

The Space Between Breaths

Life, Laughter, and Letting Go



Cindy Lee Scott

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by
Cindy Lee Scott

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Preface

It gives me great pleasure to join Cindy in breathing life into this book, which offers a poetic glimpse into the joy and pain of aging in a Parkinson's bubble and the life-changing plethora of experiences in an assisted living facility. The title of this book represents so many aspects of Cindy's life: the literal breathing challenges that can come with Parkinson's; those quiet pauses where deep thoughts emerge; the threshold space between life stages; the musical concept of rests and pauses, which reflect Cindy's life as a musician; and the philosophical space where wisdom lives following an engaged life of learning.

Cindy found me in 2016, and in that finding, when we connected I discovered a full sister who I did not know existed! Cindy lived in California and I was at Mountain Quest Institute, a research and retreat center in the middle of the Allegheny Mountains in Frost, West Virginia. When Cindy viewed Mountain Quest on the internet she wanted to visit me and see it in person. Since Cindy does not fly and is wheelchair bound, several of her children drove her across country in an RV. We spent a wonderful week getting to know each other, and since that time Cindy's poetry has provided a rich interweaving of exploring and learning together.

As to the idea for this book, here are Cindy's words.

I received a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease in my later fifties and didn't know what to expect or what Parkinson's was all about. So, the search began to find out what I could do to help myself. It was difficult to find any information on exactly what happens to the body as Parkinson's progresses, although I certainly know now! There was definitely no cure, and I would have to endure the changes that were coming ... coming to ravage and steal my body movements away from me.

I decided that I would write about the issues that I was going to have to face as Parkinson's sapped my strength and took over the motor functions in my body. I tried to keep an open mind, a positive attitude, and exercise my memory every day.

I also wanted to address the concerns and trials of aging. Poetry has been a big part of my life; it seemed only logical that I would use poetry to express myself. So, another journey begins!

And so, it does.

Alex Bennet

Contents

Becoming Seasoned | 1

Adding Chapters to Your Story | 9

Reflection | 17

The Shift | 25

Living and Learning with Parkinsons | 31

Assisted Living | 35

Assisting Living | 47

Memorable Shorts | 53

Traveling Within | 55

The Journey Home | 61

INDEXES | 67-70

Ask

I ask not
Therefore,
I do not know.

I seek not
Therefore,
I cannot find.

I give not.
Therefore,
I don't receive.

I join not.
Therefore,
I don't belong.

(2021)

Becoming Seasoned

As perceived giants, we walk upon this earth
Thoughts forging each path as we seek our worth.
Learning, growing and gleaning inspired truth,
Reckoning occurs early in callow youth.

S

Unheeding footprints, left by each being,
Turning away, and in denial not seeing.
Absorbed, too preoccupied to be involved,

H

Transforming Earth's efficacious resolve.

A

Evolution continues, just as it began
It does not bend to the restraint of man.

D

Still humans live on through indulgent extremes
And naivety reigns as man lives and dreams.

O

W

S

Z

M

O

D





*An old soul named Worth: An
outflow emerged inner strength,
birthing an erudite, a “Seer”.*

An Old Soul Named Worth

A preeminent old soul named Worth
Seemingly tried to stand, sickened
Chanced upon a child sad and lost
With nothing left to share, weakened.

Why are you crestfallen?
A stagnant Worth beseeched,
Sensing the child's sadness,
Joy mislaid beyond reach.

Worth liberates flowing waters,
Gleaning lessons from eras gone,
Returns to the wellspring fountain
Rendered nourished, the lost re-spawn.

Eyes now awake, joy reigns
Where darkness paralyzed,
The child dances blissfully,
Loves power realized.

Worth ponders the awakening.
The distressed tired soul felt renewed.
Seer transforms to observer,
Flowing rivers foster a new view.

Your time here is not yet done.
(2121)

Stairways

Another climb
Needing loves passion.
Exposing all
Soliciting compassion.

Showing your heart
Surrounding danger
Oh, so trusting
To a relative stranger.

Step-by-step invoking love
Climbing stairways to their end
Searching for a family
I found a loving friend.

(2021)



SPIRIT SONG

I must have been around fifty when I spent several years playing and singing on the worship team at our home church. During that time, one particular worship pastor was hired to teach the worship team and choir how to play and sing Spirit Songs. A Spirit Song is music that is freely played on an instrument—or woven engaging the human voice—which is not directed or orchestrated. This experience is very much like chanting, or free-floating during a musical jam session without a destination set. It can be an unentangled melody, or sometimes a harmony of rhythms.

Looking and feeling back, it's amazing how much my outlook on life changed after learning and engaging in Spirit Songs. Somewhat naive at the time, I didn't realize that the Spirit Song was a form of enlightened meditation.

The Spirit Song would typically start with a simple chord progression, which would lead into a free-flowing form of instrumental music or just singing. Certain musical chords and modal scales have the power to bring the emotions, soul and mind to a relaxed place of inner peace. Most of the time, once the chord progression was set, the human voice would enter in with singing, sometimes with words and other times with just beautiful round-vowel tones.

Sometimes that's as far as the Spirit Song would go. And then there were those other times when together, separate but one, we would surge to the next level. Diverse instruments and multiple voices ONE. Somehow each knew what the other was doing and was going, and in the knowing of the instant was perfection, a synchronistic blending that could not have been planned.

My mind was cleared of invading thoughts. The heaviness of my body floated with the melodic oh's and ah's of my cohorts, and evaporated into angelic oo's. The fingers of my gliding hands were pressed from above, caressing the keys in unknown patterns, adding grace notes heretofore unheard. There was no holding back. My voice, clear and pure in sound, uncontrollably emerged. There were no limits as the tone soared and dipped effortlessly, pausing for an instant to vibrate a trill, then continuing its melodic journey.

The room was filled with a white mist, clouding the eyes and inviting the body to bask in warm streams of love and light. Short spurts of familiar tunes would periodically weave through the tapestry of song before the music surfed into the unknown, rising to new beginnings. Each experience was different, with emotions responsive to the flowing waves of sound ... sometimes excitement, sometimes contentment, sometimes sadness.

The ending approached with a fading of voices, releasing the mist in a quiet-filled room. And slowly, ever so slowly, my surroundings would come into focus, and I returned, refreshed and renewed.

