

Once Upon a Poet

My love of reading started very early in my life, I would read books whenever I had a chance. Of course, on a farm we had chores to do so I didn't always have time to read but whenever there was free time I'd sit down with a book. When I was in third grade a fellow student and I decided that we wanted to read the entire 3rd grade library. When we finished all of the boy's books, we started on the girl's books. After reading a couple of those, we decided the whole thing was a bad idea and we were satisfied by just reading the boy's books. When I was in junior high school, I memorized a poem called The Deacons Masterpiece, approximately 1000 words long written by Oliver Wendell Holmes. I did recite it for my junior high teacher and I do remember she was impressed and suggested that I recite it for the rest of the class. I, of course, was somewhat shy so I declined. I still remember many lines from the poem.



After I enlisted in the Air Force and was stationed at the University of Indiana, I wrote my first of several what I might call love poems. The first one was written on a rainy day while I was sitting in my dorm room and yes, we lived in dorms not barracks because we were at the University. Anyhow I wrote the first one as I was sitting watching a rainstorm on a dark and gloomy night and I wrote a few others while still attending the University of Indiana. The love poems were not about anyone other than in my mind. I guess I was dreaming of that special person. Little did I know that I would meet that special person on 23 October 2010.

After I completed the Russian program at the University of Indiana I was transferred to Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo TX for advanced Russian training. I did not write any of my poems there. However, when I got to Japan, I found the urge to write again and I wrote several poems that are a little darker in my thinking. The Discharge, of course was written about the end of the four years of Air Force service. I was more than ready to get out when that happened.

There is one interesting side note of my poetry writing. While I was the IT director at Moorhead State University, one of my student employees came in and was somewhat upset by the assignment she was given by her mass communications instructor. The assignment was to find an unpublished poet or author and bring samples to class and share with the instructor and the other class members. She said "where the world can I find a unpublished author or poet?" I said, "you are in luck", and showed her what I had written years ago. She took them to class and the instructor loved it. The poems were published in an online publication by the mass communications department and my section was entitled Once Upon a Poet hence the title of this story.

Hill

A cluster of lights so far down hill
Grouped as if afraid of the night.
And yet between here and the mill
Are sprinkled the lone brave farm light.

Away from the harsh din of the city.
Quiet, peaceful, broken only by the fog
Praising, for the soft shower our Almighty,
Who put at my feet a mossy log.

Moving gently, whispering softly above me
Still green amid a patch-quilt of hues
Sway a mighty wise old oak tree,
Keeping me safe from the falling dew.

Around me trees nodding, swaying, sleeping
Softly a quiet, lonely quiet is creeping
Touching everything and swiftly moving on
Taking with it all sound and motion.

Chilled by the passing cool breeze,
I feel a hand my arm gently squeeze.
Her eyes mirror the beauty I see
As she moves closer, still closer to me.

Along, together, we live the hour
Of the gift of soft breeze and shower.
Two hands, two hearts, forever together
As the far bells call us to gather.

Flying Freely

Flying freely in the dark sky
Now caught like a puff of cotton
In a tree high in the heavens
Casting a shadow on all below
The midnight cloud stops, moves on.

The shadow moving stealthily, swiftly
Misses nothing as it covers the ground.
Across her face it gently glides
As if it were trying to hide
The picture of which I am fond.

Gently it covers, uncovers, moves on
Leaving behind the nightly peace and beauty.
The stars and moon once more show
On my arm a lovely face
Smiling now making everything right.

Falling

Slowly, softly falling, fluffy flakes
Cover the track my foot makes.
From the dark unknown night
Falling pure and clean and white.
With the natural beauty of each flake
My heart knows the path I take.
The past is covered, the future white
Filling her soft brown eyes with her delight.

White blanket falling all around
Now to cover two, not one.
White snow on dark hair
Nothing so beautiful so fair
Falling, softly falling ever true
The snow and my heart for you.

Angel

Like a polished halo her hair does shine
Making me thankful that she is mine.
Her golden wings that no one can see
Are more beautiful than a honeybee.
Because of this I call her Angel.

Here eyes are like the deep blue sea
Whose hidden meaning I long to see.
Here eyes reflect the stars shining above
That will watch over her one true love.
Because of this I call her Angel.

Happiness

Her happiness to guide my way
Lightens my load every day.
Her tears when she is sad
Makes me feel very bad.
But then through the stormy weather
Her smile makes me like her much better.

Like the true queen she is
She's very beautiful, she is.

Discharge

Forever dark leaving the world
False light, returning by dreams.
Hoping, surviving, a non-existence,
Forgetting the old, planning anew
Revisiting the past, to again be free.

Freezing the mind without a thought
With hopes of blind acceptance
Trying five fold repeatedly failing
To snuff the innate undying glow
Revisiting the past, to again be free.

Failing to conquer tasting defeat
Destroyed by the candles' omni glow
Hopes of love with home and life.
Fearing failure, not knowing success
Remolding the past, to again be free.

Bars

Cold gray dead walls
Holding in a dead life
Dead as the small X
Of each passing day.
The room holds two lives
A lone rose, a lone man
Who are to live together
With death all around.

A window, a picture of 'live world'
A mountain with the spring's green
A tree with life's first bud
A squirrel running free
Telling of a happy freedom
With life all around.

War

The bomb is oblong the men explode
In scrimmages of fury since time untold
Men of might, running, hitting, hurting

Each in his way a banner upholding
For each can win in freedom's fold

To quit to stop short of gaining all
Is just the beginning, the start of the fall.
But the fall is sly, it can wait.
Stupidity at home, its running mate
While men are dying giving their all.

War is hell t'was said by one
But half losing should be wanted by none.
Victory complete, the American way
Peace can be late until they are at bay
We must be first on top all the way.

Is It Better?

Is it better to run hard
Through the paths of life?
Is it better to knock down
All and everyone
Who stands in that path
Standing by choice or chance.

Or is it better to run carefully
To look for each friend
And in no way harm him
Even if it means your score?
Is it better to stop – Out!
Just to keep from harm a friend?

Is it better to live to help and never hurt?
Is it better to think not of oneself – I wonder.

I Understand

Bodies there, people asking not knowing
Where to find the wood, how the fire
One there hinting a smile, wandering alone
Alone and not, two forget the twenty.
The walk long but not enough, cool the breeze,
As the river rolled, reeled, reflected the mood.
Among the trees, paths for wild and tame
In the hearts paths for quiet and close.
The night for love the night to not remember
To not remember another, not tomorrow – now.

And all this to be lost, remembered but lost.
Soon, all made right by 'I understand'.

And after I met my Sweetie in 2010, I wrote the following for her.

We Want You

A strange and wonderful thing happened,
Just as I was going to sleep.
All of my senses were alive and alert,
Sending messages to my brain.

My fingers want to touch you,
My hands want to hold yours.
My arms want to encircle you,
My eyes want to gaze into yours.
My legs want to walk with you,
My lips want to kiss yours.
My heart wants to share with you,
My mind wants to talk to yours.

A strange and wonderful thing happened,
All of my senses were sending the message
"We want you".