

The
BEAUTY



of
LISTENING

Poems by
LINDA EVE DIAMOND

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LINDA EVE DIAMOND

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First Edition

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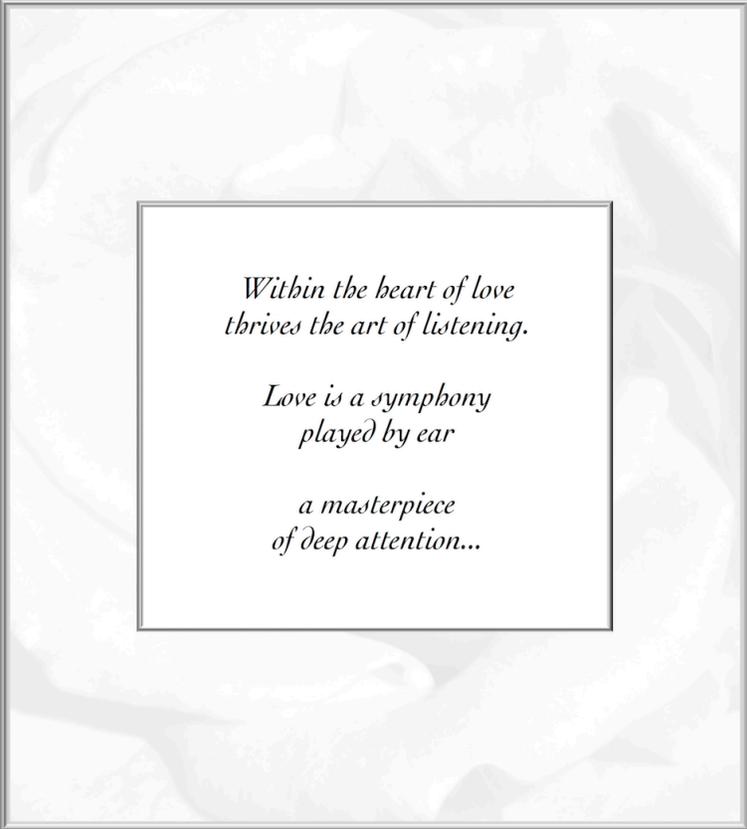
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*for my husband, Jeff,
who brings love to my poems
and poetry to my life*





*Within the heart of love
thrives the art of listening.*

*Love is a symphony
played by ear*

*a masterpiece
of deep attention...*

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ON WORDS THROUGH TIME



THE BEGINNING



In the beginning... you arrived—opening, unfolding with a cry.
Though beginnings are hard to define by place or time.

You might say the beginning was the first day
you responded in some way to sound

or the first time someone listened
intently to your heartbeat.

In that beginning you were wrapped
in your mother's voice, love, turmoil, music...

Somewhere in your beginning you were tiny
as a grain of rice—your whole being etched within...

Before then, you began as a joining of two
whose histories run through you...

Even when you were born,
you were no blank slate.

You came to the table as you were.
As you are, you come to tables

with old ideas for new beginnings
hard facts crossed with wired beliefs.

So much depends upon perspective
as truths pivot and turn, live and die.

Forever learning from others, for better or worse,
learning from within, on a never-ending curve...

a mind shaped by time and place,
worlds of local words and metaphors...

the words that wrapped around you as you grew
or burrowed deep within your sense of self.



Within each moment, present past future breathe
each new beginning, a rush of newness echoes dreams.

It's all there inside—words, music, metaphors...
the earliest and last times someone touched you when you cried.

The early days, when you knew nothing and felt everything—
the days, after all you've learned, that still feel that way...

all shaping who you are and what you hear
as you perceive and relate your own, unique meaning.



We spiral through the vast, ever-changing world
on the only solid ground we know—for the moment...

holding balance while reaching for new ideas...
quieting our minds to feel and empathize...

all part of the challenge of nature and change,
old ideas and new beginnings...

the wonder and beauty
of listening.

THE ORDINARY LIFE OF *AMAZING*

Remember when *amazing* was a bright star of a word—
turning heads toward the wondrous or startling?

Now everything and nothing are *amazing* all at once...
...a big store, a good score, a comment, a new look, the cost of a book...

...a blog, a sandwich, nice weather, a few sparkles sewn on a sweater...
...a chain email, a one-day sale, marketing games and miracle claims...

Some say *amazing* should be retired
or at least redefined as *good* or *mildly amusing*.

It happens. A word grows old and weak,
gets a little smaller, loses its teeth.

The exhausted word can't stand on its own without *really*
or strains to regain its size through words that magnify....

Truly amazing. No, *really*.
Totally amazing. (*Really?*)

Some people complain; some even lay blame.
We love words and hate letting go.

Words, though, rise and fall, grow old and decay,
and some, for no reason at all, simply slip away.

Wonderful words, too: *jargogle*, *brabble* and *deliciate*—
and how, in our endless writing, did we lose *scriptitation*?

Every day new words are born and old ones pass away.
Slang crashes from fashion faster than you can say...

Take a far-out trip and keep on truckin' babe
or get zozzled on giggle water with a dame.

The turning leaves us falling into truths about ages,
growing smaller, wearing out, using words the kids don't say.

Now they hardly use a vowel and don't care for spelling anyway.
Just another sign of time churning the dust around us.

Remember how *amazing* used to shine—even just a little bit?
When *amazing* was a shooting star, did you make a wish?

A SWELL TIME IN 1929

Mac, I'm no pushover, but this doll was the bee's knees.
Yessiree, she was the cat's pajamas and all the berries.

She was a floorflusher, a real smudger, too, but I was just a heeler.
So we'd flap gums—then *Oliver Twist* would take her hand and steal her.

One night she left the joint early, so I stopped up and knocked on her door.
Let's Misbehave was blaring, so I knocked a little more.

When she opened the door, she was still in her glad rags, looking swell.
The place was littered with dead soldiers, but I didn't care and she could tell.

I took her in my arms and asked: *Cash or check?*
Check, she said with a smile, reaching for a deck.

We sat and spat about Gatsby and taking flight.
Then I said, *Baby, I really need that cash tonight.*

What happened after that is none of your beeswax, Mac.
She's my sweetheart now, and that's all there is to that.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go and see a man about a dog.



*For those who don't happen to recall 1920s slang, a **floorflusher** was one who loved to dance, and a great dancer was an **Oliver Twist**. A **smudger** danced close—very close. A **heeler** was a bad dancer, prone to stepping on your toes. One who was the **bee's knees** was the **tops**—also known as the **cat's pajamas** and **all the berries**, too. If you talked or had a chat, you'd say you **flapped gums** or **spat**. **Dead soldiers** were (and still are) empty bottles. A **deck** was a pack of cigarettes, and reading was known as **taking flight**. When a man asked a woman, "**Cash or check?**" that meant "Kiss me now or kiss me later?" A man could only hope she wouldn't say the bank was closed.*



LOVE LETTERS

I'm reading old love letters
from 1919.

The way their language flowers and flows,
to read them is to step into a dream.

Somewhere along the years the flowers fell
from *My darling sweetheart, Dearest heart of gold...*

Now handwritten letters are fading away
along with the art of handwriting.

But nothing will replace the tender grace
of love's language hand drawn on paper—

letters thoughtfully written
in beautifully tied ink ribbons

hints of the lover revealed
by paper design and feel

and the story behind a writer's script
told by boldness of lines, pressure and grip.

Lucky lovers today send and receive, without delay,
hearts, letters and love songs any time, night or day.

Still, some will always reach for that quiet charm
of a handwritten letter from the heart.

(If you're wondering—yes—those old letters were to me.
This year I turn one hundred and thirteen.)

TWITTER

Today the morning news flies by,
the news and all the gossip too.
It twitters through the maple trees
and flutters gently on the breeze.

I follow these twitters and tweets
their simple songs so bright and sweet,
these bards of feather sing their tweets
tweet *twitter* tweet *twitter* tweet *tweep*.

They have, we hear, their own bird-speak
and rhythmic ways of tapping beaks.
They have the morning worm reports,
the weather and traffic, too, of course...

