

# To the gleaners

by [Hannah Faith Notess](#) in the [May 19, 2009](#) issue

You do not need me to bless you  
for the shorn field easily gives up its treasure  
into your baskets. Your quick fingers  
conjure food out of early morning mist,  
and in this light even the dumpster  
gives up its chipped vase, its clawfoot end table.  
The sidewalk gives up its clear brown bottle.  
You do not need me to bless you  
but I will anyway wish you clear sight  
into the world's crevices and corners.  
Harvest the chives flowering under the workbench.  
Harvest the copper tubing looped in the scrap pile,  
the chrome fendered bicycle at the sidewalk sale.  
Clamp the broken slats of the chair together.  
Restring the guitar. And let your metal detectors  
whine always with joy. May you find all you seek,  
because at the end of the story  
the woman knots up her apron  
heavy with grain, then steals up to the sleeping body  
of the man who does not yet love her.  
And when she lies down next to him  
she will gather even the scent of his sleep—  
the smell of all future harvests, ripening.