

March Madness

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March is winter's sucker hole, and gladly I dive in.
Snowdrops and crocus jewel the lawn,
Hyacinth, jonquil and tulip sniff the air,
A hint of warmth in every breeze.

The flower beds are cleaned and wear new mulch,
Fallen branches cleared and burned,
Netting off the pond,
Stirring fishes from their torpor.

The Hazelnut begins to yawn,
Catkins stretching from their winter sleep,
Pendulous, languid, dancing in the wind,
Their ladies blooming scarlet, unnoticed on bare limbs.

Bikes off the rack, chains oiled, tires filled,
A month before the warblers migrate north.
On the horizon, dark clouds gather,
And springtime dreams run before the storm.

Summer Lease

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These are the days I most enjoy,
Here in my summer lease by the shore,
Rain dripping from the eaves, a book in my lap,
A small fire in the pot-bellied stove.

It is Spring, ahead of the season
When the beautiful young people
Arrive to show off their bodies along the boardwalk and the beach,
In the ageless mating dance that, at its heart, never changes;

When overweight fathers and vigilant mothers,
With unfocused children, sunburned and high on sugar,
Shop for saltwater taffy and tee shirts,
And postcards with pictures of some other beach;

When old people arrive with their beach chairs and memories
Of when they were those parents, or those children,
But usually, of when they were those beautiful young people,
In the ageless mating dance that, at its heart, never changes.

What will it Matter?

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What will it matter, in centuries to come,
That we have loved tonight?
Will the grass be less green, the sun shine less brightly,
Because we have stolen this moment?
Will nations fall, the rivers stop flowing,
Because we have cast aside the rules?

The strength of our love, the thunder of our passion,
Lives only within us.
It will not be noted in the earth's tomorrows,
Never etched on the mountain's brow.

So let us love while we love,
And if future generations are untouched,
We will carry the warmth of today
Into the winter of tomorrow.

And if our passions precede us to eternal bliss,
Today will live forever;
We will touch each other still
In our memories of youth.

A Soldier's Child

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My father arrived in an envelope most Wednesday afternoons.
I could feel my mother's pain when there was no mail,
No father from half a world away, whose face I could not recall,
Who was only the memory of a smell, a hug, a song at bedtime.

To me, the letter *was* my father,
His voice spoke through my mother's reading,
His hand had touched that paper, his pen had written those words
That came alive as I looked at the curves on the page,
Posted two weeks ago, answering Mother's questions of two weeks before that,
But for me, they were immediate and vital.

Mother carried each letter in her apron pocket until the next arrived,
When last week's letter would join the others, tied with a ribbon,
Placed in a box on the dresser, where I would go,
When nobody knew, to wonder at the box, and be with my father.