

Winning Poems in 2021 CFCP, Inc., Annual Contest

4. Light or Humorous, Third Place

Inside the Purple Outhouse

Clovis, California, late nineteenth century

A doctor had a special outhouse
for those who came for his advice.
All brightly painted purple,
two holes in the seat were sliced.

When patients did their business there,
they happened to start to talk
of themselves and events in town.
They still gabbed on their homeward walks.

And what may they have talked about?
About work at the lumber mill?
Or how to grow great grapes and corn,
or the growing winter chill?

They may have shared some helpful hints
of how to bake the best peach pies
a pattern for a certain dress
appealing to a fellow's eyes.

Or of the new railroad in town,
or neighbors' weddings coming soon.
The friendships formed in that outhouse
grew community. What a boon!

Jennifer Fenn
Fresno, CA