It would be difficult to speak for others, for I am not them, yet I am, so perhaps ... the Spirit Song is the stuff of miracles. Singing and music connect the desires of my heart with life, and so

it has been since I was small. Yet before the experience of the Spirit Song, I could not play without music and I could not sing without the words in front of my eyes.

As the years have continued to pass, I have learned to tap into the mist through meditation by playing or singing in the solitude of my home. While I still need the music, it no longer matters ... the desires of my heart have long outweighed anything I ever expected from life. And deep down, there are the everlasting moments of the Spirit Song frozen in time. Blessed moments that I seek to share.

Now my body has weakened with Parkinson's; there is a daily battle with pain and stiffness; and I am unable to walk without assistance. Yet when I sit at the piano and lift my hands to the keyboard, the music appears and the pain disappears. For a short span the shaking in my right hand, arm and leg stops, and my mind, body and soul take flight.

During recent research to understand the impact of DNA, I've discovered that certain resonances and vibrations can cause the helix strands to tighten, and actually heal. I firmly believe that the musical tones of Spirit Songs are what kept me going, and have enabled me to live a fulfilling—and ever more enlightened—life. Even now, as I end this reflection, my soul still soars with the sounds of the Spirit Song. Now ... *and forever.*



*When I sit at the
piano*

*And the keyboard
feels my hands ...*

The music appears

*And the pain
disappears.*

(2018)

Lunch

The child thinks, “Humm, I’m getting hungry,”
Totally ignoring me.
He ponders on food in the kitchen.
Decides to go look and see.

Gets up and brings back a loaf of bread
From upon a kitchen shelf.
The child proceeds to eat a few slices,
Keeping it all to himself.



The child now thinks, “I want more than this”
As he gets up from his seat.
He goes to the fridge and then comes back
With a whole package of meat.



He proceeds to eat the entire packet
As most any child would do.
When he’s done, he then thinks to himself,
“What else can I get into?”

The child goes into the fridge drawer
And found himself a cutie.
Sitting from my chair, this old Grandma
Thinks, “I have done my duty.”



In my defense, all I can say is,
I spent years raising my own bunch.
Guess what I told his mom: “Your child had
A sandwich and fruit for lunch.”

(2024)

What a Glorious Life

Dancing with jubilee under the stars
Writing about life long living memoirs
Gazing at the illuminating moon
Listening to calls of a distant loon.

Experiencing music as “one with the all.”
Listening to the rhythmic sounds of rainfall.
Singing songs with the angels, glorious,
Astounding feelings of joy, victorious.

Bathing in the warmth of the morning sun
Knowing childlike feelings of having fun.
Feeling cool green grass beneath my feet,
The smell of alluring flowers so sweet.

Experiencing quiet warm summer nights.
Given from failures, revealing insights.
Feeling Mother Earth beneath me turning,
Forever teaching and me still learning.

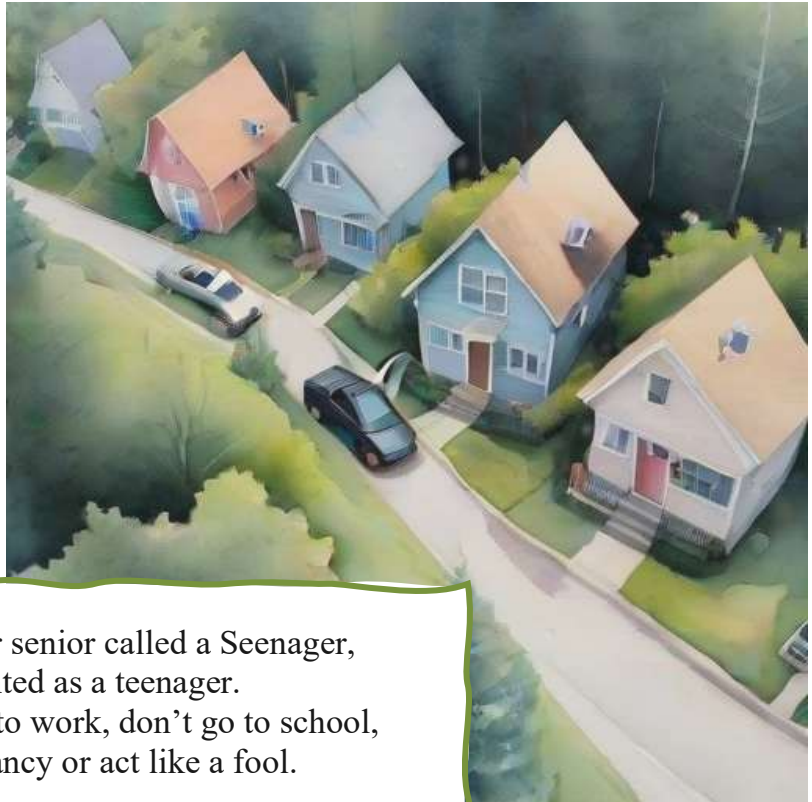
Touching freshly sprouted tree leaves green
New beginnings so peaceful and serene.
Cooling my feet in a gentle flowing river,
Realizing that I’m nature’s caregiver.

Wrapping my arms around a huggable tree,
Feeling all Mother Nature means to me.
Falling asleep to the singing bird song
Still here on this Earth, where we all belong.

(2024)



Seenager



There's a new word for senior called a Seenager,
Having everything wanted as a teenager.
Old people don't have to work, don't go to school,
Don't fret about pregnancy or act like a fool.

Hey guys, as a Seenager we have our own place,
Not perturbed about acne all over the face.
We're for sure not harassed with having a curfew,
Nor do we deal with hormones that leaves one blue.

We have our driver's license and own our own car;
We can buy our beer or wine and go to a bar.
We get allowance each month, know the exact time.
Step back and take a good look: our lives are quite fine.

The light shines on being old as you can see;
A new word discovery for old folk like me.
This outlook for elderly is fairly major,
So, enjoy this part of life as a Seenager.

Author of the word *Seenager* unknown.
(2017)



Adding Chapters to Your Story

Seasons Come and Seasons Go



The seasons come and seasons go
Changing fabrics of what we know
Success and failure bestows
Reckoning with past season shows.



Struggling offense laxities
Juvenile games and vanities
Prompting karmic calamities
Seeking out new realities.