A feed about the birds and bees,
the best vacation spots and trees,
a feed on local feeding stops
and where to find the richest crops.

They sing the songs of everything
or nothing, as they love to sing,
and through it all are mating calls—
the oldest twitter feed of all.

They sing of love and tweet the blues;
they warn and share important news.
From here under the rustling leaves,
it all sounds beautiful to me.

I've silenced *my* own calls and beeps,
alerts and tweets, to hear the tweeps
of birds, the natural twitter tweets
tweet *twitter* tweet *twitter* tweet *tweep*.

These calls need no reply from me
nor do the breeze or buzzing bees.
What beautiful simplicity—
a time to just breathe, pure and free.

Once upon a time there was time
to listen to the morning tweets,
to send a dream out on the breeze,
run free without a beeping leash.

Yes, I quietly unplugged myself
without a post or warning tweet,
just walked alone without a phone
and sat beneath a tree—just me...

...and my heart—my heart is flying..
with the twittering songbird's tweet.



WRDS

We're losing language
word by wrd, syllable by slbl.

Soon we'll cre8 a class in skool
of New World Spelling
(nw O splg).

Spelling will be taught
in History class (hst clss)
with the arts
and civil discourse.

Words in their full splendor
are luxuries now. No time
for so many syllables
or every little vowel.

Time is growing short
for lexical complexities,
syntactical tactics,
extraneous words.

Just give me the *Re*.
No time for lunch.
Toss me a sound bite.

The richness of language
will be for the elite.

Who else could afford
the frivolous extravagance
of reading, writing or listening
to so many sprawling words?

LISTENING TIME

... in stop- ... sitting ...
... you listened. I un- ... ned, articulated, ...
... uld feel my breath su- ving. I don't know
... hen the door blew open, but a natural light
... ed the room. Through that generous, ope
... stirred a breeze of fresh, breathable
... listened, my thoughts began to
... a knowing voice deep in.
... my voice, my cent
... thank you
... the

THE GARDEN

Last night in the dream, I was you and you were me.
I saw things in a way I never could with you as you and me as me.

I felt your suffering and saw myself through your forgiving eyes.
Then we switched back and talked and laughed about it all.

The dreamscape was a lush, peaceful garden. Maybe it was yours...
or mine... The lines between us didn't matter so much.

Wait... yes... now I recall...
We didn't change places in the dream at all...

But we listened so deeply we could nearly see
through one another's eyes.

I said things I didn't know I knew and, between us, ideas grew
in the light of the garden, where dreams seemed to bloom.

Remember how we used to talk that way,
at a natural pace, face to face?

These days that closeness is virtually replaced
by virtual unreality.

We miss the pitches and tones, the subtle smiles and cues.
I miss the subtlety of you.

Our conversations face-to-face, organically flourishing,
so thoroughly nourishing, could never be replaced.



EATING AWAY

Something is eating away at me.
Don't know what it is.

I feel it carving at my gut,
nibbling through my dreams.

I think I know what it wants to say
so I take to debating

as though we're on different sides
and I could win without losing.

It grumbles, moans and pokes at me.
I turn up the TV.

It won't be eaten away. I tried.
This ache is eating me alive.

Maybe it's time
to listen.

I sit with the ache.
It makes me cry.

Enough of that. I get a snack.
I try to wish the ache away.

I sit, at last, for as long as it takes,
and ask the ache what it's trying to say.

I try, in my way, to listen.
(Or am I, in my way, trying *not* to?)

I try to hide, but it's all there inside.
I just don't know, but I do. I know.

THE DOORWAY

Trapped inside myself, I heard your voice,
the gentle offering you placed in the doorway.

You offered to listen. I opened up
just a little.

You stepped so softly... as if entering
a place of prayer.

You didn't look for a light switch,
bring a flashlight, open the blinds...

...or try, in any way, to illuminate
my space.

You sat quietly beside me
in the dark.

I talked in stops and starts,
becoming smoother as you listened.

You didn't jump in, preach or rant,
judge me, entertain or chant.

I unburdened, articulated,
and could feel my breath... slowing.

You didn't tweet, text, check your phone
or update your online status to *listening*.

I don't know when the door blew open,
but a natural light filled the room.

Through that generous, open space...
stirred a breeze of fresh, breathable air.

As you listened, my thoughts began to clarify,
opening to a knowing voice deep inside.

You helped me find my voice,
my center and my smile.

You say you didn't do a thing.
You simply listened.

Thank you for all that you *didn't* do
and all that you *did* by listening.



JOURNEYS

You don't have to travel far to explore
or discover hidden treasures.

Each one of us is a brave new world.
Just listen to someone you love.

No need to pack your bags...
Baggage only gets in the way.

Some points of interest will surprise you.
The rates of exchange may seem strange.

Don't think your personal constitution
holds all truths and solutions.

This is a world—with a history and laws
evolving at its own pace.

Curious traveler that you are,
you may, on a quiet day, have questions.

What dreams have you put on a shelf?
When do you feel most like your truest self?

Listen to the answer, a sentimental anthem,
vocal chords playing sacred music of the heart.

THE LIGHT

On a day black with noise,
smoke, mirrors and blame

listening is a luminous light,
radiant and loving

embracing the wounded
with deep warmth

illuminating
dark truths

creating safe havens
one story at a time.

Listening is a light
each one of us can shine.

THE PROBLEM WITH INTERRUPTING

(A Cautionary Tale) ;)

She said, *I couldn't love you*

He snapped a quick reply:

You said you did. You lied to me, but then all women lie.

With that, he gathered up his things and spewed a harsh goodbye.

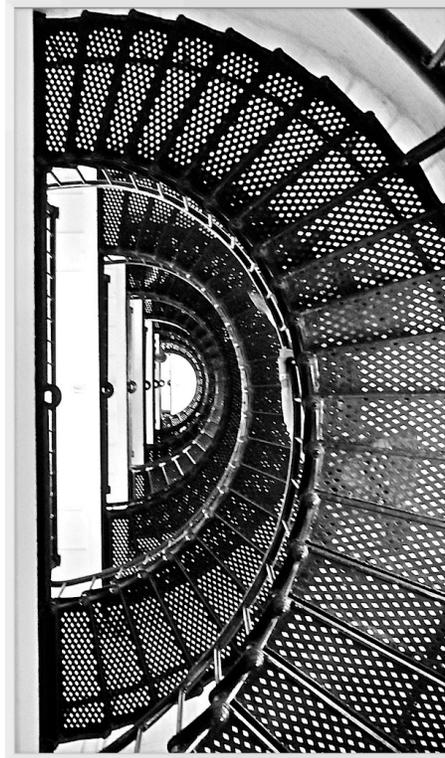
She would have loved him always, but he had one awful flaw.

He interrupted her every sentence, her every little thought.

But oh, how she cried when he walked out the door.

The rest of her sentence would have been *more!*

QUESTIONS OF PERSPECTIVE



NIGHT FLIGHTS: AMELIA EARHART'S DREAMS

A Story Told through the Language of Dreams



Imagine Amelia's mind at rest,
beyond all confines of reason or knowledge of time,
soaring through the uncharted, nightly flights
of dreams...



BREAKING THROUGH

She's having that dream again—
about the condescending men.

They hover above her
muttering something

about a woman's place...
as if there's no debate.

Her plane is a giant
powder puff.

Undaunted, she flies
record-breaking highs.

She crashes through glass,
sailing through the ceiling in the sky.

Through the shimmering shards she goes,
shining on through dangerous rainbows.

Onward and upward she flies—
brave as any man alive.



MEMORY'S FATEFUL TURN

Tonight Amelia flies
over the moon
with a cow, somehow,
singing hey diddle diddle...
but they never come down.

Grounded on a star
they watch the search on Earth—
wild questions, desperate theories,
agony and tears...

No one in the country of dreams
or the whole continent of stories
can solve the mysterious riddle.

When Amelia was a child,
she sang, *Hey diddle diddle...*
Wanna hear a riddle?



HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

Amelia dreams she's a child
chided for daydreaming.

Amelia!
Amelia Earhart!

