

# Over The Years

Poetry

By

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Poet David Whyte once remarked it was engineers who shyly eased up to him and asked if he would look at their poetry.

As an engineer and artist, I offer these few poems from my experiences over the years.

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*The Elements*      *January 1983*

Low in the sky a thin  
curl of silver grasps  
tightly it's dark nature like  
an image from my dreams.

In stillness of deep darkness  
before coming of dawn,  
power born within me  
whispers in my mind.

I sense the Spirits presence  
in the rustling dance of trees,  
like the stirring deep inside me as  
we respond to an invisible wind.

Earth, air, water,  
fire make a whole.  
My power to do, to think,  
to feel, to love, make up me.

To love is to eventually die a painful death!  
Not to love is to miss the sweet ecstasy of life.

To attempt love without emotion is foolish!  
Letting go of one's feeling is to be the fool and begin loving.

However, in each moment's passage all is complete.  
The higher the joy, the deeper sorrow and pain.

So, to birth love's joy is surely to experience its pain  
and death—if not today, then on the morrow.

Dare I to love,  
to be the fool,  
to die again,  
and again,  
and again?

*The Voyage*

*May 1985*

Outward bound our narrow mark gleamed white and steady,  
as an arrow skimming the glassy blue.

On distant shore the burning disk rose to its apex and retreated,  
as we explored neath tree and marble.

Now stiff breeze pushed salty dunes endlessly toward us,  
as our tiny vessel searched to and fro for its home.

And in the bow, like many breasted Artimus, the women rode  
her groans of labor fiercely tasting the salty spray.

*The Tree*      *March 1989*

The tree waits.

The tree waits silently.

It waits for singing birds  
or whistling wind.

It waits patiently.

Patiently it waits.

Leaves poised  
breathless  
it waits.

Indifferently it waits.

In darkness  
like the soul  
it waits.

It waits for light of morning.

*Waiting*

*May 1989*

In the shadows  
under a tree  
the ant searches  
back and forth  
on my page.

Its movement onto my palm  
turns it face up  
open, unable to write  
as if to say:  
It's unimportant what I do!

Another probes  
hesitantly  
in the narrowing space  
under my pants  
high on my leg.

I wait  
curious and in wonder  
for these tiny creatures  
to finish their search.  
The gentle breeze waits with me.

Outside the window  
as she finished telling her life story  
my eye caught a tiny winged creature  
as it soared to its apex  
reversed in an instant  
and was gone.

In its place  
for a moment marking the spot  
floated a small white feather.

Gradually  
I returned to my body  
to the room with the woman  
and the passing whirl  
of our lives.

*Mourning*

*August 1989*

Sharp repeated blows to metal  
deep inside the black case  
finally startled me awake.

A voice speaks my name  
as I struggle to find answering sound.

Emptiness of “his” house brings shivers  
as a dark hole grows in my chest  
matching cold grayness of early hour.

Last night I went to see him,  
his frail body thrashing,  
his eyes unfocused,  
mind unaware of the empty space  
where his leg once grew.

I don't know why I hurry now  
as I quickly dress  
and stumble to the car.

The machine roars to life.  
White knuckles grip the wheel.  
Dull eyes sense the road  
as I rush mindlessly toward a cold body.

Finally, a wail of anguish  
heralds tears of my guilt.

His lifetime is frozen forever.  
Mine, still unfolding,  
screams for relief.

In this place near the sea  
great cypress trees stand guard.  
Birds sing and deer quietly graze  
while waves of nature's green  
slowly creep over an unknown tomb.

Carefully reassembled  
are five stone fragments to mark the spot.

The sunlight filters  
through the open center  
where a name once spoke.

What raging mind  
stirred the hand that  
shattered this eternal marker's heart?

Was it random violence  
to satisfy some stranger's painful experience?  
Or, purposeful revenge  
against the unavailable guest?

I'll never know this story  
of devastating tempest.  
But, I am reminded of my own experience:

Of old festering wounds long buried and forgotten  
painfully reopened by some new blow  
releasing torrents of cleansing tears  
that somehow reach the healing place  
turning my secret rage to stone.

