

POETRY

Watercolor by
Jan Guarino
JanGuarinoFineArt.com

Drew

by R.P. Infantino, Levittown, NY

I was witness to a lone youth's first attempts on a bicycle.
With helmet in place, elbow and knee pads secured,
he rode not an inch before striking the ground.
He readied the two-wheeler, attempted once more,
and the earth rose up hitting him hard.
He repositioned himself, tried again and crashed again.
Another attempt plummeted him downward.
Each and every try, same injurious results.

Watching this fragile youth damage himself repeatedly
caused my heart to break. I felt compelled to rush to his aid.
But despite his hardships, the boy continued on without despair.
He never quit, never got angry, never became frustrated.
He suffered his trials with dignity,
holding firm his goal to one day ride free.

This courageous youngster, more determined than most adults,
added one second more of riding time with each crash.
To his innocent mind, the bruises were incidental
to the process of learning.

By day's end, he covered the entire distance to his friend's house.
This scrawny inspiration of a boy
discovered the ancient philosopher's creed:
Fail over and over. Attempt again and again.
Ever improve.

COVID has killed us All

by Toni-Cara Stellitano, LCSW, Commack, NY

Covid has killed us all
And maybe it needed to,
Maybe we were all silently crying out
for a personal revolution, a redefinition of our own status-quo,
an exhaled yawn of normalcy,
the palatable but the no-so-tasty,
the digestible indigestion of the things we had grown too accustomed to,
until stress got so high, until the body's capacity to hold hardship
exceeded its ability to pretend ... and then ...
We saw what we could not un-see within ourselves,
Our in-dismissible longings, our summers, our springs, our ceilings,
Our God-given right ... to Begin again



intuition

by David Frieman, Huntington Station, NY

intuition takes
us to where we have to go
in a timeless flow



upside-down DAISY

by Eva Tortora, Staten Island, NY

Today I fell off the earth
in a spinning circus pose
like a caterpillar
under a full moon
like an upside-down daisy
like a backwards math problem
like a light bulb
still being invented
over and over again
like a conversation with you
the last one
before the full moon comes
and I'm back near you
waiting like a caterpillar
upside-down.

The Therapeutics of Applying ink to paper

by Rhonda Weiss, Leeds, NY

Come cheer me up
No you don't have to apologize
For not being an organic bitter-sweet chocolate
A goblet filled with Chateau Lafite Rothschild
A bouquet of alstroemeria or calla lilies
A dandelion in wait of a wish
Although I'd much prefer
A friend's knock on the door
Or a check to grow a depleted account
I already know that perfect health
Is a companion too big
For the entrance
To allow
So be a sport
Come and cheer me up
Just don't lie there
Like a wet dish rag
Harboring discarded food particles and saliva
Coated in counter dust
And battered with polluted water
Between your folds
Come to me
Let me drown my sorrows
Into you
You won't feel a thing
Your long hard plastic armor
With its indigo dye insert and rapier point
Inanimate and immune
Come to me
So I can discharge
All my fragments
Into your care
And then I can shred
Your holdings
Of blue bars on white
3 holed paper
That refused to rearrange
The fragments into a complete sentence

It is difficult to get the news from poems, yet men die miserably everyday for lack of what is found there.

— From *Asphodel that Greeny Flower*