

## Five Poems

### Maggie's Soliloquy – A Prose Poem

I see it now! I understand! We are the perfect triumvirate: the three of us in this triune space. The perfect trilogy, our three stories -- our three *truths* -- in the midst of these triune truths. *We* are a trinity, the three of us. This place is wholly a trinity of the most awesome truths in the world. I am whole, now. I am complete, for I have found that ecstasy that surpasses all understanding.

I stand here at the interface of Land and Sea and Sky. The tastes! Oh! The taste of the land! The bits of wood and shell and crab back. The clumps of seaweed with those interesting new tastes of fish and snail and salt. The sand itself: the gritty, salty, crunchy, mouth-coating, coat-clumping, toe-crunching, tail-wagging sand!

And the wash of the Sea: the ultimate bath that splashes back; that pulls the very land from beneath my paws; that rushes up the sand faster than I can run; that will roll me and tumble me in its cold, salty, wet, loving, exuberant embrace.

And, oh! the smell in the air; the Air that reaches to the fullness of the Sky; the vast, blue, bright fullness of Heaven itself. The Wind that runs across the sand, blowing and lifting and tumbling its grains and its grasses and its smells! That moving air, that wind, that fragrance that is as vast as the ocean and as bounding and as endless.

Oh, those smells! Of the birds in the sky; of the sea lions on the rock; of the dead things! crabs and snails and seaweed and jelly fish! And fish! Fish! Fish! Fish! Oh! The smells that permeate the air! The smells of people and dogs; of wet clothes and sandy shoes; of hands and gloves and sweatshirts and soaked, sodden, wave-slapped blue jeans; of sand and sea and my own wet, salty, sandy, odiferous coat!

I see it now! I understand! For I am here, and my people are here, and we are one with the sand and the sea and the sky; three beings, but one spirit; a perfect trinity in this perfect triune space. This is truly the essence of everything, the spirit of life and love and truth. For I am whole, and I am one with all of Creation, filled with the ultimate love and truth and light; for I am a dog on the beach and I am in heaven!

## Alone

One cannot be alone  
If a cat is present.  
Yet if our cat finds herself alone  
She will call for us  
And bring some trinket or gift:  
A notepad,  
A linen napkin from the table  
The letter we left beside the door

Perhaps it is the instinct to hunt  
To strike out alone  
In search of prey,  
Or just the sport of tracking down something  
Or someone.  
What instinct drives a cat  
Or a human predator  
To toy with the prey  
To underline what aloneness can mean  
In a dangerous situation

Were you alone  
When someone you knew,  
Not very well,  
Showed up  
Demanding something of you  
That you preferred to keep close?  
Were you prey  
When you heard those quickening steps  
Behind you on the dark sidewalk?

Or did you turn,  
Quickly,  
Like a cat,  
Make yourself look larger  
Than life  
And disarm the hunter  
with an innocent question,  
“Did you happen to see a dropped letter?  
I left it by the door.”

I think I'd like to be a cloud today

I think I'd like to be a cloud today.  
You think I don't hear what you say about me,  
Lying in your hilltop meadow  
or sailing across your ocean,  
watching me and my kind float by.

"Look, it's an elephant!" you say.  
"No, it's a snail."  
Not that I'm truly offended --  
After all, how can you know,  
trapped as you are,  
there on the ground or on the sea,  
that there are other sentient beings  
nearby,  
in the sky?

That even as you watch us,  
we are watching you.  
That even as you judge us,  
we are judging you,  
for your wars,  
for your inhumanity,  
for your smallness.

Let us, just for once,  
cease to call each other names.  
Let us just allow each other  
to live to our own full potential.  
Just for today: You  
be as fully human as you can be.  
Just for today, let me be a cloud  
and nothing more.

## What Dog Was This?

I'd like to know what happened to that dog  
who left his prints on Alameda's walk  
where now health-conscious people come to jog  
and at the fine historic homes to gawk.  
Had he a master foll'wing at his will  
to wipe fresh concrete from his furry paws?  
That he had licked and fallen gravely ill  
instead is the result that gives me pause.  
I find it is ironic that I'd care  
(now that a hundred years have come and passed)  
about some spaniel's health in pausing there  
whose mortal life his paw prints long outlast.  
For daily do I curse the ones who gawk  
And leave their pooches' gifts upon my walk!

## Father and Child

On Northeast 33rd, a father  
Boosts his child into the air  
To soar with outstretched arms, an eagle  
On a breeze so mild and fair  
Or, next to glide on wings of silver  
Small brave pilot with no care  
He leaves below his earthbound garden  
Sees his dad still standing there.

Still there with upstretched arms, his father,  
Stands through childhood's seasons long  
Within the naked skin of winter  
Never more to join spring's throng  
And though he makes a home to sparrows  
Pauses for the thrushes' song  
No loving words can he now whisper  
To the child with wings so strong.

And I the passing stranger finds that  
My imagination's free  
To watch a childhood's flight of pleasure  
Impish grin and bending knee  
I see his father's arms thrust skyward  
Bearded chin, apparent glee  
Eyes shadowed by a Pirates' ballcap  
Untucked birch-white shirt flaps free.

This pair still frolics where a birch tree  
Once wept leaves on 33rd  
Where it hosted thrush and sparrow  
And a father's whispers heard  
Until an axe turned trunk to statue  
Tree to father, boy to bird  
To pique a wayward stranger's fancy  
To turn nature into words.