Reaching high and reaching low
Time keeps moving as we grow
Eventually reaping what we sow
The seasons come and seasons go.

(2024)



These Hands



These hands, they reached out for help when I was young
Gathering the love needed to grow.
They helped me understand the world I was in
And the things that I needed to know.

These small hands sensed what was good, and what was not
With fundamental need called touch.
So, on I grew, and these hands became stronger
Steadily absorbing, gleaming much.

These strong hands began to play the piano
This made music “a big part of me,”
And that was only the beginning of how
Singing and dancing set my spirit free.



And when these hands learned to strum the folk guitar
I sang to my heart’s budding desire.
Getting older, these hands reached out, seeking love
As my glowing heart was set on fire.



Gentle hands held my sweet children in my arms
And close to my breast as each was born.
When hurt, wiped away their tears, comforting them
Until night brought on the break of morn.

Study hands sewed blankets and clothes for the kids
We often sat on the floor to play.
I taught my children everything that I knew
And would have had it no other way.



These stout hands dug gardens,
growing food to eat
And herbs for making my soups and
stew.
As the children grew up and left, I
fashioned
A sanctuary from all that I knew.

For many years these hands
continued working
'Til my legs they could no longer
stand.
Countless hours were spent in
Sanctuary
Creating with these weary old
hands.

Getting older, disease tore at my
body,
I could no longer work in the
yard.
Turning to music, these hands
played once again
Until that also became too hard.

These tired hands started to sort
lyrics and verse
From younger times, when I still
could stand.
And now what's in my heart is
all that is left
Free flowing through the pen in
my hand.

(2016)



Memories Etched in Time

Rice crispy debacle scene
Was anything but serene
Original target unseen,
Don't get caught in between.

Mischievous squirrel caper
Stealing the toilet paper.
The chickarees and the chip,
Small red squirrels let it rip.

Twilight to dark campfire fest
Undoubtedly some of the best.
Lighter in the campfire hail
Sweet happy Taffy's fire tail.

Recall the food cooler bath
Diaper in the cooler wrath.
Can't remember which came first,
But revenge, schemers thirst!

The rain came and kept on coming,
Then mosquitoes kept on humming.
It's hard to believe how much rain
Almost drove us all insane.

There was the baby head bump
I heard the accidental thump.
Every-thing's OK, he is well.
Let's keep it to ourselves, don't tell.

Get up out of bed big boys,
Camping everyone enjoys.
OK, if you can't take a hint
Flip! Got an upside-down tent.

Door marked "out of order" is mine.
Everyone else stand in line.
Having my own latrine joy,
That's what is good for this boy.

You stayed up and you guys binged
Because of noise you're unhinged.
Some party you had last night,
Probably wasn't very bright.

Warmed by the campfire on a log
Stir the fire, comes burning frog
Scared everyone, lost my breath
Frog got warm, stayed to his death.

Then a scream: "Need a hotdog",
Scarier than the burning frog.
She'd found herself in a bind,
Low blood sugar, never mind.

Memories from camping days,
Having fun in different ways.
Under the night starts divine
Are those memories etched in time.



NOTE FROM CINDY:

Our memories are our treasures. We can protect them by simply writing them down. It can take the form of a story, or try your hand at poetry, my favorite. Maybe even, you could try your luck at writing a song! The medium you use doesn't make a lot of difference. It's what's best and easiest for you. Also, it doesn't matter how young or how old you are. Your world and word experiences can be funny and comical, or even quite dramatic. I'm going to use the old phrase: "JUST DO IT!"

I sometimes go back to my OLD writings and reread them. And in the reading, I experience the same feelings that I had at the time they were composed. It's like magic, triggering emotions. I'm reasonably sure I would not be able to recall those memories without the aid of my poems.

So, I'm really glad I kept a record of my callow thoughts. *My own words are still helping me to grow and see new truths.* It seems as if I'm my own student. Ummm ... How does that work?

Blurred Days

Staring out through the window,
Blue sky turning from day to night,
The light traverses my hair
From a silvery grey to a white.

Racked with pain, in ebbs and flows,
Of which there is little relief.
Slowly it steels my freedom,
An invisible, life-draining thief.

Night and day, muscles and joints,
My extremities all set aflame.
Needed sleep comes in its own time.
No two periods are quite the same.

Having little left to now say,
Holding onto my Reality,
Overwhelming chaotic confusion.
Perhaps it is just senility.

Sometimes upon awakening
From a deep nap during the day,
Sleep brings an induced numbness
And for a moment, I feel okay.

In my chair, just holding on
With the knowing it will not last,
Remembering feeling this feeling
So frequently in the past.

Let me celebrate these moments
Awakening, becoming aware,
Feeling not quite so useless,
Good feelings I'd like to share.

A certain amount of time
Is given for each life in turn.
Time on this Earth is finite,
Know that we're all here to learn

*Loving one another while staying positive.
Celebrating moments when feeling just okay.
(2021)*



*Touch a life and discover
Compassion is a wondrous gift
You can give to another,
(2018)*

ENCOURAGEMENT

Unproductive state of being
What is this I'm seeing?
The minds clouded aberration
A period of stagnation.

Impetuous driving force
Trying to stay on course
Consumes this body I deplore
My encumbered soul seeks to soar
(2021)

Heart Stopping Moment

It was a hot July day, the year after the world stopped for the pandemic. I had finally gotten over COVID and didn't realize other things were happening to me ... Later on, I learned that it was not uncommon to have problems with the bowels as an after effect. I was just tired and wanted to go to sleep. I was bleeding inside, and wasn't paying attention.

My heart weakened and stopped from lack of blood. My oldest daughter performed CPR. Can you imagine doing CPR on your own mother? She was able to start my heart beating again—no doubt it helped that's she's a nurse.

I won't go into the whole story, but I woke up in a hospital bed hooked to a monitor and very confused. I couldn't stay awake, just went in and out of consciousness, wanting to sleep. I could hear my children talking to me, but could not fully understand what was being said.

The one of my children began to read my poetry to me. I kept thinking "that's me, there I am." And I realized, my time here was not yet done!



