

Poetry Series

Dianne Feaver
- poems -

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Dianne Feaver()

Adolf And Eva

Behind the concrete bunker
of the Reichstag Chancellory
lies a shallow unmarked pit
where Adolf and Eva
were cremated, their remains
unceremoniously released
to eons of punishing wind and rains.

I like to think they were placed there
by voiceless Jewish children
because, really, what is left to say
that has not already been
howled out in lancing pain
toward the sky. I like to think
they were placed by the keen
perhaps eye to eye,
so they would recognize eternal terror
in one another's dead breath
or with arms wrapped in newlywed embrace
feel the unforgiving emptiness
of holding so lovingly onto death.

They must have realized
the dire strait they foundered in;
that there would be nowhere to rest.
They could have been singing Oopah!
in the Keller halls instead
or dining in the restaurants
of the Alexanderplatz
How attractive the cyanid
and bullet must have been-
how surgical sharp their cowardice
to choose suicide instead
of coffee at the last cafe
in Berlin.

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Affirmation

Do you remember
how in our splendid youth,
we left the world far below
and walked into the hills
where wild, summer flowers
spilled through grassy meadows
and scattered velvet petals
in drifts beyond the rise?

We set ourselves adrift
amid the newborn blades,
each pliant to the lightest touch,
and every one so green
but none so much as I,
nor so eager,
to take us down into those petals
and crush the scented grass,
'til every wild, summer flower
filled us with love's renewal
long into our lives.

Say you do remember,
yes, say you know me still
and the tender, summer taking
of your petal-scented girl.
I remember far off hills,
of the greenest meadow grass
and that splendid, youthful aching
in your eyes.

Dianne Feaver

Coeds

September will bring butterflies
in artless flight from country lanes
on dew soft wings as yet untried
to quietly wait the season's change.
Now, what brings them here to city streets,
to fencepost, rail and concrete step? -
while, on boulevards, we chance to meet
their lanky-legs and velvet tread
and dare not speak or move or breathe
and lose this moment rarely had.
They grace us here in crosswalk light
and soothe the cooling shadows there
with an innocence and winged delight
that warms the heart of Autumn air.

Dianne Feaver

Dear Grand-Daughter

O' beautiful child, O' gypsy eyes
dewdrop lash and thistle down
how in evening light the sound
of hearts will break and sighs
escape as angel song.

O' beautiful child, O' wondrous gift
tangled curl and petal-brow,
how did we live before this,
the very air we breathe
so much sweeter now?

Dianne Feaver

Decisions, Decisions

Learn how to pander to drunks
like your inebriated funny uncle's manoeuvres
that will net you a dollar and grandpas gropes
that leave you goggle-eyed but won't.
You could use a couple of bucks could't you?
Come on think. Don't you want a boyfriend
with an vested interest in your breasts?
Party time for teenagers
and a girl must put it out there
or face the social desert
landscaped by their peers. Then get a job
where your rent depends on tips.
Learn to to sell a steak, meat on the bone
look at the other girls with cleavage worth a good deposit
on a home. Business men will pay for drinks
the ladies auxiliary won't ever know how it really is.
So what's a girl to do? It's not exactly rocket science
to see the play at hand
from drunk dad to punk lad, a life of servitude
has been coming all along. No sense
throwing all that experience away
what about your future? Besides,
(all shock and awe to come)
think how good it will look on your resume.

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Doing The Math

The elementary equation 'one plus one is two'
is relied upon as mathematically quite true.
It's a a simple determination
of a proven calculation.

But substitute the addends
with any deeply felt emotion,
greed or hate or love's inexplicable devotion
and their subjective qualities
distribute unknown properties
for a total justifiable
as surely unquantifiable.

When calculating sums of the human heart
It's difficult to quantify the value they impart
to even complex logarithms
for they follow this truism;
'The total is much greater
than the sum of all its parts.'

