

Travels, Observations, and Prayers

Poems

by

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Chapter 5

LOVE AND OTHER MUSHY STUFF

## I Wish

(written contemplating so many people I know who are so beautiful, but they don't see it.  
2/27/14)

I wish that you could look  
through my eyes just once,  
and then you would see  
the beautiful soul that I know is there  
every time I look at you.

And then all of your doubts  
all of your fears  
and all of your insecurities  
would vanish forever.

Dear Lovely Lady

(Written one long lonely winter's night at home wishing I had someone to curl up with.  
2/26/14)

Dear lovely lady,

I wonder

what are the secrets behind those eyes?  
what interests do you have,  
what makes you laugh,  
and what makes your heart beat fast.

And I wonder

what you smell like when you're close to me,  
what you taste like when I kiss you,  
what you feel like when I touch you,  
and how your body feels in my arms.

Wednesday Morning, February 12, 2014

I woke up this morning  
and found that  
sometime during the night  
Love had driven a spike  
through my heart  
and deep into the bed.

And it was poisoned  
with memories of the past  
and imaginations of the future.

And the only way to free myself  
from Love's deadly impalement  
was to rise and face the dawn  
of another day

alone.

## Love Makes Idiots of Us All

(The first line came from a Facebook conversation with a friend. 2/8/14)

Love makes idiots of us all,  
and though we slip, and trip, and fall,  
still we hear the Siren's call...  
and Love makes idiots of us all.

## Morning Love

(A sleepy morning, and reading the love poems of Pablo Neruda for my morning poem post. I guess it's a good thing these love poems are coming up. 2/7/14)

Sometimes it takes a while,  
to get the Morning Love out of my eyes,  
and rise from you  
to start my day  
alone against the world.

Dear Beautiful Lady

(Written late one night contemplating the beauty of the ladies I have seen. 2/3/14)

Dear beautiful lady,  
tell me please  
what I have to do

to watch the morning sun  
with envy as it reaches out  
to caress your gentle face

to melt into your eyes  
while a cooling cup of coffee  
waits in my trembling hands

to lose myself completely  
in the melody of your voice as  
you speak your words of love.

Tell me, beautiful lady,  
what must I do  
what must I say

for you to share your grace  
with me.

## Shelter of My Heart

(Written during the process of my divorce. 2/1/14)

And so I'm caught within a prison, that I myself have made,  
fallen neatly into traps that I alone have laid.

The walls I thought would shelter me, became foreboding cells,  
and I remain a prisoner within this customized hell.

The door is right in front of me, open and unbarred,  
but I remember a heart outside, broken, torn and scarred.

The window shows a lovely view of rolling hills and lea,  
but I well know the truth it holds, and there's no place for me.

For Shadow hides within the fields, amongst the summer grain  
and springs upon the unsuspect with misery, woe and pain.

It rends and claws the Innocent, and shatters sacred Trust  
and leaves the Faithful bleeding out, and trampled in the dust.

And so this is my shelter, my own security  
its silence and its loneliness a comfort unto me.

It holds me in its darkness, away from tempting light  
and promises to keep me safe, and free from Lover's Plight.

Here I remain forever more, a dark and lonely soul  
yet here my heart remains with me, safe, secure, and whole.



## Cleo and Curdy

(One cat was mine, the other invaded my home. I was encouraged by my Facebook friends to write a poem about them. After some testing and trials, this is the final limerick. 1/11/14)

Cleo and Curdy  
were both kind of dirty  
as dirty as kitties could be  
I gave them a bath,  
now I can't do the math  
'cause I'm missing a finger or three!

## Renew the Man

(Written one rainy morning after the bedroom ceiling caved in from a water leak, and several counties in southern West Virginia was suffering from a chemical spill and had undrinkable water. I really don't know what all that has to do with a love poem. 1/11/14)

Tonight let me wash in the waters of your love,  
Let me bathe in the liquid of your eyes  
Let me feel the fluid caress of your touch  
and know the cleansing power of your sigh.

