

Poetry Inspired By Photographs...

A Collaboration Between

Olympic Peaks Camera Club

and

Olympic Peninsula Authors

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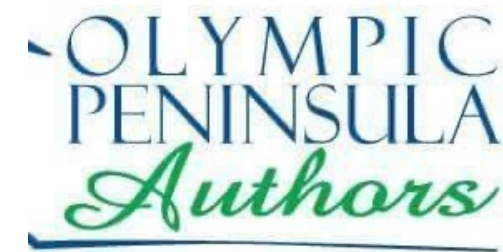
Studio Bob, November 2023



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“Expressions” by Susan White, Copyright 2023

Penny Candy

Inspired by the photo “Expressions” by Susan White

The tiptoe anticipation!
 The always glorious selection!
 The riotous colors!
 The sweet, sweet tastes!

At age 6,
 The weeklong wait for my
 Nickle allowance-
 Endless.

Daily I ask dad-
 Today?

Finally, the Friday
 Vibrating coin,
 Resides in my
 Eager palm.

I am out the door,
 Down the several blocks,
 To the variety store-
 Through the magic portal,
 Behold, the overwhelming
 Penny candy section!

Oh, the choices I must make.
 Red wax lips,
 Sweet and chewy
 Once my front teeth have
 Had enough fun
 Holding the fake lips
 Over my own.

Red or black rope licorice,
 Candy cigarettes,
 Joseph’s coat bubblegum balls,
 Candy corn kernels,
 Soft orange nougat peanuts,
 Individually wrapped squares of

Pink yum gum,

Suckers-balls with chocolate centers,
 And stiff sticks,
 Or flat, translucent lickers
 with soft coiled handles.
 Horrible, yucky horehound drops.
 Tangy lemon drops.
 Puckery red hots.
 Wafers, and all kinds of licorice.
 Bubblegum cigars,
 Endless wrapped hard candy.
 Green cellophane snuggled
 Chocolate mints.
 Silver foil chocolate tear drops.
 No end to choice!

Such difficult decisions.
 Taste, color, size,
 Two or more for 1 cent,
 Which will last longest,
 Which does my young
 Mouth crave the most?

A time gone by-
 Penny candy now
 More expensive.
 Allowances much increased.
 First graders running
 Alone many blocks from home-
 No longer safe.

I am so grateful for those
 Weekly, tasty lessons
 In major finance management!

©Jan Thatcher Adams



“Salt Creek Morning Light” by Kevin Talbot, Copyright 2023

Island Soul

Inspired by the photo “Salt Creek Morning Light” by Kevin Talbot

A proud sentinel standing tall and alone,
strong and forbidding.
I long to know you, but
your craggy shore, steep rockface and frigid waters warn me
to admire you from afar.
I sense your danger,
it keeps you safe from human intrusion.
The morning light illuminates your heart, your soul within.
You beckon and repel,
chill and warm,
I know your beauty
and your ruthlessness.
Both are breathtaking.
and heartbreaking.
I am resigned to absorb your magnificence from the distant shore.

© Terry Sager



"Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White, Copyright 2023

Building Time

Inspired by the photo "Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White

When I was a small explorer,
curious and alone,
I sought out the husk
of many an old barn.
I would find them
out on the quarter sections
where the unruly grass
grew like poverty
but smelled fresh after a rain.
My eyes would strain
in dark spaces.
The dusty places
held mystery and signs
of struggle for life
on the American plains
when farming was
more art than science.
These weathered planks
still held together by
little more than wishes
and soft spoken prayers
showed the scars
of winters breath
and summer winds.

Sometimes I could
almost hear the past,
in the songs of my kin,
on the wind trembling faint
but seeming clear
and sometimes the future
traced in peeling paint
like the long years.
That I would not feel
until I found my way there
where sagging beams
and rusty nails
are hard won treasures.

© Chris Kleinfelter



“Sol Duc River” by Phil Renault, Copyright 2023

Why?

Inspired by the photo “Sol Duc River” by Phil Renault

*“Time is but a stream I go a-fishing in.”
Henry David Thoreau*

There is joy in a river
where a man can stand
and cast a hopeful fly.
Some folks wonder why
when the markets
are full of fish
I would waste a wish
on something so wily
and unseen beneath the water?
Surely it's not to
fill my larder.