*The Great Boulder*

*October 1990*

There are no longings  
left inside me.

Where passionate fires once burned  
there rests a great boulder.

It is made of layers  
upon layers of stone.

On the outside, sun's light is reflected  
and heat of day penetrates ever so slowly.

But at the core, there is a black moon  
where night is frozen.

I find comfort in this sealed chamber  
where sorrow and grief are safely hidden.

I sit quietly on its hard surface  
with eyes clear and heart strong.

Listening to the gentle sound of leaves falling  
I let nature be my desire.

Hidden roots reach down through layers of time  
searching for solid rock to anchor their embrace.

Hard shells with seed wait on the ground unafraid  
while sheltering arms above them wait for next season.

And, from green clusters of many shades  
burning red blossoms burst forth their song  
into a chorus of dancing bees.

Their heads of swelling ripeness stand erect  
waiting to explode virgin fire  
proclaiming their hunger to be devoured.

Balanced on this edge of everything and nothing  
a humming bird rasps its territorial war cry  
and is answered by the challenge of many beating wings.

The mountain stands silent behind me.  
Below, the endless sea licks at our toes  
as life wraps us in its dark exotic cloak.

Swelling from some mysterious womb  
waves roll forward on the backs of their ancestors  
and with a roar, blindly rush toward silent shore.

There, once mighty mountains wait patiently  
split over and over as my very cells  
from countless seasons of prying moisture.

Exploding together now in ecstasy  
they dance their glorious wedding song  
and sing their death with a thousand tiny voices.

I watch the endless repetition  
and wonder with silent fascination  
at the fierce gift of our common destiny.

*A Soul's Yearning*

*January 1991*

Slowly moving eye  
circling on invisible carousel  
probes still fields below.

There, gentle cooing pairs  
hungrily devour  
autumn's last seeds.

Now, no judgment hinders diving reflex.  
No contemplation stirs thrust of talons.

Frozen in the moment  
symbol of peace becomes a feast  
satisfying longings of another.

When death finally stills my heart  
what great creature will be satisfied?

Is it possible for me to quiet this soul's yearning  
before my body seeks earth's dark embrace?

For within me waiting there is an ache,  
it is an ache to be devoured.

High on steep mountain slope  
dark cypress lean forward toward the sea.  
Tall and silent they wait.  
Now stirred by gentle breeze,  
they wait for howling winds to rage.

Far below, restless waters swirl  
around old rocky peaks.  
They wait for gale winds  
to gather pounding waves  
for assault on the stony wall.

Overhead, long lines of shadow hide the sun.  
Having released their moist embrace  
they reveal distant mists yet uncoupled.

The sound begins again.  
It is the chill North wind  
from where horned Gods dwell  
and long boats with dragon eyes  
depart for hidden realms.

Robed in thick fur skins,  
my ancestors call me.  
They call me to their fierce brotherhood.  
They call me now to some unknown destiny.

*Winter*

*February 1991*

All around me the sun is shining.  
Yet, on my bearded cheek,  
I feel a chill wind.

I know the path behind.  
Ahead, meandering and unknown,  
it disappears from view.

Alone as I rest,  
dark thoughts are born from hidden sea,  
then, like passing whales, they disappear.

The cold penetrates my tightly wrapped coat.  
Shivering, something moves me to turn back.  
I will come again another day, and continue.

Night is the secret womb of divine mystery  
where the great wheel of time slowly cycles  
and the moon patiently empties its light in faith  
until only silent stars mark its journey through the void.

From heavenly source in joyous response  
to this faithful letting go each month  
a new spark of light is born  
to begin again its filling.

I too have faith in the frightening darkness  
where cares vanish into dreamless slumber  
until a mysterious spark ignites my heart  
with dreams to guide my union with the day.

With dawning of my mind  
I find these cycles ever fill my life  
with grief and joy and pain and pleasure  
until my soul is overflowing with their gold.

*Legacy*

*June 1991*

Never enough money  
    never enough time  
        never enough —

The words lash at me  
    challenge me  
        probe at my soft place —

Differ with me  
    argue with me  
        became a part of me —

Images of Him sitting  
    eyes downcast  
        back bowed  
            head in both hands.