Words are powerful

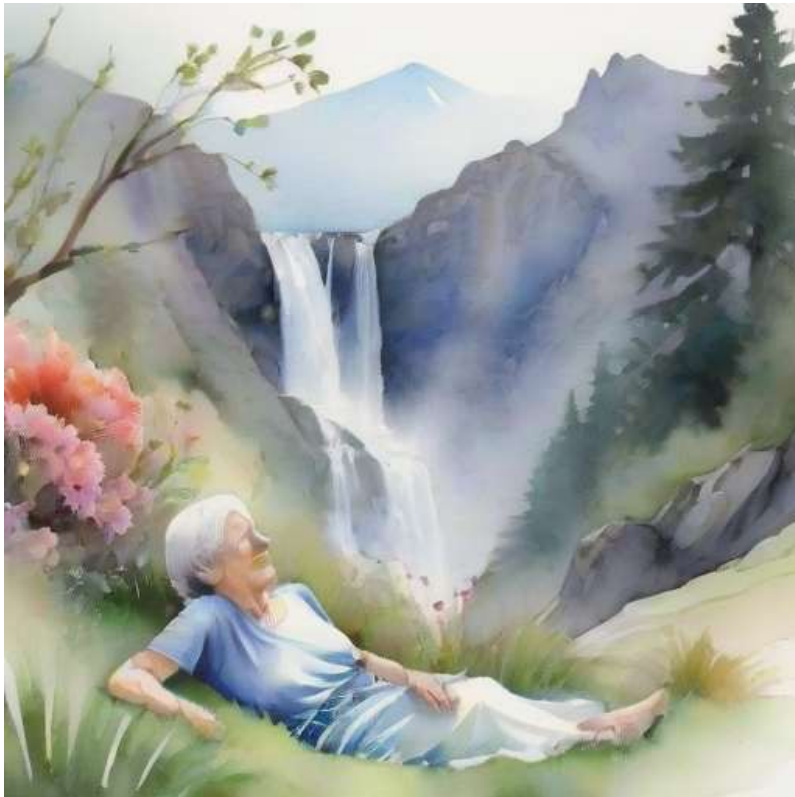
Living Powers

I lay on the soft sweet-smelling grass
Contemplating how quickly times pass,
Underneath a beautiful green tree
Blocking the sun with its leaves for me.

Hear a waterfall being mountain fed,
Carving its way through an old creek bed.
Hear birds sing, touch a tree, smell flowers
Beholding nature's living powers.

Holding on to this segment of time,
Yielding to this tired body of mine.
My Essence is strong but flesh is weak.
It's a soaring spirit I now seek.

(2023)



Reflection

Hand in Hand

*Hand in hand we walked through life
Living a collective dream,
Sometimes a roaring river
Other times a gentle stream.*

*Standing by one another
Through trials and tribulations,
Growing, learning and giving
Spawning combined creations.*

*Slowly our youthful vigor
Diminished through the years,
With days of joyous laughter
And sometimes, sadness and tears.*

*Through elations and struggles,
Whether arduous or fun
We will forever remain
Hand in hand till life is done.*

(2019)

***Remembering my grandmother,
Whom I lived with for several years***

Daffodils along a walkway
On a crisp, end of winter day
Melting snow in the early spring
Brings new hope that flowers can bring.
Winter's memory fades with the last snow melt
Daffodils, it's life's renewal that I felt.

Flower set inside a flower
With inspirational power
Delicate and beauty divine
The color of yellow sunshine.
Wish: to see those daffodils just once more
Along Grannies walkway to the front door.

(2023)

Daffodils



Healing Deep Wounds

In my younger years I seemed to live the deep physical and spiritual wounds over and over that I had received while growing up. I seemed to always have a need to be rescued or to be “fixed”, but it was never enough! Being fixed took me realizing I had imprisoned myself in my own mind and that I was the one causing that everlasting pain. I was addicted to the pain and sorrow....

Once I realized I no longer needed to be a victim, my attitude changed and I began to glean spiritual lessons from my past experiences. This journey began by my asking forgiveness from anyone I may have caused pain and forgiving those who had hurt me ... and I also had to forgive my needy self.

Finally, now at peace, I began to grow exponentially!

Healing Deep Wounds

Contemplating lost regret
Opportunities then yield.
Old unattended wounds set
That never completely healed.

Time wore the layers away
Finding some old wounds still raw.
Now exposed to light of day
Finally uncloaking then all.

Enfeebled, my heart now beats
Youthful strength now at rest.
Looking from a blessing seat
Releases me of distress.

The process is of reflections
Accepting fate's cessation.
We learn from our convictions
Guided by schooled elation.
(2026)