There are no great mounts
up on my wall.
But there are days when
it simply counts
to have been there at all.
To capture the moments
that pass along
a winding stream
and the hard won hours
is all I need
of the days that pass.

Where the eagles scream
above the rushing current
I know that
the ancient mountains
have sent the gift
of unspoiled water
carving a path
through the valley's soil.
It sustains a fisherman's
aging soul
before he sleeps
from his days of toil.

© Chris Kleinfelter



“Expressions” by Susan White, Copyright 2023

The First Time I lost You

Inspired by the photo “Expressions” by Susan White

You were almost three.
Shoppers laughed in every aisle.
As I chattered to you and picked
through a yarn barrel,
you poured out Lincoln Logs
from the can onto the floor.
I scrambled to get the logs
into the can and on the shelf
and you were gone. I charged
through the festive buyers
to a nonchalant cashier,
who didn't see you.
In my prairie skirt I felt ashamed
and battled to the door frantic.
Spinning on the sidewalk, I shouted your name.
The seaside town had changed from sunny,
a fierce wind blew with stinging salt spray
and waves smacked the bulkheads.
Running right proved worthless.
I turned to claw the air left
and saw you, ambling
into the store alone,
older somehow,
like our future
was dreamed.

© Teya Priest Johnston



"Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White, Copyright 2023

Riding Through the Plains

Inspired by the photo "Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White

Quiet passenger peers out,
Combs for companionship,
Sanguine hillside mowed and rolling,
It sighs, too warm for snow.

Sky aches with faint strips of cloud,
Skeletal barn hugs her memory,
She recalls its red beginnings,
The green of a golden field.

© Laura E. Garard



"Life In Death Valley" by Ed Hartman, Copyright 2023

Deluding Beauty

Inspired by the photo "Life in Death Valley" by Ed Hartman

Your curves seductive
so smooth—so glowing

defying the all-encompassing Dark

frozen waves
from water to desert

no footsteps on your skin
no sounds in the air

eternal black swallowing all colors

a few scrubs
promising life is still
possible—desirable

despite
violence raging
on either side
of your treasure chest

gentle moonlight
bathing your onyx glory

as well as shining light
on the horrors
not far away—

© Eelka Franziska Lampe



"Guggenheim Spirals" by Kevin Talbot, Copyright 2023

Contemplation on Guggenheim Spirals

Inspired by the photo "Guggenheim Spirals" by Kevin Talbot

I walked your spirals
more than once

You are the art
embracing all art

We are specks in time and space

grazing on inspirations
from past and present

Your crown channels the sun
or the light in her seeming absence

Six tongues are lapping
at your zenith

that helps us
letting go of language

and all the little lights
are sparkling yes!

© Eelka Franziska Lampe



"Salt Creek Morning Light" by Kevin Talbot, Copyright 2023

Ebb Tide at Salt Creek

Inspired by the photo "Salt Creek Morning Light" by Kevin Talbot

On the morning of the summer solstice
I await the lowest tide of the year
to boldly stride the rock-strewn beach
to visit this tiny island. It beckons me
from its ever-diminishing patch of gravelly soil
to acknowledge its salty quarantine from the shore.

I yearn to plant myself in the midst
of this stranded grove, place my hands
on the deep-seated roots of the mother tree
which has withstood so many storms.

I shudder at the strength of her wisdom
flowing into the young trees around her
bow my head in admiration
inside the silence of their tight lonely circle.

I too have endured the howl of winter winds
which strained to bend and shape me.
They have taught me to tap
into the same inner core of stillness,
accept it all, as part of a greater plan
to endlessly groom and cultivate me.

© Eva McGinnis



“Guggenheim Spirals” by Kevin Talbot, Copyright 2023

An Afternoon at The Guggenheim with Frank

Inspired by the photo “Guggenheim Spirals” by Kevin Talbot

“A building is alive, like a man, and its spirit is the spirit of its maker.” Frank Lloyd Wright

After walking through New York’s angular streets in the August heat, I step into the coolness of the expansive rotunda of The Guggenheim Museum. Inside the main gallery the polished terrazzo floors are upstaged by the six-story spiral interior. It resembles a nautilus, with its coil of sloping interconnected ramps and slanted walls. The whole structure could be a sculpted mountain with an ascending pathway to its pinnacle of light.

