

5 Poems for Sixfold (Oct 2022)

October Sun

A tangled prairie
of tall grasses,
already spent and leaning,
patiently brushed
by cooler winds
blowing tasseled seed
into the cusp
between seasons.

Fall's dwindling crickets
in sparse serenade,
wild flowers persisting
at the pleasure of bees.

Once lush leaves
succumbing with grace,
in variegated pirouettes,
placing their lives
on the earth.

A last dance
to the rhythm of gravity
around the sun.

Drinks on You?

There are so many
reasons why not.
A child's heart,
the saw tooth grain
of centuries,
covered wagons loaded.

The reckless rabble of boys
talking 'round and 'round,
of solemn secrets
only for men.
While the women unearth
their buried solace,
tenderly talking
'round and 'round
stirring stew without a pot,
sowing fields
of commiseration
by hand.

While you may play hard
for money,
or stage cockfights
and bullfights,
tracing blood in the sand,
We may always stir,
without a pot,
'round and 'round,
trying to decode you
on sheets of paper
and cloth.

Pandemic: Year One, Not Together

Our hearts reached out across space
through a digital cyber swamp
of mayhem and jaggy edges.
Uncertain fallout stirred the flux
into a virtual cornucopia
both nourishing and bitter.

The careful spilling and spooning
of love in two places,
joined the launch and ricochet
of crouched fears, all tumbling
into our invisible waves
of chatter and resilience.

Outside facing hectic and new
or inside and sheltered
pinching our arms,
the days ticked slowly like old clocks
tarnished and faulty.

Daily updates from friends and foe,
warm breath amid shards of misery,
the crazy and far gone,
the piercing and worrisome.

In a few blinks we saw
carefully constructed fortunes
fall apart, unfolding
like paper garments,
creased and thin
almost transparent.

We clutched at every fact,

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rivers of broken promise
ebbing and flowing around us.
We held our breath.

Did our cluttered reserve
of wishful charms
drip and drop into the digital sea
and absorb the darkness?

Did rain fall and drench
from our virtual cloud
to wash the mouths of some
and clear the way for others?

I was more than ready
for legions of wizards
in white coats
to unwrap the puzzles
we felt and they saw.

I am still ready
to let their magic sweep
into our smoldering milieu,
working by starlight when they must.

Not Broken

Coming to grips
with a status unexpected
both welcome and not
both stagnant and fleeting.

Just short of flipping out
all channels open
thoughts stripped and haughty,
catch the bus or sink into the abyss.

A new currency to hold onto
placates a primal cry.
I force the issue
with a complicated plot.

Finding unbroken mental paths,
trying them on for size,
putting it all into a carton
for prompt delivery.

Could be just a phase
to chatter endlessly
into my own brain,
a little reckless, forsaken
by the experts.

So I wind the clock
that dares to bend
and wait for daybreak.
I fire up the infernal challenge
to work on a new sketch.

Take the subway next time.
Eat at better restaurants.
Dare to slip on ice.

A Life Lived in Bits and Pieces

I felt the mortar
between us
slowly degrading,
almost imperceptibly
turning to dust,
as the days quietly passed
like the breathing of trees.

I could listen all day
and still not hear
what you have not said.

What is our silence,
if not a sound
that grips us
with hushed fingers,
sometimes louder
in its own way
than a string
of perfect words?

I would have held
the door open,
watching the air between us
for hopeful signs,
but that was not the plan
and it's too late.

The bits and pieces
I did love, are resting
on a high shelf,
which for now
I cannot access
without a ladder.