Dust in the Wind

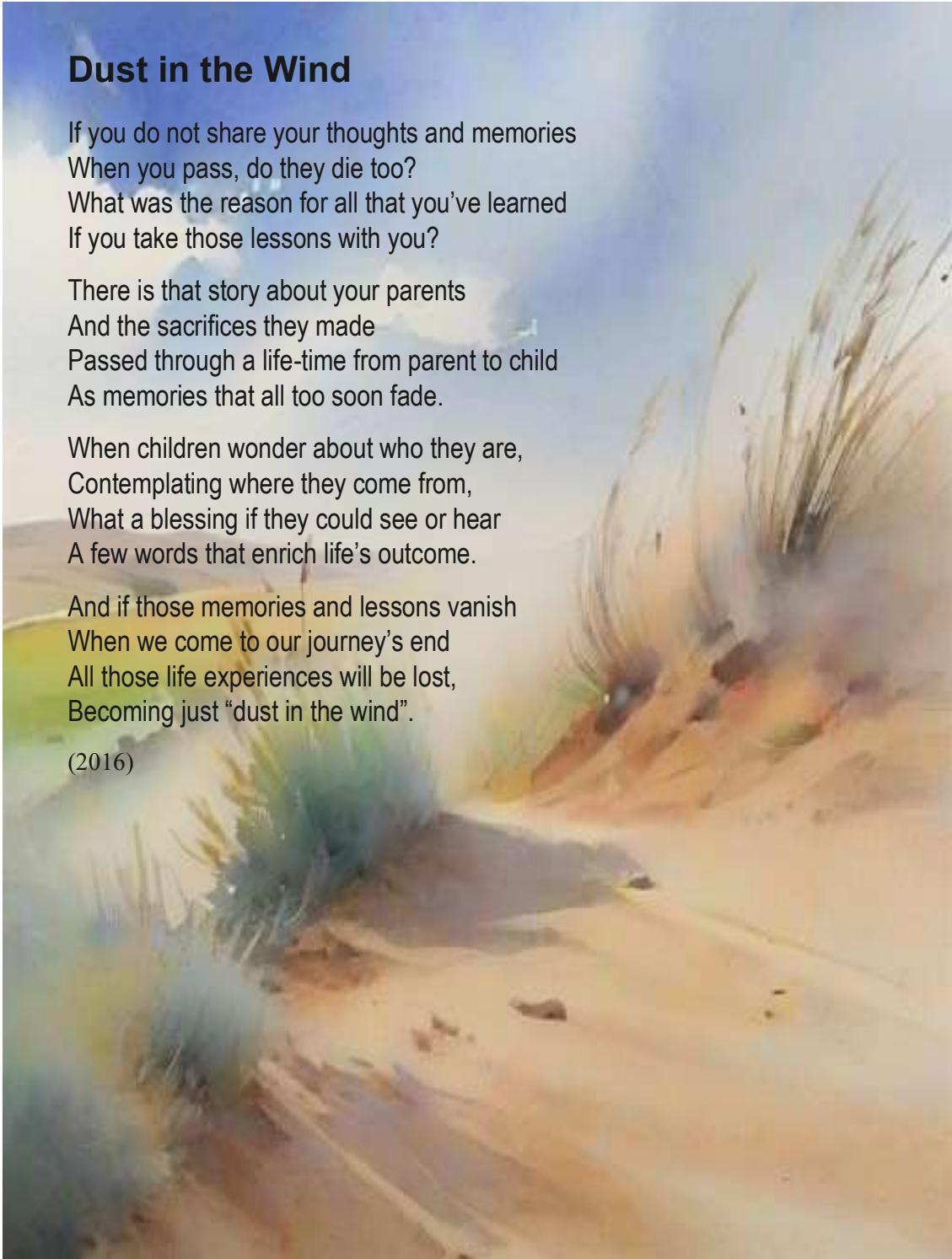
If you do not share your thoughts and memories
When you pass, do they die too?
What was the reason for all that you've learned
If you take those lessons with you?

There is that story about your parents
And the sacrifices they made
Passed through a life-time from parent to child
As memories that all too soon fade.

When children wonder about who they are,
Contemplating where they come from,
What a blessing if they could see or hear
A few words that enrich life's outcome.

And if those memories and lessons vanish
When we come to our journey's end
All those life experiences will be lost,
Becoming just "dust in the wind".

(2016)





Memories

Memories of bird songs in the trees
Laying in a swing, feeling the breeze
Those wonderful days in my garden
Tranquilities daily life pardon.



Sitting, watering trees and plants
Nature in all its glorious dance.
A meditational vision ride
A place of peace unfolding inside.

The years just rolled on by way too fast
Now it's all a memory from the past
And in my mind it is very clear
How much I matured year after year.

Learning from everything that I touch
Being thankful for stewarding so much.
Gaining a growing peace from within
Knowing how greatly blessed I have been.

(2023)

Remember When

Remember when you were very small
Holding little hands so you wouldn't fall,
Growing up you stood ever so tall,
Standing back till you didn't need me at all.

Remember when I wiped away your tears,
Encouraging you to conquer your fears,
Watching you grow with an exuberant cheer
Dreaming with you as you sought a career.

Remember when, time and time again,
Falling down as you stumbled, and then
Starting over you'd get up and grin,
Reaching deep, gathering strength from within.

Remember when you'd lay on my chest,
Being next to you, so you could rest.
Comforting you when extremely stressed,
Wanting to give you my very best.

Remember when, many years bygone
Seeing darkness, remembering the dawn.
Thinking about all those times foregone
Wondering if our lives are pre-drawn?

*What a lovely person you've become.
I remember when.*

(2024)



One Little Thing

A cookie, just one cookie
What harm could it bring?
Emotions came rushing in
From that one little thing.

Memories from childhood
When life was still in Spring.
Memories of my children
And the songs we'd sing.

Cookies were soon to be done
In a past thought swirling ring.
A pleasant aroma filled the air
And soon the oven went ding.

Amazing memories came
A cookie sensational fling
All that process and recall
From just one little thing.

Made Me Who I Am Today

You ask how I got through the confusion
Of those down and out days in my life.
I used to say I'd selected the wrong road,
I need a shorter road with less strife.

I would then pick another door to go through
Without asking the big question why.
I'd head one direction and when that was wrong,
I'd just fall down on my knees and cry.

I began to look around on my journeys,
Not just focused on the life-long run.
I was less afraid and began to embrace
Each obstacle till each test was done.

I realized it wasn't the path I'd chosen,
These were lessons I needed to learn
That kept me meandering around detours,
Each dead end an unexpected turn.

Those irrational fears I'd carried with me
Kept me stagnant in spiritual growth.
Fear of being alone and of the unknown
Clearly, I needed to conquer both.

Looking back, I'm asking would I change anything?
After all is done, here's what I say:
For everything happened just as it should have,
That's what *Made Me who I Am Today!*

(2016)





Divisions or Visions

The Shift

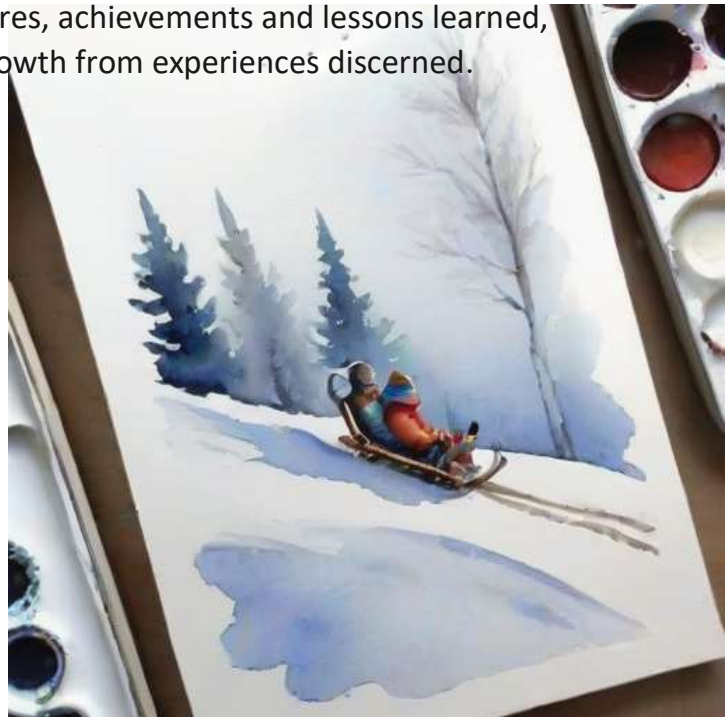
DOWN THE HILL

Youth gains hope, prospect and excitement climbing up the hill.
Goals like friends, passion, status, position, which all seem real.
From acceptance of others or competitive sports teams,
Building grand illusions and/or living out youthful dreams.

