

Face Prints

We are cast into roles
before we have the chance
to audition,
our voices stifled
when we try to speak
our truth.

In time...
our skin hangs too loosely
or stretches too tightly
over our precious bag of bones.

In our marrow we know
we were born to roar
like lions on the mountain top,
leave our face prints on the moon
before it disappears behind
night-curtains of clouds.

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There Are Days

There are days
when despair seeps into my mind
and my energy clock
refuses to wind.

Suddenly,
I shake off the darkness and cold
Determined
to break the mold of being old.

Bravely, boldly,
I'm going to let my light shine
After all,
seventy is the new sixty-nine.

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Task Master

Early morning, I walk
with my friend,
who is hundreds of miles
from here;
her soft, southern tones poke
into my ear
through the metal box
I hold next to it.

I do not give my full
attention to shrubby foliage
or arching trees,
nor the story of her day to come.

Unfocused, divided, I puff
my path though the neighborhood,
breathily relating
my story to her.

Sun and flowers flow past
my eyes
in a vapory glaze of colors.
Multi-tasking they call it.

Someone is focused.
A fox sits still and composed,
calmly centered in my path,
Looking at me with
intense concentration,
as if waiting
for an exchange of words.

His stillness
stops me.

Now, tightly wound
and quiet,
I back away,
choose a different path,
only one task
on my mind.

The Blue Dog

She didn't know
her world was black and white,
so her small, six year old
fingers broke the rules,
spilled outside the lines,
colored her dog
blue.

Her world crumpled
as she stood in front
of the class,
laughter coached by the teacher
caged her creativity
and her blue dog
that day.

Today a man
sells his paintings of blue dogs
for thousands of dollars.
His blue dog stares at me
from the canvass with yellow,
unseeing eyes,
but I see the little girl
and her blue dog
and quietly mourn their disappearance.

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Put A Number On It

It seems to me
It's impossible to measure pain.

How much does it weigh?
How long is it?

Does it fill the space
of a cup or a barn?

The doctors insist
that it can fit neatly
into our number system.

On a scale of one to ten
how bad is the pain?

Well,
let me think....

Does it have me down
flat out like one
or curled into a twisted ball
like eight
doubled over like a three
top heavy like nine?

Ever the moderate
I reply "Five".
and thank God I'm still alive.

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