Dianne Feaver

Echoes

After your death, a hard spring rain
drenches the woods and last year's leaves
And as the skies empty, I stand alone
in its coursing stream, mute,
shocked, near lifeless as the trees.

And I strain to hear you call my name
in the symphony of clear liquid notes
dripping from the spouts and eaves
and greet again your lightest footfall
by the silent, unlatched gate.

And if I am not the one to listen,
who will chance to hear you?
Will there only be the mourning doves
breathing out in sorrow
their gentle question...Who?

Dianne Feaver

Editing Poetry

Each winter begins the same way,
a pristine fall of crystalline snow
lays down on the breast of woods,
the birch by the steps, the path to the lake.
And when its beauty is at its peak,
still untouched by footprint or windfall,
laying silent and serene
and -most importantly - perfect,
I carry my shovel to the top of the hill
and methodically break its back.

Not until it cries for mercy
and lies before me, its purity
crusted, veined and scarred
in begging piles, not one dig more,
do I dare to stop and pride myself
in a job well done. There - I say-
I am ready for the next snow to come
blowing by my door, falling beautiful
completely perfect, completely oblivious.

Dianne Feaver

Eye Witness

deliberately forget to fill the bird-feeder.
Instead, I become the sole witness,
to you faithfully scooping black seed
into the old log container, placing back
its comical cone hat, just so,
all the while talking to the cat
who waits on the porch anticipating
the delightful moments your comittment brings
It is the two of you, I see,
and the cycle I cannot - nor should - stop,
animal to animal, working on
in domestic symbiosis, I witness
two hunters at home in a blind
one dedicated decoy, one willing weapon.

Dianne Feaver

Flight 1969

An accident of birth, a twist in serendipity
one more candle on a cake, one day less,
or month before and it would not be me,
but someone spared what I confess.

Among the families on the beach,
my two parents on vacation with their kids,
sat with the necessities of each,
above sea-grass, out of sight as if they hid.

We appeared intrepid to be alone;
in truth, only spectators to a world,
of families passing by I earmarked not my own,
as elusive and fleeting as a seafoam curl.

And like the waves, there were always more,
but none like us, a family apart, too afraid
of one among us and the mask he wore,
a family man in public, a quiet tyrant well obeyed.

And as the sun set, these families went walking
and the last of the day dripped the sea
into the footprints they made talking
in a freedom I imagined one day included me.

I watched the tide slide out to the sun,
families left, the moon suddenly awake,
and I flew with the sea-wind, my flight begun
toward the future family I swore an oath to make.

Dianne Feaver

Freefall

In that elusive time,
when possibilities exist as
a fleeting substance, believed
then quickly denied,
the lightest thought can form
a star-like place
where two can linger until
a ripening desire compels them
to the edge of their decision;

They are almost ready,
but no - not yet -
there is still time, before dawn,
for declaration
and a second's worth
of days and nights
to secure a lifeline of courage
and hope that the other will want
- will also need -
their journey to begin.

In the time it takes to catch a glance,
in one unalterable moment,
they step out into a beckoning,
uncertain space and fall
- long past waking-
toward a more exquisite place.

Dianne Feaver

Future Perfect

Ten floors up in a crowded elevator
all eyes averted from the rude behaviour
of the kid throwing spitballs
at everyone in the mirror.

Ten more floors every eye a glare
not one man spoke, nor one woman dare
catch the interest of a naughty boy
hurling gobwash through the air.

Ten floors more to the boy's waiting mother
who only sees her boy grinning like a Cheshire
and as the doors slide shut I hear a voice behind me say
'I think, someday, he will be a baseball player.'

Dianne Feaver

Gifted

Hearing your call one morning, I was led
beyond the window where, unfettered in flight,
Autumn rose up effortlessly, its light
quietly composed, fragile and fair, we rooted
ourselves in its deep, promising bed.