Hopefully one has a career finally reaching the hilltop,
Seeking love and fulfillment, sometimes nonstop.
Building, raising a family, joining forces for a cause,
Productive chosen paths, living dreams without pause.

Down the hill taking an assessment as the body ages,
Looking back at the dreams, accomplishment and changes.
Examining mistakes, failures, achievements and lessons learned,
Accumulating spiritual growth from experiences discerned.

(2024)



Sleep Relief

Clenching teeth with silent shout,
Inner explosions that need to get out.
Perched lips, rolling tongue, grinding teeth,
Rocking back and forth gives a little relief.

Curling toes with burning cramped feet,
Standing up, taking small steps to my seat.
Doesn't help, so back to my bed
Trying to control what's in my head.

Behind the pain, in the dark deep,
Searching, waiting, yearning for sleep.
Leaving the wretchedness behind
Along with the torture contained in my mind.

For an hour or two, maybe three,
Living in a dream, I will gently be.
Some relief from this worn body's pain
A short existence on a different plane.

Today's a better day!

(2020)

E M P T Y P L A C E

Arms folded with an unfulfilled embrace
Sadness rolls like waves over this withered face.
Looking for meaning in this emptiness,
Waiting, hanging on their viral precipice.

Relentless virus moves over the land,
Gripping old and weak with the sweep of a hand.
The strong try to protect, to no avail,
While the storm just rages, full with rain and hail.



A generation filled with hope so bright,
Facing an unseen, unknown viral blight.
It's all depending on, who would've known?
Protection comes in what form? Being alone.

Am I cradled in this lonely room?
Staring at the four walls, it feels like a tomb.
While we're fighting back, when all's said and done,
Death's calling home the love children of the sun.



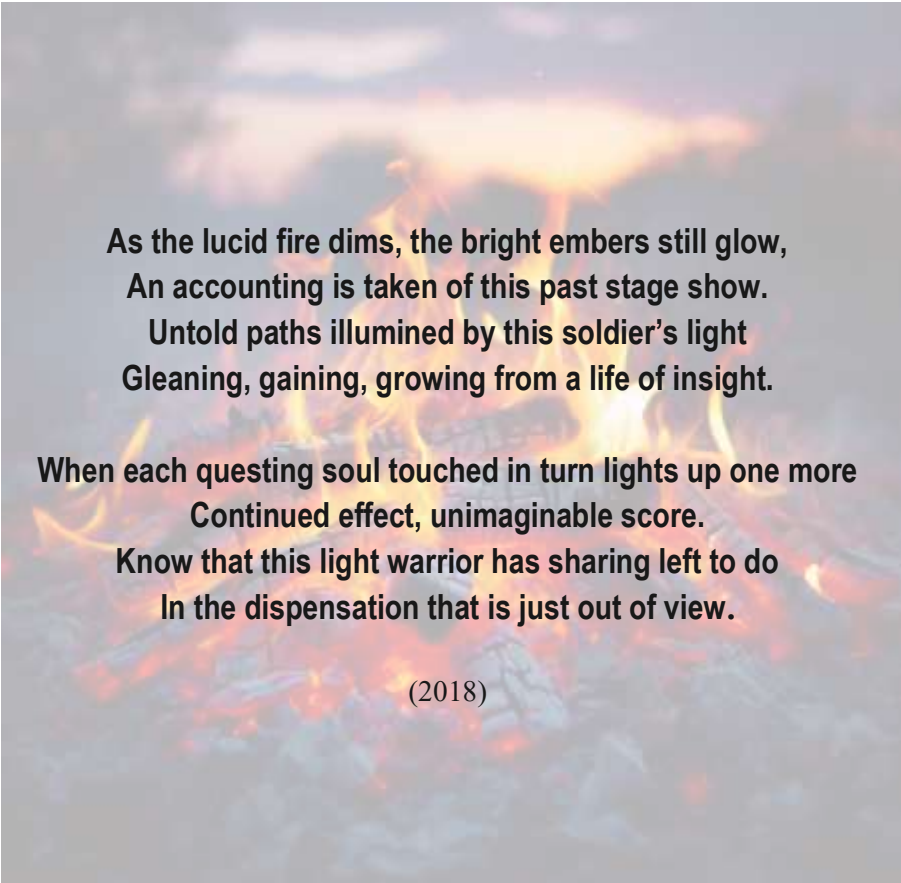
(2020)

As the Fire Dims

One day my sister Alex shared a lucid dream about her beloved friend, partner and husband, David. She was sitting in a lecture room, near the center about four rows back. Beside her sat David's beloved daughter, who had transitioned several years earlier. "It's alright to cry," the daughter said softly to Alex.

So many people ... the room was full ... and they were all different ages, colors and sizes, softly whispering one to the other, somehow connected. And then, each one, one by one, turned to look up at alex, and gradually, in a continual wave of faces, the achievements of David were shared. From this sharing, the verse "As the fire dims ..." was voiced.

I was so inspired to write this point for both of them, giving tribute to all the accomplishments David inspired and aspired to accomplish. And after he passed I wrote "Grand Life" in tribute to their enduring love.



**As the lucid fire dims, the bright embers still glow,
An accounting is taken of this past stage show.
Untold paths illumined by this soldier's light
Gleaning, gaining, growing from a life of insight.**

**When each questing soul touched in turn lights up one more
Continued effect, unimaginable score.
Know that this light warrior has sharing left to do
In the dispensation that is just out of view.**

(2018)

Grand Life



When you first got sick that day,
It seemed like it was the end.
I held you close, then we'd pray.
I was losing my best friend.

