

Sparkle!

**Jimmie Harvey
& friends**

2014

*More heartfelt
thoughts and ideas
from
Jimmie Harvey &
Friends*

Published in the beautiful
Willamette Valley
Oregon
USA

January
2015



Copyright © 2014 Jimmie S. Harvey

Cover art by Michael A. Faris

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author(s).

Second Edition 2015

www.abouttimepublishing.com

A note from the editor

I am always pleasantly surprised toward the end of November. That's when I start getting last minute submissions from the most creative people who want to be included in *Jimmie Harvey & Friends*. It seems the pressure of a deadline will squeeze out the best in the best of us.

This year is no exception. We asked for Sparkle! and we got it! Between these pages you will find some beautiful thoughts, some strong opinions and some pretty good poetry, along with some shorts that I think most will enjoy.

Each year I take great pleasure in producing these books. It's a very warm way to reach out to those we know and love. But more than that, it is a way to express our feelings about things that matter in life, be it love for humanity, a stern perspective, or just a collection of randomly beautiful thoughts.

I hope that this book will inspire folks to write down their experiences, set them to rhyme, or paint a picture. Most of all, I hope it will help to bring us together and to appreciate the people around us.

So pour yourself a cup of whatever, curl up next to the fire and enjoy.

Best wishes,

Michael A. Faris
Editor
About Time Publishing
mfaris1950@gmail.com



Contributors

Annie Effiong.....	68
Claire Lemons.....	5
Edwina Taylor.....	x,xi,28
Heidi Sachet.....	42,45
James Burke.....	40
Jeff Wollman.....	50
Jimmie Harvey 1,6,8,10,16,20,23,48,49,54,57,60,62,64,66,70, 72,81,82,83	
Jim Stocker.....	34
Judie Bunch.....	14,18,24,28,38,52
Kevin Faris.....	13
Michael A. Faris.....	12,32,58
Pete Stallings.....	2
Ray Teplitz.....	26,30,36
Richard Howard.....	69,78
Robert Hill.....	51
Suzi Wollman.....	22,74,76
Veronica Yates.....	4

Contents

Author Biographies	x
Springtime.....	1
Just Me and the Trees.....	2
Inviolable	4
14 Years of Valentines.....	5
My Favorite Time of Year.....	6
Diamonds on the Bay.....	8
Hands.....	10
Hardahearin’.....	12
Selectivhearin’.....	13
Clothes Pin Dolls	14
The Birds Are Playing Hopscotch	16
Missy.....	18
The Conversation.....	20
Chaos’ Reward	22
I Love Winter.....	23
Devin.....	24
A Fractured Tale	26
Lacey	28
Empires	30
Sentimental Joe.....	32
A Lifetime of Clouds.....	34
Uunforeseen.....	36
Symphony.....	37
Please Excuse Us, Estella Hilliard.....	38

Island Anchor.....	40
Fishes & Souls	42
First Love	45
In Charge	48
Pinnacles	49
Ferguson.....	50
Seeing.....	51
Waterfall.....	52
Life as it's Lived.....	54
Autumn	57
Fickle Fangle	58
Silver Filigree	60
What Holds Up That Little Cloud?	62
What You Didn't Say	64
Threshold.....	66
The Hospice Nurse	68
Dead Dog.....	69
I'm Purple Today	70
The Cobblestones of Péroutes	72
The Birth	74
The Bride.....	76
Birds of a Feather	78
The First Snow	81
Don't Stop the Music	82
In the Attic of My Mind.....	83

Author Biographies

Jimmie Harvey Retired, living at Rogue Valley Manor in Oregon, after many years managing a temporary payroll processing center in California. She has published one novel and several short stories, along with many poetry books.



Dr. James Burke is a retired physician and Naval Officer. He was stationed on Guam in the 1980's, which is the source of his novel materials.

Judie Bunch has been writing most of her life. Many of Judie's stories were written while she was a commentator for Jefferson Public Radio. She and husband Jerry raised four children in Ashland, Oregon and have lived in the Rogue Valley 44 years. They now take care of 5 acres and 10 chickens near Talent, Oregon.



Veronica Yates is a writer by choice, a journalist, columnist and editor by experience, and a poet by inescapability. Her poems have appeared in the Syracuse Cultural Workers annual publication, Women Artists Datebook, Rosebud magazine, Writers' Journal, Lucidity Poetry Journal. She lives in Eugene, Oregon, where she finds joyful satisfaction in turning her attention daily toward the miracles in the everyday of things.



Photo: Edwina Taylor



Michael A. Faris is owner and editor for About Time Publishing. He binds books, writes poems and stories, keeps bees and a garden in the country. He lives with his wife, Judy, just outside Junction City, Oregon.

Heidemarie Sachet was born in Prague. Grew up in Germany within spitting distance of Loraine, France. Went to work and studied in Paris at age 19. After receiving her Diploma, she did the same in London. Worked as a translator in Northern Germany. Emigrated to the U.S. in 1965, and has lived in Eugene since December 1969. She is working on her memoirs.



Pete Stallings

lives in Staunton, Va and works as a machinist. He plays guitar in three bands all over the country.

Kevin Faris lives in Ft. White, FL and is Aircraft Maintenance Supervisor for The University of Florida Gators Athletic Team.

Robert M. Hill holds a PhD in Physics - Duke University: 1953 Worked at SRI International doing research in the Physics of Chemistry funded by US. He also served as a Program Officer at National Science Foundation and later retired as Chief Scientist at SRI.

We also wish to thank these authors:

Claire Lemons

Ray Teplitz

Jeff Wollman

Suzi Wollman

Paul Williams

Richard Howard

Annie Effiong



Photo: Edwina Taylor



Springtime

Walking up the mountainside
On a late spring afternoon
Caressed by a soft breeze
Perfumed by
Opening spring flowers.
Life is waking
Reaching out
Touching me,
Welcoming me
Assuring me
That life can be good.
Alone, I gather in
Softness, gentleness,
Happiness.
My heart sings!
Perfection all around!
What did I do
To deserve this beauty?
Why is my life so good?
I don't know!
I feel like
The luckiest person
On this earth!
My life
SPARKLES!!

—Jimmie Harvey

Just Me and the Trees

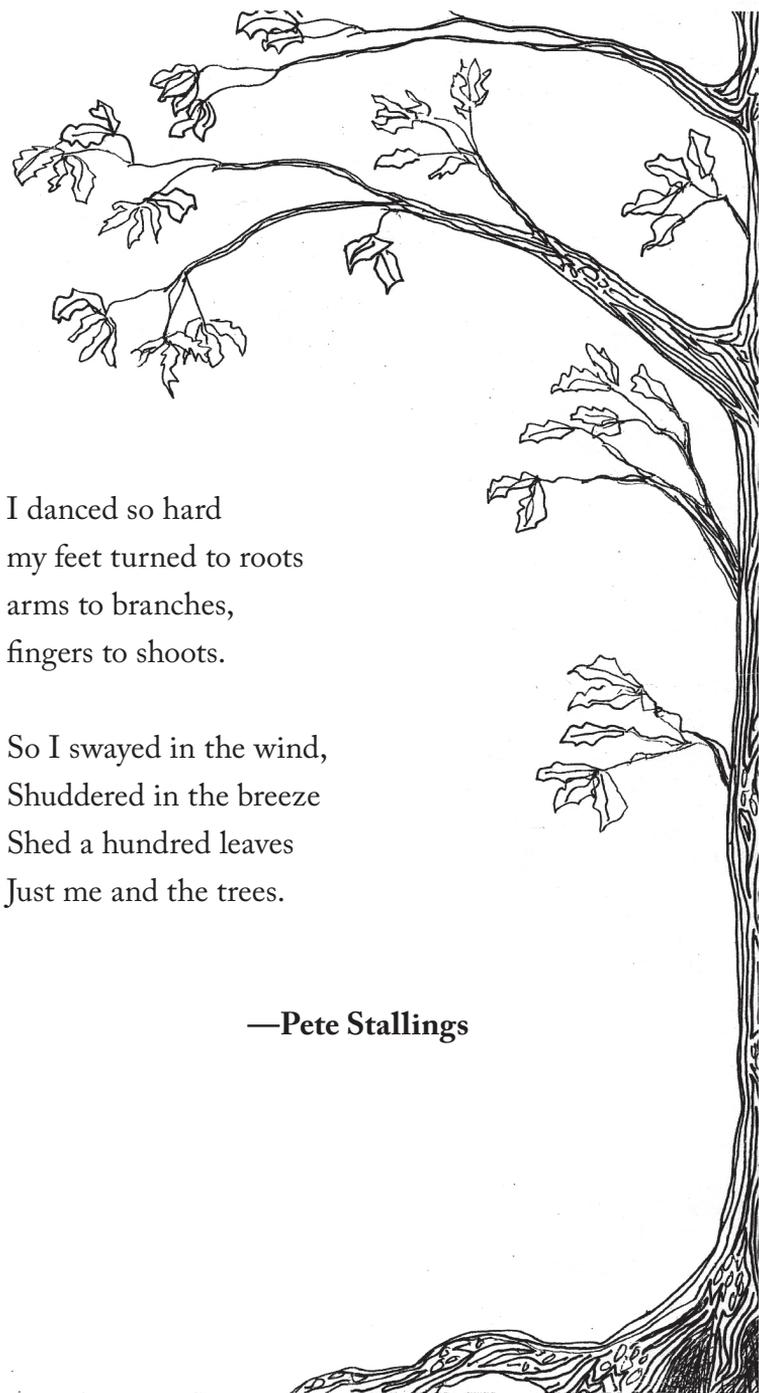


Unloaded my pistol
Drained the gas from my car
I started out walking
to see how far.

I walked past the houses
I walked past the roads
I stumbled over mountains
Broke a couple of bones.

I swam through the river
and spoke to the fish
They told me to continue
because that was their wish.

I came to some trees
In the middle of some trees
we all started dancing
just me and the trees.



I danced so hard
my feet turned to roots
arms to branches,
fingers to shoots.

So I swayed in the wind,
Shuddered in the breeze
Shed a hundred leaves
Just me and the trees.

—Pete Stallings

Inviolable

Only the purple iris holds
the power, makes me stop
and see again the first one plucked
from snow and ice in a blinding
late spring blizzard unforeseen.

Over generations past and passing,
I still chase the sense of it—
this violet symbol for all of what
remains unlived in me.

It must be somewhere close: tall of stem
erupting from the rime-flecked earth—
this ruffling flag of purple feathers
waving its mind at the world
hardened by nothing.

—Veronica Yates



14 Years of Valentines

While today at the store
I thought that for sure
I should buy my sweet husband some Reese's

Minis bound in a box
Written words of sweet talk
And not those measly cheap dumb Reese's Pieces!

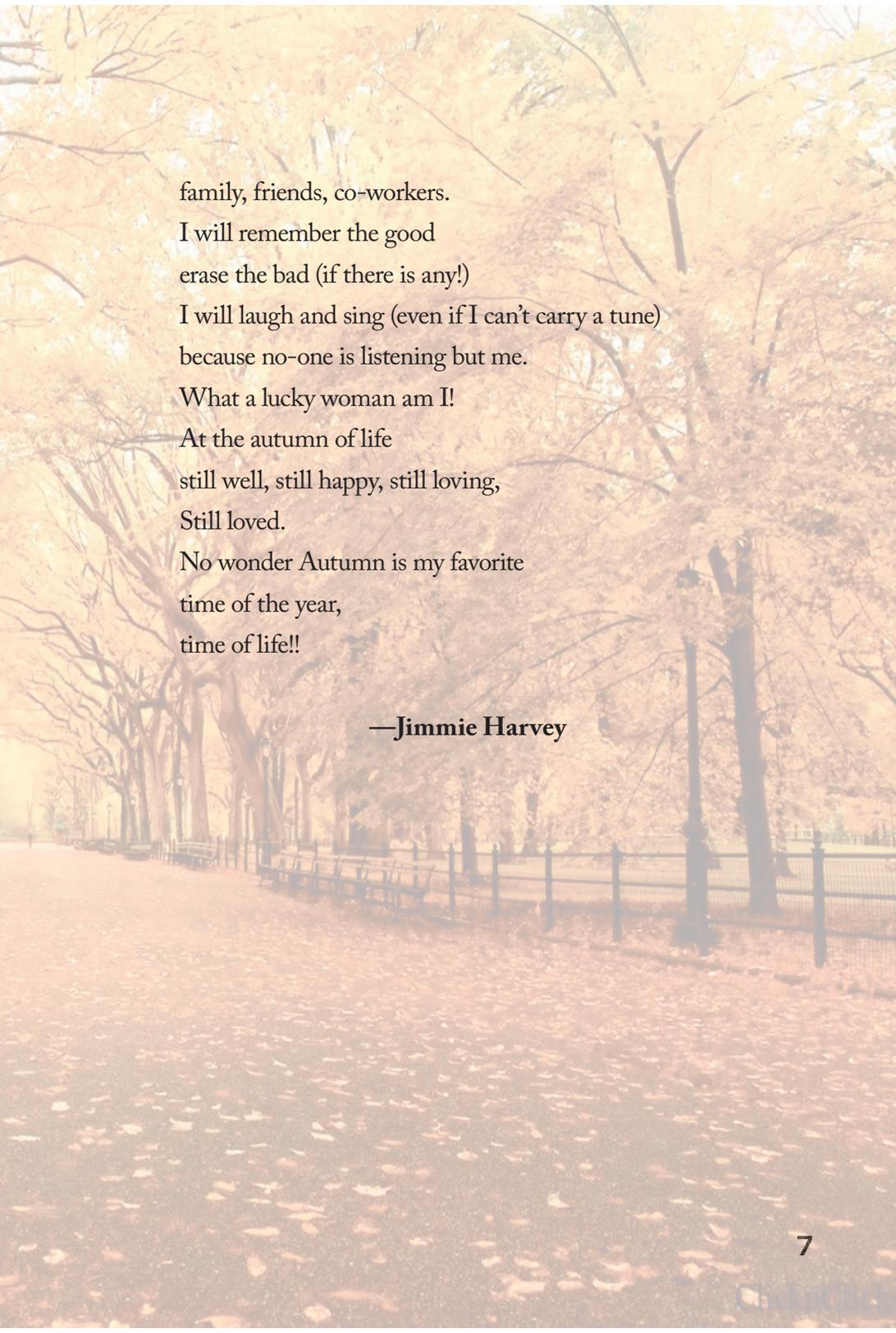
But then I stopped short
For I remembered the sort
Of person that I claim to be

So I turned and I walked
For tomorrow that box
Will be clearanced, 'least down by fifty!

—Claire Lemons

My Favorite Time of Year

My favorite time of the year!
The clammy summer heat is gone,
the air is crisp and cool
the sun has pulled back into her cave
resting, not pushing her dominance on us.
We rise in the morning smiling
looking forward to the day..
the day in which we can do
whatever we want, unimpeded by heat.
I smile, stretch, breathe deeply.
Life is good!
Happiness is mine!
I can share my good fortune
with all who cross my path.
And they share their good will, their smiles,
their reaching out to me.
What did I do to deserve such a life?
To reach out only to find someone
reaching out to me!
It's not only the autumn of the year
but the autumn of my life!
I have worked hard,
producing, creating, making things work
and now I can relax, sit back
enjoy the beautiful people who have
enriched my life —



family, friends, co-workers.
I will remember the good
erase the bad (if there is any!)
I will laugh and sing (even if I can't carry a tune)
because no-one is listening but me.
What a lucky woman am I!
At the autumn of life
still well, still happy, still loving,
Still loved.
No wonder Autumn is my favorite
time of the year,
time of life!!

—Jimmie Harvey

Diamonds on the Bay

There are diamonds on the bay
glittering, sparkling, twinkling,
shimmering, scintillating diamonds.

Green hills change to slate
as they climb into the distance
upward, outward, reaching
toward a far horizon.

A road winds through the trees
disappears into the mountain.
Here and there a sprinkling
of red and brown and russet
rooftops scar the placid green.
But there are diamonds on the bay.

Tied up to the dockside
sailboats sit at anchor,
gently rocking, softly bumping
eager to go sailing.
The time is right;
a fresh breeze beckons
fills a flapping canvas.
Adventure bids the sailor come
explore the open water.
And there are diamonds on the bay.

The elegant tern seeks breakfast
wheeling, racing, calling, diving.
Again, and then again, he dives
retrieves his silent, destined meal.

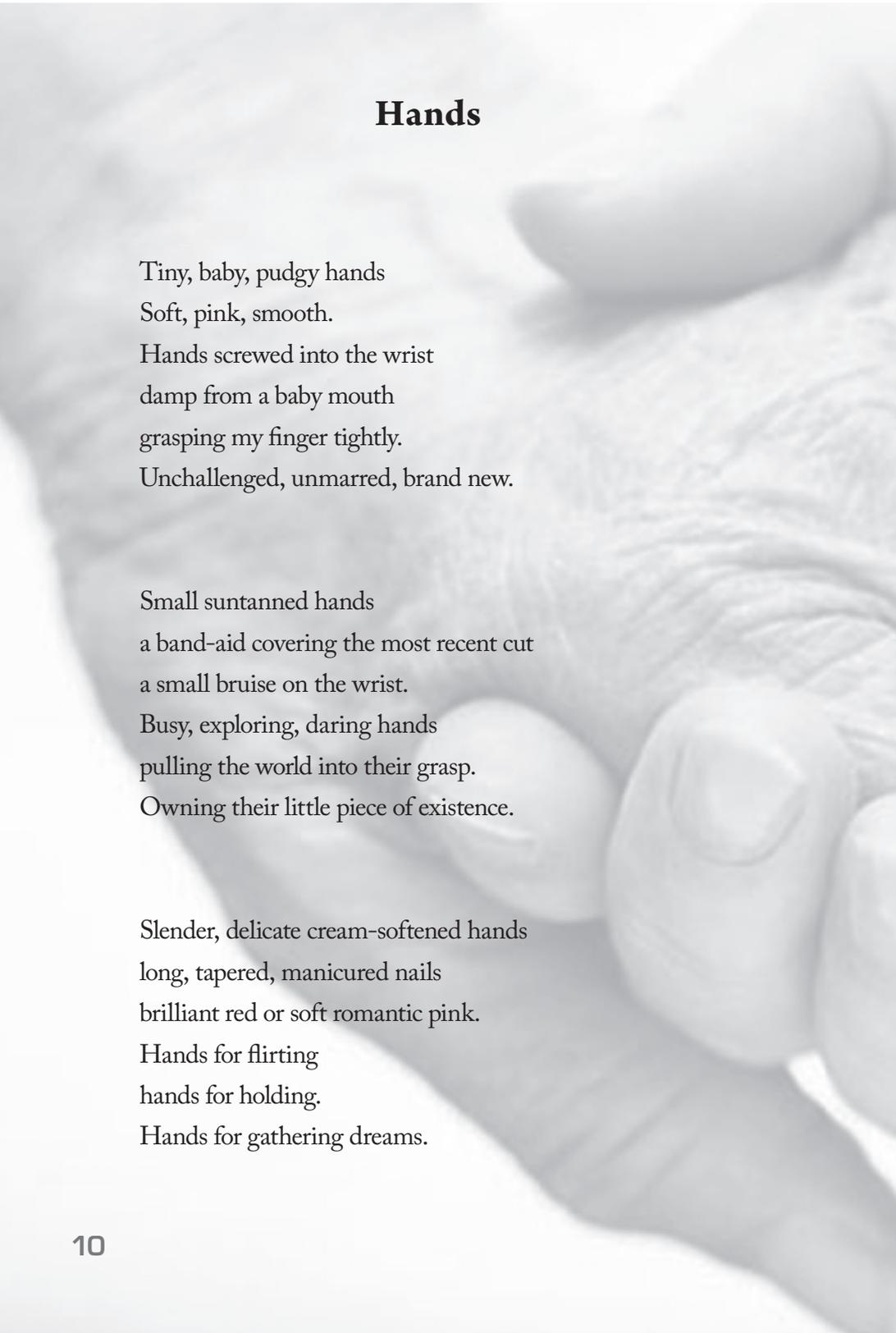
On every post a cormorant
in prehistoric posture
presents his spread-out wings to dry;
while the willet chooses daintily
among the morsels in the surf.
And there are diamonds on the bay.



I walk along the shoreline
exulting in the morning breeze.
The sky is cloudless, brilliant blue
and I absorb the beauty
of sky and rocks, of sea and birds.
It's good to be alive today.
The world is such a wondrous place!
It's there to see, to smell and hear
and I am rich beyond belief.
For there are diamonds on the bay!