*Keep your head out of the clouds
and your feet on the ground!*

The buttoned-up voice
half frightening

half frightened
shrieks this urgent advice.

Amelia turns
and giggles in her sleep.



POETRY

Amelia dreams she flies
because the endless sky
is a wild, wondrous poem
she tries to memorize.



CLOUDS

She dreams she flies deep
into a thick, white cloud.

She hears her sister's voice
calling out from the past...

*Meelie! Can you see it?
Can you see Cherryville?*

Amelia loved that game,
their search for a mythical place...

always, though, summoned home
before they'd reach Cherryville

...but not today...
Amelia's going all the way.

*Meelie! Do you see it?
What's it look like?*

"Meelie" doesn't reply.
Her little sister cries.

Amelia's disappeared.
Her plane has crashed

cracked beyond repair
in Cherryville.

Good thing Amelia's grown
wings of her own.



JUST PASSING THROUGH

I open my photo file.
Went to Chicago this time.

You put on your glasses
and a warm, polite smile.

Cool metal art
circling clouds

a distant opera,
faceless crowds

water falls
down brick walls

A lighthouse.

You shake your head.
You like people

like me.
Where are you?

Here, I point
to the space

between you
and the image.

No, wait.
That's me

reflecting
wind blown

in the famous metal bean,
and there, the long shadow

floating in space
on the ground...

looks like me or a ghost,
either or both

part of the scene
in some accidental,

incidental, nearly
invisible way.

INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM: *THE KING'S PAWN*



The King's Pawn is a little poem that might be best read with a friend. This poem is written in a style that's meant to be read (and heard) in two voices.

The three dimensions of this poem:

1. **Player's Perspective:** Reader #1 reads down the left-hand column as "The Player."
2. **Pawn's Perspective:** Reader #2 reads down the right-hand column as "The Pawn."
3. **Reader's (or Listener's) Larger View of Both Perspectives:** Readers 1 & 2 read their parts alternately, reading across the lines together.



THE KING'S PAWN

(A Three-Dimensional View of Two Perspectives)

PLAYER'S SIDE	PAWN'S SIDE
You play right	Chess games
Careful movements	A stratagem
For him	For love
Stepping lightly	Inch by inch
Square by square	I move for him
No one cares	Does he care?
If you fall	Will he care?
In love	I will die
A pawn dies	For the king
Pathetic and small	Is my love noble?
A fool	In love
A king couldn't love	A pawn is strong
A powerless pawn	Honest and steady
Dying to protect	Living to protect
His righteous highness	My lover my soul
He hides behind the line	He kissed me one time
Faceless fools guard the crown	This heart exists because he kissed
In a moment of pain	My little wooden lips
The loveless king says anything	He said I was his secret queen
Carved without a heart	Whittled out of love
He watches you die	God save my sweet king
Another pawn	In justice I lived
In his little game	All pawns die in vain
Expendably	Dependably

Played.

THE MONSTER IN THIS POEM

This poem is about a moment in the life
of a monster—or a monster in the life
of a moment. Either way...

The monster, feeling misunderstood, wants to know
who names one a monster and another a hero—
and who's side the name-callers are on, anyway.

A colossal tear falls from a red, bulging eye.
The monster looks in the mirror and cries,
I'm not a monster—am I?

Who is the monster and why
all this noise and blame, confusion and shame?
Maybe you know—or maybe you wonder.

Most monsters are battling monstrous fears,
and most aren't monsters through and through
(some, of course, but relatively few).

At this moment, only you know who this monster is
and whether it's time to listen, to love, to forgive
the monster in this poem.

THE MODERN ART OF CONVERSATION

Conversation, once a high art,
has changed in favor of simplicity.

Seems the art of blending led to clashing.
Perspective was a bore.

The many styles and points of view
confused things even more.

Discourse moved to smooth, quick lines
then simplified more over time.

Welcome to the gallery
of modern conversation.

I'm in the blue room
with all the blue people.

Water horizon and sky wash
into a nearly solid blue.

The plaque on the wall refers to a ship
which must be the same blue as the sea.

The lighthouse and the beacon, too,
I presume are the same blue hue.

Undoubtedly, shipwrecks are rampant
in the blue, blue, blue, blue world.

The room of reds is no better
red folding into red upon red upon red.

In the purple room,
an artist true to light

paints only colors true to life
but still only the life of purple.

Thus, *Woman with Teacup*
shows only a floating purple cup.

To those who love purple,
this is the only place to be.

Blues gather with blues.
Reds with reds. Greens with greens.

In each room, the solid blend
of voice and vision

blinded by the beauty of the color
blind to anything missing at all.

In fact, they say the other rooms
do nothing but distract.

Speeches all begin and end:
I know I'm preaching to the choir.

That phrase echoes through the gallery
which is, incidentally, falling apart.

The halls are dark and dangerous.
Common grounds are never cared for.

When these patrons meet in the hall,
tempers flare with no provocation at all.

Each room is heated with endless talk
that the art of conversation may be lost.

TRICKY LISTENING

Sammie listens meticulously
for exactly what she wants to hear.

It's a simple trick, a sleight of ear,
a trick so clever and quick
even Sammie misses it.

Yes, she listens very carefully
without listening at all.

AWAKENING

He tells you his home nestles dreamily
among towering pines.

This much is true. You enter the forest.
A drum is beating. No... That is your heart.

You are floating through dreams of love entranced
by easy words and clever smiles...

Your eyes so forward focused you don't see the woven web
spun across your path until your face is wrapped—with netting.

Sudden shock of itchy snare makes you scream.
You pull the sticky string from your cheeks and lashes.

You shake your hair and spit
more web from your lip.

In a black, crystal instant you realize your small size.
Your whole body is covered with web.

Even your brain is spun. Poor little fly, sad snack.
Not a morsel of love has the *spider* for *you*.

PAPER DOLLS



A PAPER DOLL'S STORY UNFOLDS

The world is filled with paper dolls
tattering through the hard streets.

Ruffled hearts tousled hard,
fluttering, shuddering

through pounding storms and singeing heat
and thoughtless, careless stomping feet.

As you'd imagine, sketchy characters
can be especially hazardous.



Some paper dolls cry so much,
even their tears will tear and cut.

I once knew a paper doll
who cried herself to a pulp.

I knew another who disappeared
down a stream of his own tears...

shredding tears and tears
until nothing was left.

Still, somehow, most will survive.
Some paper dolls even thrive.

Me? No, I wasn't cut out for this place,
and life at home was hardly safe...



I was born to a blustering wind
and a window opened wide.

My sister, what a pair we've made.
She's a razor-edged scissor blade.

I've taken countless risks
for a trace of closeness.



Closeness holds
the greatest danger of all.

I was raised to be afraid
of being torn apart...

...or worse, that I could cause
that kind of hurt.

I could hardly dare to touch
for fear I'd give a paper cut.

Still, I've risked my small wisp of a life,
been nearly ripped to bits—

But always for that slightest chance to fold
into the tender touch of kindness...



I'm torn, cries the paper doll.
What should I do?

Sure, I've thought of giving up.
So what?

A paper doll cut out without a trace.
Why should anyone notice or care?

What stops me? I turn that page
over and over... and it's blank.

But still, here I am.
Here we are.



All of us here find some way to survive,
a way that we learn to escape or get by.

I learned as a child where to hide
to protect my thin, paper skin.

The safest place in the world
for a paper doll girl

is deep in the safe, warm heart
of a good, thick book.



How does a paper doll survive?
By the grace of books, I stay alive.



NOT MUCH FOR WORDS

Some paper dolls
don't find safety in books.

They tuck themselves instead
under other kinds of covers...

Press themselves between
different sheets.

Some paper dolls never find
a safe way to survive.

DINNER AT EVE'S

Once again
Eve's dropping

everything.
She's gone

too far
to the bottom

of a bottle
of Original Sin

apple wine,
spilling blood

red wine
and secrets.

Everyone listens in
on her

every slur,
gathering tidbits

about the others,
eavesdropping

as she rambles
distant, unaware

the room is hushed
and leaning in.

She drops
all covers,

every act
of love.

Does she love
anyone?

