

Poetry Anthology of Duane L Herrmann

Duane L Herrmann



Presented by

My poetic side 

Dedication

To Hattie Warner who taught me to read and gave me access to the world, and my Aunt June who suggested the idea.

About the author

Duane L. Herrmann, a reluctant carbon-based life-form, was surprised to find himself in 1951 on a farm in Kansas. How did that happen??? He's still trying to make sense of it but has grown fond of grass waving in the wind, trees and the enchantment of moonlight. He aspires to be a hermit, but would miss his children, grandchildren and a few friends. His work has been published in many real places and online, even some of both in languages he can't read (English is difficult enough!). He is known to carry baby kittens in his mouth, pet snakes, and converse with owls, but is careful not to anger them! All this, despite a traumatic, abusive childhood (first suicidal at age two) embellished with dyslexia, ADHD (both unknown at the time), cyclothymia, and now, PTSD. He's still learning to breathe and perform human at the same time.

summary

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Invocation Meditation

"O Moving Form of Dust,"
Baha'u'llah addresses
the created of this world.

"In the image and likeness of God
He created him;
male and female, He created them."

From dust and "a moist germ,"
to dust do we return,
our shadow selves and bodies.

For, around us, all we see
are dust constructions;
none of which is 'real.'

The real world lies ahead
in realms unknown and glorious
when we leave this dust behind.

Absence by Inference

A row of cedar trees
native to the plains
and nearly indestructible,
with a shed behind,
old, ruined,
indicate the absence
of a home
once in the space
the trees protected.
What happened
to this farm?
The missing family?
Tragedy afflicted
on their lives?
And, the children?
What did they feel,
uprooted, scattered,
with the wind?

Coyote Crossing

On the crest
of the hill ahead
silhouette against the dawn
a coyote
crossed the road.
He was not afraid.
I was far away
enough, he knew,
to do no harm,
vehicle that I was
to his perception;
not a strange encounter
on a country road
in early morning light.
Our worlds glanced
upon each other
to remind us:
we are here together.

Danger!

Poetry

is dangerous.

It causes thought,

reflection,

and sometimes even:

action.

Watch out!

A poem might

infect you!!

Explorers

We have explored
the continents,
the oceans,
though not completely,
and the universe
that we can reach.
We have explored
our bodies
and our minds,
though we're not done,
but isn't it time
for our final frontier:
the human spirit-soul?
What gives us dreams
that we then achieve?
What keeps us going
despite impossible odds?
How can we survive
the un-survivable?
And, why
will we risk our life
for someone else,
loved one or unknown?
We do it all the time,
"Of course. Why not?"
Are we fools?
Or, is there something more,
some great attitude we have
which spurns us on
to do for others,
more than ourselves?
What is this?
Why do we?

Why don't we know
more ?
the human heart?

Family Plowing

I plow the paper with a pen
engaged as the family has been
in cultivation: sowing and reaping.

I plow the paper with a pen,
in a solitary field -
it always has been.

My father was a farmer,
his father, and his before him;
we are plowmen in our rows.

I plow the paper with a pen -
rows of words across the space
in neat and even lines.

Though plowing is the family business,
my "machineries" now differ
for a different kind of crop.

But the plowing is the same:
long straight lines
across unmarked fields.

Garden Bright

"White" hostas
with variegated greens
brighten
the dark, shady corner
of the house and fence.
"Bing, bing,"
they say, leaves
dancing to the breeze.
The formerly dark,
now transformed
by bits of white, light
and darker greens.
So much more cheerful
than dull dim before.
And so, with lives of joy
in troubled times
when happiness
is rare.

Grandfather's Road

Invisible to the traveler now,
two tracks through the grass,
but the discerning eye
can see two fence rows on each side.

Across the prairie and down
the hill it leads
over a little cement bridge,
with iron rails;

One missing.
Also missing is the house
and barn and windmill.
Not even a line of stones.

His early life,
his boyhood home,
has returned to the prairie
from whence it came.

The earth
reclaimed its own.

But the road remains
to show the way
to the past of my grandfather's life:
he walked this way to school.

Grave Concern

Walking through
the park-like place
with
ornamental stones,
one finds a hole
a foot or so deep
and knows
the wooden lid
of a coffin fell!

His Name

He fled
young man,
boy
in fear
from the army
or police ?
no one now knows,
a hundred years ago:
my great grandfather.

I returned
walked his house
his board floors,
stairs
and cried in reunion:
family: once again,
united.

The last to be Amerikan ?
I bear his name.

How Can You?

So few
are surrounded by
untamed,
partially neglected,
semi-wild,
or at least, uncultivated
seeming wilderness,
to city dwellers,
of the once ago farm
on the prairie
with trees.
"How can you stand it?"
No streets or sidewalks,
no lights at night,
no park benches
just grass and trees and brush
and endless sky.

Perfect!!

Humanity in Process

My ancestors were invaders
some three hundred
years ago, seeking
a better life regardless
of those living here.
My ancestors were invaded,
their homeland stolen,
nearly annihilated
in the process.
Who do I honor?
How do I honor
all of they
who are now me?
I am the sum
of our human family ?
trials, ordeals,
and difficulties
as process continues.

New \ "Normal"

We Zoom here,
Zoom there,
Going nowhere, yet anywhere!

Night Necklaces

Strings of flames
strewn across hillsides.
Large and small
flaming jewels
form lines and loops
here and there,
up, down, around.
At night the sight
is awesome to behold.
Darkness hides
grass from ash
and contrasts
smoke towering high
lit by flames
illuminating,
reflecting,
necklaces
adorning hillsides
in prairie spring.

On the Hillside

Buffalo herd on the hillside
resting
in afternoon heat,
breathing boulders
scattered in the grass
and prairie flowers;
more than a hundred -
awesome sight
and reminder
of time when
great multitudes
of the giant beasts
owned the prairie
past horizon -
source of meat, bone tools,
tipi skins and more
For Kanza, Lakota
and others on the plains.

Tree's Lament

How could my people
do this to me?
Picnic in my shade
and nap there,
climb my limbs,
collect autumn leaves ?
then do this to me!
I am ashamed!
How can they do this to me?
How can they hang
their own kind
from my branches?
Bodies
do not ornament!
They think I can't feel
this burden?
I cannot endure to live
if this is what they do.
I harbor life,
not bring death!
I am ashamed!
I'd rather die!
Cut me! Burn me!
But don't use me to kill.
My roots are curling,
leaves are wilting, I
am dying...