Yes, I'll go slumming.
Come with me! Get your book
a pencil and a paperback.
We'll talk together, just we three
you, the author of the book, and me.
We'll vivisect the author's thoughts
explore the hidden meanings there.
We'll add our own reflections so
our thoughts are intertwined with his
the value of the work's enhanced
and our book becomes our treasure.

—Jimmie Harvey

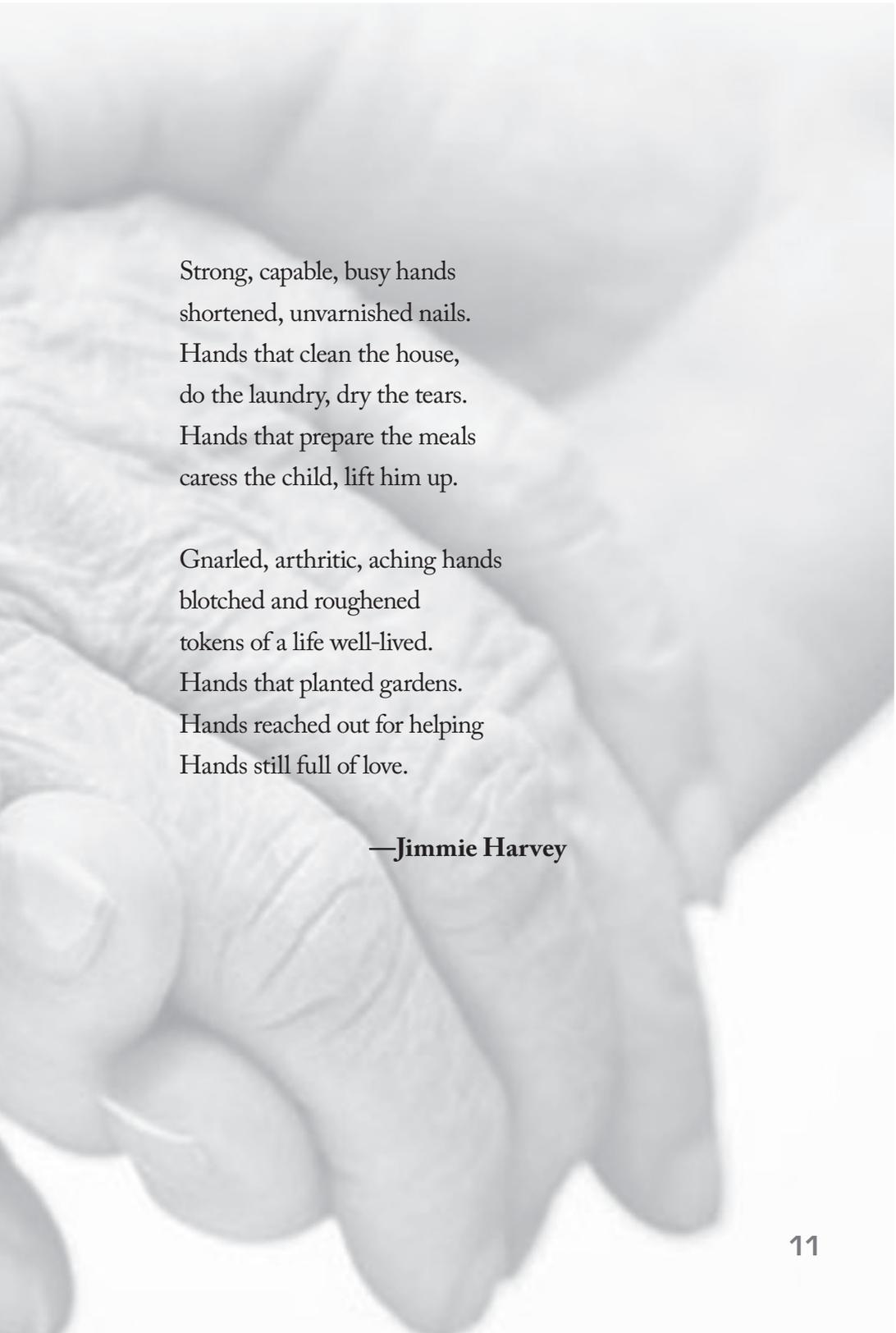


Hands

Tiny, baby, pudgy hands
Soft, pink, smooth.
Hands screwed into the wrist
damp from a baby mouth
grasping my finger tightly.
Unchallenged, unmarred, brand new.

Small suntanned hands
a band-aid covering the most recent cut
a small bruise on the wrist.
Busy, exploring, daring hands
pulling the world into their grasp.
Owning their little piece of existence.

Slender, delicate cream-softened hands
long, tapered, manicured nails
brilliant red or soft romantic pink.
Hands for flirting
hands for holding.
Hands for gathering dreams.



Strong, capable, busy hands
shortened, unvarnished nails.
Hands that clean the house,
do the laundry, dry the tears.
Hands that prepare the meals
caress the child, lift him up.

Gnarled, arthritic, aching hands
blotched and roughened
tokens of a life well-lived.
Hands that planted gardens.
Hands reached out for helping
Hands still full of love.

—**Jimmie Harvey**

Hardahearin'

I beg your pardon
Excuse me, Dear
I heard your voice
But the words weren't clear

I missed the message
You were thinking of
I didn't catch
Your words of love

I didn't fathom
Your thoughts of praise
Perhaps I missed
Your loving gaze

But please bear with me
Understand
Though I'm hard of hearing
I'm still your Man

Each new year brings surprises
New aches and pains abound
Amidst my failing senses
Some words are garbled sounds

Just grunt so I will notice
I'll turn to you and then
If you will just speak clearly
the message will go in

—Michael A. Faris

Selectivhearin'

I beg to differ I said to her
That's not what you said at all

I think you've mis-remembered
So lose that dreadful pall

My hearing isn't faulty
It's my mind that sorts it through

Next time write an email
You said three beers, not just two!

—Kevin Faris

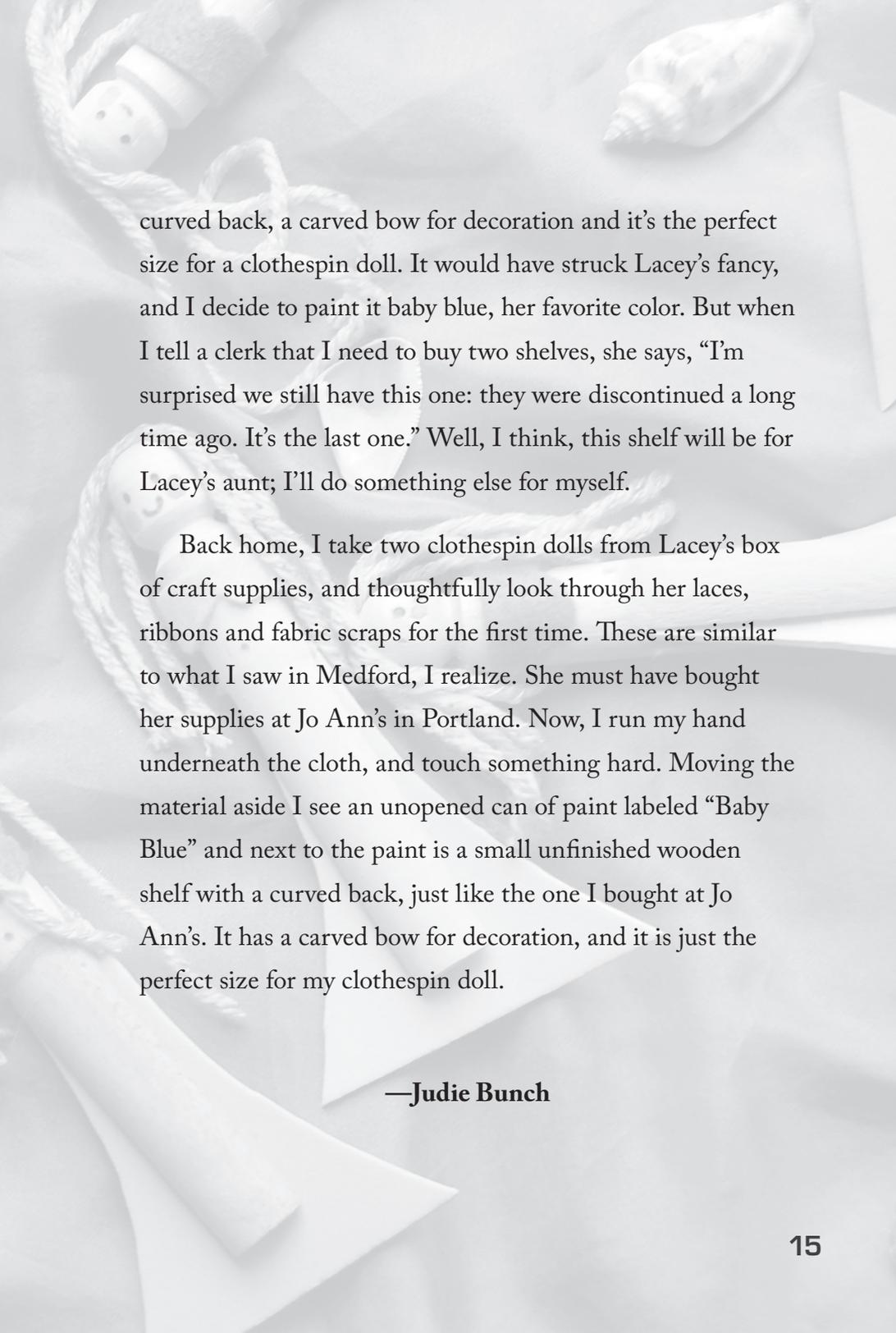
Clothes Pin Dolls

“Which one would you like to have, Mom?” Lacey asked when we visited her in Portland. I couldn’t decide. All the clothespin dolls she was making for Christmas gifts were beautiful: 5 inches tall, golden curly hair tied back with green ribbons, dresses of red taffeta, tiny bouquet of flowers held in their pipe cleaner hands.

“You choose one for me—surprise me at Christmas,” I said. Christmas did not come for us that year. Our 29 year old daughter died December 5.

We brought her belongings home, and stored her plastic box of crafts with the dolls tucked inside, in a corner of our workshop. It sat unopened for almost 5 years, but now, I decide to display two of the clothes pin dolls; one for me and one to give her Aunt Pennie. I go to Jo Ann’s Fabrics and Crafts in Medford, wander through rows of brightly colored fabrics, past shelves of ribbons and laces on my way to the back of the store. How would Lacey display her little dolls, I wonder?

In the craft section, I look through a variety of unfinished shelves for sale and it comes to mind, she would have wanted her dolls where they could be touched. On a close-out table, I pick up a small wooden shelf marked half price. It has a



curved back, a carved bow for decoration and it's the perfect size for a clothespin doll. It would have struck Lacey's fancy, and I decide to paint it baby blue, her favorite color. But when I tell a clerk that I need to buy two shelves, she says, "I'm surprised we still have this one: they were discontinued a long time ago. It's the last one." Well, I think, this shelf will be for Lacey's aunt; I'll do something else for myself.

Back home, I take two clothespin dolls from Lacey's box of craft supplies, and thoughtfully look through her laces, ribbons and fabric scraps for the first time. These are similar to what I saw in Medford, I realize. She must have bought her supplies at Jo Ann's in Portland. Now, I run my hand underneath the cloth, and touch something hard. Moving the material aside I see an unopened can of paint labeled "Baby Blue" and next to the paint is a small unfinished wooden shelf with a curved back, just like the one I bought at Jo Ann's. It has a carved bow for decoration, and it is just the perfect size for my clothespin doll.

—Judie Bunch

The Birds Are Playing Hopscotch

The birds are playing hopscotch
in my yard.

Break of dawn
wrens chatter softly
to each other,
hopscotching merrily
in the freshening air,
welcoming the day.

They move out.

Red winged black birds
appear
searching busily for worms,
laughing, hopscotching
their morning away until
Blue jays, tall and strutting
hopscotch across the yard,
waving to each other
scattering the black birds,
claiming territory as their own.
They chatter, smiling, daring,
laying claim.

As the day progresses
birds of different feather
arrive, testing the territory
hopscotching,
laughing, chirping, eating.
They don't know
the territory is mine!
But I gladly share.
They entertain me.
I listen, watch
happy to allow them
to eat, hopscotch, laugh
entertain me.

—Jimmie Harvey

Missy

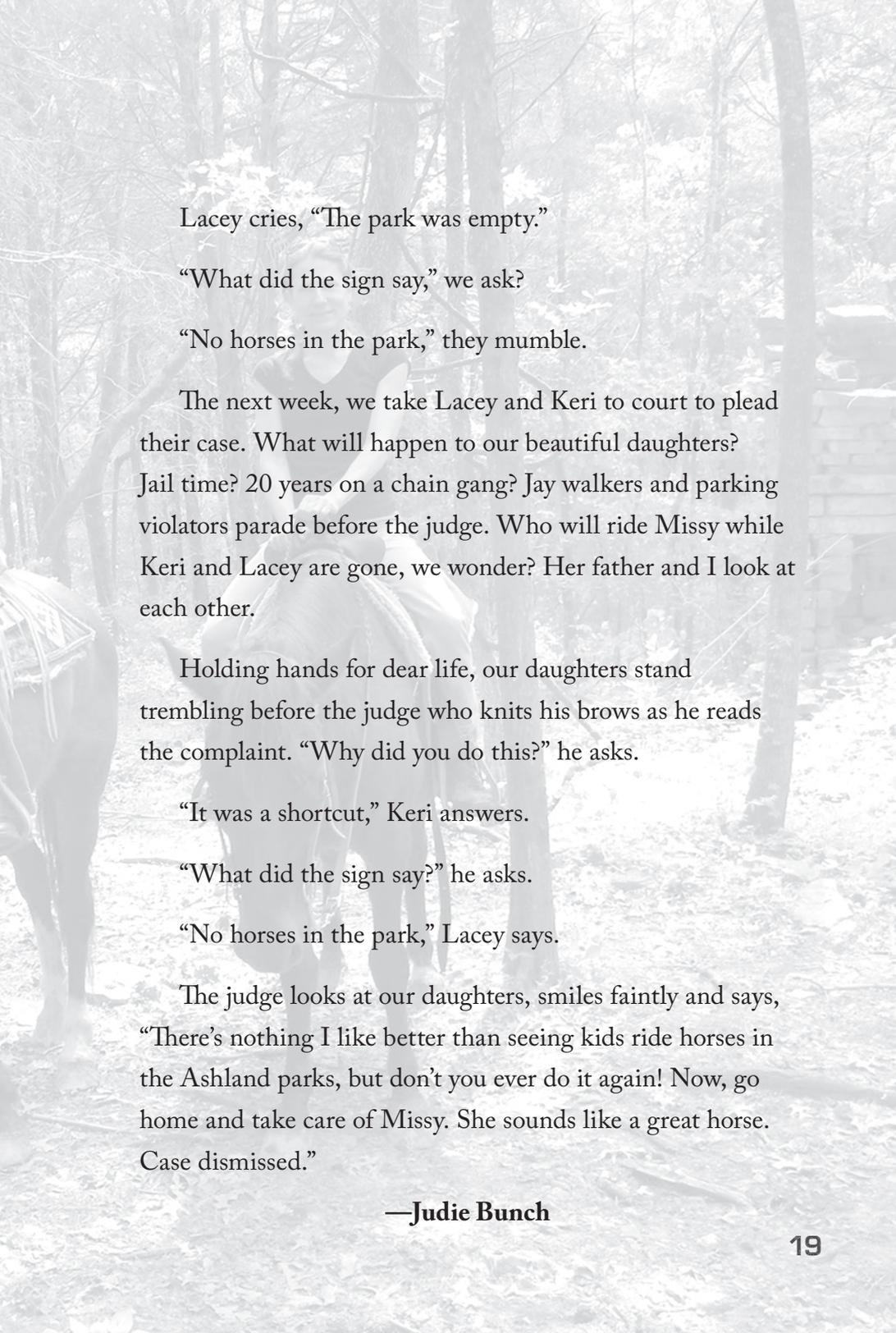
An Ashland policeman drives up Francis Lane in Ashland, stops beside our house on Windsor and knocks at the front door. He says he's sorry he has to do this, opens a little book, writes something, tears the page out and hands it to our daughters, 16 year old Lacey and 10 year old Keri.

Our girls have a love affair with a big, gentle quarter horse named Missy. "We'll buy her ourselves," they said, and earned \$300 doing odd jobs. "But we have no room for a horse in our backyard," we said, so they found a pasture up the hill from us on Walker.

"We'll take care of her ourselves," they promised, and they do. Every day rain or shine, Lacey on the front, Keri on the back of their wonderful horse, they ride around the block from Walker, down Garden Lane, past the little park across from the Presbyterian Church, come to our driveway to brush her, then take Missy back up Walker and bed her down. We are very proud of our daughters. "You are so responsible," we tell them.

But now, we are stunned! Our girls have been issued a complaint from a neighbor living near the park. Lacey tells us she yelled from her window, "You can't do that!"

Keri looks down at the floor and says, "We just took a shortcut."



Lacey cries, “The park was empty.”

“What did the sign say,” we ask?

“No horses in the park,” they mumble.

The next week, we take Lacey and Keri to court to plead their case. What will happen to our beautiful daughters? Jail time? 20 years on a chain gang? Jay walkers and parking violators parade before the judge. Who will ride Missy while Keri and Lacey are gone, we wonder? Her father and I look at each other.

Holding hands for dear life, our daughters stand trembling before the judge who knits his brows as he reads the complaint. “Why did you do this?” he asks.

“It was a shortcut,” Keri answers.

“What did the sign say?” he asks.

“No horses in the park,” Lacey says.

The judge looks at our daughters, smiles faintly and says, “There’s nothing I like better than seeing kids ride horses in the Ashland parks, but don’t you ever do it again! Now, go home and take care of Missy. She sounds like a great horse. Case dismissed.”

—Judie Bunch

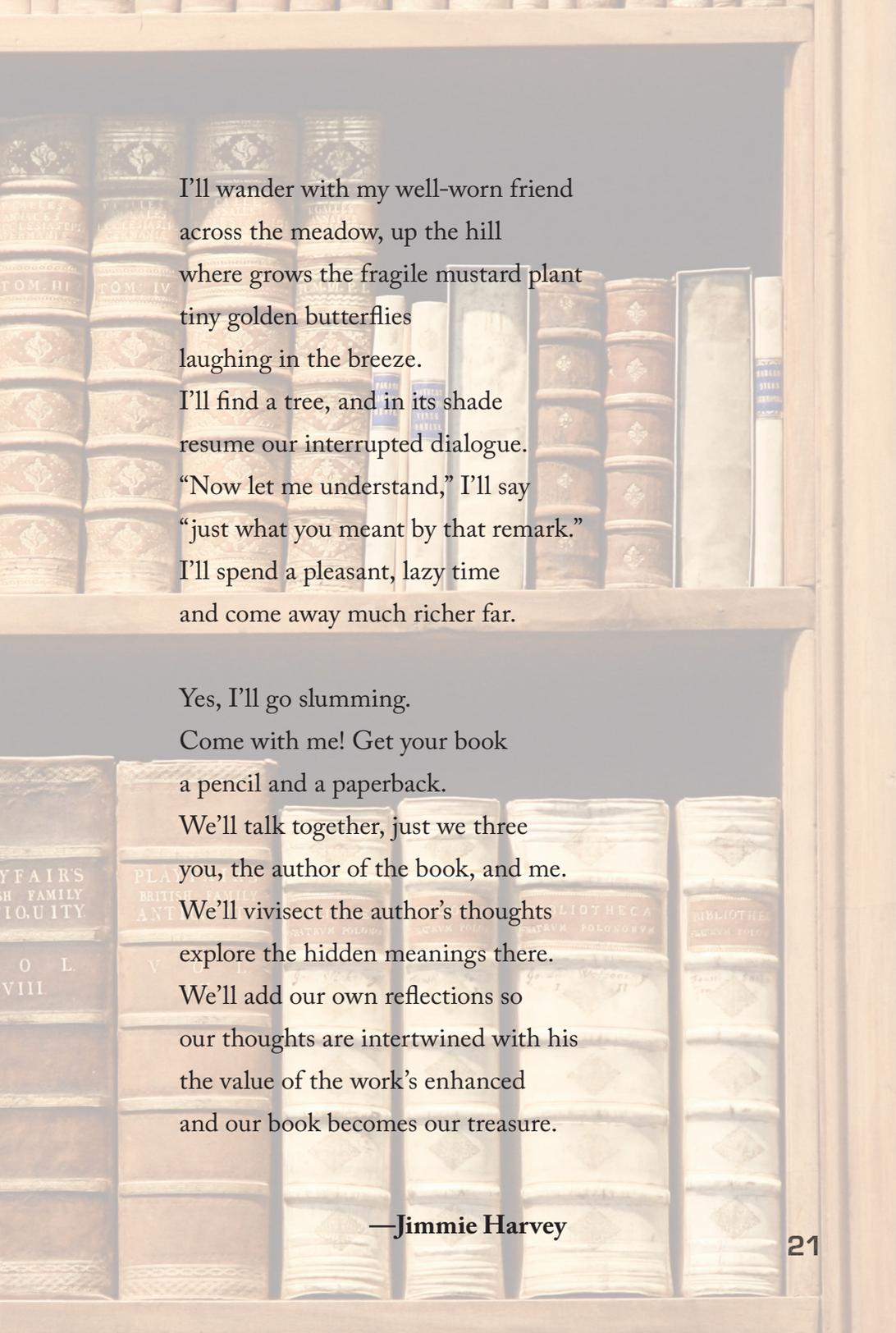
The Conversation

Lined up primly, leather-bound
pristine, “valuable,” handle with care
unmarked, they smell bookstore new.