Then our days were simple and complete
We drank the universe held in a raindrop.
and slept the winter through -how could we not-
A warm hearth, mulled wine, our unwavering belief
Spring will grace us with another life, another lot.

Your call was the seed we planted - How it grew then-
free and fertile, unfurling in new light
Arms spread to the sky, we bloomed our delight
and because you called, a future of seasons,
as beautiful a love gift as was ever given.

Dianne Feaver

Girl Talk

Spend two hours in Cosmetics
trying all the latest potions
promising quick miracles
in age-defying lotions
'til you swear you are still young enough
to head on to Lingerie
for something lacy and ridiculous
and - with luck - on sale today,
perhaps a Calvin gossomeer,
or a Lauren spider web.
Then buy them all in extra-small
and raging, riot red.

Now head on home in frightful traffic
to the dog who needs a walk,
four kids who want to stay up late
just as your mother calls to talk.
After that, there's still two hours
to bathe and primp and pluck and gloss
and set your scented, frilly hook
baited with the things you bought
But just remember who laughs best
and whose ignorance is bliss
when he turns to you and says
'Honey, I love how natural you look.'

Dianne Feaver

Growing Days

The last few piles of winter snow,
gray and pockmarked, still remain,
reluctant targets for winds that blow
in biting rain.

These tenacious gargoyles resist
their sure erosion and cling,
desperate, in the leeward drifts
of... everything.

Everyday in measured decrease
they grasp, despite fate's certain ways,
to witness the dazzling spring release
of growing days.

Dianne Feaver

I Have In Mind

I have in mind to go today
as time has spent itself with me
and I have cast my lot between
the way it was and might have been,
to where the sunlit heavens rise
there to zenith, flare and fall
Beyond these hills a new place lies.
toward the Astral Shepherd's call
whose brightest note is yet a gleam.
and stars are caught in joyful play,
Where that flash is look for me,
I have in mind to go today.

Dianne Feaver

I Witness

I deliberately forget to fill the bird-feeder.
Instead, I wait to see you come by
faithfully returning to scoop black seed
into the old log container and place
back its comical cone hat, just so
all the while talking to the cat
who waits on the porch
anticipating the delightful moments
your comittment will bring.
And I realize the way of man and beast
I see the turn of their endless cycle,
two hunters in domestic agreement,
symbiosis at home in a blind,
one dedicated decoy,
one loaded weapon.

Dianne Feaver

Instinct

On bitter winter nights, I hear her cry,
a stray abandoned sometime last spring.
Fearful still, she won't answer my call
but slinks away, as if beaten too.
How like a child she sounds, I think
her still alive part of some greater plan
that she be out there instead,
where even I could not survive
and I thank her, I am reminded
before I sleep, to go and see
my children in their beds.

Dianne Feaver

My Own Backyard

When the lilies get too big
they fall over the peonies
and the peonies hate that
and retaliate by growing
in unattractive clumps
into the English ivy
now forced by this surprise invasion
to splay up the cottage gate
and tangle up the latch
between my yard and my neighbour's
and the neighbours hate that
so they retaliate with clippers,
rakes and shovels full of dirt
and make the creeping ivy
stay where it was put
which sends a message to the lilies
that it's ok to fall upon
whatever lies beneath.

I must speak to my lilies.

Dianne Feaver

Of Water And Light

What maid is this to bathe
as water-sprite in merry play
where lilies float on willows,
her every charm a scented vapor
of young lotus and new vine?
What girl lives beyond the vale
and takes her pleasures as she will
standing by the water's edge,
so fair as to hear a leaf in breeze
as song ringing through the Summer air?

How does she move in crystal shafts,
the curve of her breast a silver flash
beneath love's sweet hollow of her neck?
What lady bathes in iridescent light,
each turn of wrist so fine as to faint
the eye of he who sees her there?
Fair maid, young man, both to hide
in leaf and shade, one innocent in life
one watchful from a darker side.