The skylight dome and embedded arches transmit a subtle silent pulse with the promise of the blue-sky freedom. Its light lures me in, as surely as a shining geometric web might dazzle a stunned creature into its vortex. As I crane my neck to gaze at the dome I’m in awe and yet am strangely disoriented by this cathedral-sized shrine to art and design. Full of contemporary art treasures of Degas, Van Gogh, Picasso and many other Impressionists, this unique architecture feels animated with the echoes of many people admiring the art or looking over the side on each level.

I wonder if the spiral helix reveals its own promising vision of blissful eternity, in the way it uplifts the eyes out of the limitations of the ordinary.

Frank probably planned it that way with his love of the organic shapes and spherical designs.

I don’t realize that I’m supposed to take the elevator to the top and proceed down the spiral. Instead I venture upward inside a vertical labyrinth of intimate art galleries divided into seventy sections and bays. Paintings mounted on horizontal bars protrude from rounded walls. Larger paintings seem to push themselves away from the slants and curve towards me. No corners or off-ramps either.

Halfway up the helical ramp I feel the subtle pull of the 97-degree tilt and circularity of the walls. They are just enough to induce a lopsided vertigo. I attempt to straighten up to find the right angle for my hips to shake the feeling of being unbalanced. But it persists and the low ceilings in the alcoves add to my light-headed disorientation. In addition, I am increasingly overwhelmed and feeling a bit emotional, standing in front of so many beautiful paintings, sculptures and their historical significance. (Later I would learn that so many people have experienced this kind of feeling in the presence of great art, that it is now known as a syndrome – the Stendhal Syndrome.)

Nevertheless, I am determined to get my money's worth and get to the top, with a view from the parapet, where I hope that floor is level and my awkwardness will cease. After a few hours, I reach the upper level. Now I'm even more fascinated with the arched glass firmament with a portal in its center. I feel like I could float right into it. When I look at the downward-spiraled bowl I experience an optical illusion of being inside an extra dimensional space.

I appreciate Frank's vision and am dismayed to read about all the resistance he received for this design. Also ironic is Samuel Guggenheim's death on the Titanic's maiden voyage, long before this UNESCO site was conceived or built.

I am tired enough now to quickly descend the ramp, grateful to reach solid ground. I am deeply moved by absorbing the essence of so much art in this fantastic space. Though Frank never walked it himself, this might be what he had intended for this experience, inspiration for future artists. His daring and courage certainly enriched my life.

© Eva McGinnis



"Palouse Lone Tree" by Susan White, Copyright 2023

Survival

Inspired by the photo "Palouse Lone Tree" by Susan White

Alone in a field
Just me, a tree
How did I get here
Did only I survive
The passage of time
When forests were cleared
All except me
To exist without the company
Of my family
Other trees
Will humans on earth
Be like me
Surviving
But asking
How did we get here
Did we survive
Are we really alive

© Roger Briggs



"Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White, Copyright 2023

Prairie Barn

Inspired by the photo "Palouse Barn Sunrise" by Susan White

I stand alone
By a prairie Barn
A breeze carries
My thoughts away
To another time
Where memories unfold
Their stories untold
A farm
A family
Covered by dust
And unknown

