

# POETRY

## Winter

by Milissa Castanza-Seymour, Bethpage, NY

Oh winter, you arrive  
with smiles  
and heartfelt reminiscence!  
The winter solstice  
darkens our door  
as the North Pole  
tilts away from the sun  
Yet, in the darkness  
the light of the world  
guides your entrance!  
The sun rests  
but light still glows  
the light of our hearts  
and souls  
as it forms well-wishes  
for peace and love  
Like fairy dust in the wind,  
our invitational intentions

wrapped in twinkling light  
warm us  
settling down to blanket the earth  
with hope  
and prayers  
and expectations  
of what is to come  
The divine nature of your presence  
exacted by design  
births an energy  
not easily contained  
by mere mortal hearts  
and lights the way  
to celebrate  
life  
love  
and the beauty of silver and  
gold lined dark nights!



Hibiscus Tea

## Kitchen Still Life

by Connie Prestianni

The early morning light coming from the window is so clean.  
It passes through the blind and creates a pattern of stripes on the cabinets.  
That light illuminates the kitchen and sanitizes it for the new day.

She gazes at the ordinary objects and how the cool light makes them special.  
The coffee pot, the toaster, her mug, all elevated to objects d'arte  
Together they create a kitchen still life.

She loves the solitude of early morning,  
The quiet is accentuated by the occasional knock of the refrigerator.  
The quiet invigorates her. It's a good time to pray, reflect, and to plan the day.

She thinks, as she drinks her coffee, what can she accomplish  
and what will the day bring.  
As she ponders, the pristine light is changing into a golden hue.  
Her day begins.

In time, someone else will find refuge in this kitchen  
And will create a different still life.  
But she won't think about that now, as she sips her second cup.

## Them

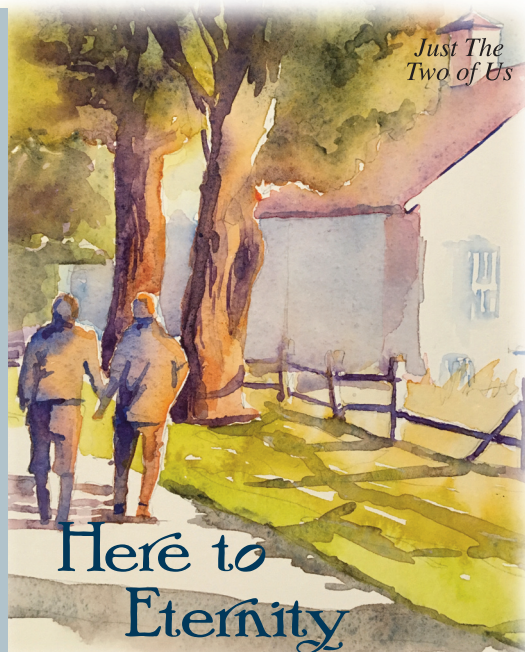
by Elaine P. Morgan, Warrenton, VA

I watched them again today.  
Familiar strangers  
shuffling along together  
down sidewalks, streets,  
past storefronts, restaurants.

Both of them have snow white hair now  
but not one strand reveals the secret  
of their faded hues from yesterday.

He leans over a grocery cart  
resting his weary spine.  
She clutches his left arm  
with a right hand to steady her gait.  
Both of them hobble to their car  
in silence, sharing presence gratefully  
after years of like intention to so many  
common destinations.

I always told you we would be them,  
we would be them one day.  
We believed it you and me,  
nostalgic fantasy.



Just The Two of Us

## Here to Eternity

by Bruce Levine, Saco, ME

For Jane

Forever held  
A piece of my soul  
Floats through the universe  
Sitting on your shoulder  
Lasting 'til the end of time  
Like the waters of a spring  
Flowing from here to eternity  
Counting the days  
By scores of millennia  
In everlasting love

## Suspended in Time

by Seana Ankers, Warrenton, VA

Swirling colors envelop my mind,  
Covering my face and then expanding outward.  
Or was the sensation coming towards me and entering my soul?  
Coursing through me as pure energy,  
Awakening my mind and every fiber of my being.

Where does it start, and where does it end?  
Did it start with you, breaking through my self-made walls and vulnerabilities?  
Did it come from within me and simply refract off of you?  
Or was it an alchemical reaction, joining both in one sacred moment?  
A gift from the Gods themselves.  
Words do not exist to capture it.  
It must be experienced.  
It must be breathed.  
It must be felt from within and suspended in time.

For in that moment, time stopped.  
We no longer existed as individuals.  
We were the world, and the world was us.  
We captured all the colors of the rainbow and felt their power.  
Our frequencies danced with those of the world,  
Vibrating on to eternity and slipping back into our souls,  
Just as time began again.

# The Beautiful

by James Vollbracht, Bozeman, MT

What We Hold

Watercolors by  
Jan Guarino  
JanGuarinoFineArt.com

If you  
are not as Beautiful  
in this moment  
as you will ever be,  
when shall you ever be  
Beautiful?

If you and I  
are not as Beautiful  
in this moment  
as we will ever be,  
when shall we ever be  
Beautiful?

All of life  
responds to the  
immeasurable  
power of Beauty;  
but who has the courage  
to proclaim themselves  
to be  
the Beautiful Sun  
of God?

Who is it,  
amid the flash

of thunder  
and the roar  
of lightning  
that rages  
through our world,  
who can drink nakedly  
from the Fountains  
of Beauty  
unashamed?

At the end  
of this life  
our regrets will not be  
our sins.  
No, never our sins.  
Our regrets will be  
the Beauty  
we withheld  
from ourselves  
and others.

We have  
been made  
so afraid of our sins  
and so ashamed  
of our Beauty  
that we have come  
to believe  
only a miracle

could change  
our lives.

And yet  
there is a bridge  
to Beauty  
that is known.  
It is found  
in the curl of a wave,  
in the silent glance  
between two eyes,  
in a touch, a brush  
of a hand  
upon the cheek.  
These are the eternal  
moments  
of our lives.

The Great Secret  
is not that  
one day we shall  
awaken from  
the dream of life  
and suddenly  
be transformed.  
The Great Secret  
is that we are already  
the Beautiful;  
and when we see

the Beauty  
within another,  
it awakens  
the Beautiful  
within ourselves.

Stop, here, now.  
Take my hand,  
we have not far  
to go;  
for this path  
is already known.  
Let us walk  
over the bridge  
of Beauty together  
and gaze into  
the deep well  
of life,  
seeing all that  
has transpired.  
And with tears  
of joy  
and whispers  
of remembrance,  
we will  
travel into  
the Beautiful  
and  
beyond.

*Do what is healing to your spirit, and without effort you will bring the world healing in return.*

— Alan Cohen