No turned down corners mark
the progress of the reader.
no underline to say “this — yes, this!”
They are sterile, unrevealed
their thoughts unshared, a monologue
their passion, their “consider this” untouched
like people growing old
alone in sumptuous palaces.

But I’ll go slumming
among the disarray of paperbacks
among the friendly give and take
of two way conversation.

The margin scrawl that questions
“Why?” or “What means this?”
the underlines that emphasize agreement
or draw attention to a central thought
my contribution to the talk
in cryptic notes, a challenge thrown
or a smile in full agreement.



I'll wander with my well-worn friend
across the meadow, up the hill
where grows the fragile mustard plant
tiny golden butterflies
laughing in the breeze.

I'll find a tree, and in its shade
resume our interrupted dialogue.
“Now let me understand,” I'll say
“just what you meant by that remark.”
I'll spend a pleasant, lazy time
and come away much richer far.

Yes, I'll go slumming.
Come with me! Get your book
a pencil and a paperback.
We'll talk together, just we three
you, the author of the book, and me.
We'll vivisect the author's thoughts
explore the hidden meanings there.
We'll add our own reflections so
our thoughts are intertwined with his
the value of the work's enhanced
and our book becomes our treasure.

—Jimmie Harvey

Chaos' Reward

Little ponies gallop
Up and down the hall;
Towers build up slowly
And in a moment fall;
Sounds of laughter echo
Or tears begin to flow;
But silence is a warning
Things are about to blow!
Water splashes gaily
And splatters on the floor;
Closets fill with toys
That tumble out the door;
Shoes are scattered everywhere
Yet socks all disappear;
But when all gets too quiet
Disaster's looming near!
Books are strewn from hem to haw
And blocks are tumbling fast;
But finally they're all asleep
And rest can come at last.

—Suzi Wollman (Memaw)

I Love Winter

I like the winter time
the rime-coated window panes
the wind hugging our house
gathering us all inside
where love glows like a candle.

I love a fireplace
the rose-colored heart of it
the smoke scenting the room
warming our hands and feet
drawing us closer together.

And I love the kitchen smells
the pumpkin pie and cinnamon smells
whetting our appetites
(as though they need whetting!)
satisfying our souls.

Springtime is beautiful
and fall is spectacular
summer's adventurous
but winter brings us closer
closer to belonging.

—Jimmie Harvey

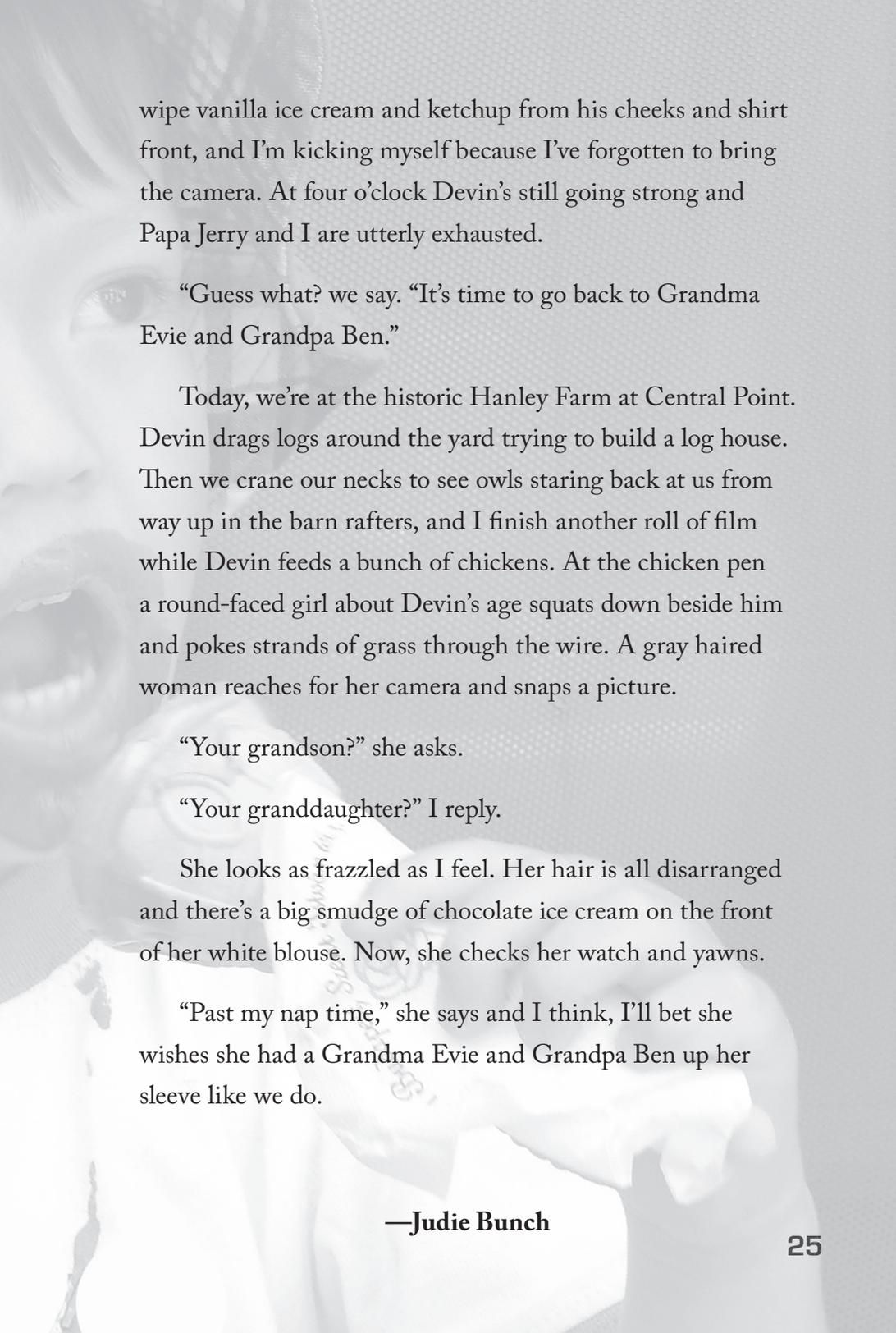
Devin

Papa Jerry and I are sharing our five-year-old grandson Devin's annual visit with Grandma Evie and Grandpa Ben in Central Point, and it's our turn to have him for a few days.

Monday, we walk the dog then ride the bus to the Ashland library to read Dr. Seuss' Green Eggs and Ham. We eat chicken and grapes at Lithia Park and swing, "High, high, higher, Papa Jerry!" at the playground. My camera goes click, click, click at every stop. By seven at night Papa Jerry and I are tuckered out and looking forward to bedtime but Devin hasn't brought his pajamas. We're disappointed that he doesn't want to sleep over so we drive him back to Grandma Evie and Grandpa Ben.

Tuesday, we wrestle the dog, kick a ball around the yard, eat peanut butter sandwiches, mop up grape juice, play in the fountain at Ashland's water park, put our left foot in, our left foot out, do the hokey pokey and turn ourselves around a million times, and I take some great snapshots of him. By six o'clock at night our muscles are aching and Devin wants to go back to Grandma Evie and Grandpa Ben. Papa Jerry and I are visualizing a soothing evening in the hot tub so we say, "well...ok..." and hope we sound convincingly reluctant.

Wednesday, Papa Jerry and I sleep until ten, eat a leisurely breakfast and pick up our grandson around noon. We go to Jacksonville and ride the trolley, play in the sand at a park,



wipe vanilla ice cream and ketchup from his cheeks and shirt front, and I'm kicking myself because I've forgotten to bring the camera. At four o'clock Devin's still going strong and Papa Jerry and I are utterly exhausted.

"Guess what? we say. "It's time to go back to Grandma Evie and Grandpa Ben."

Today, we're at the historic Hanley Farm at Central Point. Devin drags logs around the yard trying to build a log house. Then we crane our necks to see owls staring back at us from way up in the barn rafters, and I finish another roll of film while Devin feeds a bunch of chickens. At the chicken pen a round-faced girl about Devin's age squats down beside him and pokes strands of grass through the wire. A gray haired woman reaches for her camera and snaps a picture.

"Your grandson?" she asks.

"Your granddaughter?" I reply.

She looks as frazzled as I feel. Her hair is all disarranged and there's a big smudge of chocolate ice cream on the front of her white blouse. Now, she checks her watch and yawns.

"Past my nap time," she says and I think, I'll bet she wishes she had a Grandma Evie and Grandpa Ben up her sleeve like we do.

—Judie Bunch

A Fractured Tale

A healed fracture was found in the arm bone (I've forgotten which) of a prehistoric hominid, which means that the creature was many thousands of years old. Hominids are human-like creatures, if you didn't know already. You have correctly inferred from this finding, that the injured creature was cared for, because we know that healing fractures takes time, weeks to months, depending on attendant circumstances; infection and other complications, nutritional status, age, availability of consulting orthopedist, etc.

We can probably safely infer that there must have been at least three of them, because only two would have put them at a serious disadvantage in the wilderness of the African Savannah. So, how did they know? That question suggests that they "knew" from previous experience. So, hominids had been doing this for some time, taking care of each other, even before the golden rules of human cultures, perhaps, even before God, because no one supposes that hominids knew about God, yet.

But, if they knew about caring for the injured, like lionesses caring for injured cubs, or mother elephants caring for abnormal knees in babes, but getting them up, anyway, then they must have worked out the technology of caring for broken bones: immobilization? Protection? Pain relief? Did they know about pot, or poppy seeds?

Imagine, they, who preceded us, knew enough to care and take care of each other. What would they think of our “progress?”

Have you looked around you? Have you looked inside?

—Ray Teplitz

Lacey

All over Ashland there are reminders of our daughter Lacey: the church nursery when she was a baby, the kindergarten at Briscoe School, the neighborhood where she played, fields where she and her sister rode horses, Geppetto's, her favorite restaurant, the Unicorn, her favorite store.

Everywhere I go, I can still hear her laughter, her voice—"Hey, Mom!" —the playground at Lithia Park where we swung her as a child, where she in turn played with her little son; the same playground we took him after she died. Ashland, then Talent has been home for 35 years. Most of our memories are wonderful; others are sad, and sometimes the hurt is more than I can stand.

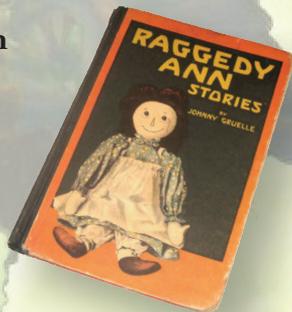
"Lets go out of town," I say.... "Just for a little while where there aren't any memories"; so this weekend her dad and I drive to Springfield near Eugene to antique shop. The sun is shining and in a field near Springfield, two young girls are jumping their horses. In town we pass a park where moms and dads are swinging children.

Toward the end of the day, I'm in the back of a collectibles shop looking through some old Raggedy Ann books when a tall, blonde young woman, a little boy about our grandson's age, and a grandmotherly woman slowly make

their way toward the book shelves. The mother stops to look at some ceramic dog figurines, and takes hold of her son's hand. "We don't touch. We just look," she says softly. Now, the grandmotherly woman moves past me, browses the book shelves, removes a book, turns the pages, laughs, then calls out, "Oh Lacey, come here! You must see this!!"

Oh my! I shut my eyes, take a deep breath, and start to tremble. Quietly, I put the Raggedy Ann book back on the shelf then turn to leave. I would love to ask the young woman how she came to be named Lacey. I would love to tell her what a beautiful name she has. And, of course, I would love to tell them that we had a daughter with the same name but I won't intrude on their happy world. Outside, my husband waits for me on a bench, dozing. I tap him on the shoulder, and he opens his eyes. "Ready?" he asks. "Yes," I say. "Let's go home."

—Judie Bunch

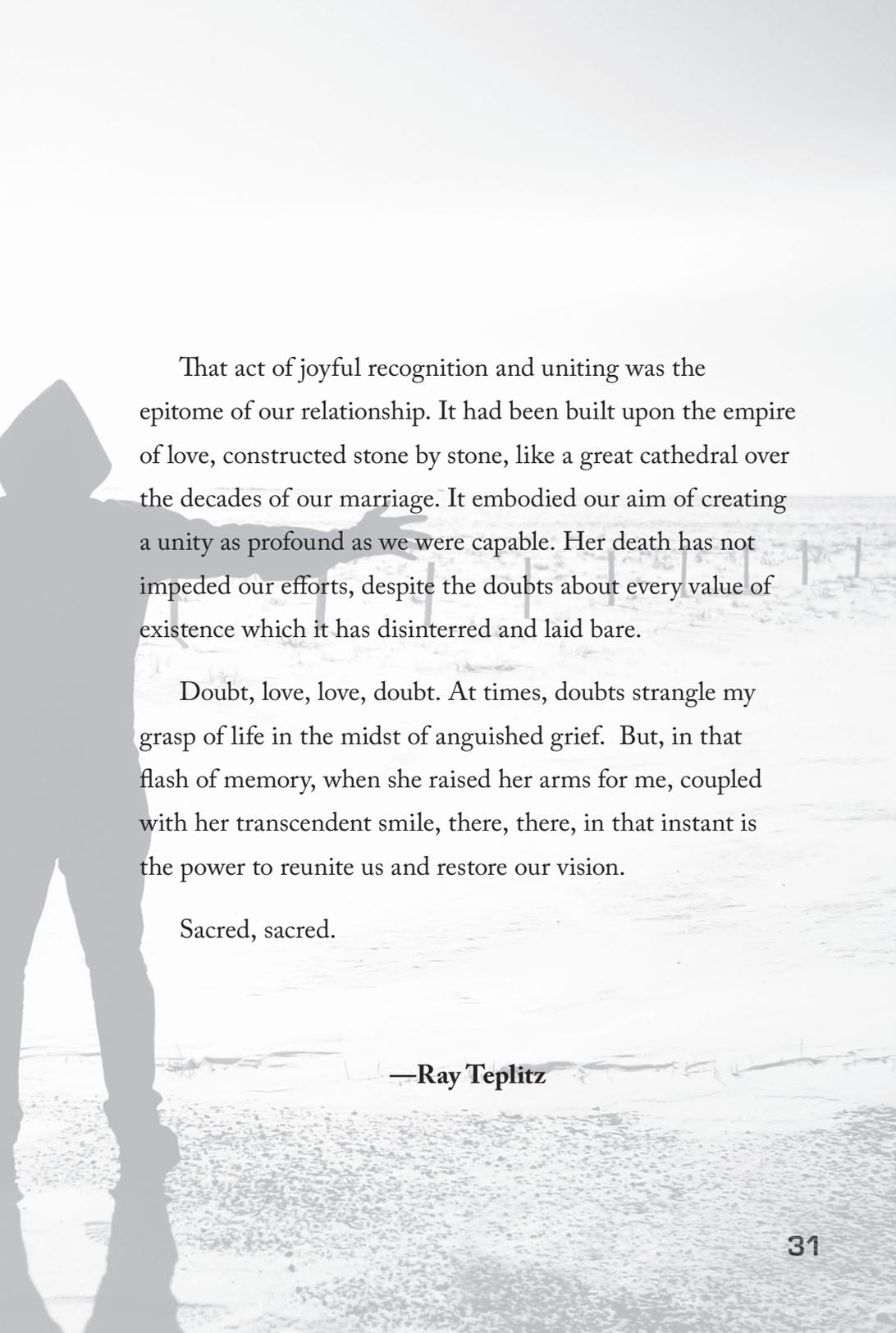


Empires

What more can be said about grief or love? Life is always mixed with some grief, for loss, Life's counterpoint, follows us at all times. After the many years of love in a life perhaps too long, questions arise. Is love real or just a fiction of mere self-interest? Is this grief I feel, or self-indulgence? All of life's temptations seem at times of doubtful pursuit.

Late in our lives, Marlyn and I became separated by our illnesses. She required more care than mine allowed. Then, she became a patient in our community's health center.

On one of my daily visits, I entered her room to find her in animated discussion with an aide. I sped to her side and on seeing me, she turned and raised her arms, smiling for the anticipated embrace and the kisses that followed (and have not yet stopped).



That act of joyful recognition and uniting was the epitome of our relationship. It had been built upon the empire of love, constructed stone by stone, like a great cathedral over the decades of our marriage. It embodied our aim of creating a unity as profound as we were capable. Her death has not impeded our efforts, despite the doubts about every value of existence which it has disinterred and laid bare.

Doubt, love, love, doubt. At times, doubts strangle my grasp of life in the midst of anguished grief. But, in that flash of memory, when she raised her arms for me, coupled with her transcendent smile, there, there, in that instant is the power to reunite us and restore our vision.

Sacred, sacred.

—Ray Teplitz

Sentimental Joe

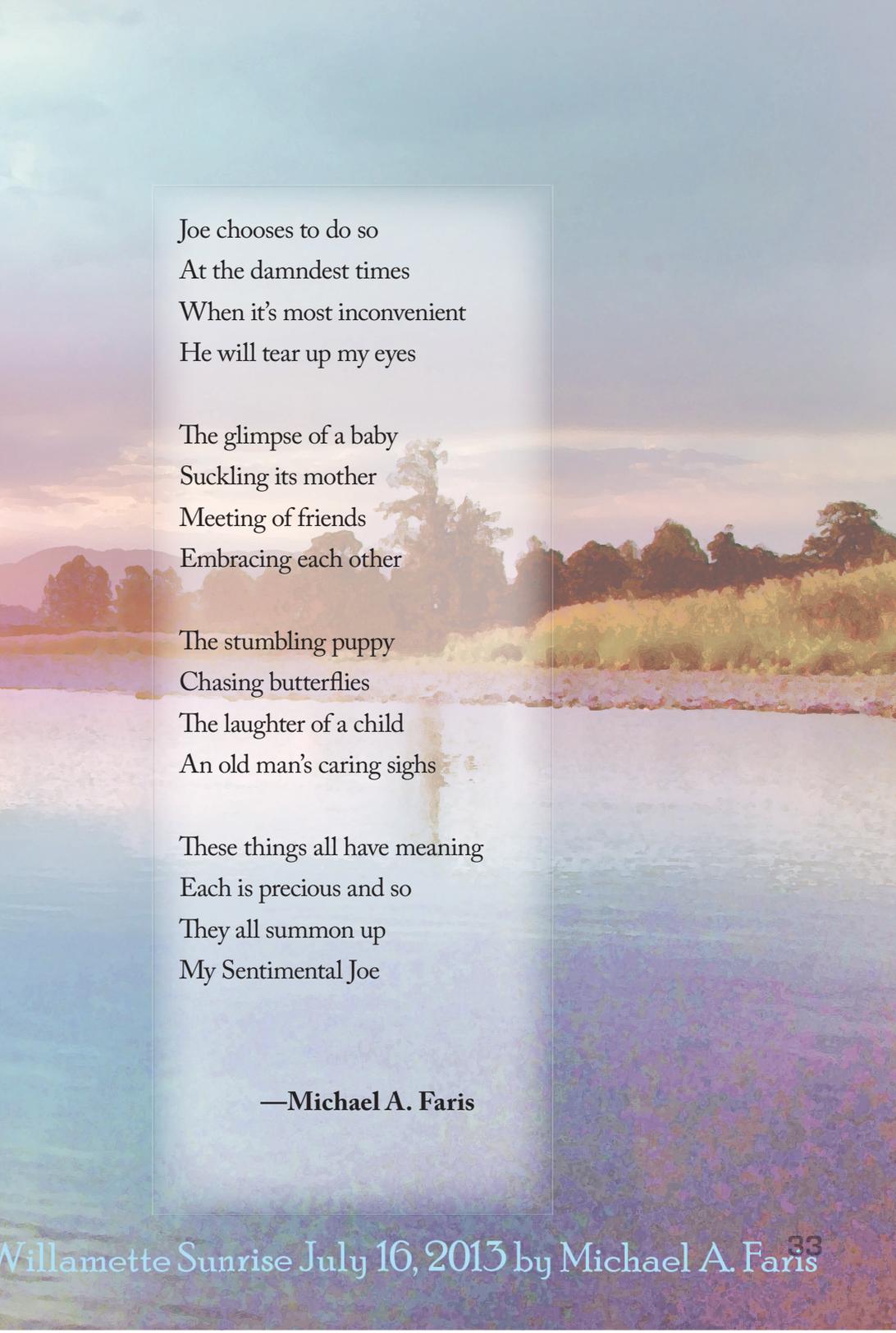
A constant companion
is Sentimental Joe
Compassionate and caring
A gentle sort of soul

Often in shadow
His face soft and mellow
Ever in the background
A quiet sort of fellow

Dredging up memories
Recalling at last
Old friends and lovers
Happenings past

A subtle suggestion
A favorite tune
A fleeting fragrance
Sweet perfume

Sentimental Joe will just appear
Omnipresent - standing near
Quivering chin
Aching from within



Joe chooses to do so
At the damndest times
When it's most inconvenient
He will tear up my eyes

The glimpse of a baby
Suckling its mother
Meeting of friends
Embracing each other

The stumbling puppy
Chasing butterflies
The laughter of a child
An old man's caring sighs

These things all have meaning
Each is precious and so
They all summon up
My Sentimental Joe

—Michael A. Faris

A Lifetime of Clouds

Clouds overhead - puffy, spacy, white, fleecy, shapes and faces, rainy, thick, moving across the sky, some slowly, some speedily, always changing, as we lie wonderingly on the grass, watching them float by.