He was a stoic.  
He could do anything.  
He could endure everything.  
He turned to cold lifeless stone.

Images of Her dancing  
    arms reaching  
        eyes lifted  
            whirling hair flying.

She was free.  
She did everything.  
She went everywhere.

She burnt up in the flames.

(Continued)

I feel the pain of old wounds  
and the pure joy of inspiration.

I feel the strength of steel  
and the power to penetrate  
to rip and to plow deep.

I feel the heat of fire  
and the energy of life  
dancing spontaneously.

I feel the broken places  
the cut places  
the places that ooze  
warm and wet.

I plant my seeds in their dark soil to grow.

*The Joy of Sorrow*

*October 1991*

Oh mystery,  
what is it in my pain  
that gifts my heart with joy?

For so long in fear  
I struggled with my feelings,  
to prevent their sharp penetration.

But moved by unknown tide  
and blown by invisible wind,  
their waves finally did drown me.

In the darkness of that wet grave  
some strange animal was born within me.  
Its deep sounds cleared my troubled soul.

Having shed my tears to the oceans  
my sad eyes with playful mirth  
now feel the wild body of life's humor.

*The Grandfather's Turn* January 1992

In the gathering darkness  
a closed door stands before him.  
It leads down into the earth.

As the sun swept across the sky,  
all the rooms above were explored.  
Only this one last mystery remains.

No book yields its secret.  
No experience lends a hand.  
All who went before him are gone.

As he hesitates,  
scars remembered  
awaken old fears.

With puzzled look,  
the child senses his caution  
and seeks his callused hand.

They make a humorous pair  
leaning in different directions,  
with the end tied to the beginning.

Feeling the old man's strength,  
the small head fills again with visions  
that pull them eagerly ahead.

Now, with trembling hands  
and growing excitement,  
they will open the door together.

*The Great Hall*

*February 1992*

Come with me  
into the great hall of my heart.

I will light the candle  
of my thoughts and  
I invite you to light yours.

With these flames dancing together  
we will explore the deep shadows  
of our grief until the light of morning  
fills this sacred space with joy  
and songs of our praise.

Slowly,  
in deep stillness,  
in deep stillness of early morning darkness,  
ghostly forms begin to stir.

Slowly in deep stillness  
of early morning darkness  
ghostly forms begin to stir  
and haunt the empty chambers of my mind.

There is no image.  
There is no dream.  
There is no light.  
There is no God!

I am alone.  
I am alone on the edge.  
I am alone on the edge of life.  
I am alone on the edge of life with all life.

We are seeds.  
We are seeds alone.  
We are seeds awakening to light.  
We are seeds awakening to light with all light.

We are traveling.  
We are traveling forward in time.  
We are traveling forward on the edge of darkness.  
We are carrying the divine light of all creation for an instant.

We are the seeds of God.  
We are the seeds of God for an instant.  
We are the seeds of God and all creation for an instant.  
Then we are gone—while the light of all creation continues on.

*Hear What I Have to Say!*

*May 1992*

All who are here to support me  
to dance with me  
to laugh with me  
to cry with me  
to love with me—

Hear what I have to say!

All who are here to humble me  
to wound me  
to mock me  
to bring me to my knees  
to peck at my bones—

Hear what I have to say!

I have done all these and more with myself already!

Layer by layer  
I unfastened the hard armor  
I removed the soft cloth  
I tore at the bare skin until  
my soft flesh cried out  
in pure anguish.

Thus, I fed myself to the hungry lions of my heart.

Now they are satisfied!

Their bellies are filled with my flesh and blood  
as their tails slowly flick away the flies  
that seek to nest in my bare bones.

(Continued)

I have not come  
to entertain you  
to comfort you  
to save you.

I have climbed upon the great cross of pain  
where I carefully drove the nails of my truth.  
I will drive more!

I stand with no rank and no authority.

I stand naked carrying the scars of life experience.

I stand at the edge of a great salt sea  
that comes from unknowable place  
to my eyes like gentle drops of rain.