Youth falls heavy to this lad, his spirit
lost in willful thrust, no one to guide him,
there need in him no follower to trust.
He is not truer as a man than this moment,
hid in quiet breathlessness, her beauty,
a song of yearning bursting in his chest.
One turn more and Heaven pours
her hair a shower lit, pure gold.

He cannot breathe as she draws near
but hears the water's green caress.
Ah! How He dreams their droplets
fall as motes and drift in halos.
His eyes for her as birds to see this maid
and trill his call beyond this place
where love stands waiting in the sun,
a slant laid low on forest floor,
she steps into the water and hears

a joyful sigh rise above the shore.

As fawn and buck are to the chase, he turns
and parts the fern and reed, her face
a startled doe, a golden frieze of maiden,
she trips the mossy stone and falls.
O' what lad lives who could resist
this moment given? A man waiting to be born
in a wooded pool of evening light
cannot hold back, he reaches out,
she is as thistledown in flight.

When new leaves are soft in curl,
when tender roots push fertile soil,
every sound of cloud and wind
and night filled rain and storm whirls
as one voice completely innocent,
deaf to all but breath and blood, blind
to all but skin and hair and hand and soul
He feels the man he must be, she meets,
not sees, his eyes in need, her limbs
are sunlight shimmering in silver
as they fall among the reeds.

What place is this that rises up
and carries sound too far
to hear what lovers say in ripples?
What place is this but an arbour,
a chance to be a woman, she speaks
of love, he is not there, he cannot be.
The air is singing, she cries, the air, the air!

What maid is this who bathes alone,
a water-sprite in merry play, but she who hears
too late the lotus drown, no one to reach
the shore, to catch a stone to foot.
In one heartbeat, she is undone,
no Spring will ever be as green.
In one heartbeat she is gone,
his delight a prize he won.

Offering

India is a girl out in the sun
walking the earth, quietly singing
of water and bread,
the only one casting no shadow,
the only one hearing no sound
not even her own graceful step?
though the bells on her ankles?
offer bright music.

?She is mute.

No language exists ?but that of brown skin ?
wrapped in colours her ancestors wore?
to pray for the path, to work for her life, ?
to labour and strive until her feet
begin? to follow the curve of her hand.?
How she will grow!
Her beauty, ?no less than a gift, a cast of fortune,
a wife, a child, a home the singular duty?
of a girl out in the sun.

Dianne Feaver

One Soul Rising

There is a hill that steeply slopes toward the sea
where a path is worn, bare and rugged,
from the tread of souls upward to its misted peak.
No one returns, though they may slip a footfall,
trip on the wretch below or keep the one above
from holding on with, at best, a tenuous grip.

And so they climb, the upward pilgrimage
of will and grit a tribute to the high,
rare air the bravest seek, above the earth
above an ordinary life, sure it is a lie
that the grass is not as green, the sky
not as endless as the view
from somewhere...up there,
where only the strongest survive.

Dianne Feaver

Our Feast

Were love the reason for the flesh we gain
my darling, we would be colossal!
Obesity would be our prize
for having feasted, gluttonous and unrestrained,
from every passionate vessel.
Broadly fleshed, bulked up to perfection,
all our mountains buttered hot
insurmountable by any lesser one
without serious consideration.
Belly bulge to belly bulge we would heave and quake
and you, majestic in my eyes, formidable on top.
Our great bed, firm and extra large, a sideboard;
substantial as it is, would groan to bear the thought
We would be titanic! Stupendous girth our just reward.
How we would revel through the years
in a love so substantial as to fatten us the more.
And smug...oh yes..the sheer weight of love we'd make,
enough to bring our poor, thin neighbours to tears.

Dianne Feaver

Pond Ice

Should a warming air let winter slip
and thaw the rime that crusted hard
the snowdrift seal around the pond,
every rip out on the ice, every scar
from battles waged with sticks and shouts
and sharpened blades, disregards
the time of year and melts a bit.