For my soul has been soaked by the murky sludge of living,  
drenched by waves of struggle and desperation,  
splashed by others treading the stagnant waters of life,  
trying to stay afloat for one more day.

So take me in your sheltering arms,  
wipe away the filth and grime,  
and uncover the Man, the very best of Me,  
hidden under the waste of the world.

Let Me (9/27/13)

Dearest young lady,

Let me look at you,  
reach out to you  
touch you  
caress you  
grasp you  
squeeze you  
caress you  
hold you

with my eyes  
with my hands  
with my lips  
with my body.

Just for a minute  
just for an hour  
just for  
the rest of  
my life.

At The Library

(written at the Bridgeport Public Library 8/00)

Leaking air  
from tired pursed lips  
ineffective  
in a library full of children

For My Mother On Her Passing

(written 4/27/06 8:05 A.M. One of the most beautiful mornings I have ever seen.)

A beautiful spring morning  
The Lady of the house  
has drifted off to sleep.

## A Question...

(I was thinking of those wise old grandmothers and elder ladies who seem to have a particular hold on wisdom. If I could speak openly to one of them, what would I say?)

Hello, dear Grand-Mother.  
I need to ask you a question...

You have seen so much pain  
in your own exalted life,  
throughout your many cherished years.

There have been  
Tornadoes  
Hurricanes,  
and Floods.  
The worst of fire, wind and rain.

You have seen the entire world at War.  
Holocausts  
and Nuclear Bombs  
Homicide and Genocide  
on an unspeakable scale

Assassinations, Riots,  
and Protests in the streets.

Famines, Plagues,  
and Diseases  
of the Mind and Body and Soul.

You have been witness to  
Man's Inhumanity to Man,  
and Nature's fury unleashed.

So I ask you, aged Grand-mother  
full of Love and Wisdom and Strength--

Is there any hope?

Answer:

My child, come a little closer  
and listen to what I have to say.

If you have heard a baby's cry of joy,  
and saw a smile on that little one's face  
for no other reason except a loved one is near,

If you have heard the sparrow's song  
and saw them dance with joy,  
playing on the wind simply because they can,

If you have felt the sun's gentle warmth  
bright and shining on a warm summer's day  
or saw the moon cast its light on fresh fallen snow,

If you have taken the time to play a game  
with a puppy, kitten or child  
and felt the energy of their new life  
brighten your own tired soul,

Then you know, young one  
the secret I have found-  
that keeps me going in dark and troubled times  
and gives me hope to spare.

Shower-time (home, 4/5/08)

(My cat gets upset whenever I take a shower, especially if I try to sing. She thinks I'm in trouble.)

Kitty wishes she had the power  
to keep her human from taking a shower  
It bothers her that he gets all wet  
and she hasn't had the urge to,  
yet.



## You Are

(written for my wife on our anniversary. It actually took several years for my feelings to ferment into this poem, but it's real.)

My Life  
My Love  
My Hope  
My Strength  
My Joy  
My Peace  
And Everlasting Bliss

As you touch the depths  
within my soul  
with a simple single kiss

My bright blue sky  
My warm summer rain  
My crystal clear cool water  
that takes away my pain

My first snowflake of winter  
and flower blooms in spring  
Just one soft word or sideways glance  
and my heart begins to sing

My songbird in the early morn  
and the bright full moon at night  
The warm days sun upon my face  
and the evening's first starlight

My comfort in a world of pain  
My shelter from the strife  
And I am honored above all men  
to know you as my wife.

## A Wedding Poem

(I sat down and wrote this for Howard and Helen, a couple who dated steady for many years before tying the knot. They both acknowledged that this is exactly how they felt.)

What need I of promises,  
or the vows I take this day?  
They're surely meant for others,  
for me they hold no sway.