I stand before you as a humble human being.

Now, I invite you to mount this sacred hill of darkness  
beside me and in the blazing light of our being  
share this intimate moment together.

But I warn you,  
there will be no relief from pain or sorrow  
only a deep blanket of love  
to comfort our souls.

*Come Mourn With Me*    *April 1992*

There is a secret chamber  
in the darkness of my heart  
where grief and sorrow  
have their start.

When I have  
the strength to share  
my pain and  
private demons there,

My soul reveals  
a hidden spring  
that in its cleansing flow  
heals everything.

*Gathering Stones*

*June 1993*

As I walk along this rocky road  
I find many treasures.  
There are stones of pleasure,  
stones of joy, stones of sorrow and grief.

Carefully, I gather them all in.

Together, they turn over and over  
in the vast salt sea of my emotions,  
until their sharp edges are worn smooth  
and their great beauty shines out to the world.

Over the centuries  
    sheltered by damp walls  
        rough stone steps are worn smooth.

The opening leads down into the darkness.

I know who dwells here!  
It is the devouring Minotaur.  
It is born from the mother of all fears.

Shaking with terror,  
    most stumble in alone.  
But for those with courage,  
    dignity is your companion.

King and queen,  
    servant and slave,  
        child and sage,  
all seek light in this great darkness.

There is only one way out.  
Turn around and embrace your death.  
Bait yourself on its painful hook, and wait.

She will come for you when you are ripe.  
She will slice open your belly with her sharp claws.  
She will reveal your heart locked in a secret chamber.

She has the only key.

Gently,  
    she will turn the frozen tumblers.  
Tenderly,  
    she will lift your bones and kiss your parched lips.  
Firmly,  
    she will hand you the thread  
        to a passionate and abundant life.

*Strange Music*

*April 1993*

There is a golden string  
strung between my heart and belly.  
When the spirit plays,  
I feel strange music.

It beckons me through turbulent waters  
past convention and beyond tradition,  
where winds of paradox and clouds of uncertainty  
dance on the rip tide of my emotions.

But, beyond this wild sea and stormy sky,  
there is a warm fertile territory  
where I boldly plant my seeds.

There in the rich soil of our relationship,  
I safely nurture my soul  
until my heart blossoms  
with your strange exotic flowers.

*The Growing Edge*     *May 1994*

Ancient forest sentinels  
with fire blackened skin  
guard this dark holy place  
from early morning sun.

At their feet unfolds  
a stony channel torn  
from earth's heart  
over eons of time.

Filled with torrents of raindrops  
racing madly toward the sea,  
their mighty chorus  
floods the mountain air.

Like the tall redwoods,  
I embrace my darkness.

Like the gathered stones,  
I have become a sacred vessel.

And like the raging stream,  
I am bound to sing out my song.

In the mountains high there is a solid wall.  
It's built across the river and holds the water's fall.

Open up the floodgate and let the river run.  
It sings a mighty chorus when wild torrents come.

The valley below is parched, the earth beneath is dry.  
All the crops are wilting, soon the people will die.

Open up the floodgate and let the river run.  
It sings a mighty chorus when wild torrents come.

Now dark clouds are forming, feel the breezes roll.  
Pray a storm is coming to fill the empty hole.

Open up the floodgate and let the river run.  
It sings a mighty chorus when wild torrents come.

See the lightning flash, hear the thunder's dare.  
Feel the wind a blowing, smell the moisture there.

Open up the floodgate and let the river run.  
It sings a mighty chorus when wild torrents come.

Feel the raindrops falling, hear their dancing drum.  
Now the heavens are open, let the torrents come.

Open up the floodgate and let the river run.  
It sings a mighty chorus now that wild torrents come.

*Rustling*

*September 1995*

When I am quiet  
I hear rustling.  
In shadows of my mind  
I hear a rustling.

Dark butterfly wings  
are rustling—it is my soul.

Is it trying to land?  
Is it searching for heart's flowering?  
Or is it caught again  
In some invisible net?

No! Like a hound by the hearth  
it is circling to soften its rest.