© Roger Briggs



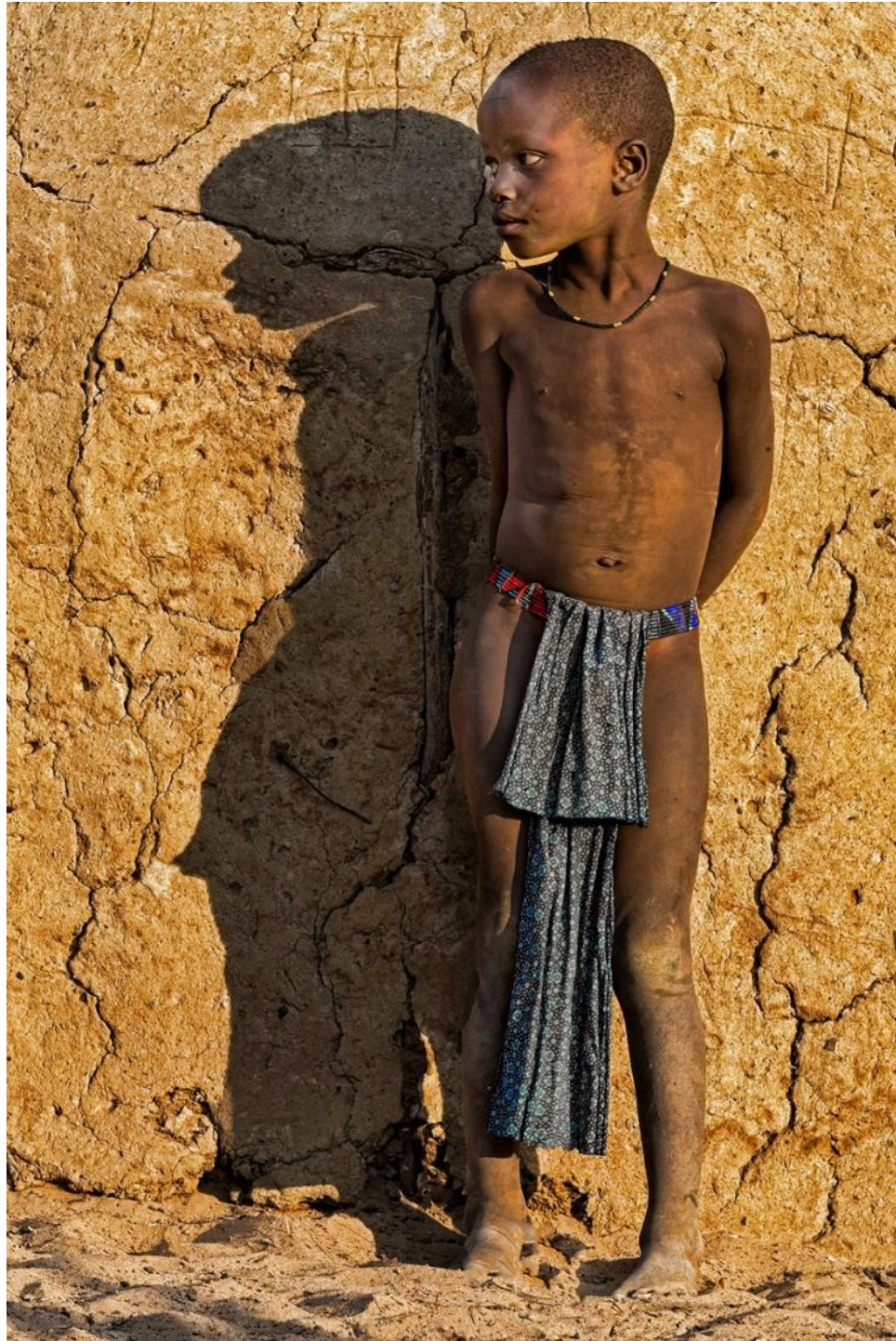
"Port Angeles Moonrise" by Kevin Talbot, Copyright 2023

Craters of the Moon

Inspired by the photo "Port Angeles Moonrise" by Kevin Talbot

Cast their light
Revealing ridgetops and mountains
In shadows
Against a dark night
Like a scene in someone's dream
Asimov or Sagan or me
One colorless frame
Frozen in time
Unyielding
Hiding
What we can not see
Yet we know
What's yet to come
Faith in the orbits of planets
The motion of galaxies
Gravitational pull
Saying
Good-night Moon
Until we meet again
Hello Sun
I'm here to stay
Today