Clouds acquiring names from Latin dictionaries - Cirrus, Cumulus, Stratus, Nimbus, Stratocumulus, Cumulonimbus, Cirrostratus, and beyond.

Clouds disguised as groundfog, jet trails, thunderheads, anvils, herringbones, billows and banners.

Clouds bearing friendly forecasts; sunshine, pink at sunrise, lavender at sunset, "red sky at night, sailor's delight".

Clouds, red in morning, black and menacing, heralding danger, sailors' warnings at sea - batten down hatches, or make a run from hurricanes, typhoons, clouds touching giant waves, discharging lightning, disgorging driving rain.

Clouds celebrated in song; Karen Carpenter's "Cloudy"; Joni Mitchell who "...Looked at Clouds from Both Sides Now." The Civil War's "Turn the dark clouds inside out 'til the boys come home."

Clouds catalogued in science - "Cloudspotter's "Guide, "Cloud Collector's Handbook",

"Weather Identification Handbook" (Fittingly by Storm Dunlop).

Clouds in literature and drama: Wordsworth, "I wandered lonely as a cloud,"; "Sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud", said Shakespeare's Henry VI; John's Gospel proclaiming "The Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory".

Clouds seeded, to poach on nature's seemingly random patterns, clouds containing particles unfiltered and unwanted. Earth-bound sky-watchers seeking, sometimes in vain, relief, by fresh, lively clouds.

Clouds in our own Rogue Valley - changing hourly, daily, round and flat, black, white and grey, sunlight framed and penetrated, not enough rain in them - or too much, our unsung natural wonder. (Manor Marketing take note and add it to "good food, ample space, lively activities" : "Mrs. PRV, have you noticed our amazing clouds?").

Clouds, reintroduced as mysterious electronic 21st century, keepsake cupboards overhead, (or wherever) capturing our messages, containing our secrets, bundling our longings into laconic passages, feeding words and ideas back to us through the mist.

Clouds lifelong! Ever watchful, at the final breath as at the first. Thanks, clouds!

—Jim Stocker

Uunforeseen

Perambulating, post-prandial, I came upon two miniature Japanese maples, elves of the arboreal world. Frosty Winter had stripped them of their leaves, leaving them skeletal and exquisite.

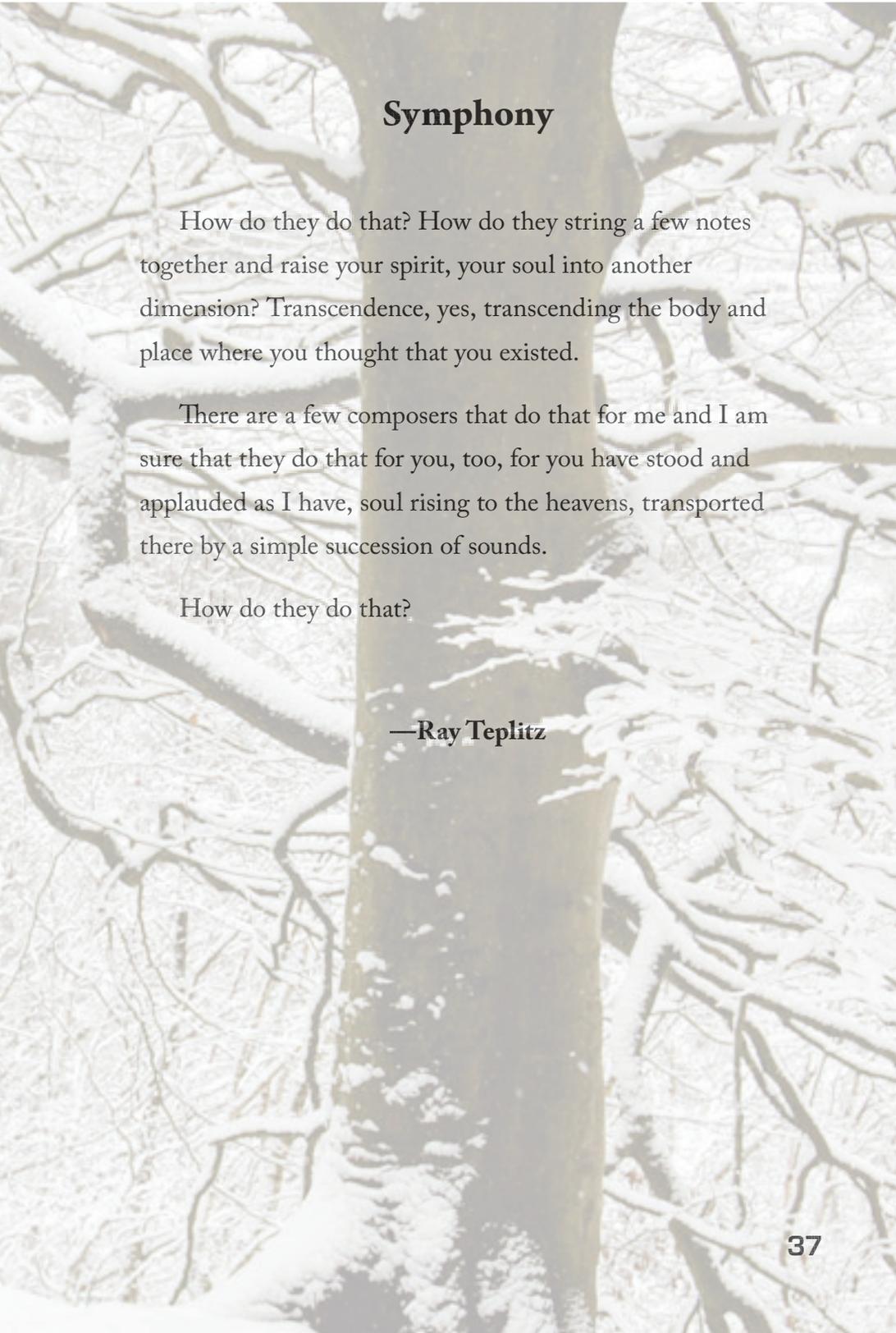
Dew and whatever other moisture resided about had accumulated at dependent elbows of these tiny limbs, courtesy of Gravity. These clear spheres gleamed in the gray light like crystal beads, strung as holiday ornaments. No hand could have foreseen this mellifluous effect. It was Nature's inherent magic wasn't it?

Now, several days later and after freezing frost had drawn its brush across the landscape, all exposed foliage showed it's art. The maples' limbs were transformed into white tracings suspended in the labored air as were the twigs on the nearby gnarled oaks and every other suffering, but regal vegetal form. Their roots, buried in the warmer earth would protect them from death, but their exposed parts would surely die.

Protect your roots, Nature calls, and you will be saved.

A good epigram?

—Ray Teplitz



Symphony

How do they do that? How do they string a few notes together and raise your spirit, your soul into another dimension? Transcendence, yes, transcending the body and place where you thought that you existed.

There are a few composers that do that for me and I am sure that they do that for you, too, for you have stood and applauded as I have, soul rising to the heavens, transported there by a simple succession of sounds.

How do they do that?

—Ray Teplitz

Please Excuse Us, Estella Hilliard

It's noon in Ashland and it must be at least 95 degrees outside. I hate to leave the air conditioning but I've promised our four year old, Keri, a picnic at the little park next to the fire station on Highway 66. She loves the "horsey" swings there. We lather ourselves with suntan lotion, pack carrot sticks, peanut butter and grape jelly sandwiches, she grabs her teddy bear, and I throw the wool afghan over my arm. We walk down Frances Lane from where we live on Windsor, and cross Siskiyou Blvd. to the grocery store for ice cold bottles of Martinelli's apple juice.

When we come out of Buy-Rite, the temperature has climbed another 5 degrees. I can hardly wait to get this scratchy afghan away from my arm. Keri is fussy and wants me to carry the teddy bear. We plod along on wilted legs and I remind her of the fun she'll have on the swings. Five hot blocks later, we see the horseys gently swaying in the glistening sun—but, the sprinklers are on. The whole park is awash in water.

What now? Go back up the hill to home or go to Hunter Park, four blocks away? We cross Highway, 66, pass Mountain View Cemetery on the corner, and limp down Normal Avenue to Hunter park.

"It won't be long now," I say. "The Martinelli's will taste so good." But, nearing Hunter Park, we can't believe our eyes: some water-happy maintenance person has turned all the sprinklers on. There's no place to put the afghan. We

turn around and hobble back to Highway 66. Keri is hot and sticky and wants to be carried. My feet are swollen; they're getting blisters, and I'm really frustrated.

Suddenly, I zero in on the tall fir trees, the deep shade, and the lush green, dry grass at the cemetery. Careful not to step on Estella Hilliard's grave who died in 1907, we spread the afghan on the grass at the edge of the cemetery, kick our shoes and socks off, and open the Martinell's. We've just bitten down on the peanut butter sandwiches when some kind of cemetery attendant in a gray shirt runs over from the other side of the grounds wildly waving his arms.

"What are you doing?" he asks. "You can't do that here! Didn't you see the sign? Go to the park. Go to the park."

Crunching our carrots, I say tersely, "The parks are wet. It's hot and we're not leaving until we're ready."

"We have rules," he sputters and stands glaring down at us while we finish eating. What can he do? Arrest us for picnicking in a cemetery for pete's sake?

Finally rested, Keri and I put our shoes and socks on, gather up the afghan, the teddy bear, lunch sack and empty bottles, say thanks to the cemetery man, and start home. Across the street, we look back, wondering if he's still watching us. He's nowhere in sight, but all over the cemetery the sprinklers are on. I squeeze my daughter's hand, and give her a wink. "Hey Keri," I say, "How's that for timing?"

Island Anchor

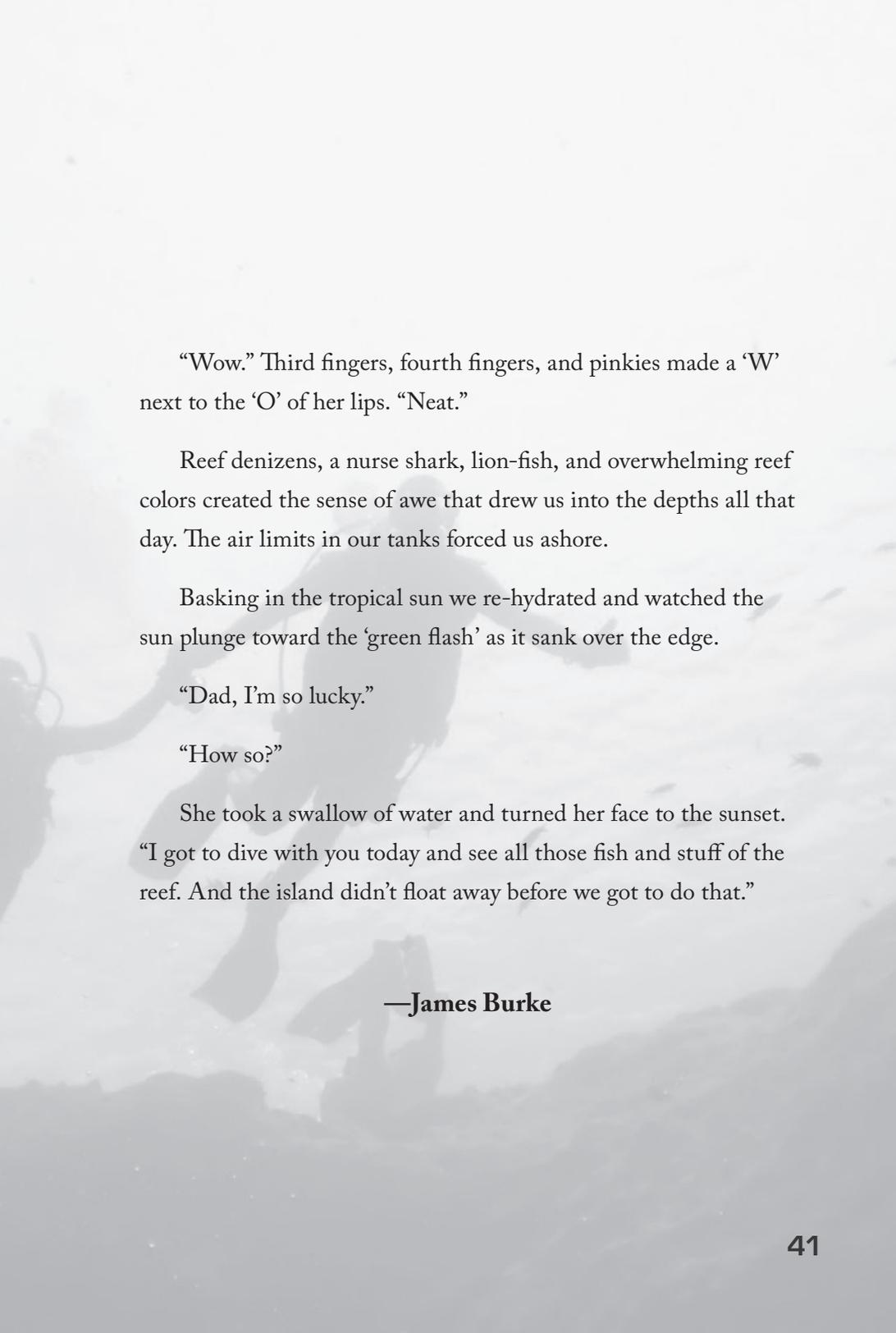
90° F; 90% humidity; no breeze; 6 degrees north of the equator. Distant clouds promised the usual afternoon squall. A perfect day to dive the reef off of Wives Beach on Guam. Just another day in paradise, with the potential for adventure, fish, and sucking compressed air at 30 feet down. Shared with my daughter, what could be finer?

Age 13 and newly certified to scuba, she was thrilled with sharing a dive with Dad. Exploring the cracks and crevices of the reef surrounding our island was the penultimate bond we shared—the joy of weightlessly floating in a world few ever experience.

Emerging from the sand and extending into the sea, the communication cable for Guam caught her eye as we worked our way toward open water. Thick, black, alien, and encrusted with marine crud where it entered the water, it connected Guam to points elsewhere.

“Dad, what’s that?”

“Oh that? That’s the anchor to keep the island from floating away in a storm. Whenever a typhoon hits, we’re safe. Can’t be blown adrift again.”



“Wow.” Third fingers, fourth fingers, and pinkies made a ‘W’ next to the ‘O’ of her lips. “Neat.”

Reef denizens, a nurse shark, lion-fish, and overwhelming reef colors created the sense of awe that drew us into the depths all that day. The air limits in our tanks forced us ashore.

Basking in the tropical sun we re-hydrated and watched the sun plunge toward the ‘green flash’ as it sank over the edge.

“Dad, I’m so lucky.”

“How so?”

She took a swallow of water and turned her face to the sunset. “I got to dive with you today and see all those fish and stuff of the reef. And the island didn’t float away before we got to do that.”

—James Burke

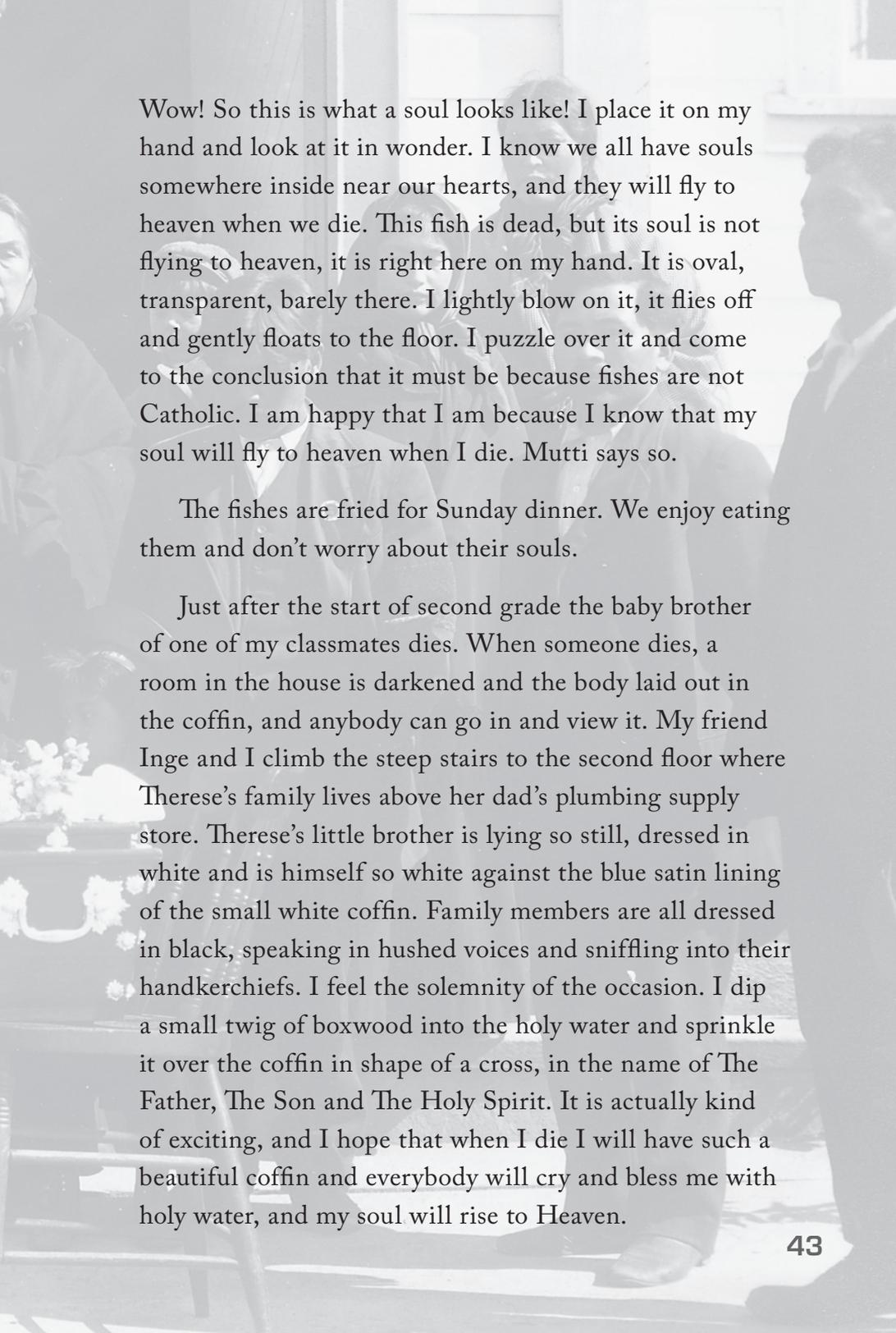
Fishes & Souls

My Poppi likes to go fishing on summer Sunday mornings with his friend, Mr. Jochem Mutti and Poppi will get up at around 4 am, he gets himself ready, then his fishing gear, eats the breakfast Mutti has prepared for him in the meantime and leaves on his bike. Mutti goes back to bed

Poppi meets his friend at an arm of the river Saar, called “the Lido.” They enjoy the fresh morning air, the stillness, the beauty of the water, and each other’s company. Whether they catch fish or not, they always end up at Hussinger’s Restaurant and Tavern for their traditional Sunday morning pint which can stretch to two or three, because they either celebrate a good catch or drown their sorrow over bad luck.