*Along The Shore*

*January 1996*

Endless waves hiss their dying song  
while rising tide spreads lacy blankets of foam.

Lifting mist reveals silver disc of sun  
while rocky cliffs await their daily bath.

In the distance a whale spouts  
while gulls drift back and forth.

Blackbirds hurry among scarce plants  
their yellow eyes hungry for seed.

Birds are simply present  
either for food or death!

My thoughts turn to life  
and full acceptance of it.

I wait for inspiring visions  
secure in this precious moment.

*Great Invisible Sea*      *January 1997*

Great invisible sea  
    whose waves well up in my eyes  
    whose driving wind is Divine,

What lunacy attracts you toward  
    winter shore of my soul?

Is it about painful vulnerability  
    found in human life?

Is it about the terrible anguish  
    found in loss of relationship?

Is it about the wounding pleasure  
    found in physical love?

Is it about some future agony  
    yet to be discovered?

Is it about simple recognition  
    of our final earthly destiny?

Is it about humble acknowledgment  
    of our ineffable connection?

Or is it the melting of some great  
    glacier around my heart?

*Valentine's Day    February 1997*

By strange coincident  
on Big Sur coast  
not far from the river  
two trees entwine.

One thrusts bare branches  
high overhead in the sky.  
The other's green leaves spread  
wide around its tall companion.

Native Californians both,  
each quite different.  
Oak and Sycamore,  
yet mated for life.

Their distinct forms  
cast long shadows  
over rich layers  
of seed and leaf.

A flock of crows  
march back and forth,  
nudging, poking,  
harvesting hidden life.

Our roots,  
some known,  
some hidden,  
anchor us

We are content  
sharing lunch,  
feeling warmth  
of hearts entwined.

*Ireland*

*June 1997*

The shores of this land  
are littered with stones.

Stones rolled from  
tombs of dead hearts.

Hearts resurrected  
like the lush green  
fields of Ireland.

*Unfulfilled Dreams    December 1997*

I no longer  
cast my net  
looking for dreams,  
seeking fulfillment,  
longing for times  
past or future!

Somewhere,  
when I listen,  
a bird sings,  
breezes refresh,  
dawn & dusk  
paint the sky!

Now the world  
is my dream!

*Asilomar*      *December 1998*

Chill moist wind  
Blowing in from the sea  
Births loping low clouds  
While cold buttermilk sky  
hides the Sun high above.

Out beyond guardian rocks  
covered by naked sea grass  
waves cast out by receding tide  
impatiently wait return  
singing their displeasure.

Hidden along rocky cliffs  
are small abandoned pools.

Beneath these still waters  
among tiny shy creatures  
are forgotten treasures  
shells & glittering jewels  
hidden in secret crevasses.

The long tide of life is like this!

Under vast emotional sea  
in cold recesses of the mind  
are forgotten memories  
once loved, or feared,  
or much too heavy  
for young to carry.

They are all hidden treasures,  
experiences that shaped  
our unique hidden beauty.

Stop!  
Walk along this other shore.  
Rediscover your richness  
before the flood tide of time  
covers it all up again!

*Eating Bitter II February 1999*

Down the road  
Around the bend  
Darkness begins where  
The pavement ends

Slippery and slow  
Where light rarely gains  
The way is steep  
With toil and pains

One companion  
Take for this end  
Welcome death  
Along as your friend

*The Gift*

*May 2001*

I am in a whisper in the back of your mind.  
I am in a thought that comes without warning.

I am in conversation with a friend.  
I am in your laughter and mine.

I am hidden in a glass of wine.  
I am in satisfaction of a good meal.

I am in wind among the trees.  
I am in changing seasons.

I am in silence of day passing into night.  
I am in deep pleasure of sleep.

I am the gift of life.  
In a spontaneous moment.

*A Quiet Heart*      *January 2002*

Down the way  
of high imagination  
behind a dark forest  
of passing years  
there is a meadow.

Hidden from view  
by accumulated chores  
and responsibilities  
lie treasured memories  
and forgotten dreams.