(And do her friends "love"
everyone?)

She's through with you
moving on to herself,

the fall from grace.
You listen.

Eve's dropping
the public face

the pretense
her lying smile.

Designer paint drips
down her face.

I'm empty, she says
staring at her drained glass.

Her husband
ribs her.

All about Eve, he sneers
drinking his beer.

He'll be sorry. Do you know
what *he* says about you?

You wish
you didn't care

about a twisted truth
that lies in their minds

behind their eyes,
behind your back.

Still the spinning room
is transfixed

given in to temptation,
listening out of control

as Eve reveals
her shameful side.

A seductive snake
slithers to her glass

to pour a little more
apple wine...

PORTRAIT OF JANE DOE

Orderly.
She hears them call an orderly.

Hospital walls see her come and go
carried in drunk

spinning out of control.
The walls, too, the walls are spinning.

White coats snickering, grinning.
Who is she?

No one knows.
Who is anyone?

She is. Anyone. Jane Doe.
Orderly.

Jane is orderly.
Likes to color code her empty folders.

Likes things to be ordered in twos.
The world is too odd a place.

Must be evened out
in little ways.

Orderly, orderly
Jane Doe.

Jane is an orderly mess,
a drunk and disorderly mess.

Jane needs a shot
to keep her in order.

If Jane were well,
she might well be an orderly.

What an orderly
orderly she'd be.

Then she could be all that she dreams
she is inside.

She is inside where she hides
with a drink.

Her mind is a mess
of frayed, tangled wires

that don't connect.
In her tangled mind

her mind is in perfect order.
This false beacon of order

sets an impossible standard
for the world

...the horrifying world.
Alcohol soothes.

She pours booze on the wounds,
the wounds inside that never heal

and new wounds
always bloom inside

and on her face.
She cuts herself.

Doesn't really know why
or why not.

She thinks of it as simple grooming
with precision incisions.

Somewhere deep inside
she knows that's a lie.

But the wires in her brain are cut.
She cries out to herself through dreams

but then her memory is black
so she believes she doesn't dream.

She dreams, though, every night,
dreams always in recurring themes—

deeply cutting dreams that dig
into the pain behind the cutting.

She dreams she cuts her skin open wide
to release her light and let it shine.

She dreams her face is filled with secrets
she must dig out and burn.

She dreams she's a paper doll
cutting off her own rough edges.

She dreams she's cutting herself free
from pain.

She dreams she cuts precisely
because then she will be perfect.

She screams and cries in her sleep,
tearing at her skin, clawing at the sheets.

Orderly. Orderly.
Jane Doe.

THE STORY OF NO ONE

She's here for him,
his invisible friend.

When he's busy,
she disappears.

Who was here?
no one...

She leaves no footprints.
Her every trace is erased.

She's a few scattered hours
a daydream in between

a blocked escape
a stomach ache.

He comes and goes
telling endless stories

asking in passing
how she is.

Fine she says.
It's easy to believe her.

He wants to—and besides,
no one doesn't lie.

MONDAY MOURNING

He tied a knot around his windpipe.
Monday morning. Stiff suited
Monday mourning.

Another sterile sunless week ahead
driving through the traffic maze
squinting through thick smog and haze;
no wonder Monday morning burns his eyes.

The lump grows in his throat as he enters the door
while deep in his chest where no one can see he cries
tears of an artist rendering life in a small cube.

He marvels at the masters of paperwork around him.
They know what to do to survive and do it with ease.
These are the fittest, the strong, the survivors.

But he, with paper-thin skin, crumples.
He, with tears in his chest, suffocates.
An animal of wild, deep emotion.
Trapped. Shaven. Starched.

Weaker by the week in this unforgiving world
deprived of sun, air, sleep and trees.
If only he could breathe.

He tied a knot around his windpipe.
Monday morning. Stiff suited
Monday mourning.

POSTCARD

I live in a postcard.

There, that's me
on the beach
beside a palm tree,
the black silhouette
slicing an image
into the orange
Florida morning.

Wish you were here.



MORE QUESTIONS OF PERSPECTIVE



JANIE'S LIFE

JANIE'S LIFE

Janie's life is a production.
She's the writer, of course,
temperamental artist,
obsessed with
her vision.

...she forgets her dreams...

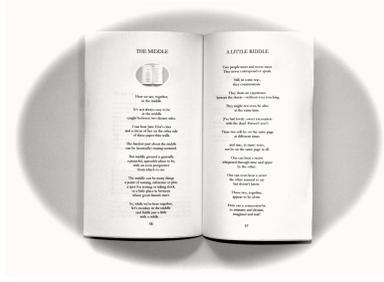
.....
She's quick to blame
the bumbling director
line-flubbing actors
the audience,
the reviewers,
even the breeze.

...wait just within reach.....

.....
Don't tell her now,
but she *is* the director,
and line-flubbing main character.
She's even her own gullible audience
believing every crafted word of her script.
She reviews herself, too, changing the show,
itself, by whether she chooses to be harsh or kind.

She is the observer
watching them all,
the whole scene,
through the keyhole
of a secret stage door.

THE MIDDLE



Here we are, you and I,
in the middle.

It's not always easy to be
in the middle
caught between two distant sides.

I can hear Jane Doe's cries
and a circus of lies on the other side
of these paper walls.

Sometimes, ironically,
it's hard to stay centered
in the middle.

Though middle ground is generally
a peaceful, agreeable place to be
with an even perspective from which to see.

The middle can be many things—
the center of action
a safe place for paper dolls,
a spot for resting or taking stock
or a place where good friends meet.

So, while we're here together, friend,
let's monkey in the middle
and fiddle just a little
with a riddle...

A LITTLE RIDDLE

Two people meet and never meet.
They never correspond or speak.

Still, in some way,
they communicate.

They share an experience
between the sheets—without ever touching.

They might not even be alive
at the same time.

(I've had lovely, sweet encounters
with the dead. Haven't you?)

These two will be on the same page
at different times

and may, in many ways,
not be on the same page at all.

One can hear a secret
whispered through time and space
by the other.

One can even hear a secret
the other seemed to reveal
but doesn't know.

These two, together,
appear to be alone.

How can a connection be
so intimate and distant,
imagined and real?

GEOMETRY 101

You're too rigid,
said the circle to the square.

Said the square to the circle,
I don't care.

At least I make a few good points
while you spin round and round to no avail.

Into the night they fought and compared,
but beneath the arcs and angles, they cared.

In time, the square became less pointed
and the circle, painfully more jointed.

In the end, they were a wreck of tangle.
The only one standing was the triangle,
who came to three profound points:

△

A square is not a circle.

A circle can't be cornered by a square.

○ A circle and a square should never dare to fall in love. □

THE JABBERWOCK'S WIFE

(A Postscript to Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky*)

The Jabberwock's wife
Stares with fright into the night.

A while back, she heard a snicker-snack—
Now, more noises brick-bracking out back.
Is it her husband whiffling home?
She hopes with all her beamish might.

Something's wrong, just isn't right.
She runs galumphing, panting, fumpling
Into the streamy dream-like brillig night.

She finds a clutch of red posies
And the cherry pie he went to buy
Not far from the Tumtum tree,
Where he'd said, *Please marry me...*

Passion gyring in his eyes,
Jaws biting with desire—
Their claws sweetly snatched,
Two hearts forever latched.

'Twas hushy in the mourning night
When the lovelost wife took her life.

WEDDED BLISTERS

The rose of their love dried
and withered to disdain.
For honor's sake they stayed
having affairs to ease pain...

The other man at least nods and pretends,
when she speaks, that he comprehends.
Though no one in the whole scene understands,
not husband, wife or lovers—no one can.

All they know is that love died
strangled in the passion vines
they wove around the marriage bed
to symbolize their lives now wed.

In time, her self-esteem was tangled
and his sense of peace was mangled.
Their friends all begged them to leave,
but to their agony they cleaved.

