

## **Always Take the Scenic Route**

We forget what day it is, aren't aware of weekends and wonder why stores, banks, post offices are dark. We tire from too much being *out doors* and need a nap at three pm. We take the long way to every errand; travel roads with the finest vistas that bring smiles to our hearts. We peek down a street that has always been where *it* is but now see signs and paths as though all brand new. We explore secret meadows of our neighborhood uncovering treasures left behind. In this new life we have gone from honoring a dense pen-and-ink-like-drawing datebook to embracing a blank canvas filled with images yet to be drawn.

## **At Gay Head Cliffs**

At Gay Head Cliffs a lighthouse shines  
Between wind and sea below, she dines  
On history of visitors both welcomed and warned  
Of the beauty of her land and the dangers so worn

Perched upon the soil a beacon of the night  
In 1856 she was lit to glow bright  
Clay cliffs from the ice-age now threaten her time  
Eroding each year after centuries of a lifeline

Earth, sea, humanity menace her foundation  
With our hands we will steady her situation  
Inch by inch feet by feet  
In middle ground we shall meet

Then she will stand, majestic and stable as before  
A constant to delight twenty-first century's shore  
Travelers will come, embrace her history and view  
Her Martha's Vineyard family will be proud anew.

## Letting Go

Sometimes it's the image  
from a certain age—  
the child with ponytails  
wrapped in colorful  
candy-colored balls  
dancing with every jump

This is the image in view  
even as the newborn suckles  
and coos for her mother—  
the girl-child with ponytails no more

Sometimes it's the voice  
words of admonishment  
ringing in tender ears  
as the youngster tries to  
follow directions  
get it right  
be careful  
not break anything

That voice demands attention  
even in its absence  
the ringing stays true—  
filter of all other voices years later

Sometimes it's the family gathering  
all generations happy  
embrace past memories  
enjoy current ones—  
togetherness

Even as phone calls go unanswered  
commitments broken  
disappointment fills the air  
past scenes shade the present  
with shadows, artificial rainbows

Sometimes we just get stuck  
because we want to  
because it was better *then*  
because it's easier—  
than rides on fast moving clouds  
clear sight  
letting go.

## **Of Gods, Goddesses, Heroes and Poets**

Stop!

Put down that pen. Take my life off your page.

The feelings tiptoeing across your mind

creating faint footprints in the sand

are a herd of thundering wild elephants

stomping my life into the ground.

Words placed on paper mock everything in my brawn

meant to hold reality at bay.

Your language leaves me staring into the face of Medusa.

I am Antony bereft of all titles

Samson shorn of his hair.

Do not be Delilah, stalking at the foot of my bed

shears posed for weakness.

Let me embody the strength of the gods

be your Zeus, your Atlas.

You be my Aphrodite, my Hestia.

Deny Pandora her mischievous ways.

Keep me safe.

Stop.

## Son's Puzzle

the pieces were strewn about  
north, south, east, west  
in boxes, file folders, drawers

fragments—

a piece of blue sky here  
a glimpse of water there  
a fish peeking at a hook in wonder  
an address in an old familiar neighborhood  
an elder, last of a generation  
schooling, coaching from afar

you found all the pieces  
lined the borders of the landscape  
filled in the horizon  
perfected the portrait  
and you wrote the story

you completed the puzzle—through tears and pain  
a good son honoring his father