© Roger Briggs



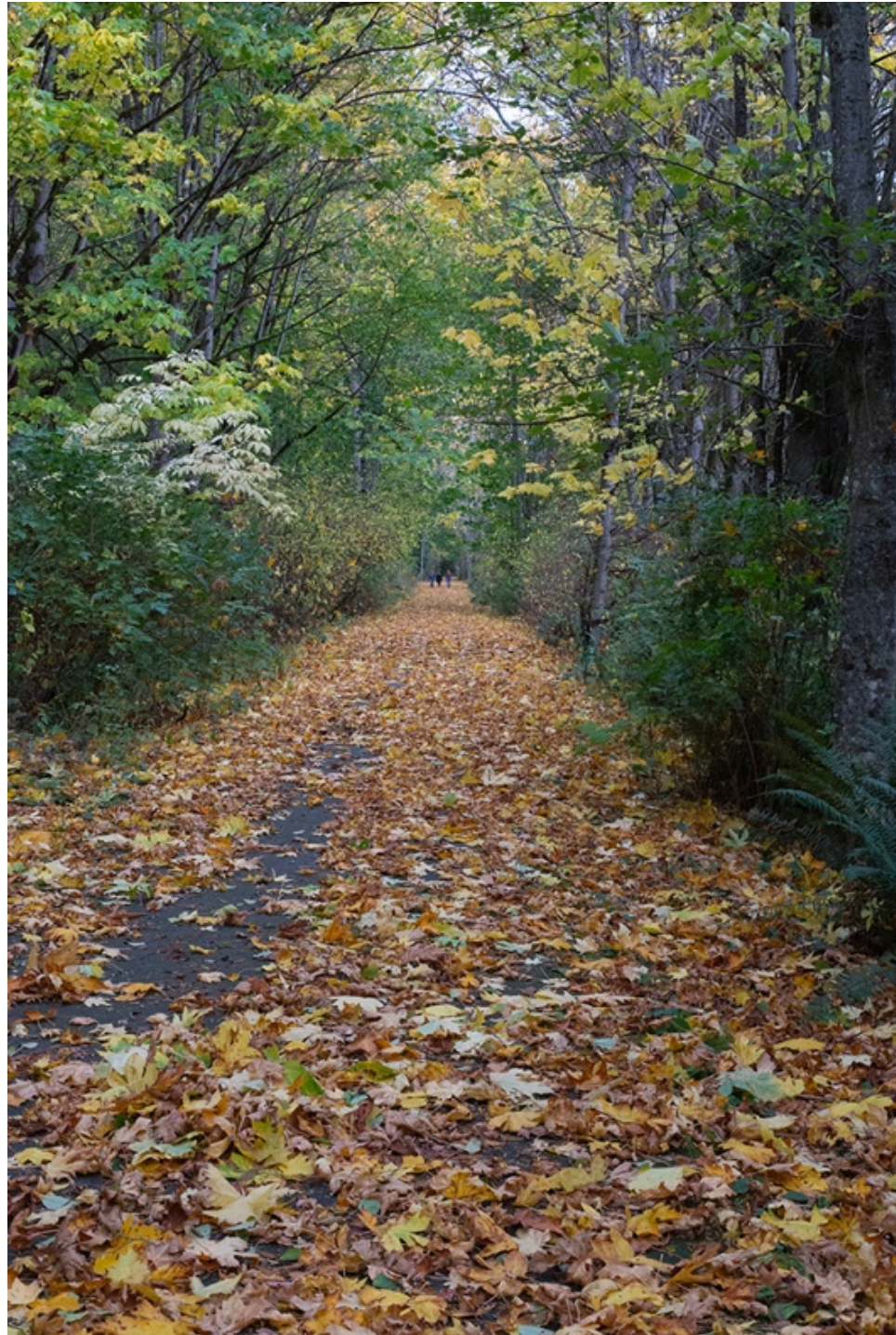
"Me and My Shadow" by Bruce Fryxell, Copyright 2023

African Boy

Inspired by the photo "Me and My Shadow" by Bruce Fryxell

Cast your shadow
For tomorrow
Your days of struggle
To be free
Without hunger
To love and be loved
Without war
To know the comfort
Of a peaceful night
A mother's smile
When you wake
A father's lessons
For you to learn
To become a man
You can

© Roger Briggs



"Follow The Yellow..." by Phil Renault, Copyright 2023

Leaves

Inspired by the photo "Follow The Yellow..." by Phil Renault

Your journey
Does not end
With a fallen leaf
A path
Extends for you to see
Beyond
Your hopes
Dreams to be
Beyond the fallen leaves

© Roger Briggs



"Gotcha" by Bruce Fryxell, Copyright 2023

Snatched

Inspired by the photo "Gotcha" by Bruce Fryxell

All morning I sat
Patient
Rod in hand
Wistful
Hunger rumbled loud
I persisted
One fish would feed all of us

Then a tug on the line
The prey jumped
A pelican on the horizon
Flew in
Snatching the fish
My line still in in its mouth

© Heidi Hansen



“Alaska Pond” by Lewis Bennett, Copyright 2023

Away

Inspired by the photo “Alaska Pond” by Lewis Bennett

Beside the still lake
Sunlight glints off the trees
Mist rising with daybreak
Not a motion or sound
The noise of the city
The stress of my life
Dissipating in this place.