Should night fall frigid and replace
the wind-soft ice, snapping tight
the surface mirror slick, how
lucky to be thrilling
to the wild race at daybreak,
first to set spirits soaring
on the best of winter's icy face.

Dianne Feaver

Reaping The Promise

Didn't I pass a lifetime once
up in the heather that courses the cliffs,
And didn't I know each trout in the brook
quietly waiting afloat with the promise?
Wasn't I near the sea edge watching
visible there by lantern or sun, kissing
the ones who returned or waited to mourn?
Didn't I live it real there, moving to what is done
close to the spin of the earth, my time passing?

Didn't I hunt with clever hounds
raised to the whistle kept close at hand
and stable the mares each spring found
fat with the promise and will again
work the fields, bent to rows,
my side by yours bred to the soil
we turned over and over to roots below
and in seasons of plenty turn over the toil
to the promise of sons and a natural end.

And didn't I fend the sorrows
that hung by the jamb or seeped in the cracks
Enduring, I clung to the promise shown
in the croupy child, the harvest patch.
I passed a lifetime long before.
Time marked a time, knew well my due,
and knowing the time for renewal had come
prepared me something more.
I know of this. It must be true,
for aren't I reaping that promise now
living this life with you?

Dianne Feaver

Renewing Our Vows

We waited until August
and its inevitable heatwave,
when our two old cats,
now frail and failing
to fall into a kind of stupor,
and lay limp and lazy
in the still and heavy air.
Then sure they would not fret,
if we were - as was our plan
to lift them gently, one by one
into their car-ride-crates
and quickly, before they could protest
drive directly to the Vet.
No amount of time, not even
seventeen years of loving attention,
and a vow to see them to a painless end
had prepared us for their quiet trust.
They did not make the usual travel fuss
but watched us in silent, round-eyed innocence.
Unaware of our destination,
how could they have known
the nature of their final fate?
Now, as our days shorten, the vow
we made wears a more familiar face.
We ask each other to be as kind now
and not prolong unbearable suffering
beyond the limit of our day.
But to whom will we cling as we did to
each other broken hearted and sickened
with the pain that love and kindness
demands as we renew our promise
with all the strength left in our hearts
to do for one another, just the same?

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Shearing Pen

If we don't sheer the woolly buggers
they will bleat themselves to death
and standing in the pen,
we blather on about it
'til they do.

Dianne Feaver

Step One

Similarities

existing beyond the bounds
of place or time
set in motion
blood and bone
to move
in step;
synchronicity
the reason why
only children

still

greet each other
as their elders
cannot
in meadow, suburb, laneway
or the pavement of the backstreet,
familiarities
of language or colour, then
skip in time,
bred to be together
to run as

one world

like the school-yard race in June
everyone
a common reason,
to chase summer out the door
and take
that joyful leap
toward
freedom.

Dianne Feaver

Step Two

Country kids do a highstep,
barefoot through the pasture,
knee-deep in the meadow
where lazy, patchwork cows
have gone for morning milking,
single file to the barn.

And city kids do a hip hop,
one foot in the gutter, down
the sidewalk to the corner
where friends come out of nowhere
everyone standing, waiting
all together arm in arm.

But, all kids do a quickstep,
a leaping, clicking, heel-step
and shout the joy they're feeling
when summer sends them reeling
from the classroom out to freedom
the day that school is done.

Dianne Feaver

Table For One

Before the funeral, women rush about
as one heartbeat, laying out a table
with familiar offerings, arranged for
small moments of comfort.

They work in quiet service
that they not miss the joyous sound
of the one whose turn it is
to attend a different feast,
the one called to lead the toast
to women who rush about
setting out a table for one,
in silent hope their own
will be as full.

Dianne Feaver

The Poor Wee Mouse

Her poure, wee tuckirt mouse,
Too much in use, now dyth oute

Long 'twas favirt by goode wife
Of poet's cottage and wee fine life.