Stop!  
Prune your chores!  
Trim responsibilities!  
Build a pathway  
through the forest.

It is time to remember  
what lies waiting in the meadow.  
It is the wonder of our dreams.  
It is the magic of a quiet heart.

*In The Mirror*    *February 2006*

(At an Elderhood Conference,  
a young man says he  
doesn't see old people  
because they aren't sexy!)

Eyes are sunken in retreat  
beneath strong brows, yet shine  
with deep blue of evening sky  
catching every movement.

Prominent ears & nose contain  
frequently trimmed hair nests  
while smile lines and wrinkles  
around the eyes flow deeply.

Bearded in white, jowls  
sag slightly on well worn  
leathery skin dappled by  
moles and old age freckles.

Rough bald dome also  
speckled by age is now  
ringed by a fine narrow  
band of once blonde hair.

The tanned weathered  
neck could easily belong  
to some great desert turtle  
with its creases & folds.

(Continued)

Yet on the inside still resides  
a tall shy youth with ample  
wavy hair, zestful enthusiasm  
and strong playful energy.

Mind sorting mysteries  
of machines and theories,  
it soars high in imagination  
with heroes and adventurers.

Intrigued and attracted by  
the wonder of each unique  
feminine beauty, heart still  
ponders possible connection.

But in quiet reverie, pace is slower,  
thoughts more serious, aches enduring,  
as young ladies smile back easily seeing  
a Grandfather rather than a lover.

*Hibernation February 2005*

Weak winter sun  
filters through  
afternoon haze with  
only a hint of blue  
from the sky while  
a few cumulus puffs  
perch on nearby hills.

The rustling breeze  
carries sounds of  
mating birds  
yet penetrates  
my clothes  
with cool fingers  
touching the bone.

Now as I search  
for missing  
inspiration  
a heavy blanket  
covers my mind  
dulls my senses  
slowing my thoughts.

Making myself  
comfortable in  
my reclining chair  
I lean way back  
close my eyes  
and let go into  
the quiet.

*Sow Yourself! December 2006*

Sow yourself like  
a seed into life!

Plant yourself among  
both friends and enemies.  
Your rich vitality  
will nourish all.

Dream of endless beauty,  
clear lakes, snow capped  
mountains and soft  
sand dunes by the sea.

Let another's tears  
swell your essence  
and grow your spirit  
into songs of joy.

Your love & laughter  
will burn away the  
darkness of life's  
crushing burdens.

*After Valentine's Day February 2008*

Unexpected shower of rain  
and hail explodes after  
morning walk under misting  
sky emptying yard of all life.

Bright sun breaks through  
providing brief respite  
from Winter's wet waves.

The Jay is first to return  
with prospective mate  
clutching hanging feeder  
with experienced grip.

Acorn Woodpecker pair  
easily take their turn,  
while on the ground,  
Band-tailed Pigeons,  
a single Crow and Doves  
feed on scattered seed.

Later, Golden-crowned  
Sparrows, Juncos and  
Purple Finches will  
come to the feeder.

They will be followed by  
flocks of Chickadees, a  
Titmouse or two and  
Townsend Warblers who take  
their bath in the fountain.

(Continued)

Perhaps even the  
Pacific-slope Flycatcher  
will show her face  
having filled several nests.

Lazily, I am satisfied to  
calmly wait and watch for  
their passing parade without  
my usual desire to work.

My world has tilted slightly off axis.  
It's as if a strange psychic quake  
rocked my life's foundation.

I first noticed it with the little things.

Today, the news paper never arrived.  
I forgot butter making my waffle recipe and  
I discovered a water leak in the yard.

Although the sun is shining, wind is  
blowing up a gale and a fire has  
broken out in the nearby foothills.

Even though I received an epidural and other  
shots from my doctor, the nagging pain  
in my lower back will not go away.

Previously, the golf course closed  
for renovation and the fountain  
pump replacement stopped working.

I am also in dispute with an appliance  
repairman and when my printer  
stopped, a replacement arrived broken.

I resist nagging feelings of victimization,  
but it feels like an invisible cloud of  
mischief has entered my once happy life.

