

*from Poems of California*

### ***The Emerald Desert***

Curving concrete paths carve fervent green lawns  
and green umbrellas sprout from tabletops scattered poolside  
and spiky, green palm fronds reflect on placid, pale green water,  
rippling in the gentle breeze atop shaggy, giraffe-like trunks.  
Everything verdant: hedge upon curving hedge,  
some sprinkled with blossoms orange, or pink, or bougainvillea red.  
Now, into this green world come the people,  
gray as the concrete and stiff-limbed and wrinkled  
and, for lack of a better idea, laughing  
into the face of the unknown.

-- March 20, 2014

### ***Golf Lesson***

The teacher's cheerful voice etches  
the blank slate of chill morning air  
and scribbles  
across the monotonous  
cooing of the mourning dove.  
    Soon,  
women of the putting lesson  
pop  
small, white, dimpled balls rolling gently  
over the green grass, blinking  
among sunshine-stretched shadows  
slanting out long from their feet.  
    Then, sprinklers sputter suddenly  
into silver rooster tails  
that "choo-choo-kachoo"  
over the driving range beyond,  
and a passing golf cart's rumble  
mindlessly  
smudges the teacher's words  
so she smiles and waits  
patiently.

### ***Deep in the Blue Sky***

Deep in the blue, February sky,  
almost as in a phosphorescent sea,  
a thousand feet, it seemed, above Palm Desert,  
we saw them flocking,  
swarming,  
a spreading flickering-black-and-white curtain  
sliding east.

What? Binoculars!

Closer, then, we saw them:  
black-tipped, white wings,  
orange legs and bills,  
an army of pelicans soaring  
broad as a sunset  
as if to an inspired symphony.

So, we had to wonder again, didn't we, about those stubby,  
child-like pelicans  
we saw hanging out in the dust  
like hobos for a handout  
beside the red and yellow stalls above the beach  
at Puerto Vallarta.

*from Poems of Puget Sound*

*AEOLUS Brisco*

After the morning rain that swamped  
our gutters into gargling fools,  
the sky broke open wide and blue  
and laughed a roaring wind  
as though to say it all had been a joke,  
for look what you've got now:  
a chuckling of pine cones skipping,  
dancing crazily  
out of laughter's awesome roar.

5/15/13

### ***Where Sea Meets Shore***

Why would one walk a sandy beach  
where waves wash wanly on the shore  
and, graceful, sway just out of reach  
and, languid, lisp, "Forever more?"

Why would one castles carve for hours  
only to watch invading tide  
o'er run the moats and topple towers  
and melt all back to sand seaside?

Why would one if he had a choice  
instead not trod a rocky shore  
where jagged waves in giant voice  
come clattering, then, back for more,

come plunging in and shattering  
themselves to foam and stinging spray?  
For liquid does the battering  
'til solid rock does back away.

And, where upon a sandy beach  
does one find cavities of pools  
where tiny creatures within reach  
teach big and little kids some rules?

There's magic here, where sea meets shore.  
There's strife and love, there's less, there's more.

--8/08/12