

VEGAN PRAYERS

(I)

Our father who art in garden
Fallowed be thy land
For the growing season
Thy mushroom come
Thyme will be grown
Alongside rosemary,
Lemon balm, and basil
In soil as it is in haven
Of water jars on windowsills

Give us this day our daily bread
And protein
And forgive us our trespasses
At summer barbecues
Where meat just smells too good
As we forgive those who scorn us
With “Humans have always been hunters” arguments.
Thank you for the mock chickens who egg us on
And for pouring into us like olive oil
Your evolved resolve.

And lead us not into temptation
Of factory farm meals
But deliver us from pork, beef,
Chicken, and veal.
In the name of our fodder, greens,
And wholesome sprouts, amen.

(II)

Dressed are the salads
For theirs is crispness in bite

Mixed are the brimming stews
For the sick will be comforted

Incorporated are herb handfuls
For they will be dill, coriander, and parsley

Three Poems: Vegan Prayers, Crab Vocabulary, and Puppies

Embodied best are the leeks
For they will invigorate many a dish

Pressed are the beans into curd
For neural flesh will be shown mercy

Impressed are those who hunger and thirst,
For they will be filled

Pleased are the healthful of heart
For they won't see God from cardiac disease

Geniuses are those who prepare out of resourcefulness
For theirs is not the realm of recipes

Praised are you when you braise roots instead of shanks and loins,
withhold from greenhouse gas abuse,
and choose love of creatures over animosity.

Eat and be merry because absorbed through blood are not hormones, but nutrients
As were absorbed by preindustrial consumers before you.

(III)

If I am an executive chef at a five-star vegan establishment, but do not use hemp hearts, I am only a hopeless burger-flipper or a lamentable prep cook. If I have a culinary flair and can commingle even the subtlest of flavors, and if I have a steady hand that can chop coconuts, but do not have hemp hearts, I am nothing. If I load a dish with all the ingredients in my possession and strain every muscle of my body assembling it that I may earn heftily, but do not sprinkle hemp hearts, I gain nothing.

Hemp hearts are potent, hemp hearts are fine. They do not ruin health, they do not clump, they are not fatty. They do not cause allergies, they clean out bowels, they are easily digested, they do not raise cholesterol. Hemp hearts are not so filling that they induce sluggishness, but boost energy. They are always slimming, they always balance blood sugar, they always add high quality protein. Hemp hearts are a super-food.

When I ate meat, I weighed like a carnivore, I craved like a carnivore, my breath smelled like a carnivore's. When I became a vegetarian, I put the ways of meat-eating behind me. For now my organism still aches for eggs and cheese, then I shall know veganism fully.

And now these three remain: salt, pepper, and hemp hearts. But the greatest of these are hemp hearts.

CRAB VOCABULARY

Mangrove magnates
Maudlin hermits
Crouching grouches

Observed in carbon copies
On stony beads strung on littoral-ropes
Posing for flashes and flicks of cloud shutters
Before panoramas of the briny deep

Sand-carpet gliders
Shuffle through shallows
Fiddling seashells like piano keys

Possess button eyes, baton legs, breakneck claws
Scan, scuttle, snap-snap, pause
Peep, like shrinking violets, from behind seaweed cloaks
Steeping in treasured tide

Capricious crustaceans
Riparian warriors
Decapod-puppets

Squat, hold mudras
Meditate on the ocean of cosmic consciousness
Corroborate juxtaposition, as in flesh and shell
Gurge in sea froth. Disgorge forth notions

Shall one of these stiff little critters clench
your soft, open toe until blue in the face, remember:
they are more cordial than scorpions, smoother than spiders,
more charming than beetles,

but their splashy palaver
makes cadavers of people.

PUPPIES

(I)

Clifford, my gentle boy,
your sensitive brown eyes, so fearless
fixate on me and all my moods
including those that need your sweet little flicks
and laps on my arm.
Kisses back to you, bubba.
I can't wait to give you another piece of cheese,
fatty-boom-boom.
Though, you can't run as fast as your skinny-mini sister,
In the park, all the other doggies run to you,
my little social Yorkipoo.
When you went playing in wild grass
tangling and gluing your beautiful black wavy locks,
sprinkled with grey wisdom,
I tenderly picked those prickly bits
out of your eyes and face,
held you still and shaved parts of your lion's mane,
then embraced you
because the sadness of looking like less of a man
was written all over your face.
Don't worry, sunshine.
You are exactly what a woman needs.
Just don't pee in the house.

(II)

Luna, my super-girl,
stay wild and strange like yin.
Though I call you princess,
what you really are is a little queen.
When you fail to eat, I finally understand my mother
who persistently annoyed me with her attempts to feed me.
Your claws and bites, from always reaching upwards,
are as elegant as bees knees on my knees.
Looney dog,
you are the best at hunting down dead rats in alleyways
and fooling mama who thinks they're bones.
That black spiky mohawk you sport with such confidence
puts all the hipsters in our neighborhood

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to shame on our walks.
Each time you summersault out of a tangled leash,
I, myself, am reminded to stay active,
break out my own constraints.
Fly ahead of the pack like a jet,
my baby warrior, my knowing leader.
But don't take poops so wet in front of coffee shops.
That's just embarrassing.

(III)

Fluffy, cute, bitsy munchkins.
Precious, wee, furry poopies.
Tiny choo-choo's of nature,
For 3 months I've been surrounded
by your bellowing barks and fiery fights,
comforting cuddles and grumpy growls.
Clifford, thank you for bringing me enlightenment,
my chubby little Buddha.
Luna, even Blue would have no clue
about how to be a lovelier friend.
Critters, thank you for filling my heart with so much love,
it leaks into this poem.