

POETRY

SOMEONE CALLED ME "MA'AM" TODAY

by Diane Sciacchitano, North Massapequa, NY

Do mirrors lie?

Is the reflection staring back at me fairly passable for a woman of age?

Or could I be in denial?

I am not a "Miss" any longer.

Admittedly I have moved forward to the next stage, but when did this transformation occur?

Was I absent for my own graduation from "Miss" to "Ma'am?"

Alas the years have careened bye and the memories are overflowing.

The blessings are many, a testimony to one's lifetime of loving hearts that surround me.

This new moniker "ma'am" shouldn't be daunting.

The reflection in the mirror is just my badge of a life well lived.

The passage, inevitable, the gift, the test of time.

BROKEN VOWS

by Dr. Seena Axel, Delray Beach, FL

Vows don't only get broken
on the battlefield of discord,
disconnect or cheating.

Promises made with full heart-felt,
deep belief in the possible,
die in the wake of unpredictable life change.

Personal development/ spiritual growth, the life-death cycle
ongoingly occur, even when uninvited, deeply transforming
one human differently from the other.

The vows, once solemnly taken, are no longer congruent
to current relationship dynamics.

To leave or to change...that becomes the question.

The courage to be IN the conversation, becomes key.
The strength to speak the truth you've come to know,
takes depth of substance and soul.

To eliminate blame or shame...guilt or remorse
...to ground yourself,
standing on more than two feet of honesty and valor,
that takes inner strength and fierce desire.

Vows don't only get broken
on the battlefield of discord,
disconnect or cheating.

Change is always happening;
sometimes when you're looking the other way.
Life changes us. We need to change the vows we take.

Promises outlive their veracity.
Only true love endures.
Especially when it's founded in earth's pure depths.

Embracing the new requires letting go
of what no longer serves. Love is eternal.
The form, like life itself, is in constant evolution.

The substance of love is forever imbedded,
eternally imprinted, and easily transformable.
The challenge ... promises made anew.

PEACE

by Allison Taylor Marrero, Huntington Station, NY

Red, Gold, Orange
Brilliant, Bold,
Beautiful
Trees say goodbye
to the old
with a flourish
and flair

Even in slumber
they emanate
peace
A peace
and faith
in life
All is well
All is well

Life will come again
Something new
will be born
I will be born
I will be different
Still, all is well
All is well

Watercolor by
Jan Guarino

HAIKU

by Nancy Maia

Quietly knitting
as life slowly slips away.
Helpless to do more.

BEFORE YOUR EYES

by Rhonda Weiss, Leeds, NY

If you watch, I am
Going to deteriorate
Before your eyes
Not because I want to
But, because I have no
Choice
Showers only last so
Many days
Washing underarms can only
Extend it but a few
(Days) more
Hair can only be
Arranged so many
Ways
Before it looks
Dirty and unkempt
Clothes to change into
Run out
There is no place to
Sort through my
Prescription medications
Before they too run out

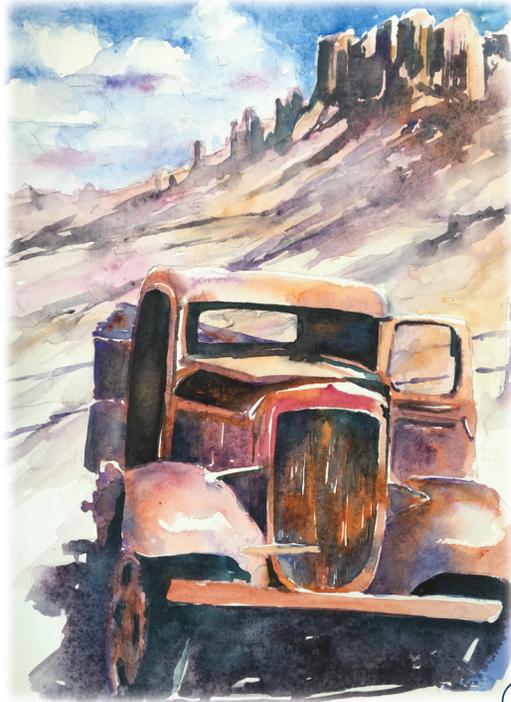
And my high blood pressure
Runs Amok
And I can't go to work
If I've nowhere to live
I've degrees but
So what
If I can't find
Accessible housing
Affordable housing
You soon will
Call me Bum
Instead of by my given name
My humanity
Is shredded
As I deteriorate
Before your eyes
But, you refuse
To lend a helping hand
And I have done
All that I could do
To remain
Like One Of You

HIS NAME IS LOYD FRAZIER

by Fred Byrnes, Huntington Station, NY

When the towers came down
on 9/11 and the dust cloud
skull and crossbones grinning
rolled through Manhattan streets
You were at the McDonald's
you owned,
four blocks from darkened history
As that dust cloud
began to coat the windows
of your McDonald's,
you locked the doors
ordering your workers and customers
to stay inside
You saw a police officer collapse
on the sidewalk
You unlocked a door
and helped him inside
Then a firefighter collapsed,
outside you went
and brought him inside

We who knew you
and later learned of your actions
weren't surprised by your courage
Five years after 9/11
the cancer caused
by that deadly cloud
claimed you
We who'd gone to school with you
We who played softball
on Sunday mornings with you
We attended your Funeral



STILL BREATHING

by Cheryl Bottone, Northport, NY

Don't take away my life
through
vein or blood or toxic
chemistry
I'm still
breathing
No dysfunctional heredity
can make me leave
I'm still
breathing

No psychotic genetics
can spoil my spirit
I'm still
breathing
Not trauma or pain
can hold me hostage
I'm still
breathing
I'm still grieving
Still breathing

PIONEER SONG

by Carisa Mannix, East Northport, NY

Over time the generations lost their sharp edges
A sod house and church on Sunday was their only defense
Relentless toil soothed by the whispers of the tall prairie grass
In the very same field, death comes to the son as it did the father
The heart stops beating and the deep imprints are carried on