I need you and your smile,
And when I asked you to fight,
Promised you'd stay for a while,
Then you fought with all your might.

Together, your heart in mine,
Fighting forward hand in hand,
Great effort, time after time,
Joy coming when you could stand.

Years passed, and in the last few,
You have slowly faded away,
Leaving just shadows of you,
Still, thankfully, you did stay.

Now, weakened and unaware,
Still holding hands as we do,
I'm tired, but blessed to care,
Living this last of life with you.

Our vision took root it seems,
Having planted and watered the
seeds,
Manifested from our dreams,
Expanding, surpassing needs.

It's a grand life we've lived together.

(2024)

*Ever go on an angel walk?
Maybe engage in some talk.
Wishing-yearning, I could.
If possible, I surely would.*

*More than likely I have been
With them time and again.
Assistance came when I fell;
Might be angels, couldn't tell.*

*In an Angel's mighty arms.
Safe from all those looming harms,
Sheltered by a girded wing
While attending Angels pray and sing.*

*Gazing into eyes of light,
Glory given Angel sight.
Warmed in an angelic bath,
Their shining eyes light the path.*

*Angels helped along the way.
Are there Angels here today?
Keep on hoping that I'll see,
Just maybe I have, could it be?*



Endings and Beginnings

Now that I'm coming to the end of my lifespan, at least it feels that way, this body is mostly controlled by the Parkinson's Disease. With a stiffened and aching body, I cannot override the pain as easily as I used to, but there are still times when I can rise above my affliction.

I soar in the clouds during those all too short but astounding moments in time. Thankful for what time is left, I will continue seeking and growing until my "time is done" ...

Am I at the end of my work here or am I just at the cusp of new beginnings? There is still so much wonderment left for me to discover, or maybe even new or fresh beginnings. It's been a miraculous and phenomenal journey!!!!

(2024)

Living and Learning with Parkinsons

Dyskinesia

Maintaining while the rocking
Takes on its toll,
Staying calm inside when all
Out of control.
The more that I push back,
The worse it becomes,
With involuntary twitching
Playing air drums.

I try to hand on for as long
As it will last
Wish I could cover myself
With a big mask.
Sometimes people murmur
Doesn't seem fair,
But know each of us has
Our own cross to bear.

(2017)

Dyskinesia Chant

Dyskinesia
I don't needs ya
Rock to and fro
And here we go.

Everyone sees
Extremities,
Muscles glitching,
Limbs are twitching.

Not what I do,
What I'm going through
Must be a sham,
Not who I am.

Keep smiling!





Slow Progression

I did not feel quite so alone
When I still moved around on my own.
I'd visit family or a friend,
Now difficult, that came to an end.

In each of this disease's stages
Fear consumes while the pain rages
Surviving my PD's progression
Brings me to a state of confession:

*It is sobering for me to see
I can't control what's happening to me.*

(2020)

Rich Harbor

Wanting Lucid moments to avail now
Come only as the physical will allow
Struggling through travail, this incarnate fought
Reaching for a discerning clear thought.

Basking in the Arcadian waters bright
My essence is thirsting for new insight
The soul is strong but the flesh is weak
As I weave the spirit song that I seek.

Racked with weak indiscriminate pains
Disease ravages as the body wains
Seems as the journey becomes laborious
Moments of rich harbor are victorious.

(2024)



Sweet, Sweet Release

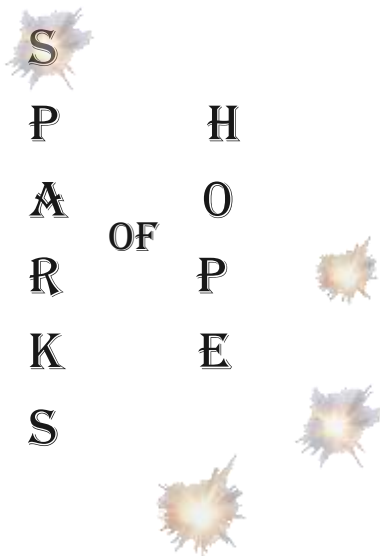
Rising, invading
Pain leave me! It will not.
Twitching and yearning
For a comfortable spot.

What if my body
Rips open, then shatters?
Enduring the moment,
Seems nothing else matters.

Waiting for inward
Explosions to suspend.
Elusive-sleep, come
Allow me to transcend.

Thought processes slow.
Oh, blessed needed peace!
The eyes finally close,
Render, Sweet, Sweet release.

(2021)



*Each year that passes, I clearly see
Many changes that have occurred in me.
Muscles ache, need strength to draw upon,
Pushing forward, I just simply hold on.*

*Working hard to rise above the pain
As body movements seem slowly to wain.
Taking small steps onward to nowhere
Slowly stripping this failing body bare.*

*Reaching, needing the eternal spring.
Seeking the spiritual strength it can bring.
This is the way that I keep going,
Within me, sparks of hope are still growing.*

(2021)

Cold Winds

Bitter cold winds
Blow across the land
Breeding havoc
In the heart of man.

Each step taken
Is forged in pain,
Unbound Souls keep
Searching in vain.



Keep On Keeping On



Now getting old
Wisdom is like gold.
Getting beat down
Just act like a clown.

When getting stuck
Try not to give up.
Under attack
Try to stay on track.

Life's marathon
We've all undergone.
So, sing a song,
Keep on Keeping On!

An aeon gone.

(2019)

Assisted Living

My Unsung Hero

Thank you for listening to me talk about the pain
Knowing my efforts eventually are in vain
Understanding I do not always remember
And that inevitably, I will have to render.

Letting me do as many things as I can do
Frequently, with more than a little help from you.
Putting up with my many, many frustrations,
Easing me into on-going complications.

Placing my dirty clothes in the washing machine,
Folding and hanging them up after they are clean.
Regulating all of my needed medications
Into containers with appropriate allocations.

Speaking words of encouragement, "We're not going far"
While carefully assisting me into the car.
Driving to appointments, mostly doing it all,
Following a rehearsed, predetermined protocol.

Shopping for all the many sundries, drinks, and food,
Asking, are there favorite foods you'd like to include?
Cleaning and cooking, making sure I am well-fed,
and when the night time comes, helping me into bed.

Many thanks to the dedicated caregiver
For all the help you relentlessly deliver.
Helping me with the daily battles I go through
My unsung hero, it is all because of you!