When Poppi returns home with fish, “Red Eyes” mostly, sometimes perch, and occasionally trout, Mutti needs to gut them and scrape off the scales because Poppi claims not to know how to do that and she does. She lays the fish on a newspaper, holds it firmly by the tail and scrapes it with the blade of a knife so that the scales fly. I grunt with disgust when she slits open the belly and takes out the bloody innards, but I like to watch anyway. One day she carefully picks out something, rinses it off and hands it to me.

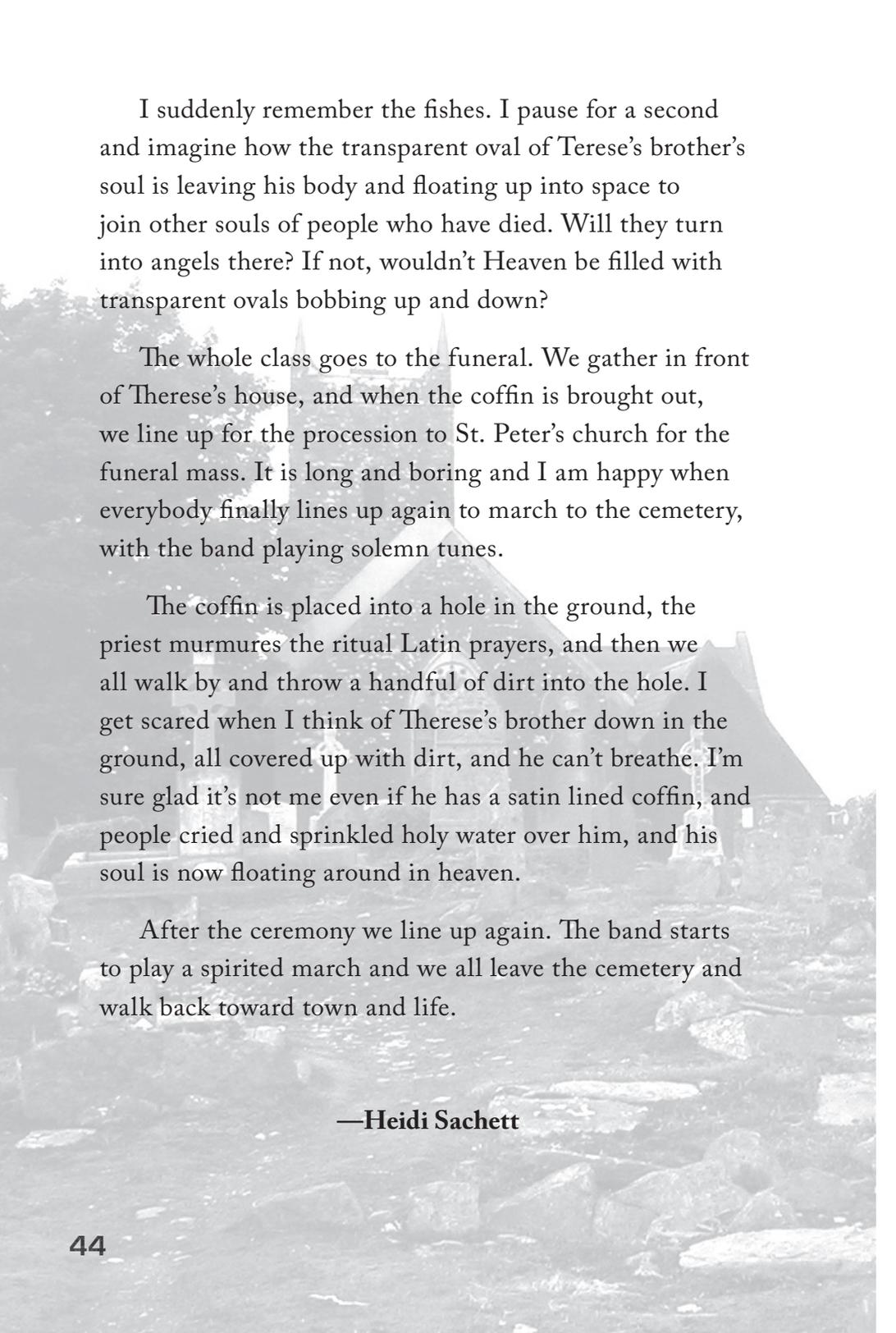
“This is the soul of the fish”, Mutti says earnestly.



Wow! So this is what a soul looks like! I place it on my hand and look at it in wonder. I know we all have souls somewhere inside near our hearts, and they will fly to heaven when we die. This fish is dead, but its soul is not flying to heaven, it is right here on my hand. It is oval, transparent, barely there. I lightly blow on it, it flies off and gently floats to the floor. I puzzle over it and come to the conclusion that it must be because fishes are not Catholic. I am happy that I am because I know that my soul will fly to heaven when I die. Mutti says so.

The fishes are fried for Sunday dinner. We enjoy eating them and don't worry about their souls.

Just after the start of second grade the baby brother of one of my classmates dies. When someone dies, a room in the house is darkened and the body laid out in the coffin, and anybody can go in and view it. My friend Inge and I climb the steep stairs to the second floor where Therese's family lives above her dad's plumbing supply store. Therese's little brother is lying so still, dressed in white and is himself so white against the blue satin lining of the small white coffin. Family members are all dressed in black, speaking in hushed voices and sniffing into their handkerchiefs. I feel the solemnity of the occasion. I dip a small twig of boxwood into the holy water and sprinkle it over the coffin in shape of a cross, in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. It is actually kind of exciting, and I hope that when I die I will have such a beautiful coffin and everybody will cry and bless me with holy water, and my soul will rise to Heaven.



I suddenly remember the fishes. I pause for a second and imagine how the transparent oval of Terese's brother's soul is leaving his body and floating up into space to join other souls of people who have died. Will they turn into angels there? If not, wouldn't Heaven be filled with transparent ovals bobbing up and down?

The whole class goes to the funeral. We gather in front of Terese's house, and when the coffin is brought out, we line up for the procession to St. Peter's church for the funeral mass. It is long and boring and I am happy when everybody finally lines up again to march to the cemetery, with the band playing solemn tunes.

The coffin is placed into a hole in the ground, the priest murmurs the ritual Latin prayers, and then we all walk by and throw a handful of dirt into the hole. I get scared when I think of Terese's brother down in the ground, all covered up with dirt, and he can't breathe. I'm sure glad it's not me even if he has a satin lined coffin, and people cried and sprinkled holy water over him, and his soul is now floating around in heaven.

After the ceremony we line up again. The band starts to play a spirited march and we all leave the cemetery and walk back toward town and life.

—Heidi Sachett

First Love

At age eighteen I fell in love head over heels. I met the object of my passion at the first carnival masquerade ball I was allowed to attend together with my best friend. She was dressed as a gypsy, I as a chamber maid.

Carnival, an ancient custom celebrating of the end of winter and the arrival of spring, is marked by feasting and drinking, singing and dancing and the reversal of some conventions. It was fun to ask men of *MY* choice to dance, and I don't think I ever sat down.

When I spotted a tall slender man in street clothes, leaning on the bar and observing the scene I went up to him, curtsied and asked him for the next dance. He was a good dancer. His name was Jean-Marie and he had come from a small community on the other side of the border in France with his *compagnon* Claude.

We danced together almost every dance until it was time to leave. My parents had set my curfew for midnight and I strictly adhered to it. Jeannot drove my friend and me home. We agreed to meet a few days later in a cafe on the outskirts of town where I thought nobody would know me. How naive I was. Poppi's family had been living here for generations.

The day after the rendezvous Poppi came home and said casually: "I understand you were seen with someone at Cafe Ott?"

His voice got louder: "I had to pretend I knew all about it

not to provide fodder for the gossips. How do you think that made me feel?” Oh, small town living!

I told them all I knew. They were not pleased. Not only was Jeannot 22 years old, worse, he had just recently returned from a two year stint with the French military in North Africa. A worry cloud passed over Mutti’s face. “Oh, my God!”, Poppi said. He knew about the life of soldiers!

But Jeannot and I kept seeing each other. I rode my bike to our meetings. He came in his old Citroen, his friend Claude tagging along most of the time!

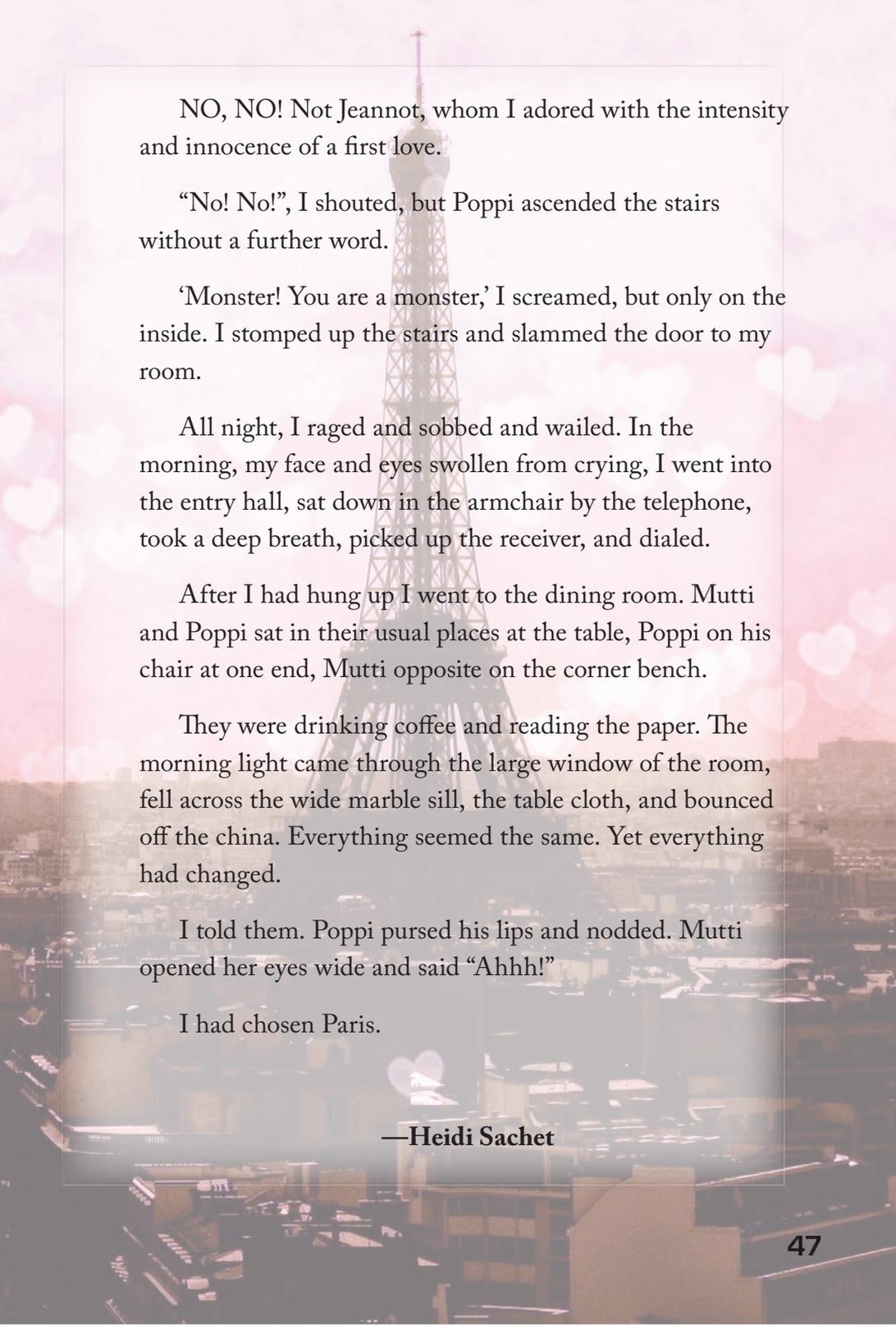
One Saturday night, we all decided to go to the movies in Thionville, about thirty-five miles from the border. As usual, my curfew was set at midnight. It was foggy and rained hard on the return trip. Jeannot drove carefully. I was fretful, but he would not go faster. We arrived at our house about fifteen minutes late. I raced to the front door and was nervously fumbling for my key when Poppi opened the front door.

“I said Midnight”, he growled, his blue eyes blazing. “You are late!”

“Yes”, I said, and tried to explain about the weather. But he would not listen.

“You have a choice”, he said. You can either continue dating, or go to Paris.”

NO, NO! Not Paris, my Love, my Dream, where a job as an “Au Pair” was waiting for me in the fall.



NO, NO! Not Jeannot, whom I adored with the intensity and innocence of a first love.

“No! No!”, I shouted, but Poppi ascended the stairs without a further word.

‘Monster! You are a monster,’ I screamed, but only on the inside. I stomped up the stairs and slammed the door to my room.

All night, I raged and sobbed and wailed. In the morning, my face and eyes swollen from crying, I went into the entry hall, sat down in the armchair by the telephone, took a deep breath, picked up the receiver, and dialed.

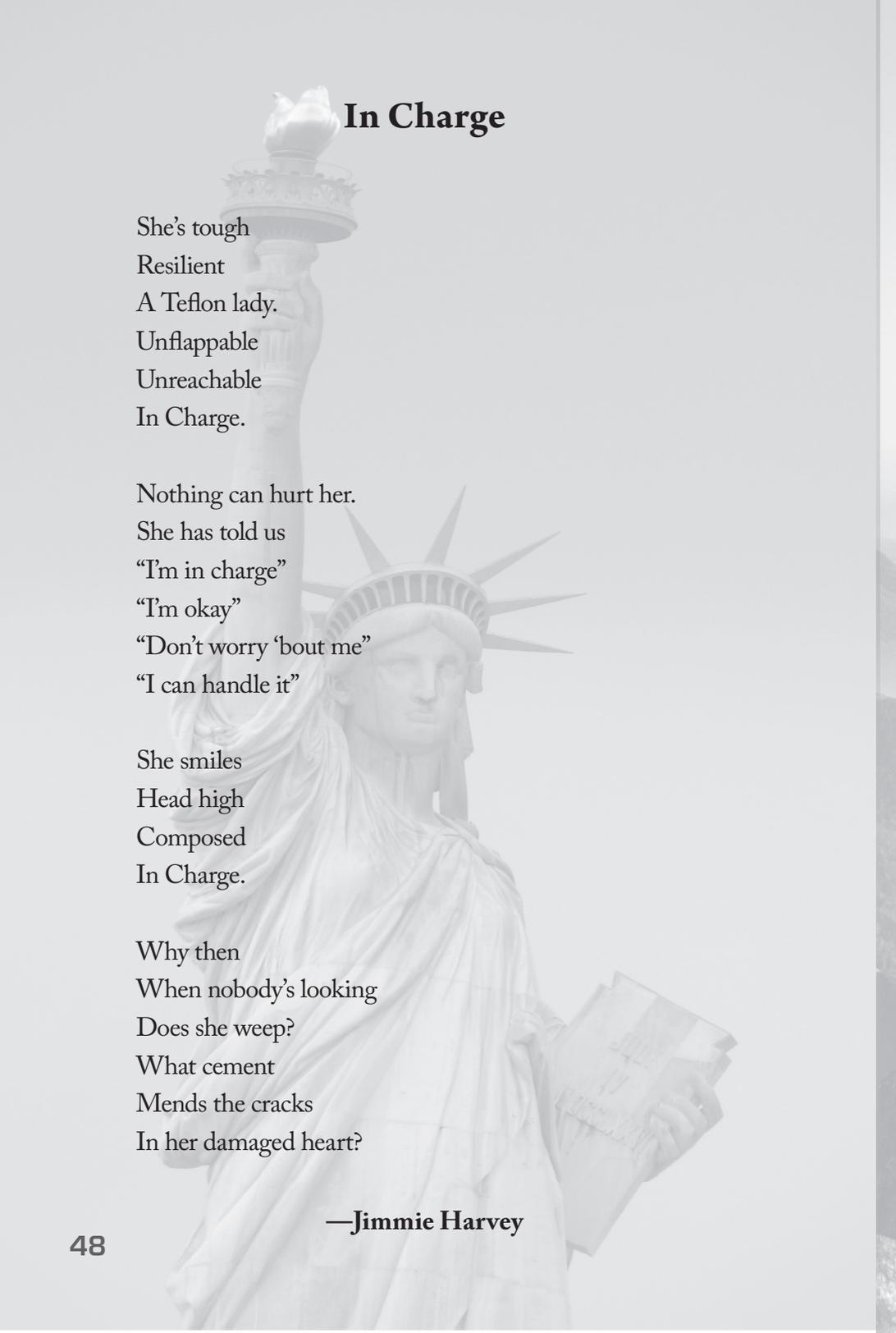
After I had hung up I went to the dining room. Mutti and Poppi sat in their usual places at the table, Poppi on his chair at one end, Mutti opposite on the corner bench.

They were drinking coffee and reading the paper. The morning light came through the large window of the room, fell across the wide marble sill, the table cloth, and bounced off the china. Everything seemed the same. Yet everything had changed.

I told them. Poppi pursed his lips and nodded. Mutti opened her eyes wide and said “Ahhh!”

I had chosen Paris.

—Heidi Sachet



In Charge

She's tough
Resilient
A Teflon lady.
Unflappable
Unreachable
In Charge.

Nothing can hurt her.
She has told us
"I'm in charge"
"I'm okay"
"Don't worry 'bout me"
"I can handle it"

She smiles
Head high
Composed
In Charge.

Why then
When nobody's looking
Does she weep?
What cement
Mends the cracks
In her damaged heart?

—Jimmie Harvey

Pinnacles

What courage does it take
To reach a pinnacle?

Most of us
Go through life
Satisfied
Not to fail.

How does it feel
To breathe
That rare ether-air
Of sweet accomplishment?

To know
That you're the best!
There is none
better...

How sweet the moment!
How overflow'd the cup!
It must feel as though
Your heart will burst!

Most of us
Will never know...

—Jimmie Harvey

Ferguson

When right is wrong and wrong is right,
and lies are truth it sheds new light,
on progress turned backward by amoral men,
who seek to brew hatred time and again

Burn this bitch down!

