

Moving with L.H. Sigourney
by Sara Kumar

I went to Leonard, Texas with my mother on a weekday in May just before closing time.

Leonard is to the northeast of Frisco, where I live and write poetry and do systems engineering. I'm also a playwright, and I enjoy thinking about pendulums, like the one at Griffith Park in Los Angeles that moves so slowly.

Leonard is not known by many here in Frisco, but there is an antique shop that is being advertised on Facebook called the St. James Collectables and Gifts shop, just in that way.

What do they have there? Veils and postcards. Alabanza. Ancient books from the 1800s, many of them, Alabanza.

There are magazines with pictures of the Kennedys and Pope Saint John Paul II, Alabanza.

There are no moving parts though, at least I don't remember them. There are two doll houses with pieces that move when moved by a mover. The house will move also.

I found this book written some time ago by the poet Mrs. L.H. Sigourney, and I've looked up her name on Britannica online. She was known as the "Sweet Singer of Hartford," and she worked as a schoolteacher in Connecticut. Here are pictures of the book, "Select Poems of Mrs. L. H. Sigourney," that was published by Edward C. Biddle in 1842 in Philadelphia.

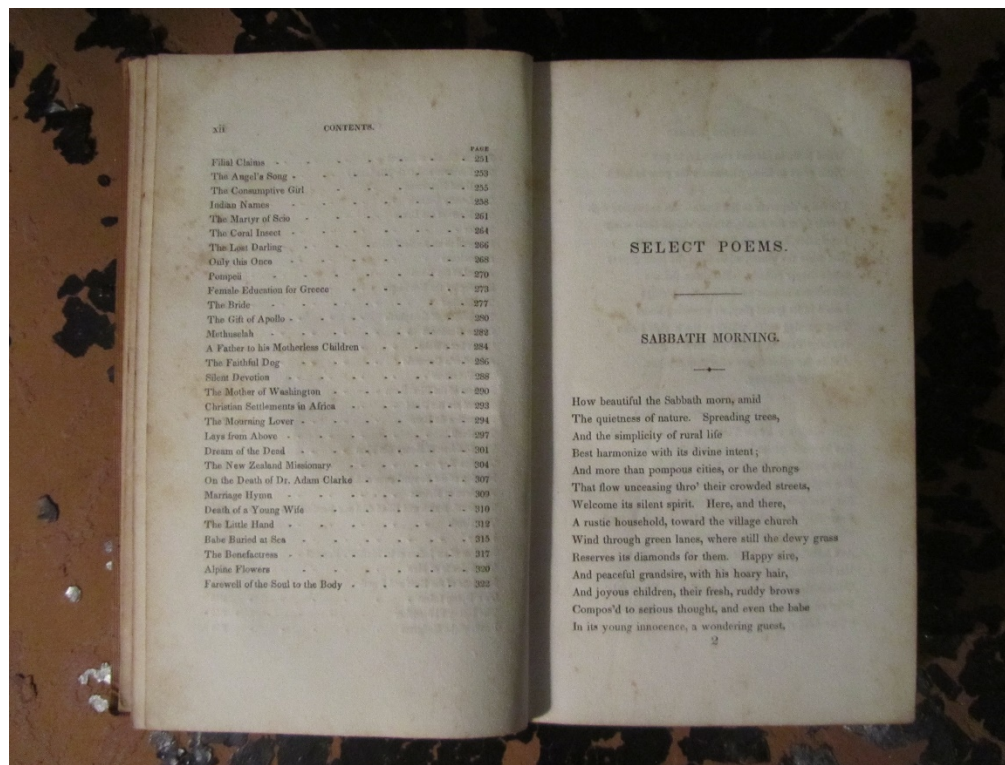


After marrying Charles Sigourney in 1819, Lydia Huntley devoted much time to writing, eventually publishing some 67 books and many articles over the course of her career.

It's Sunday morning here in Frisco, and I'll look briefly at the first poem, entitled "Sabbath Morning." I plan to write on Sunday mornings, before heading to Sunday morning Liturgy at a Black Catholic Church in South Dallas.

Mrs. Sigourney muses with God about the beautiful Sabbath morn, as Duke Senior muses in Shakespeare's "As You Like It" about the countryside of Arden. There are comparisons in both authors' minds with the "pompous cities" and the "flow unceasing thro' their crowded streets."

I'm hearing Alabanza, and I'm thinking about Upper Manhattan.



Jacques is not complimentary about the schoolboy on his way to school, but Mrs. Sigourney speaks of the "joyous children, their fresh, ruddy brows / Compos'd to serious thought." Even the baby in her mind is a "wondering guest."

I wonder how many babies there will be in the pews at the Liturgy this morning.

Let me repeat this line of hers, if I may: "Heaven whispereth to the Earth."

And the winds unfold and touch the oceans and the plants that move.

But she admonishes, in a way, the fate of St. Paul, a banished man at Patmos. Why did he suffer so, when he loved so much?

Mrs. Sigourney continues her poem with a praise of virtue, and she muses on "His words / Who on this day despoil'd the conquering grave." She ends with bold words, and she sees a slave enfranchised now, leaping up, and putting on glorious garments. Let him be well.

Here is a picture of St. James Collectables and Gifts in Leonard, Texas. Alabanza.



Sara Kumar has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Rice University and an M.A. in Faith and Culture from the University of St. Thomas. Sara is currently serving as the Artistic Director of The Rhapsody Theatre in Frisco, TX. She has written, directed, acted in and composed music for many different dramatic events over the years.

Sara especially loves responding with contemporary pieces to Shakespeare and writing about ancient and new intersections of culture, faith, science, and reason. She is currently writing a play about Andrew Johnson's administration during the Reconstruction era immediately following the Civil War. She is so happy to author her first poetry book for adults and children entitled "Colorful Dream Poem Book," to be published by Bellevue in June of 2024.