under her feet.

Then, when pollen sluiced the air, she spied
a white pig in the grass before her. Screened by

willows, a gypsy with a shoulder-sack watched,
as she hummed and began to dance with the pig.

Ungrounded, she seemed at home in a vaporous sky.

Safety is in the underorb, where a gypsy must have
a sleight touch to stretch the web and snag an old tale:

this one – troubadour of the mind – cloaked himself in
cloud, inched slowly forward, tried to stand unseen
as he witnessed this woman waltzing a pig.

Who, the woman asked, the invisible visible, *are you?*

Instead of an ancient lute or bow, his sack held a note-
book and pen. *Does it matter?* he shrugged.

Everything matters, she said, dismissing the pig, turning
away, a white wisp moving through a whine
of bright-winged bees, back toward the old bridge.

Pollen-stunned, he blinked, and she was gone.

Susan Terris, CA, USA