© Heidi Hansen



"Olympic Layers" by Suzanne Anaya, Copyright 2023

Confluence

Inspired by the photo "Olympic Layers" by Suzanne Anaya

When mountains rise
Their foothills collide
Forming a confluence of valleys
Where mists gather daily

My eye scans the horizon
Getting lost in this vision
Knowing the distance in miles
Packing supplies with mules

My eyes seek out the bluest blue
In this far distant view

© Heidi Hansen



"Morning Rays" by Ed Hartman, Copyright 2023

SOMEWHERE

Inspired by the photo "Morning Rays" by Ed Hartman

Somewhere someone
is calling someone a libtard

and someone is beating a child or spouse
while upstairs the teen is loading his gun.

Somewhere someone
is withholding vaccines from babies
or in the name of some religion
eviscerating someone else.

But for now,
in this magical instant
in this glorious place
the sun rises on the exquisite beauty
man and nature can produce
together in quiet peace.

For now in this instant in this place
we can all breathe deep to
rejoice and mourn.

© Linda B. Myers



“Abstract Sunset” by Suzanne Anaya, Copyright 2023

TWILIGHT SEA

Inspired by the photo “Abstract Sunset” by Suzanne Anaya

It’s dark at the beach. I’m alone now
with time to recharge in leisure
when brats won’t catcall, splash me and run,
or desperate men take my measure

The hard life shows in my face and
bunioned feet, consoled by fine sand.
Holding my work shoes I doggedly
limp barefoot out to the strand

where only inquisitive waves ask
anything of me. I loosen my hair
from its band, no ears near to hear
me breathe deep of the salty air.

I steady against a driftwood log,
lift my arms, pull off my dress
revealing hips thickened with life,
stretched tattoo, time-lowered breasts.

Oh! how crushes have crushed me.
I accept I’m not worth a fuss
having learned it hurts to want too much.
I live without a thimble of trust.

Forward now, nude to the twilight sea.
As I slip under, hard years slip away
until I am lithe and young with hope.
Swells wash me clean of the arduous day.

I backstroke when the gentle west wind
blows in. Zephyrus presses me in air
promising to cherish forever, the way
lovers in romcoms and singsongs swear.

In time I grow cold and come to land,
Shimmy on dress, tuck up my mane,
collect shoes that will hurt again
tomorrow. But tonight, I’m not the same.

© Linda B. Myers



"A Mother's Love" by Bruce Fryxell, Copyright 2023

A Mother Growls

Inspired by the photo "A Mother's Love" by Bruce Fryxell

Damn she growls.
This kitten is trying to kill me.
She won't rest, nap or sleep.
This is the last one, I swear.
I will never again bear
never another never.

Will she look after me while I rest, nap or sleep?
No.
She is going to play with my tail, nip my paws
pull each whisker in my cheek.
She growls and nips the kitten's nose.
I hope she's hauled off . . . to the Brooklyn Zoo.

© Judy Duncan



"End Of Summer Mushrooms" by Phil Renault, Copyright 2023

Take This for Aches and Age

Inspired by the photo "End of Summer Mushrooms" by Phil Renault

I didn't know him very well, just his first name.
We met in Mike's outdoor Tai Chi class.
Both beginners, he much younger than I.
He caught on a lot faster than I
to white stork spreads wings, & high pat on horse.

And he could barely see out of the glasses he wore
thick lenses, with a wide black band
holding his glasses in place.
I admired his youth, agility, balance.
His wife watched me admire him as she sat
on the grass with their two sons.

He said he had an ingredient which could make
me much happier as I aged and ached
and he did and it worked.

A compound ground of dried mushrooms.
Mushrooms she grew in their basement.
A gray dry powder in a slim white envelope
that cured my aches and age.

© Judy Duncan



“Seattle Morning Walk” by Susan White, Copyright 2023

The First Thing

Inspired by the photo “Seattle Morning Walk” by Susan White

What is the first thing you see in the morning
hear in the morning, taste, smell?
If it isn't love, then you need to go back to bed.
Yes. Plant your head on that warm lumpy pillow
start your day again.

Be alert to the eyes of a father watching his son walk to school
to the child feeding a parakeet from the palm of her hand
to the taxi drivers smile as he settles a white Pomeranian in the old lady's lap.

Through the pane of your window
the fragile bulb floating in air
there is much to see and feel
let this be the beginning — the best day of your life.

© Judy Duncan