Now her mouse would'na prevail,
Causeth weep, causeth wail.

Misfortune taketh right hand friende,
Knowth not why it shold ende,

Checkth cord, buyth gadget,
Click and click, nought wold haypen,

God helpth me-wife swearth low-
Nay take me poure, wee mouse now!

For truly she did treat it rightly,
Warmed it daily, warmed it nightly,

'Til husband sayth-Wife, dear idgit,
Nay play so long at bein' poet.

Nought is done! Wee house in ruin!
Cryth he- No supper stewth!

Hunger causeth man to greete,
Idgit wife cares nought for this.

Grieves wee mouse, nay ruined house,
Tellth husband-Eat take-out! -

Now goode man doth lose good wit,
Prepares goode wife great purgative.

Nay fixth mouse as wife fair begs,
He drinkth ale, she drinkth dregs.

Then, witness she how husband grins
And kens the way of mouse's end.

Husband nay fools with mouse again!
Unstoppered wife lifts jamjar lid,

Counts her share and God her witness,
Taketh half, nay more, nay less.

Goode wife content, new mousee workth,
Joyful cottage, husband cleanth,

Now writes goode wife, one eye on friend
And one eye on goode husband.

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The Writing On The Walmart

The last few holdouts closed up shop
turned off the lights, set the front door lock
took down their signs on the main crosswalk
and met altogether for a good long talk
about chain stores coming to the town's one mall
and how they were duped by the city hall
into thinking big was better somehow
and progress depended on the rise and fall
of the little man running the Mom and Pop
to give up selling their small time stock
and reap the savings from a giant block
of cheap goods bought from an Asian sweatshop,
O how they ranted on the way of it all
'til they were weary with resentment's gall
but nothing matched the surprise guffaws
of their wives revealing that since last Fall
each week they met in the Walmart lot
put on the hats and glasses they bought
anonymous shoppers for an hour they thought
never mind loyalty or their downtown shop
all things fair when a bargain is sought!

Dianne Feaver

What Passes

Now come days of uncertainty,
when recalling yesterday
brings some comfort, yes, but all too brief.
The time has come when a family
is no more than a trembling leaf,
the ones I raised now blown beyond my reach.

Who could contain their restlessness,
or blame such youthful vigor?
I had taught them fearlessness.
To go barefoot in the marsh
where dragonflies mated on the wing.
I fed them stones from such mossy places,
still they flew... somewhere.

These days of wading into waterlilies
may have to be enough,
searching tangled reeds
may have to be enough,
I am a woman waiting,
I will the stars to shift,
I am a woman plaiting wild lotus in her ha

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What War?

Turn it off, pull the plug,
kill the picture, shut it down,
throw it out, block your ears,
avert your eyes, change the subject,
avoid headlines, change channels,
dial out, click out,
sign out, drop out;
so damn easy
it's not
even
funny.

Dianne Feaver

Which One Is He?

He's the one in the sweater,
talking to someone new and yes,
I know him. He aims to encourage her
with his casual talk of truth.
He will sugarcoat it well, infuse it
with enough pity to encourage
the touching of sleeves, hands
(and if he can really enthuse) a thigh.

At this point I could warn her
but I stand aside, let them...imbibe.
I am in no danger of being trampled
by the crowd in which they hide.
All terror and shock to come
she looks at him like rays of sun
across an old, tired building,
long abandoned, still standing,
its foundation wired
and slated for destruction.

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Winter Trees

Winter brings a sudden sorrow
now family stands like winter trees,
all trembling limbs and rusted leaves,
somber shadows on the snow.

What sharp-edged storm could not recede
and spare the sapling barely grown,
its keening wind and cutting blow,
too deeply felt to yet believe?

Here comfort lies in the severed leaf
that fell to earth to rest below;
Gone as winter trees weep low
to a quiet place and wild release.

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