When good men are slandered and guilt pre-decided,
and facts unimportant to masses misguided,
unscrupulous men seek to tangle and twist,
words that sound good with a hand turned to fist

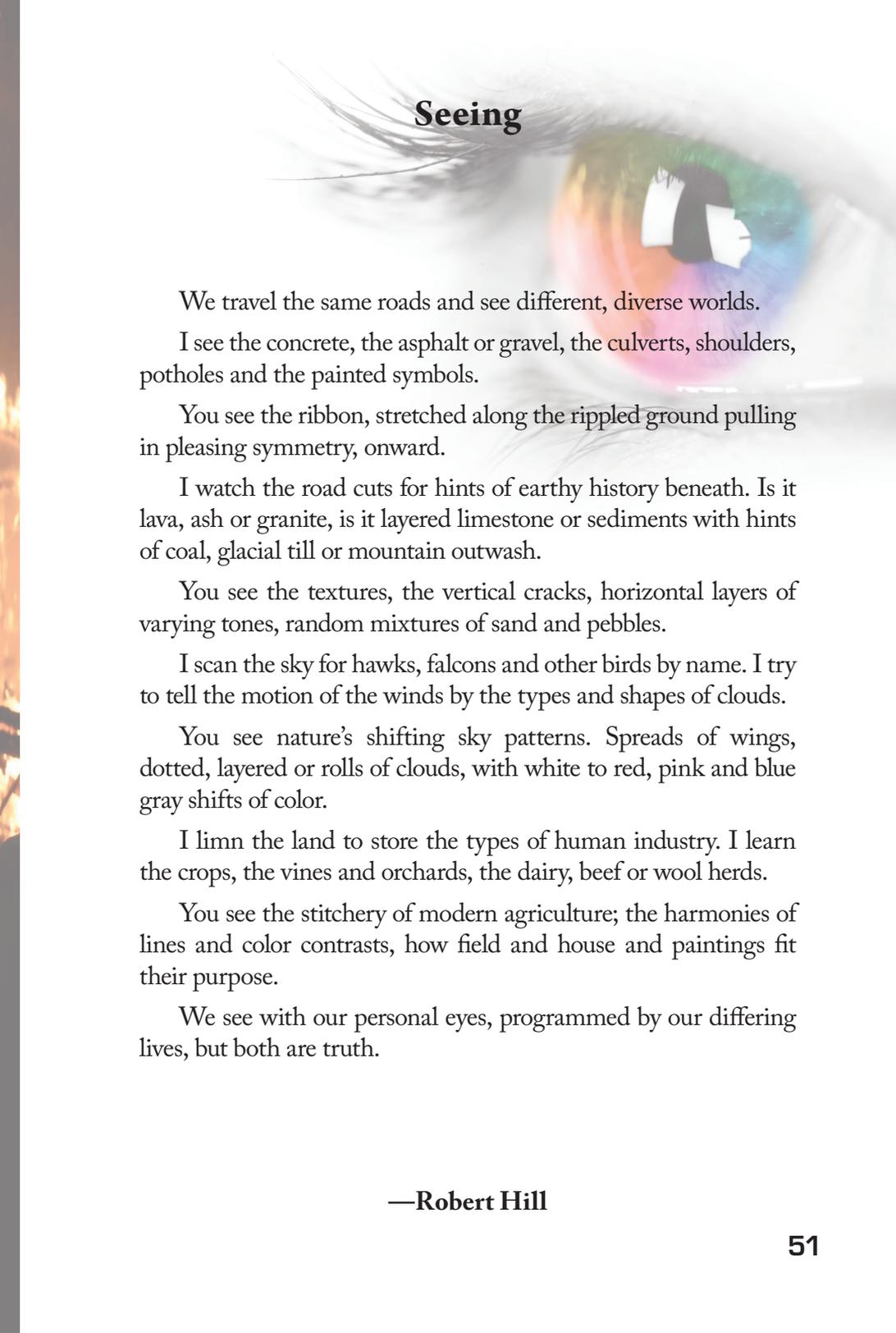
Burn this bitch down!

Then reason is trampled by anger made hate,
and thugs take the streets as the hour grows late,
and neighbor burns neighbors' lifes' dreams to the ground,
the verdict drowned out by malevolent sound

Burn this bitch down!

The clock is turned backward, the rift is made wider,
but can we afford to make hate our decider?
No! Men of good will must keep striving and then,
turn away from mistrust, become brothers again

—Jeff Wollman



Seeing

We travel the same roads and see different, diverse worlds.

I see the concrete, the asphalt or gravel, the culverts, shoulders, potholes and the painted symbols.

You see the ribbon, stretched along the rippled ground pulling in pleasing symmetry, onward.

I watch the road cuts for hints of earthy history beneath. Is it lava, ash or granite, is it layered limestone or sediments with hints of coal, glacial till or mountain outwash.

You see the textures, the vertical cracks, horizontal layers of varying tones, random mixtures of sand and pebbles.

I scan the sky for hawks, falcons and other birds by name. I try to tell the motion of the winds by the types and shapes of clouds.

You see nature's shifting sky patterns. Spreads of wings, dotted, layered or rolls of clouds, with white to red, pink and blue gray shifts of color.

I limn the land to store the types of human industry. I learn the crops, the vines and orchards, the dairy, beef or wool herds.

You see the stitchery of modern agriculture; the harmonies of lines and color contrasts, how field and house and paintings fit their purpose.

We see with our personal eyes, programmed by our differing lives, but both are truth.

—Robert Hill

Waterfall

In July my husband, Jerry, and I stopped to see waterfalls near Diamond Lake. Three elderly men stood next to us. One pointed his cane at the sunlit water.

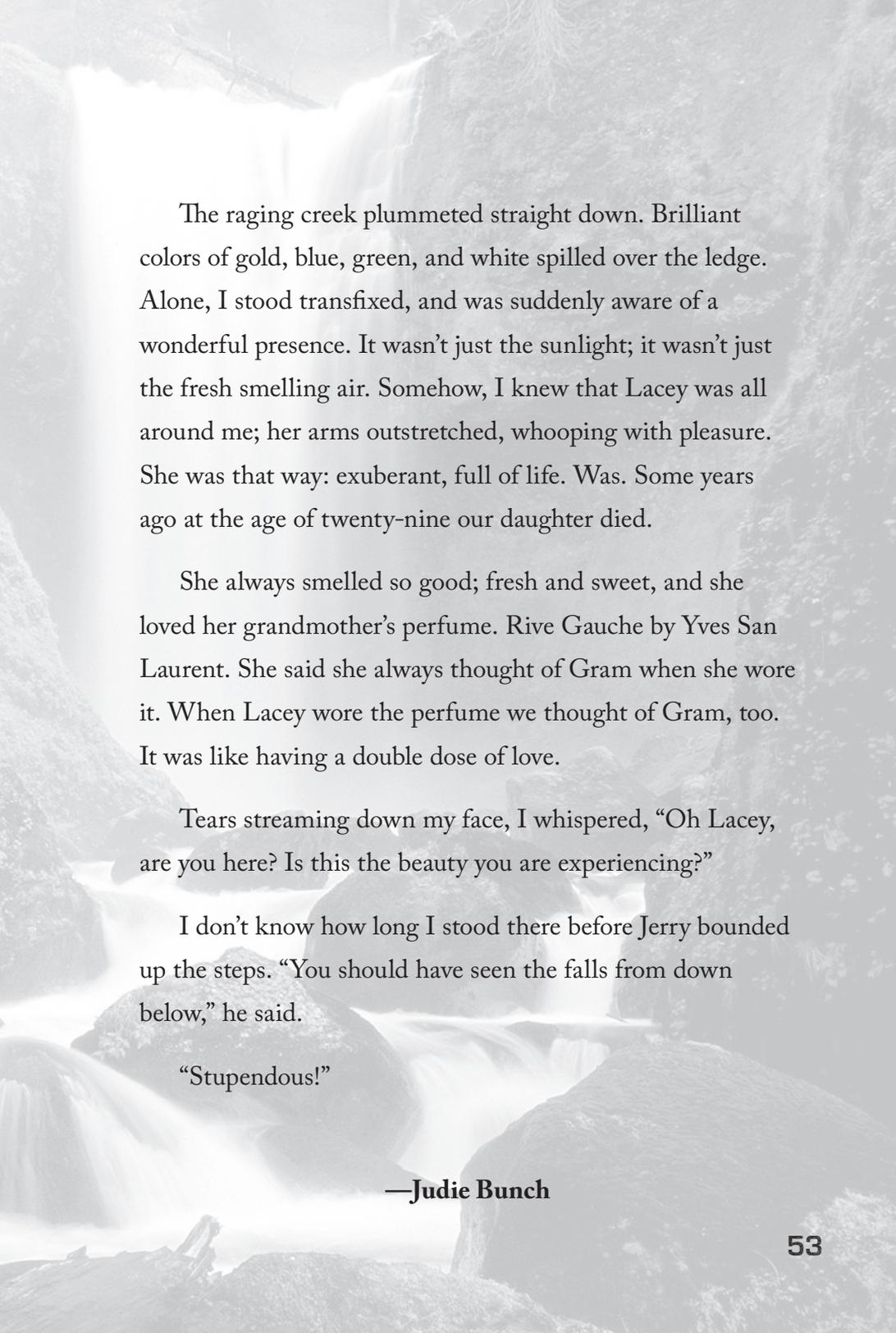
“Look at the colors. Gold, blue, green, white....”

They nodded then wandered down a walkway. A sign pointed to another waterfall, no mileage mentioned. Jerry followed but I hung back. “We don’t know how far it is and we don’t know what the path is like,” I said.

“Come on,” he called and I reluctantly followed.

It was a new path of finely ground gravel, edges lined with rocks of lava. Yet, it was downhill which I don’t like since it means uphill coming back. Grumbling, I thought, if I’d known how far I was going, I’d have worn better shoes. My stiff-sole slip-ons were not meant for hiking.

By now Jerry was far ahead and wouldn’t hear if I said I was going back, so I kept walking and complaining. No matter that the trail was easy: no jagged rocks, no danger of falling over cliffs. The cool forest did not soothe me. I was determined to be miserable. Then abruptly, I came to the falls.



The raging creek plummeted straight down. Brilliant colors of gold, blue, green, and white spilled over the ledge. Alone, I stood transfixed, and was suddenly aware of a wonderful presence. It wasn't just the sunlight; it wasn't just the fresh smelling air. Somehow, I knew that Lacey was all around me; her arms outstretched, whooping with pleasure. She was that way: exuberant, full of life. Was. Some years ago at the age of twenty-nine our daughter died.

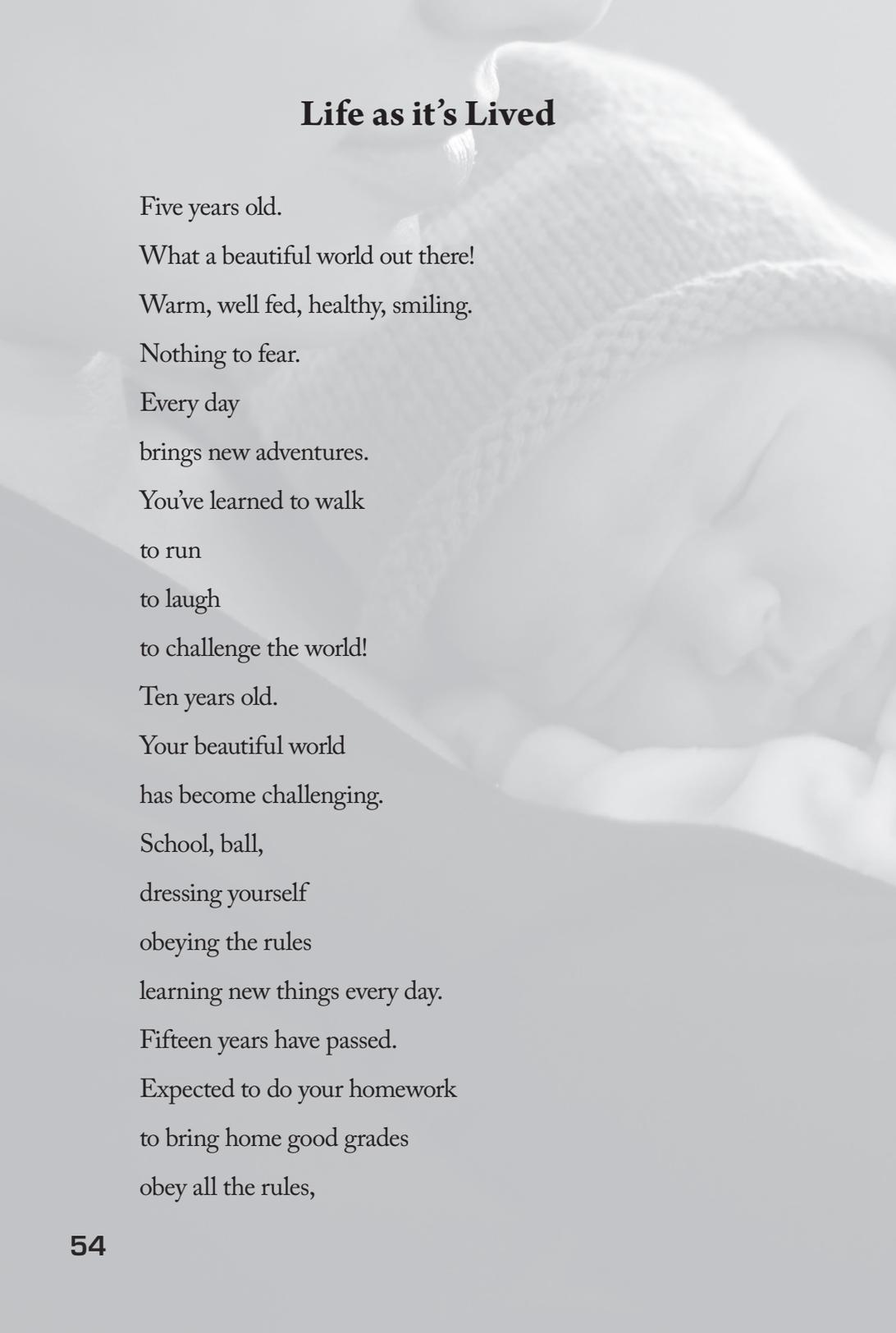
She always smelled so good; fresh and sweet, and she loved her grandmother's perfume. *Rive Gauche* by Yves San Laurent. She said she always thought of Gram when she wore it. When Lacey wore the perfume we thought of Gram, too. It was like having a double dose of love.

Tears streaming down my face, I whispered, "Oh Lacey, are you here? Is this the beauty you are experiencing?"

I don't know how long I stood there before Jerry bounded up the steps. "You should have seen the falls from down below," he said.

"Stupendous!"

—Judie Bunch



Life as it's Lived

Five years old.

What a beautiful world out there!

Warm, well fed, healthy, smiling.

Nothing to fear.

Every day

brings new adventures.

You've learned to walk

to run

to laugh

to challenge the world!

Ten years old.

Your beautiful world

has become challenging.

School, ball,

dressing yourself

obeying the rules

learning new things every day.

Fifteen years have passed.

Expected to do your homework

to bring home good grades

obey all the rules,

dress well,

help with chores.

The opposite sex is attractive

so you go out on dates,

sing, dance, watch football,

hug, kiss and your heart

is beating for someone.

Twenty-five years

and you have finished school finally!

You find the right job

the one you have prepared for and

you're finally paying your own bills.

You find the right person

join in marriage.

and begin a new life.

How beautiful!

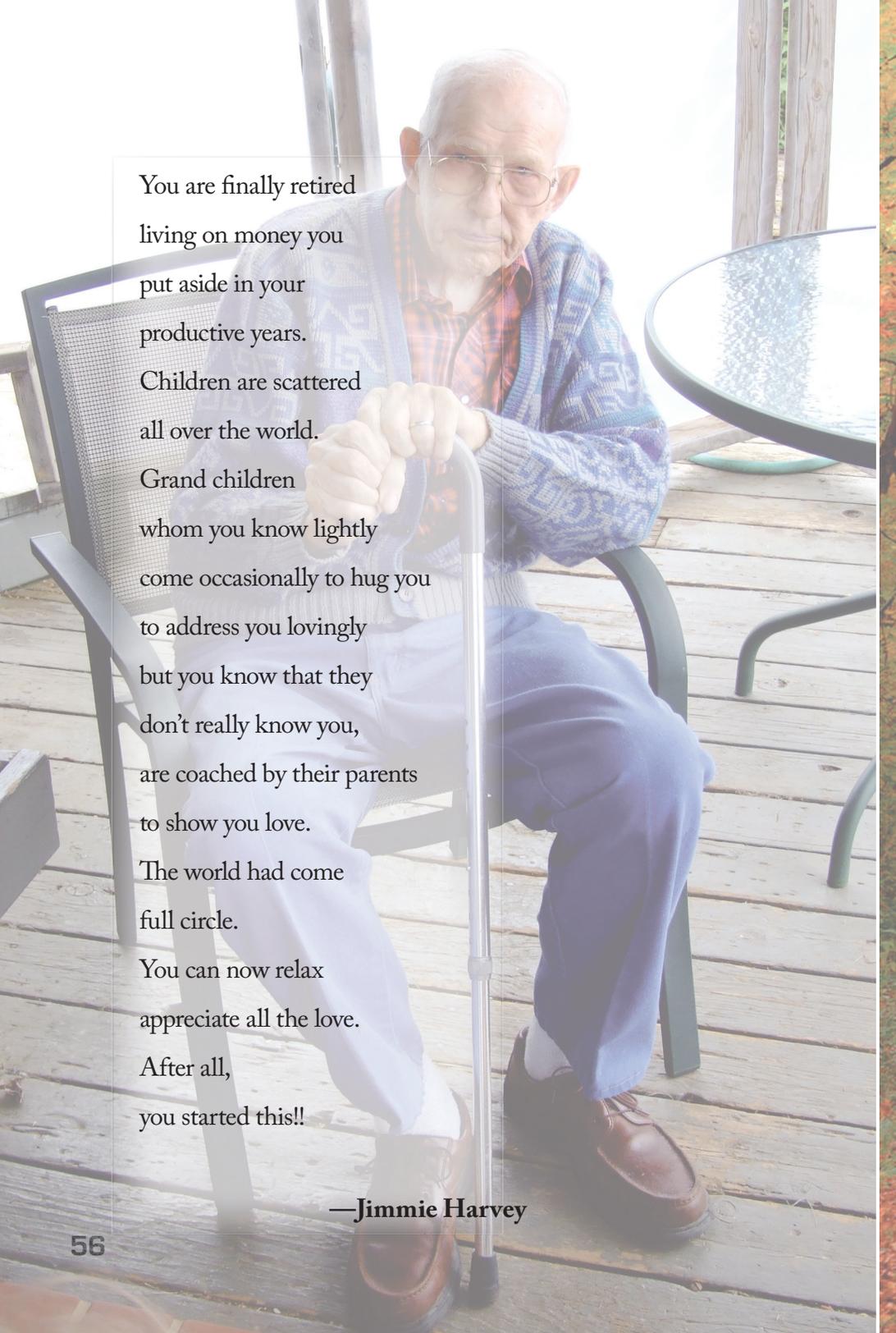
How challenging!

Then you confront

the challenge of your own children!

Wow!

Seventy years.



You are finally retired
living on money you
put aside in your
productive years.
Children are scattered
all over the world.
Grand children
whom you know lightly
come occasionally to hug you
to address you lovingly
but you know that they
don't really know you,
are coached by their parents
to show you love.
The world had come
full circle.
You can now relax
appreciate all the love.
After all,
you started this!!

—Jimmie Harvey

Autumn

After the hot days of summer
God makes amends.
He dresses the trees
In splend'rous colors
In red, gold, copper
And all shades in between

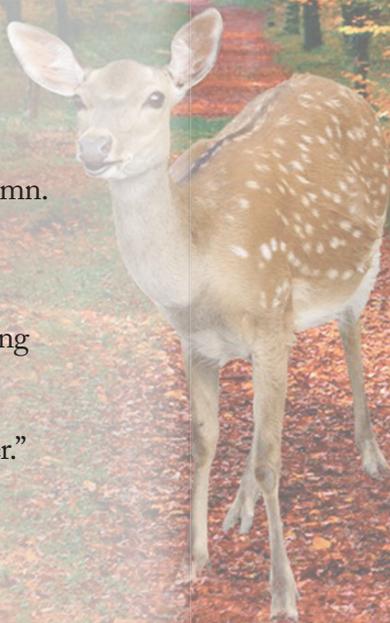
As though to say
"I'm sorry
For all the heat
The steam-bath humidity
The soul-sapping lethargy
With which I presented summer.

"Here!
Take these glorious days
Of Autumn.
The crisp, apple-picking
Leaf-burning
Soul-satisfying
Wonderful days of Autumn.

"They are yours
To spend as you will.
They are my peace offering
For what I have done
As I tortured you
With the heat of summer."

And I accept gratefully.
Gloriously.
Ecstatically.

—Jimmie Harvey



Fickle Fangle



I think the world's enamored
With a fickle fangled fad
Dissatisfied with what we've got
We'll trade the one we had

For one with much more sparkle
With glitter and with shine
The one that's so much faster
It leaves old ones behind

But not the standard model
No, the plain one's not for me
But the one with the silver saddle
The chrome and the magic key

Life's filled with little gadgets
With gimmickery and whiz
Each one out does the other
With sparkle and with fizz

A multi-function unit
That's what a person needs
A do-all kind of gadget
With universal leads

It hooks up with your wi-fi
Just plug it in and go
It synchronizes everything
But now the damn thing's slow!

—Michael A. Faris

Silver Filigree

The bony skeleton of the ancient oak
stands tall above the meadow
the tracery of leafless boughs
in silver filigree against the morning sky.

It's almost Easter time.