Does it have anything to do with  
my almost 78 years as a dedicated  
optimist? Or, am I just getting old!

*Summer Prayer      September 2008*

Golden hills of California parched  
after two years of drought send  
wild creatures migrating further down  
from the hills in search of food.

On the Monterey Peninsula,  
evergreen golf courses offer  
a treat for hungry deer and  
a stalking mountain lion.

In my yard, newly planted Gazania  
cover once bare slope, tolerant of  
sea breezes, they promised dazzling  
orange blossoms until discovered  
by ever browsing deer.

It's the doe and her two fawns  
who give me the most trouble.

I've tried green soap bars tied  
at intervals, deer resistant sprays  
wire netting and even my  
trusty sling shot to no avail.

They can not resist  
my delicious garden!

At this advanced stage  
of my life, I thought I would  
have a more meaningful  
focus than this standoff.

Now, I can only hope and pray  
for the hungry mountain lion!

It was only a tray full of old VHS tapes.  
She asked: “Why don’t you throw them out?”

The VHS player was just demoted  
from its revered place upstairs  
with the digital entertainment  
system to the guest room where  
the analog TV now resides.

Cartoon tapes and Disney movies went  
too, for Great Grandchildren's enjoyment.  
But my old recordings of workshops, TV  
programs and my tape from the Zurich  
Intensive were the object of her question.

Some how,  
I just couldn’t do it!  
I am not sure why,  
but I couldn’t do it!  
I could not part with them!

At heart I am a saver and a fixer!  
I love extending the life of things.  
First analyzing to find the problem,  
then often improvising a solution  
and finally, the joy of giving new life.

It is the same with lots of little things  
I keep and store. Small treasures  
waiting for a useful home. Potted  
plants are a part of this too.  
It’s just a part of my character!

(Continued)

I remember coming home  
as a child pleased as punch  
with a scroungy bush a neighbor  
had dug up and thrown out. I was  
sure I could make it grow again.

The same impulse exists with people!  
I have great empathy for the old.  
I have watched loved ones reach their  
prime, wrinkle and slow on a downward  
path as they grow old and pass away.

Perhaps it is frugality from the Great  
Depression Era when I was growing up.  
Perhaps it is nostalgia from times I have  
enjoyed. Or perhaps it is because of my age  
as I too am getting old and a bit worn out.

By my choice to save them, each  
saved treasure carries a bit of me—  
their presence then represents a part  
of me. Perhaps it is my way of saying,  
don't forget me when I am gone!

My Father's work bench was always cluttered at least three layers deep. As a young boy, my inclination for neatness was aghast at this!

Periodically, I would dive in hanging tools, sorting and cleaning until all was in order to fit my eye.

Tom would respond it was all unnecessary as he always knew where everything was before I started my cleaning frenzy.

Now, seventy years later, on my desk strangely there are piles of books, papers and files cluttering all over.

In the garage, on my work bench there are at least four layers deep. To the ordinary observer they both are a mess!

The visual appearance bothers me sometimes, but I know where everything is and can quickly lay my hand on it.

Although the ten year old in me sometimes yearns to put it all in order, Tom's also alive and I resist the temptation!

There is a secret place deep within my heart  
when touched brings tears to my eyes.

Sometimes it happens as I sing, or read a poem,  
or share intimately what I believe and hold most true.

Other times I discover I have stumbled into a  
Divine wisdom way beyond normal awareness.

Recently, it happened again when a  
woman complemented my singing voice.

Instantly, deeply moved, I could only mumble  
a simple reply as I wiped away the tears.

Most of the time I feel strong and bold  
with clear mind, voice and steady hand.

Then, mysteriously, inconveniently,  
it happens—flooding me by surprise.

I wonder about the nature of this overwhelming  
emotion and what has just been revealed.

Are some experiences just too lovely or  
powerful for any human being to behold?

Could it be the revealing of hidden beauty?  
Could it be a glimpse of a heavenly power?

I suspect the touch of that secret place disturbs  
a great ocean far too large for any of us to contain.

Or perhaps, it is all just about  
God's playful sense of humor.