*We're trapped in a promise, they said,
like an itchy skin one never sheds.
We walked the aisle to this endeavor
vowed that we would love forever.*

*Short of that, we'll stay intact,
at least play out the marriage act.*
Together, they blistered and bled,
lived to grieve till they were dead—

Killed by poison vines and tongues,
holes burnt through their fragile lungs
from breathing burning, acid fears.
By the bed lay untouched pruning shears—

While into their skin did thorns embed,
blood slowly dyed the floorboards red.
They could never cry enough.
Who knew that life would be so tough?

They stuck it out; they won the prize,
smiling through torn veils of lies.
Every night they'd slept in dread,
as promised, in the marriage bed.

CELIA'S STRATEGY

They wonder why the child won't speak.
Shhhh—she's imagining a wordless world.

No, Celia wouldn't speak all day
playing quiet games in silence.

Silence disturbs her parents,
makes them nervous.

They rush to fill the empty spaces
with restless, breathless chatter—
wordsrunninghardwithoutrestorbreath.

They love their clever repartee,
tight and quick, sharp as darts.

They also love the power
of dropping weighty words
from great heights.
Don't play dumb with me.
Say something
or else.

The child imagines *or else*
on a balance scale
just below an elephant.

She doesn't want to play
their game. Words
can be dangerous. Beware
sharp edges, toxic coating,
risk of children choking.

Celia seals her lips and ears.
No words in. No words out.
If they take her to a doctor,
she'll shrug as if to say,
I couldn't say... I just can't.

Can she hold out that long?
No. Parents are ruthless.

Celia speaks a few words only
to have them sliced in mid-air

by her mother's busy talking around all she has to do
and her father going on about the latest news.
The trouble, he says, over her small voice,
is politicians don't listen.

The quiet child has questions
about the word game.

*What's the point?
Where do the words land?
How do we move forward?
Why do I always end up in jail?
It's not fun and no one's learning—
How do you play this all day, anyway?*

But to ask, she'd have to play.

Long ago, her parents lost their way,
their sense of truth and honest fair play.
But how could they stop playing to win
in a game that isn't a game at all
without losing imaginary points?

Their voices are boiling over again.
Words fly like sharpened knives
dangerously, almost aimlessly
around the kitchen.

The most telling words
pause for a flash—
then they're spun like tops
until meaning is lost...
but no one's listening anyway.

Shhhh—she's had enough
of their stupid game today.

MARCEL'S GREAT ESCAPE

Josie was explosive, her triggers erratic.
To her, every mouth was a weapon.

Marcel was a strong, silent type,
but even a mime has words implied.

She was offended by imaginary props,
the very idea he'd be trapped inside a box.

One night she boxed him up herself in a fight,
so he grew wings and threatened to take flight.

Josie sliced his wings off with a knife.
At the end of his rope, he pulled a gun.

Marcel shot himself and fell
on a silken sheet of blood.

He left the silk sheet on the floor,
walked out through the very real front door.

Josie cried for the awful things he might have said.
Next time she'll try to find a quieter mime.

LISTENING FOR LOVE



LOVE IS LISTENING

Within the heart of love
thrives the art of listening.

Love is a symphony
played by ear

a masterpiece
of deep attention.

If you're listening for love,
remember this...

Love is listening
for you.

(Love doesn't have a perfect ear,
but true love is trying to listen.)

A TEN-RING CIRCUS OF BAD PROPOSITIONS

RING #1: A SIMPLE MISUNDERSTANDING

He drops the ring to the floor.
No? How can this be?

It's an interesting proposition, she says.
He scratches his head.
I heard you, he insists,
*say you want to **be with me.***

No, she resists.
*I said I'd want to **be you.***
Your proposition is based
on a preposition wrongly placed.

It's an interesting preposition,
he says, confused by the clarification.
She says, *If I were **you,** I'd rule my world*
as you do, with the confidence of a king
and the calm of unwavering certainty.

*If I were **with** you, I would **be** ruled.*
I may not be so rich and royal as you,
but outside the circle of your ring,
at least I know I'm free.

RING #2: THE HIGH WIRE

Marry me, he says.
The house is ready. I've chosen your clothes.
Did you read through the script?

No, you've gotten it wrong.
Your line here was, Yes.
Try again.

RING #3: BALANCING ACT

Standing tall, he says, *You need me.*
Where else, my dear, can you lean?
Without my sturdy shoulder
you'd surely just fall over.

RING #4: THE STRONGMAN'S SHOW

You don't have to love me,
he says, secretly believing
that couldn't be true for long.

I'll love enough for both of us,
adds the strongman for show.
This time he holds a ring.

The diamond towers
like a terrifying boulder
on a dangerously thin gold line.

You'll love for me? she asks, *Really?*
That's a powerful proposal I suppose,
but I'd like to love for myself.

Give us a try, he says, *try the ring.*
Staring back with her stone face,
she tells him she's told him *No*,
written letters, posted signs...

Now this is truly *Goodbye*,
the last word, the final sign.
Beware of falling rock.
He drops the ring.

RING #5: THE JUGGLING CLOWN

He gets down on one knee
and says, *Please marry me!*

I'm sorry for the aluminum foil ring.
I'll have a real one for you soon...

But first I have to pry it from the finger
of another woman's fist.

RING #6: THE BANANA PEEL SLIP

I don't understand you at all,
he says, shaking his head.
Isn't it enough that I love you?

RING #7: THE DEADLY RING OF FIRE

He shows up drunk at the beach party
with a slurred apology and a ring.

She looks into his yellow eyes
and answers *No*.

He throws the ring in a fit of rage.
The ocean swallows it and chokes.

He claims his love is so brutally strong
she must be insane to say no...

Almost criminally so.
If he could, he'd send her to death row.

RING #8: THE FLYING LEAP

*So what that we're family, he says.
Beyond the relative strangeness,
you know I've always loved you.*

RING #9: APE MAN

She's on the ground licking her wounds.
She hears the door. Echoing footsteps
followed by an empty apology.

On his knees, he reaches out
a black, satin box opened wide
to a dazzling diamond promise.

He expects she'll forget the unrest
and curl herself around him.
Women, like cats, love shiny things.
She reaches out her naked paw
and slams the box closed.

RING #10: RING TOSS

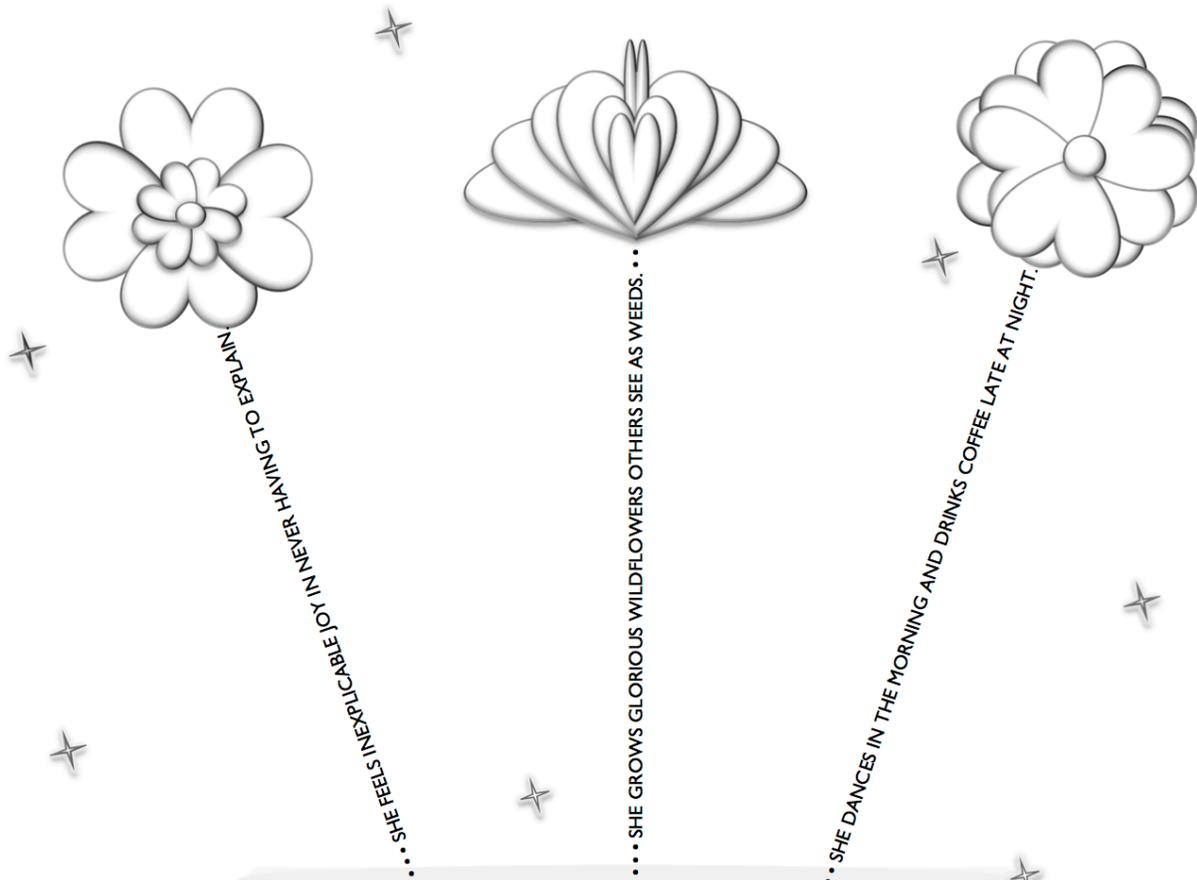
Looking into tired eyes, he sighs
We're old now, you and I. Isn't it time?