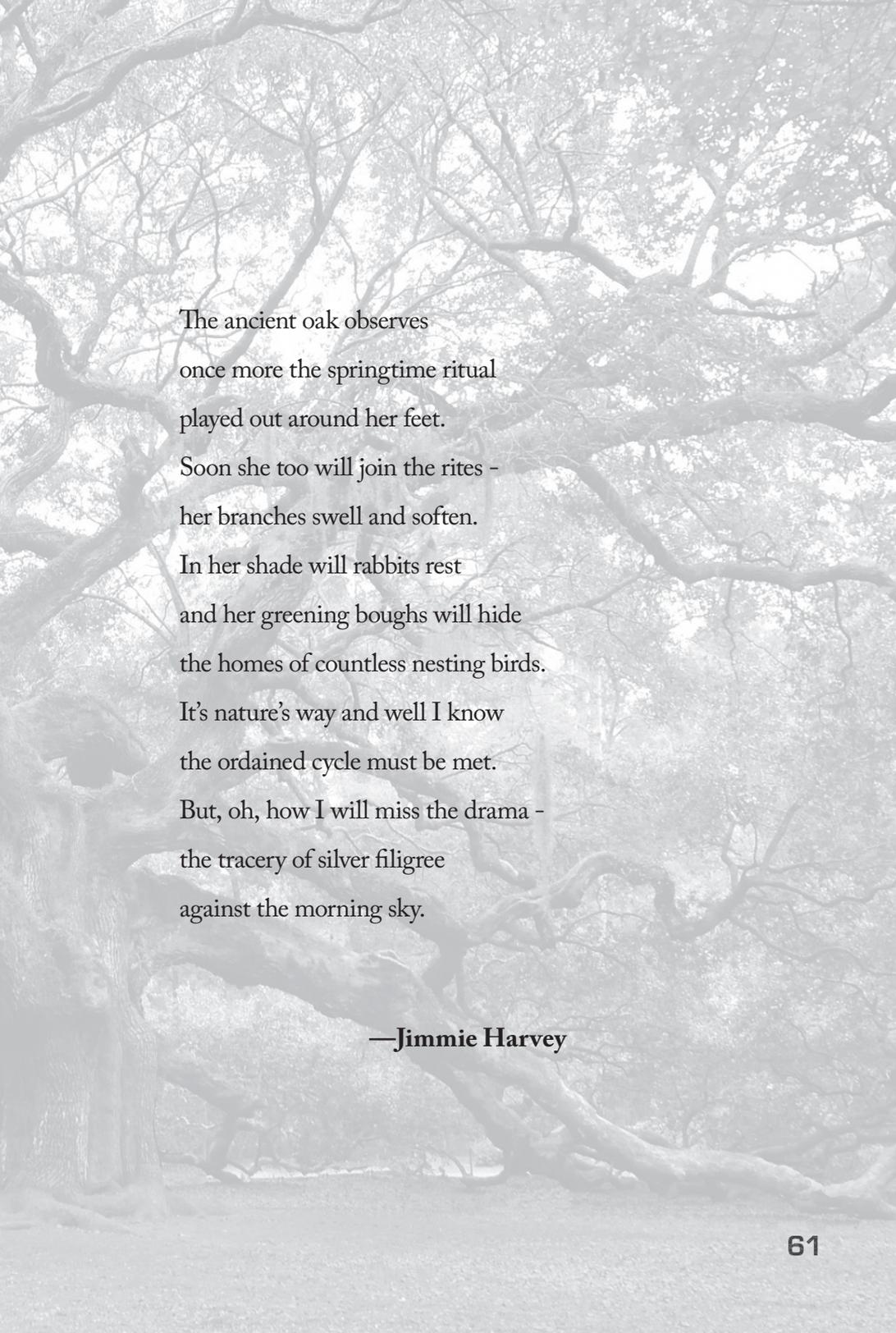
The restless waking
sends a rustle through the trees.

The brilliant springtime palette
overlays the winter's somber hues.

Overnight the flowering plum
has dressed herself in brightest pink
and peeking 'round the rocks I see
an iris and a daffodil

playing hide and seek
with a bed of crimson tulips.

On the hill's crest in the meadow
the saucy mustard plant
emerges from her winter lair
in a lacy yellow gown.



The ancient oak observes
once more the springtime ritual
played out around her feet.
Soon she too will join the rites -
her branches swell and soften.
In her shade will rabbits rest
and her greening boughs will hide
the homes of countless nesting birds.
It's nature's way and well I know
the ordained cycle must be met.
But, oh, how I will miss the drama -
the tracery of silver filigree
against the morning sky.

—Jimmie Harvey

What Holds Up That Little Cloud?

What holds up that little cloud?
The rosy, lonely little one
hanging there in azure nothingness
lounging lazily all alone.
Maybe it is dreaming
or possibly just thinking.
What have clouds to think about
anyway?

What holds up that little cloud?
Scientists can tell me
in formula and figures
distilling all the information
to indisputable fact.
But ---
I don't think so.
Not my little cloud.

Some say it is the hand of God.

But he's so awfully busy
hearing prayers
finding lost sheep
comforting the suffering
managing wars
(whose side is he on
anyway?)
I don't think he has time
to hold up a little cloud.

No, I believe it's something else.
I believe it's magic
holding up my little cloud.
The rosy, lonely little one
hanging there in azure nothingness
lounging lazily all alone.
I think it must be magic.

This must be heaven.

—**Jimmie Harvey**

What You Didn't Say

We spent the long afternoon talking
walking along the gravel path
and down to the lake
where the willow wept
chartreuse tears
for some long-forgotten slight
and the redwinged blackbird
perched daringly on the
cattail swaying provocatively
in the breeze.

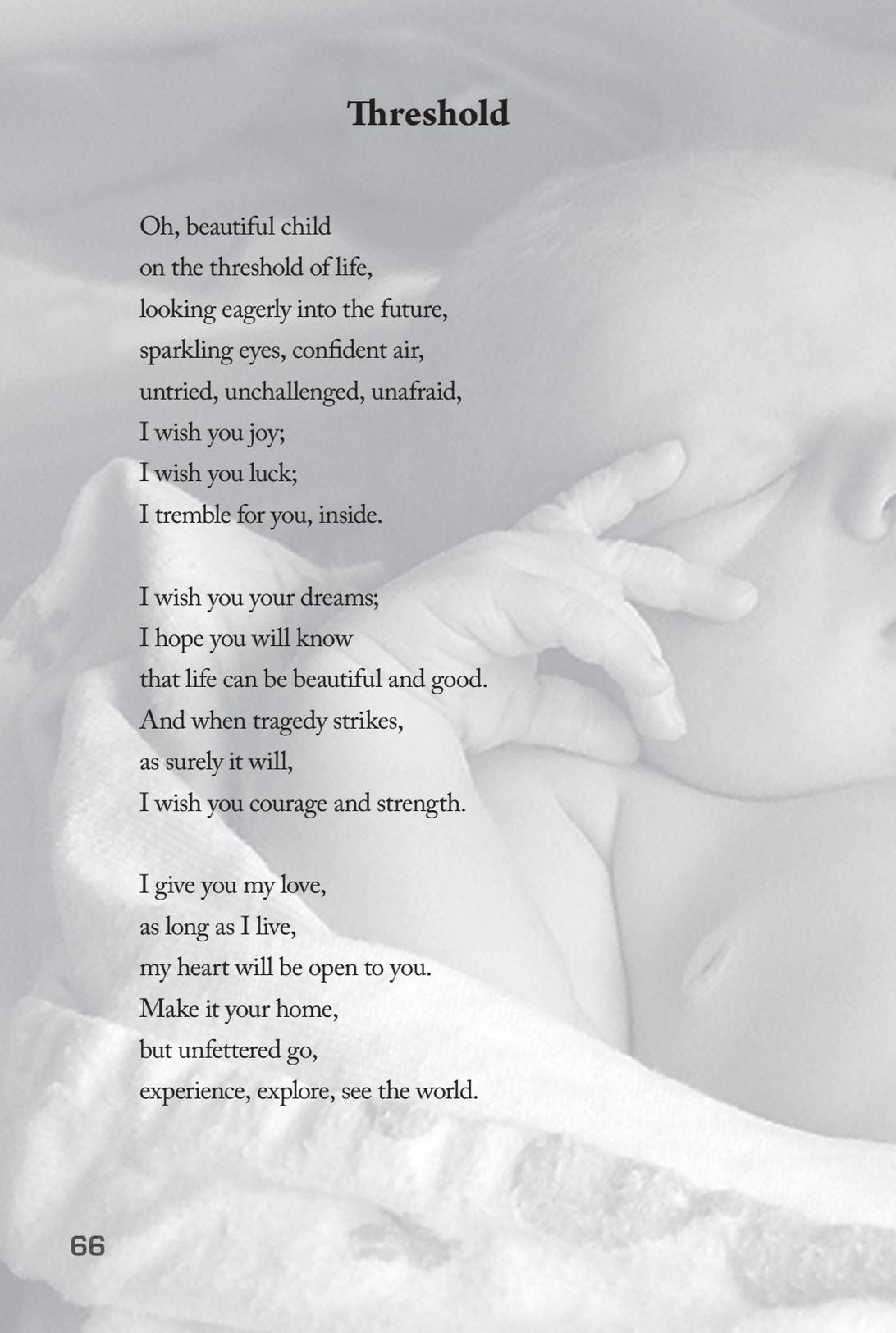
You told me about
the time you played hookey
and Joey Fisher broke his arm
and you both got caught;
about your dog
who ran away when you were ten
and how your father died
before you really knew him.

You said you wanted to be a pilot
but never got the chance
so you became a druggist
and shoved your dream
into a corner.

We sat on the grass
and ate peanuts
and drank root beer
out of plastic cups
your hand reaching out to
touch mine
and your eyes held
questions
you didn't dare to ask
and you didn't say
"I love you."

—Jimmie Harvey

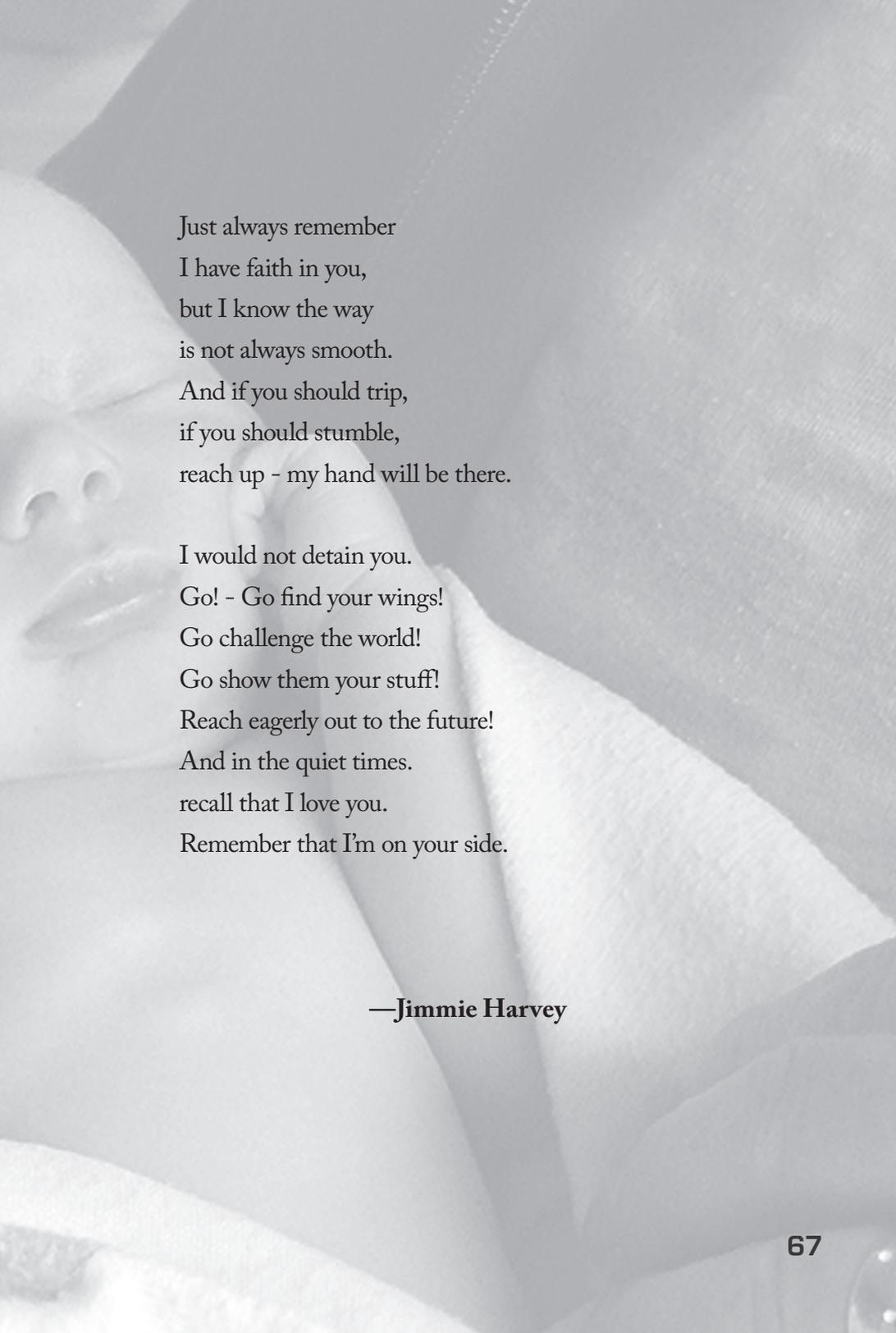
Threshold

A black and white photograph of a baby's face and hand, used as a background for the text. The baby's hand is resting near their face, and the overall image is soft and intimate.

Oh, beautiful child
on the threshold of life,
looking eagerly into the future,
sparkling eyes, confident air,
untried, unchallenged, unafraid,
I wish you joy;
I wish you luck;
I tremble for you, inside.

I wish you your dreams;
I hope you will know
that life can be beautiful and good.
And when tragedy strikes,
as surely it will,
I wish you courage and strength.

I give you my love,
as long as I live,
my heart will be open to you.
Make it your home,
but unfettered go,
experience, explore, see the world.



Just always remember
I have faith in you,
but I know the way
is not always smooth.
And if you should trip,
if you should stumble,
reach up - my hand will be there.

I would not detain you.
Go! - Go find your wings!
Go challenge the world!
Go show them your stuff!
Reach eagerly out to the future!
And in the quiet times.
recall that I love you.
Remember that I'm on your side.

—Jimmie Harvey

The Hospice Nurse

When days are long
And nights are longer
And sleep won't close your eyes
Just lay your head on my shoulder
For one final lullaby

When the pain is strong
And your will has been stronger
But it's sweeping you out with the tide
Just lay your head on my shoulder
For one final lullaby

When peace won't come
And you're desperate for home
You long to cross the great divide
Just lay your head on my shoulder
For one final lullaby

When you ask for a song
Your mind drifting along
And my skills have been denied
Just lay your head on my shoulder
For one final lullaby

When your hand reaches for
The Faithful One you adore
And He catches you, arms open wide.
Just lay your head on my shoulder
For one final lullaby

—Annie Effiong

Dead Dog

As I started on my way
There she lay
the worst way to end the day
dogs should not stray or play
on the streets they have no right of way

I think of her lying there cold and grey
I held her before her last breath was proclaimed
close to my heart as she faded away
“poor thing, poor thing” is all i could say
across the street her small friend in dismay

Protect the ones you love
they may only be here today
To lose a friend hurts the worst way
only with time the pain fades away
protect the little ones
tell them you love them every day
And keep your dogs out of the street
For these things I hope and pray

—Richard Howard

I'm Purple Today

I'm purple today

can you see?

Eggplant and violet and lilac

deep purple, almost black

mysterious, brooding and bruised.

I'm purple today.

The blood rushing through my veins

is purple

purple blood pushing open purple valves

in the purple chambers of my heart.

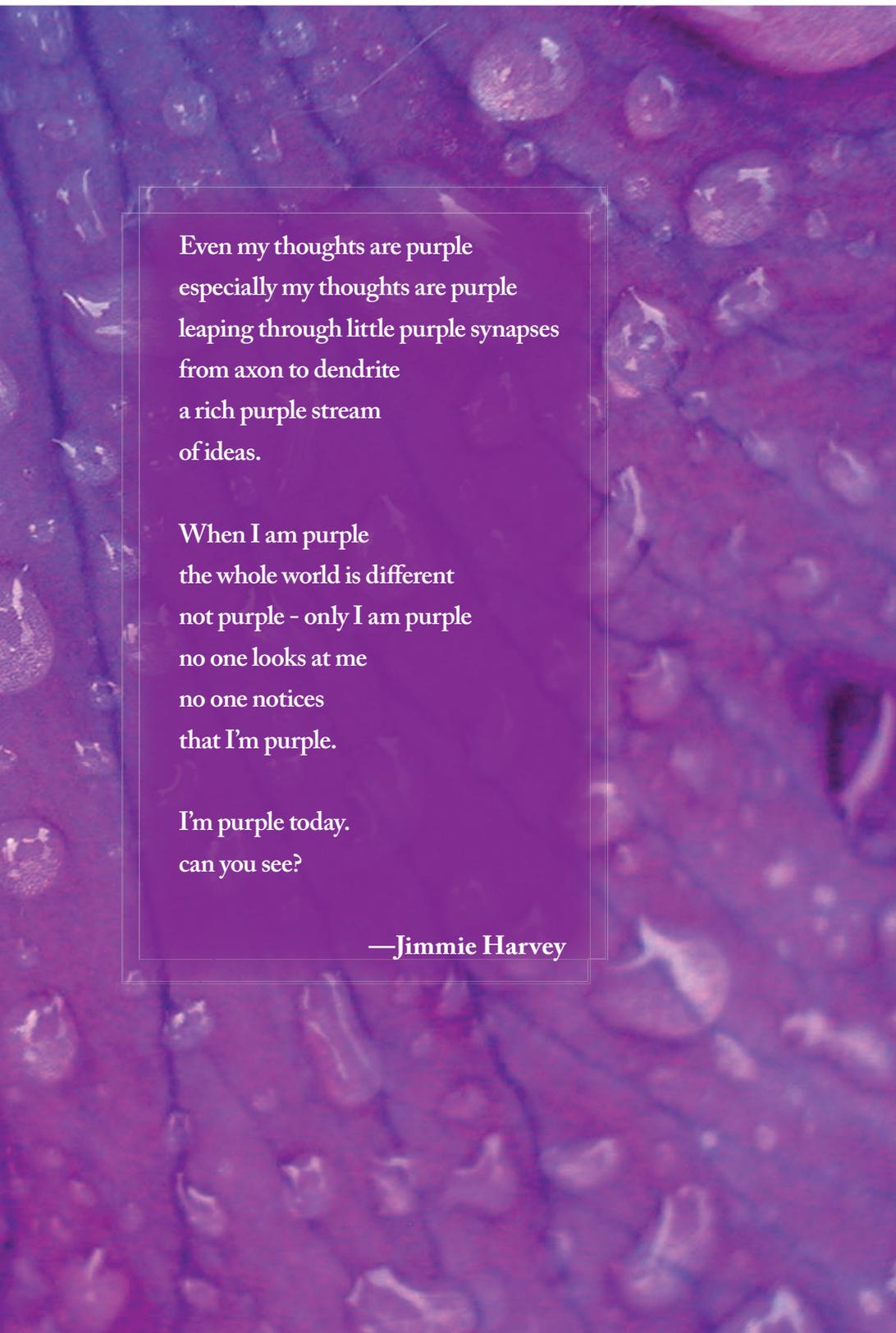
The breath in my lungs is purple

staining the tiny honeycomb cell walls

a royal purple

issuing from my nostrils

in a dense purple cloud.

A microscopic image of purple tissue, likely a histological section, showing various cellular structures and fibers. A white rectangular text box is overlaid on the image, containing three paragraphs of text.

Even my thoughts are purple
especially my thoughts are purple
leaping through little purple synapses
from axon to dendrite
a rich purple stream
of ideas.

When I am purple
the whole world is different
not purple - only I am purple
no one looks at me
no one notices
that I'm purple.

I'm purple today.
can you see?

—Jimmie Harvey

The Cobblestones of Pérouges

How many feet
have trod your worn surface
have tripped lightly
danced gaily
plodded heavily
trudged slowly, sadly
marched in stately procession?

What could you tell me
about royalty --
kings and queens, lords and ladies;
high hopes and broken hearts
triumphs and failures?

What could you say
about the common man
his dreams realized
or unattained?
How many secrets have fallen
from the lips of lovers
to your rough surface
hidden there while you waited, listening?

Tell me about the armies
mustered in your courtyard;
brave men and not so brave
departing from your cloistering walls
to fight – for what?
Love? Honor? Justice? Country?
How many came back?

Tell me about the horses
wild-eyed with terror
led by mailed warriors
into the battle
their galloping hoofs
sparking your stony surface
never to return
left rotting in the blood stained meadow.

How many rains
have washed your many faces?
How many suns brought you warmth?
How many springs
have filled your air with perfume?
How many snows
wrapped you in silence?

