The Weaver of Thorns

NANCY G. WESTERFIELD

"Enlist your sister to knit his crown
For him, Miles, and pronto, points inward.
Isn't she the one who weaves tapestries,
Does floral arrangements for the palace?
She has an hour. Tell her—and Why,
Why do you think she won't? She isn't
One of Them, Miles, is she? Is she?
Better not. Failure to obey centurion's
Orders, and the penalties are yours, Miles,
Yours, not hers. Move. We'll put on
Our little show in Pilate's courtyard,
Before we hoist him up the hill. I like
These little extra touches we can stage
With criminals."
The women of Jerusalem
Line the dolorous way. A knowing nod and dip
Of the fasces towards her, from a jovial
Uniform passing. With shrouded head, hidden
Hands, she views her handiwork, the shedding
Of the blood that now shames her, leaves her
Self-despised, with bloodied palms matching
His wounds, a woman stigmatized, and still
Forgiven, by the final passerby.

[Nancy G. Westerfield, a Christian journalist who also writes about trains and cats, is listed in *Who's Who in Religion* and *The Episcopal Lay-Leadership Directory.*]