AN ENGAGING PROPOSAL

*Some questions require
calculations, diagrams
head scratching,
a guess*

...
One question asked by the right one once brings forth the simplest reply, the guess that you know with every ounce of your soul.

SPARKLING CRYSTAL



Crystal is clear. She enjoys her single life
and she loves going home alone.

Her married friends worry.
Her family stresses.

They discuss her hair
and how she dresses.

They try and try to fix her,
to solve a problem that isn't there.

They admire how she sparkles and shines
in the midst of these terrible, lonely times.

But Crystal loves her freedom, loves her home
loves every single thing about her single life...

Except for the endless stress and strife
her loved ones seem to suffer.

FORGOTTEN FEATHERS

My back to him—I stretch out of the night—toward the sunlight.

I love your wings, he says. I laugh.

Why do you laugh? he asks.

He strokes them

kissing

each

forgotten

feather

.



BEST FRIENDS



Dear Husband,

*Such a rash of wedded blisters in the world.
The fear of it alone could cause an allergy.*

*But for those of us, the soulmates who are true,
nothing could compare to this sacred bond we share—*

*forever wed together in this bliss,
our promise poetically sealed with a kiss—*

*together wed forever for better or worse,
inextricably woven into one another's verse.*

You are the heart and soul of my life.

Happily ever after,

Your Loving Wife

THE RINGS

♡ TWO LOVERS LONGED TO BE TOGETHER, FOREVER AND ALWAYS, HOLDING HANDS. ♡
♡ THEY POURED THE METTLE AND GRACE OF THEIR LOVE INTO PRECIOUS METAL BANDS. ♡

THE GIFT OF AN INFINITE KISS

Inside the small package
the gift of an infinite kiss.

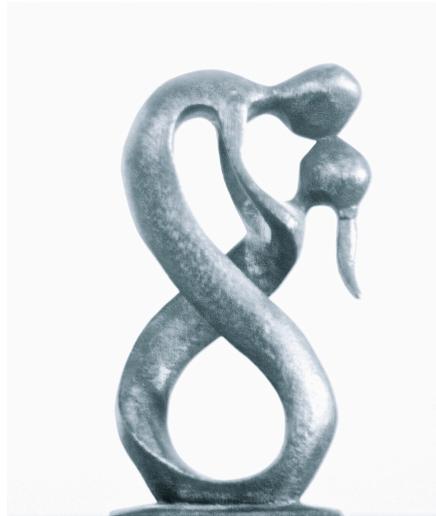
Wood lovers
love forever

through the years
still and always

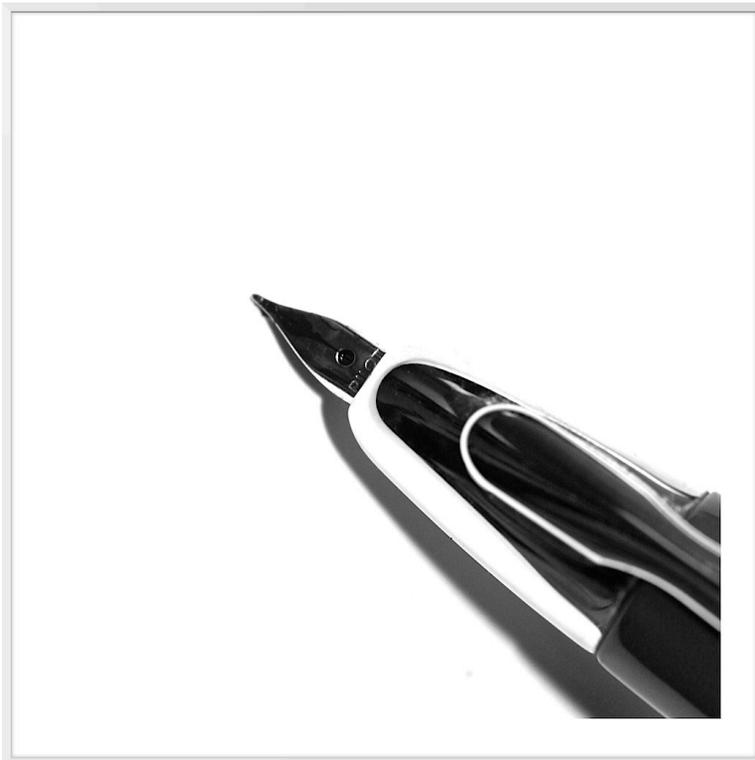
in an ageless
timeless love.

How do I love thee?
Eternally, he says,

Like this...



WRITING LIFE



A NOVEL IN VERSE

I'd like to write a novel in verse.
The ideal novel in verse
would be inverse in every way—

read from back to front
or central pages outward
printed upside-down on the page
as an argument of logic
reasoned through rhyme
and, of course,
as a mathematical function.

The reverse would also be true,
a novel inverse to itself
in inverse proportions—

no mathematical inversions
no rhyme or reason throughout
an argument of no logic
printed downward on the page
read from outer pages inward
or front to back...

...undoing every statement,
countering every point,
creating its own undoing
until everything is right
and nothing is left.

TOUCHSTONES AND WRITING LIFE

(Found on the Bookshelf ~ Composed of Book Titles)



The sensual home
A room of one's own

Fooling with words
Bird by bird

Teaching a stone to talk
What have you lost?



POETRY ON THE SHELF

Not content to be confined, poetry cascades and climbs
like ivy on the bookshelves growing wild.

Look at separate titles—then change your gaze.
You never know what stories will unfold
as books come and go and what roads
they may take along the way...



The art of racing in the rain
To the lighthouse
Seeking the heart of wisdom
The mastery of love...
For the time being
Waiting
Listening
Blessing the boats



When you stack old books to donate,
do your books give you away?



Who am I?
Open secret
I know why the caged bird sings



Here's an old joke with a twist of sublime,
unwittingly told by Silverstein, Carson
White Eagle, Catchcart and Klein...



Where the sidewalk ends
Plato and a platypus walk into a bar...
Glass, Irony and God
Spiritual unfoldment



Poetry doesn't sit still on the shelf.
Alive and wild, it writes itself.

THE WRONG WRITING CIRCLE

Welcome to the Poet's Circle! We do wish you'd come on time.
The first poet's already read. Now we'll round the room for critique...
and remember—keep it helpful, specific and brief!

... I liked the part about the goldfish. I have a poem about a whale.
Have you read my chapbook? I have it here for sale.

... I assume the poem's an allegory about war, and the boat's a metaphor.
But that wouldn't make sense. You need to work this one some more.

... I don't trust rhymes that scheme, and the rhythm is too tight.
Did you overplay that meter? No, something isn't right.