You quietly observe the centuries
watching – waiting, stable, implacable
as life passes over you
accepting what man in his passion
man in his foolishness
man in his glory
inflicts upon the world.
In the end, what does it matter?
Tell me -- isn't it all the same?

—Jimmie Harvey

The Birth

Like a tiny flicker
At first it seemed so wonderful
Things were changing
Surely this was her destiny!

She liked the changes
With the swelling and movement
And anticipation
Of new things to come.

Things would never be the same
After this she could never
Go back to how things used to be
And excitement filled her.

But then the aches and clumsiness
And uncertain gait
And discomfort grew
And she began to wonder what she'd done.

She wondered if she would be able
To properly guide and show
This new thing how to live
Rightly and with purpose.

She started to think
That maybe things were out of hand
And sometimes she could hardly breathe
For lack of room for her anymore.

And now the pains begin
And she feels the enormity
Of what she has wrought
And what might wait for her on the other side.

People all around her
Tell her it will soon be over

And she will be happy
And love what she has done.

But she's not so sure anymore
Because the pains are harder now
And she feels as if her own life
Is being ripped away.

What she once was is gone forever
And cannot be recalled
And her panic
Starts to swell.

A few more pushes they say
And her feelings will change
And she will be glad
That it all has come to pass.

Yet suddenly she sees it
For what it is
And what it will be
And it's too late to turn back now.

And she cries for what was lost
And the thing which now is
And she desperately wants to recall
Her own actions.

But it's too late
Because what has been done
Will birth a different life
Than the one she loved and cherished.

And the real pain begins.

Oh, America!

—Suzi Wollman

The Bride

Her whole world changed
In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye
He looked at her with love
The greatest love
And asked her for forever.

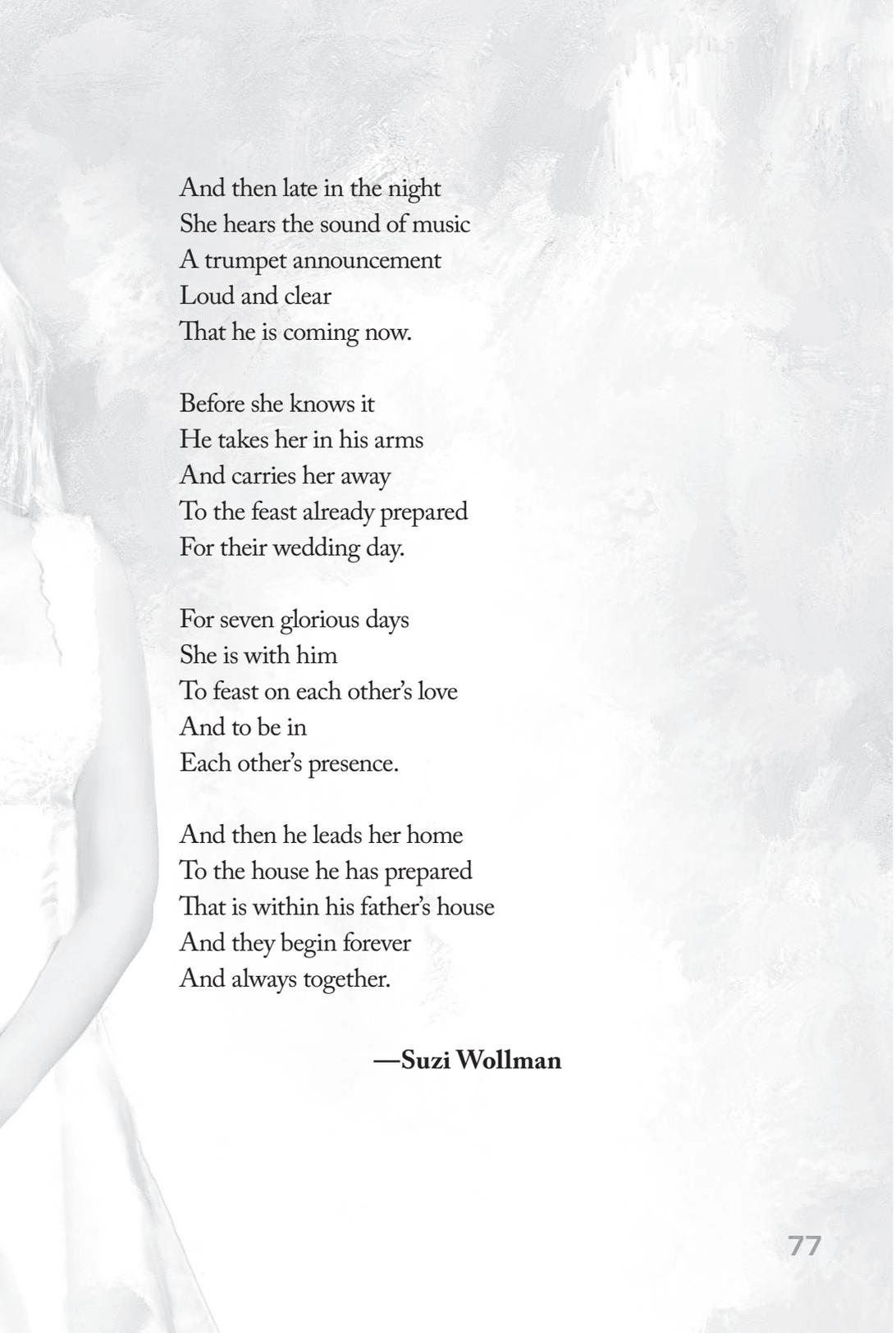
She trembled at his words
And joy filled her heart
And with her heart swelling
And tears in her eyes
She said yes.

And then he left her.
He went to build a home for her
Where they would live together
Forever
And said he'd come again to take her home.

So now she waits
And everyday is preparation
As she listens for his call
Knowing it could come
At any moment.

She is clothed in purest white
And her eyes sparkle
With anticipation.
She tells everyone she meets
That he's coming soon.





And then late in the night
She hears the sound of music
A trumpet announcement
Loud and clear
That he is coming now.

Before she knows it
He takes her in his arms
And carries her away
To the feast already prepared
For their wedding day.

For seven glorious days
She is with him
To feast on each other's love
And to be in
Each other's presence.

And then he leads her home
To the house he has prepared
That is within his father's house
And they begin forever
And always together.

—Suzi Wollman

Birds of a Feather

In the attic I found a bird cage, old dusty and grey
“A shame” I said (yes I talk to myself) “taking up space”
“I think I’ll give it away”

As I lugged it down stairs I heard the loud sound
of something hard crashing then hitting the ground
a bird I had guessed and I was quite right
had broken his wing in migrational flight
I was very concerned (and secretly pleased)
for I was injured myself
I had lonesome disease
Cureable maybe, unbearable the pain
like your heart on the tracks, run over by a train

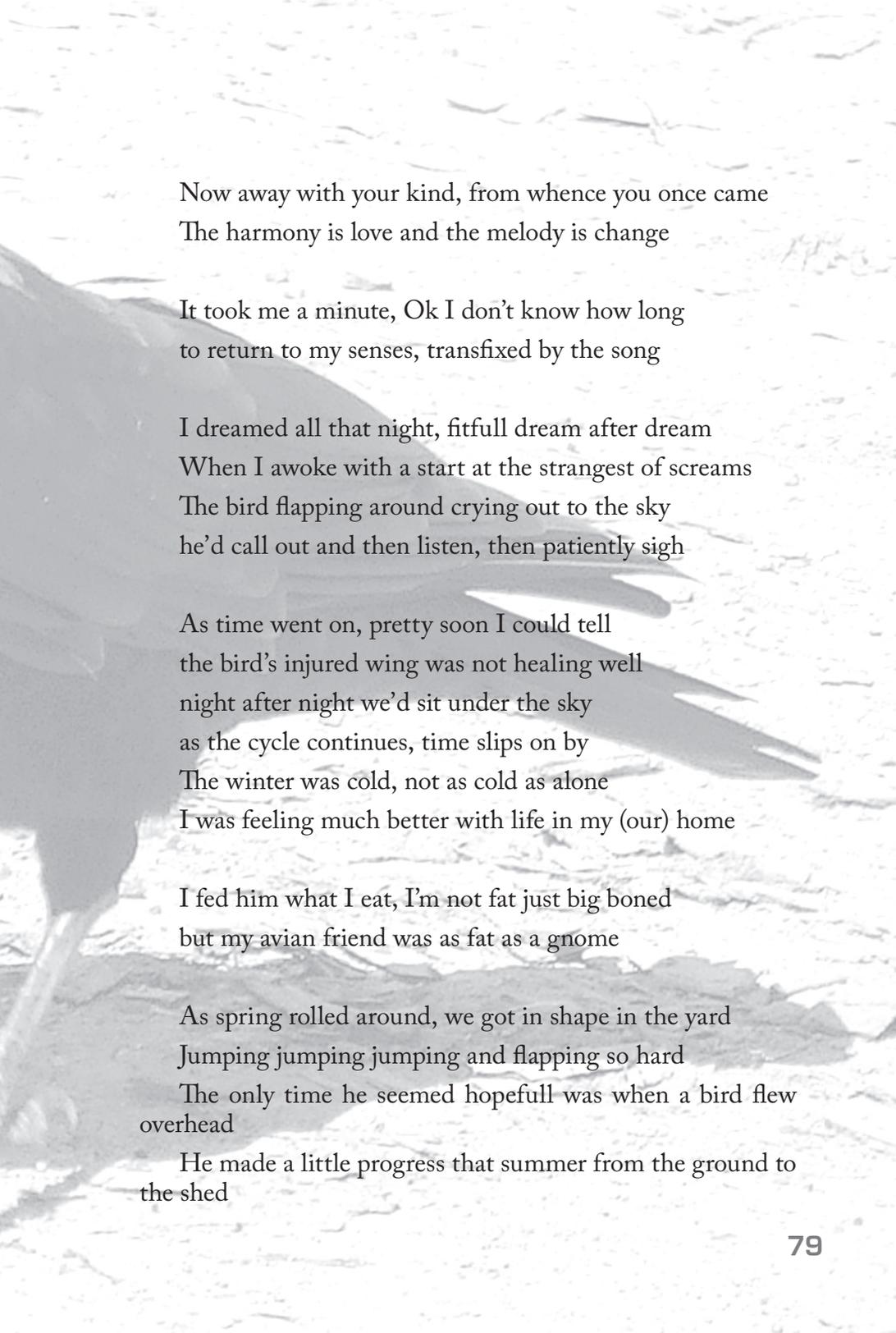
So with some reservation, afraid he might die
I choked back the tears as he looked up to the sky
His friends had all vanished on their yearly retreat
He accepted this sadly and gave a small “tweet”

Now mind you I had lonesome disease, I was glad to help
out yet setting a bird’s wing I knew nothing about

I had to do something his wing was twisted all wrong
“you’ll be flying in no time” I assured him, he replied with
a song

So sweet and so carefree as I’ve never heard
my heart keeping rhythm, the wind whispered the words

Come away my friends, this cycle near it’s end
When the tree’s standing naked, it all starts again



Now away with your kind, from whence you once came
The harmony is love and the melody is change

It took me a minute, Ok I don't know how long
to return to my senses, transfixed by the song

I dreamed all that night, fitfull dream after dream
When I awoke with a start at the strangest of screams
The bird flapping around crying out to the sky
he'd call out and then listen, then patiently sigh

As time went on, pretty soon I could tell
the bird's injured wing was not healing well
night after night we'd sit under the sky
as the cycle continues, time slips on by
The winter was cold, not as cold as alone
I was feeling much better with life in my (our) home

I fed him what I eat, I'm not fat just big boned
but my avian friend was as fat as a gnome

As spring rolled around, we got in shape in the yard
Jumping jumping jumping and flapping so hard
The only time he seemed hopefull was when a bird flew
overhead

He made a little progress that summer from the ground to
the shed

Where he stayed through the winter and on to the spring
It broke my heart his endless try to fly with a broken wing

I'll never forget the sound of his cry
I could see trapped on earth he was starting to die
Yet my sickness had left me that lonely disease
as the cycle continues amid naked trees

One day I awoke and knew something had changed
my feathered friend had vanished, I found this quite strange
His wing had healed mangled and he was too fat to fly
I looked all day everywhere but no bird did I find

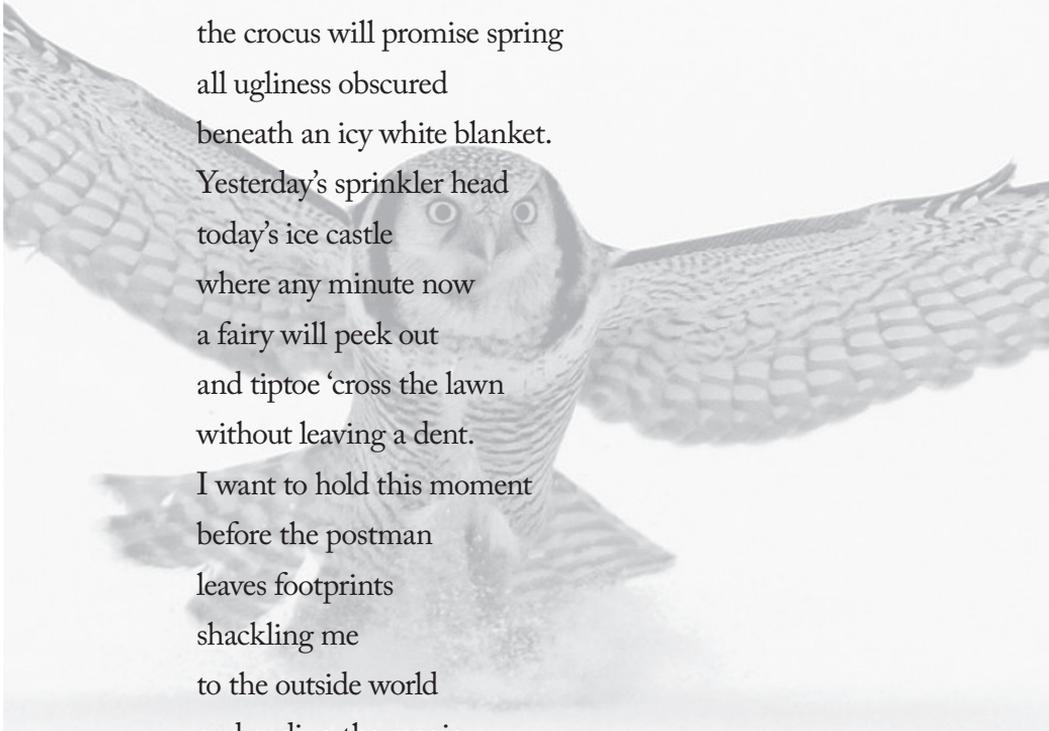
Sometimes when I'm quiet, I'll hear the faint sound
that belongs in the air, not sung from the ground
I'm not sure it is he, but it sounds just like him
My friend who had cured my loneliness
free at last to surf the wind

—Richard Howard

Make a little birdhouse in your soul - They might be giants

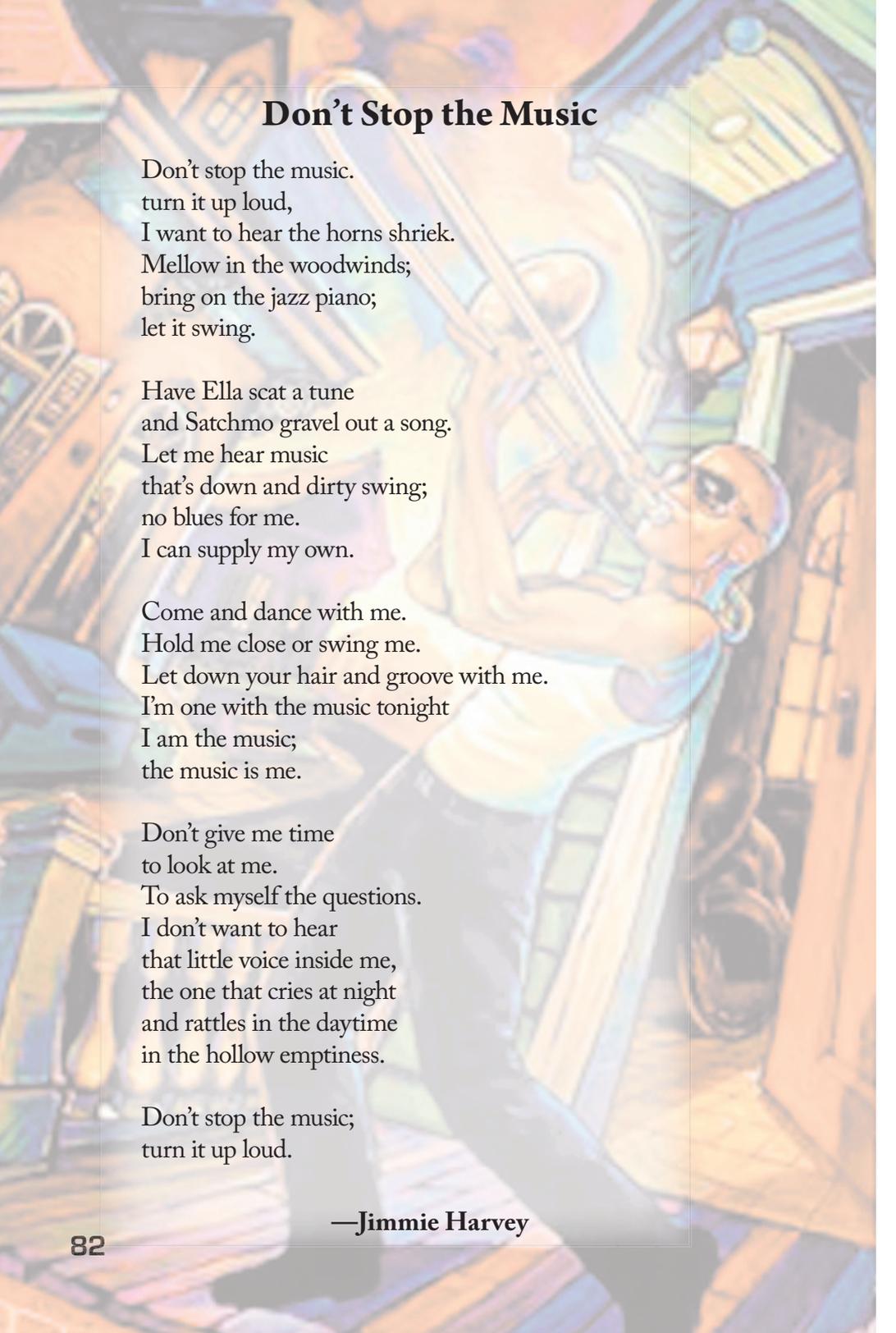


The First Snow



The first snow fell today
silence made corporal
softly brushing the shivering limbs
undressed for winter
filling the sparrow's cast-off home
which only yesterday
knew the chatter of young life
covering the place
where soon
the crocus will promise spring
all ugliness obscured
beneath an icy white blanket.
Yesterday's sprinkler head
today's ice castle
where any minute now
a fairy will peek out
and tiptoe 'cross the lawn
without leaving a dent.
I want to hold this moment
before the postman
leaves footprints
shackling me
to the outside world
and ending the magic.

—Jimmie Harvey



Don't Stop the Music

Don't stop the music.
turn it up loud,
I want to hear the horns shriek.
Mellow in the woodwinds;
bring on the jazz piano;
let it swing.

Have Ella scat a tune
and Satchmo gravel out a song.
Let me hear music
that's down and dirty swing;
no blues for me.
I can supply my own.

Come and dance with me.
Hold me close or swing me.
Let down your hair and groove with me.
I'm one with the music tonight
I am the music;
the music is me.

Don't give me time
to look at me.
To ask myself the questions.
I don't want to hear
that little voice inside me,
the one that cries at night
and rattles in the daytime
in the hollow emptiness.

Don't stop the music;
turn it up loud.

—Jimmie Harvey

In the Attic of My Mind

Stored in the attic of my mind
memories — covered with dust
spun together with cobwebs
musty, unopened far too long.

I reach in to touch one
tentative, unsure, insecure
afraid to open up that bundle
afraid to bring it to the light.

Can my fragile psyche handle
reliving an event pushed long into the past?
If I stuffed it deep into my attic
is there a reason that I shouldn't look?

If I break the seal, will it come tumbling
bringing back old heartaches — old despairs?
Or will it flood my soul with joy?
Will it bring me happiness anew?

Those dusty, musty corners of my attic
greedily protect their precious lode.
I turn away, leave it unexamined
to gather dust and cobwebs once again.

—Jimmie Harvey



This and other books can be ordered online

www.judeco.net

541-954-6724