I need no fancy rituals  
no gleaming bands of gold  
no minister to make me swear  
that I must have and hold

From this day forward forever more  
til death do e're we part  
that I must in sickness and in health  
give to you my heart.

Nay, this hour is meant for others,  
and not for you and I  
and if this sounds most puzzling,  
let me tell you why.

My love for you is boundless  
from here I see no end  
yet if it is not perfect  
no wedding vow can mend.

If I've ne're looked into your eyes  
and seen the love-light shine  
how can I with simple words  
dare to call you mine?

If I've ne're touched your hand  
and my soul not leapt to sing  
how can I give my heart to you  
with a simple golden ring?

And if I've never kissed your lips  
and wiped away your tears  
how can these vows to have and hold  
last us through the years?

So what's the purpose of this day

filled with promises and glee?  
To proclaim a love already ours  
it has no use for me.

But what of others that we know,  
our families and the rest  
in front of whom we've sworn our love,  
could they think we jest?

Nay, I'll shout it from the rooftops  
throughout the entire world  
let the trumpets give a blast  
and flags parade unfurled!

I'll tell our friends and loved ones  
and every one I see  
to come and share the joy I know  
for you share your love with me!

So take my hand and stand with me  
in front of God above  
and with our friends and family  
let's celebrate our love!

## Injustice

(If the parents say "No", just ask Grandma.)

A grave injustice  
committed by a ruling power  
appealed to an even higher court--  
Grandma.

## Searching

(Written in a bookstore coffee shop,  
sitting alone, watching the people walk by)

(This poem won an Award of Excellence from the  
Fairmont State University publication "Whetstone" Issue 24)

Eyes scanning the myriad faces  
hoping to make contact  
just for an instant  
with another soul  
kind and lonely  
perhaps looking too,  
for someone like me  
to share a coffee and  
some quiet curious conversation  
alone in the passing crowd.

Someone to help me stop the world  
so I don't have to do it  
all by myself.

## I'd Like To Sleep Just Like A Cat

(Written one sleepless night, with a cat curled up  
sound asleep at the foot of my bed. I was so jealous.)

I'd like to sleep just like a cat  
it wouldn't matter just where it's at  
a sunny spot, a nice soft mat  
perhaps where someone else has sat.

I'd find a pillow, full and fat  
and give it a squeeze and then a pat.  
I'd curl up tight and my eyes would bat.  
Just once or twice--and that would be that.

You

(Audio taped while driving through a snowstorm on Rt. 50. I didn't have anyone special in mind when I wrote this, but it certainly sounds like I did.)

I follow a bright and burning light  
deep within your soul.

I know it's there--

I see it when I need it most.  
I grasp it with tired clutching hands  
I hold it close...  
And you are there.

Your eyes reach out to mine  
They meet  
Touch  
Dance

Within the dance is healing  
That brings me out of my lonely depths  
and soothes my troubled heart.

It gives me cause once more  
to laugh  
Sing  
Shout

and proclaim to the world  
that I too, am loved.

## The Dishwasher

(I remember the little ditties in Reader's Digest that always made me laugh. This is close to that style.)

There's a way to load the dishwasher  
That my wife doesn't follow at all.  
When she tosses things in with her casual flair,  
I raise my voice and begin to bawl,

"Dishes and bowls don't go together!"  
I strive to fully explain  
"They rattle around and crash about  
it sounds like they're in pain!"

Each dish and bowl and cup and plate  
likes its very own special place,  
ordered and neat and free from harm...."  
Then she rolls her eyes and makes that face.

She says I'm being silly  
and why I just can't see  
it doesn't matter how they go  
and that makes no sense to me.

And so we'll argue on and on  
long after our supper is done  
'cause neither side is giving in  
yet neither side has won.

The debate lasts well into the night  
beneath the Man in the Moon,  
and we'll never stop to wonder why  
the dish ran away with the spoon.