... I'd prefer this piece...
as a haiku, wouldn't you?
Have you tried haiku?

... The poem had good intentions, though I don't think it's your best.
I wanted to see it go in another direction—maybe out West.

... Your poetry strains to grow, but it's dying on the vine.
I teach a series of classes for \$59.99.

... Sorry I dozed. No comment on the poem.
Was up late writing something interesting of my own...

Great advice, everyone! So insightful and true!
Who's next to share a poem with us? ...How about *you*?

THE NOVEL

I want to write...
but the pen is so far away...

Across miles of minutiae,
snacks, a telephone,
the world outside,
a winding superhighway.

As I binge my time away,
I contemplate my novel—
my navel—

Why the neighbor
mows the lawn at dawn
... and then again at noon.

I imagine the finished novel
discovered one day in its entirety
inside my head and heart
by a coroner.

He'll find blood rich with story,
characters in my capillaries,
irony woven through my veins,
plot twists on the matter
of my brain.

He will fall in love
with the writer I never was.

And he'll say it was true of me
like so many others he's seen—
She had a novel inside her.

NOVEL IDEAS: A SEQUEL TO *THE NOVEL*

The coroner and bestselling author has agreed
to his first formal interview on TV..

Your novels are each so unique!
The coroner nods.

Where do you find the stories?
I don't, he says softly. *They come to me.*

You say your work inspires you.
Yes. That's true.

But you write more about life than death.
The coroner says, simply, *Yes.*

Yes. This much is clear...
This interview was a bad idea.

Well, so many novel ideas! So many points of view!
The author smiles, shifts and scratches an itch.

Could the coroner ever tell the truth about his fiction,
the stories buried deep, so discreetly they nearly die unseen?

How is it he hears these ethereal strands of story...
and how does he know how to weave them?

Why does he feel compelled to give birth
to words that would have been buried unheard?

How can he discuss, he wonders, the ineffable nature
of his inspiration? He wonders how anyone can.

I can't take credit for the stories, says the coroner.
They come to me, and I write them down.

Ah, yes. Divine inspiration? The guiding hand of a muse?
He wants to tell his story, credit his muses, muse about the process...

No. Too confusing, even for him. He imagines the responses:
Fraud, kook, liar, thief, intuitive, idiot, genius... (He'd agree with *fraud*.)

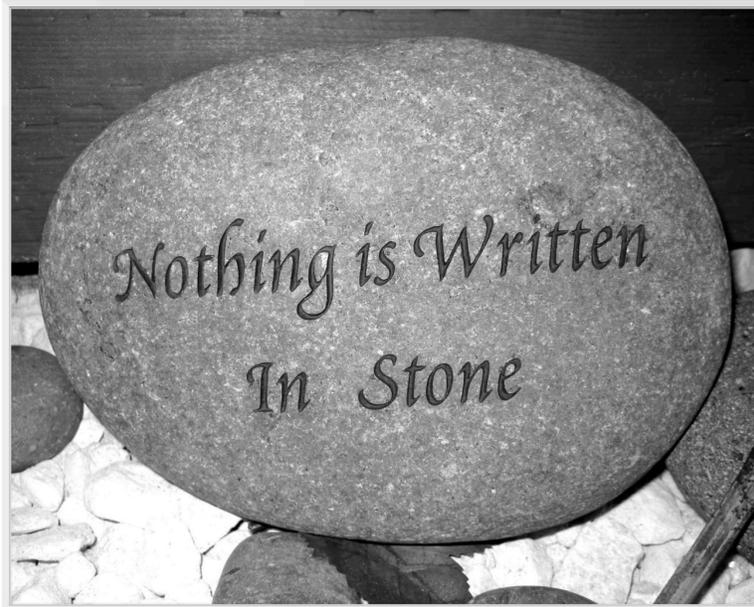
Maybe his story is best saved for a novel... and for another day.
This is no place for something too real or sacred, anyway.

If the thought of a muse amuses you, he answers, *that's fine.*
And I don't know, but maybe the guiding force is divine.

*Ah, says the interviewer. That's what many writers say.
And, folks, he's still a coroner! How 'bout that?*

With that, the interviewer slaps his knee and laughs
and the coroner quietly decides this interview will be his last.

WORDS AT PLAY



TRUE TO HIS WORDS

He said he'd love her with *wild abandon*
—meant it too.

By the time he was through,
her house looked like a zoo.

Then one morning, with no warning,
he was gone.

PET NAME CEMETERY

To Max, I was Ruby. Ruby is dead.
With her last wish, Ruby killed Max.

Still, he crawls out from his grave
and calls out all my buried names.

He cries, *Ruby, my Lou, sweet La!*
His dirty old ghost digs night and day

for his Ruby, his Lalou, Lulalay,
who loved him once...

...and loved him twice
then took her life to get away.

No more La Ruby in a blue room.
Give your letters to the ghost postman—

But Max, he'll never find your Loolaloo
or the lost Ruby who loved you.

A TOWN IN PENNSYLVANIA

Have you heard of Intercourse?
It's a town in Pennsylvania.

I learned about Intercourse
from a postcard. It had a picture
of a massive flowered quilt.
It said, *Wish you were here.*

This seems too intimate a place
to drop in unannounced—
so I call to say, *I'm coming.*
The voice replies, *It's a good time.*

I stop to ask a trucker
how to find Intercourse.
I think it's somewhere in between
Bird-in-Hand and Paradise.

I show him my postcard and map.
He takes me there. All the way there
and back and there and back again.

AFTER CHRISTMAS

(A Postscript to *The 12 Days of Christmas* Song)

In a one-room apartment,
My true love gave to me
Swarms of birds and people
And a whole pear tree!

The partridge alone
Would have been enough
Or a little stocking stuff,
But pregnant geese?
French hens and turtle doves
And more calling birds?
Another four noisy birds!

My sweetheart calls this love?
Swans are swimming in my tub!

And then there were those leaping men.
I don't care what they're lords of—
They stomped right on the turtle doves!

And don't even get me started
On the eight maids a-milking.

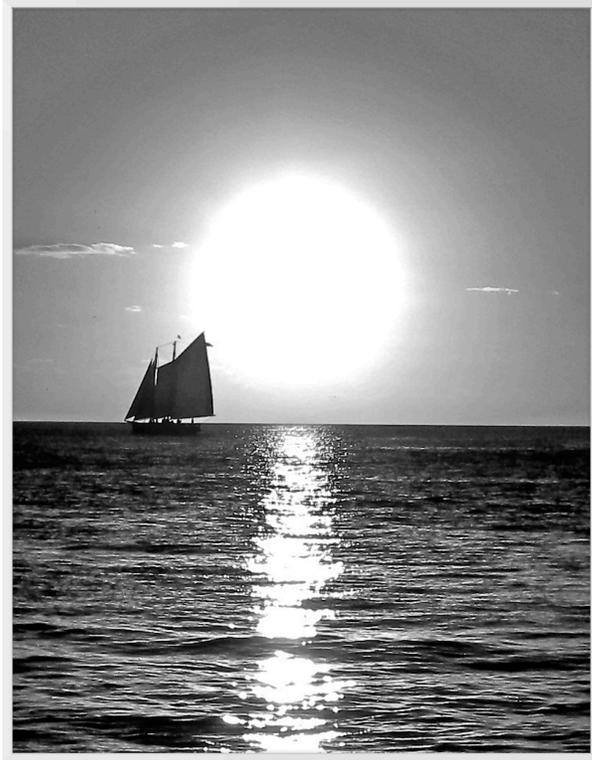
The twelve drummers drumming
And eleven pipers piping
Drove me mad at all hours!
Some people send flowers.

Worse, now they're crashed out
In heaps around the couch
On the milk-stained carpet
With the maids.

I'm standing in the only corner left,
Of energy and sleep bereft.
Everything's covered in crap.
This Christmas traumatized my cat!

Oh what I wouldn't give to be
On a long return line at Macy's
With an ugly sweater or hat
And my sanity intact.

LAST WORDS



LEARNING TO FLY

When the book crashed down,
out slipped a paper doll.

The weight of its pages
and wise words of the ages

had smoothed her worry lines
and crumpled heart.

The paper doll looked
at her once-secure book

now dropped like a seed in the garden,
autumn breezily leafing through its pages.

She'd learned so much from illuminating works
of poets, philosophers and literature.

She treasured each and every letter of the words
as if they were letters written just for her.

Looking now at this beloved fallen book,
she knew just what to do.

The paper doll boldly folded herself
into the shape of a paper airplane

and set herself free
on the breeze.

OLD HABITS LIVE ON

Evidence was found, they say,
on Gardner Island—

remnants of a woman,
flakes of rouge, a broken sky

in a shattered compact mirror
...and bones.

Is this where Earhart crashed?
They also found that Plexiglas.

Some questions still remain,
but all remains are gone.

We don't know, we're told,
What happened to the bones.

Yes, of course, that was Amelia.
She had a way of disappearing.

MEMORY

Feels like I'm forgetting
more and more.

I forget my phone, my keys,
the name to a face.

I forget
whether I've forgotten...

I think
we may have met.

I try to remember
what's been lost.
Did I see this movie yet?

I hold my breath
hoping not to forget
some urgent thing.

Relax, they say,
don't forget
to breathe.

Yes, I even forget to in- or ex-
hale.

One day I'll forget
and won't remember
in time.

That will be the cause
of my untimely
demise.

Here lies a woman.
(We forget her name... Well,
who is she to complain?)

In the end
she forgot again
to breathe.

Yes, it's true, they'll say (trying not to laugh),
she collapsed from a fatal lapse
of memory.

GHOST

In a blink, I was stripped
of my face, those bones,
my petty confusions.

No body, no mind
no eyes blind from faith
or disbelief.

No ears deaf to words
I would not, myself, speak.

No hair, no bellybutton,
no toes, no pain.

I move through the room,
a soft window breeze
cooling your hot cheek.

You cry for me more
than I imagined anyone could,
loved me beyond
all reason I could see.
Even now, you cleave
to the scent of my sweater.

Fool I was. I never learned
to feel worthy of love.

Seeing you with no limits
of focused eyes or tunnel vision...

Hearing you with no swirling cochlea
or clever brain to spin your intentions...

Stripped to my essence,
I see yours at last—
luminous and loving
beyond all measure.

You stare at the final estate
of my earthly heart —
a few piles of pages and poems
in which you own a small mention.

Amazed, I gaze at you
seeing us both for the first time
as you drink the ink from that spot
over and over with your whole being.

BEDSIDE BOOK POEM

(One Last Book Title Poem)



The beauty of the husband
A creative companion
Soulmates
Awakening to the sacred



THE LAST PRINTED PAGE

I think it said something
about Mercy and then
work in newspapers...
causes that matter...
dropped...
opportunity to leap...

Then something
about writing...
publishing... books...
...communicate better?

...remember...
...interest... read...
...distant... you...
...writing... spellings...

But these words
were hard to read
as they seeped
pulped and faded
tangled up in weeds
into the turning Earth.



THE END

In the end...
the whole mess of language,
misgiven and mistaken,
will never be sorted out.

Life is somewhere in between
what it is and how it seems.

Together we scramble
through the prickly
rambling brambles
of language,
buzzing thoughts,
tangled perceptions,
deep-rooted beliefs.

The whole experience
is really something
unless
it's really something else
(which may or may not be
the same thing).

Through it all,
we love, we laugh, we grow,
we learn what really matters,
and we find our way together
in the end.

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All photographs and original artwork throughout *The Beauty of Listening* (with the exception of the author's bio photograph) are by the author.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photo by Kate Gardiner Photography

Linda Eve Diamond is an author of poetry, educational, self-help and business books. Her Website is <http://LindaEveDiamond.com>

Praise for **THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING**

“Linda Eve Diamond’s poetry in *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* sweeps me off my feet — her funny (yet dead serious) musings on the fate of the word *amazing*, her ardent eavesdropping into the secret lives of paper dolls, her still, quiet verses that speak volumes. The book itself is as beautiful as the poems within.”

—FRED DUBOSE, Editorial Director, Reader’s Digest General Books (ret.)

“How I love *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING*! It was a delight to delve into each section. I felt like I was giving myself an extra treat each time I sat down to read a few poems. I love Linda’s humor, her delicious use of words and design. She truly listens with her heart and lets it come forth in words that inspire, amuse, cause one to wonder, sometimes puzzle, and always appreciate her skill.”

—KAY LINDAHL, CLP, Author of *THE SACRED ART OF LISTENING*

“No one will ever describe Linda Eve Diamond as a ‘diamond in the rough.’ Careful readers of her latest collection of poems will discover, Linda Eve is at her best. Like diamonds that are measured and valued by their **cut, carats, color,** and **clarity**, Linda Eve Diamond’s latest book, *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING*, is priceless. Her poetic **cut** provides brilliancy of thought and reflection to serve every reader. Like **carats** her every poem can be weighed and valued. *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* illustrates a profound range of **color** to enrich any and every reader. Last but not least, Linda Eve Diamond writes with flawless **clarity**. As a result, *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* is a treasure trove of 63 poems that will profit anyone wise enough to make the investment. For within and beyond the beauty of Linda Eve Diamond’s poems lies the opportunity to stretch your mind and wiggle your ears. Who could ask for more?”

—DR. LYMAN K. “MANNY” STEIL, Chairman & CEO, International Listening Leadership Institute & Communication Development, Inc.

“Listening is the glue that binds people together and builds, maintains and strengthens relationships. Linda’s *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* explains, in the graceful ways of poetry, many of the disparate facets of listening... from the changing meaning of words to the problem with interruption... from the self-focused ear to one’s inner listening for sounds of love. This compilation of extraordinary poems should be required reading for all who are human because it reminds us that we hear with our ears, but we listen with mind, heart and soul.”

—ALAN R. EHRLICH, President, International Listening Association and Founder/President, The Center for Listening Disorders Research

“A lovely volume of work by Linda Eve Diamond! Here you will meet people and places and learn about life. Here you will be the confidante, the best friend, the lucky one who makes the rounds with her through a philosophical and poetical analysis of life in general—and listening, in particular. This collection is remarkable in its breadth of subject matter, style and relevance to today’s world. *Just Passing Through* is an elegant tribute to the overall tone of the book: we are here, but are we *really*?”

—ANASTASIA CLARK, Broward County, Florida, Poet-in-Residence

“Linda Eve Diamond’s latest book of poetry, *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING*, offers a beauty all its own... to those who will listen. Carefully. The collection is a call for a more human world, a place where people recognize that attention must be paid. In our high-tech, Twitterized society, we are slipping away from the intimate contact that is so essential to being fully human. *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* invites us to discover that hidden humanity.”

—ROBERT SPENCER KNOTTS, author and founder of The Humanity Project

“Linda Eve Diamond has, if it is possible, bettered her first book of poetry *THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE* and in doing so bettered the human experience through her understanding of listening. This is more than a collection of poems; these verses are an immediate touchstone to the intuition disclosing how we know we are listening; and, more urgently, uncovers when we are not. I intend to spend a good deal of reverie around these insights.”

—JERRY CATT-OLIASON, adjunct/lecturer of listening courses and workshops, Communication Dept., Boise State University

“Be prepared for a marvelous journey, ranging from the whimsical to the deep. Enjoy the land of playfulness, then enter the land of the profound and come back again. Amelia Earhart is aptly metaphorized in this work. Like Amelia, Linda is adventurous, brave and daring. She explores in ways others don’t. She takes chances, experiments with different modes, hits edges of space. She soars like the paper doll that she folded into the form of an airplane to

explore heights and depths of all aspects of emotional life in her own unique, nuanced way. *THE BEAUTY OF LISTENING* is fun to read. Soar with her.”

—DR. EMILY KRESTOW, PhD, Psychoanalyst

“Listening and love are like twin sisters and this idea shines through the poems in this collection. It is amazing that—though times and styles have changed—this truth can be detected from so many different perspectives.”

—DR. MARGARETE IMHOF, Professor of Educational Psychology
and Past President of the International Listening Association