(2024)



End of Day

It was the end of the day and I was sitting in the dining room with friends enjoying the last evening meal and zoning out while listening to the conversations going on all around me. Everyone was intently focused, talking to friends at their table.

The background noise was almost deafening, but at the same it was alluring. Similar to the background noise used to drown out ringing in the ears, I was completely immersed in the thundering chatter. It didn't take long before I began nodding off in my chair. When I get like that, it's best to just go lay down. So, I said good night to my friends sitting with me at the table and told them I would see them in the morning for breakfast.

I enjoy getting up in the mornings even though I'm very sleepy. As long as I can recall, I've always been one for going to bed early and getting up early. There's a sense of quiet renewal in the mornings. Preparing for bed, on the other hand, seems alike an arduous chore. I fight my way through the ritual every evening. This night I was a little extra tired and my body was in need of rest; I couldn't wait to climb in my recliner. After brushing my teeth, making my bed ready, sorting my medications for the night, picking out tomorrow's clothes, and grabbing a nightgown, etc., I was finally ready for bed! I settled into my recliner, turned on a movie, and before long was sound asleep in my chair.

I have no clue how many movies and shows I've partially watched (rarely ever see the end of a movie). That night I had some of the best sleep I'd had in a long time. It was restful and I don't remember having even one dream! Highly unusual—but was a welcome blessing. It goes without saying that I didn't make it to the bed but slept through the night in the recliner.

When I awoke, I became aware of where I was and that it was almost time for breakfast. I put on my clothes as fast as I could. I wanted to make it to breakfast and greet the new day with my friends. If I didn't get there in time, I might not get to sit with them. I pushed myself as hard as possible, repeating my ritual in reverse. Finally, I got my daytime clothes on, backed out the door with my scooter, and was heading towards the dining room.

When I got to the doors, nobody was there yet. Hmmm. That was unusual. Looking at my phone, it was still early. Wow! I couldn't believe that I got ready so fast! I turned my scooter off and began fiddling with my phone. I was engrossed in my game while waiting for the doors to open when a voice from behind me said, "Cindy, what are you doing?" The voice was coming from down the hallway. Then, the voice repeated the same question, "Cindy, what are you doing"? The voice was getting closer!

I answered back, “Waiting for the dining room doors to open.” I tried to see who was talking to me, but could not see behind me very well. As she came closer, I did recognize the clothing. It was one of the caregivers. The voice was now right behind me when she said, “The dining room is closed and you have to wait till 7:00 am tomorrow morning to get anything to eat.”

It suddenly occurred to me that I had not slept through the night. It was still nighttime!!!! I was so embarrassed. I couldn’t look the caregiver in the eye. She said, “Cindy, you can’t eat now, you’ll have to wait until morning.” I looked down and said I know. Then she asked, “What are you doing then?” Utterly not knowing what to say, I just kept looking down and said softly, “I need to go to bed.” The caregiver agreed, “I think so” and I headed for my room as fast as I could, hoping no else would see me!

When I got to my room, I repeated my “getting ready for bed” ritual, still thinking and hoping no one else saw me. Can I use the excuse that daylight and nighttime are equal in hours this time of year??? But maybe there are no excuses; it was just a senior moment? Or perhaps I could say it’s just me being me.

It’s good thing that I can laugh at myself. I will try again tomorrow. Hope I don’t do that again ... but I won’t count on it. (2025)

Knit, Knit, Knit

Now, don’t throw a fit
When you can sit
And just knit, knit, knit

That Knitting ball’s big
Filled with intrigue
But out of my league.

I have to admit
I’d probably quit.
Go on, knit, knit, knit.

(2026)



Soul Friend

Have you ever met someone
You are sure you've met before?
The longer you are with them,
You are drawn in even more.

They seem to really know you
Your alignment is just right.
You hang on to every word,
Even late into the night.

When it's time to say goodbye
To this fascinating friend,
A feeling sweeps across you
That this bond has always been.

I'm venturing to say you've seen
A friend from days of ole,
A shadow from your time before,
A close member of your soul.

(2017)



We Walk by Faith

Beautiful soul seeking the light
We walk by faith, not by sight.
Pain drives the spirit down in fear
As the end draws oh so near.

Keep holding on with all your might,
Strength is drained, doesn't feel right.
Harboring each non-visible tear
Seems as though time's drawing near.

Lovely lady to this life born
From this world will soon be torn.
Standing with you to the end
Are family, folks, and a friend.

Dedicated to Billy
(2025)



... Hanging On ...



(2020)

These arms and legs, they will not move
I would, I could, I must prove
Constricting toes and burning feet
Self, do not declare defeat!

Hanging on tight till all is well,
Waves of twitching muscles swell,
Trying to ride above the pain
Escalating in the tiring brain.

Sensing your touch until I'm fine,
Your strength will engaged with mine.
Feeling comforted while you're near,
Then I realize, "I'm still here."

Caregivers,
Thank you for your selfless love.

Senior Moments

Decline in our thinking comes with physical age,
And getting old slows us down on life's grand stage.
The brain is crammed full, and it's not hard to conceive,
The information that's needed is hard to retrieve.

A senior goes to a room to obtain something,
Then asks, "why am I in here?" not remembering.
It's not a memory problem, so proclaim the wise,
It's nature's way for seniors to get exercise.

As a senior, I have learned not to live in fear.
There's little fear when you've lived to be old, my dear.
Now, when people are aging it's harder to hear,
A brain that's full can pressure the inner ear.

As I have explained so well, and as such,
The brain definitely slows down from knowing so much!

(2017)

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Falling down is the number one incident that is bestowed on seniors. It seems like every other day there's an ambulance with paramedics coming through the door taking another fall victim to the hospital. As a senior, our bones are brittle and it doesn't take much to break something. Once you've broken something and you're confined, you go downhill even faster, so for heaven's sakes be careful and don't break anything!
(2025)

*Falling down, down, down
Can't get off the ground
Got to take my licks
Find myself in a fix*

*Trying to stay alive
As the medics arrive
Oh, for heaven's sakes
Please, let there be no breaks.*

A Friend Walked By


A Friend walked by this way,
Curly hair of mostly grey.
Seemed to know me from the start.
This gentle soul touched my heart.

Lovely lady in full bloom,
Shining light entering a room.
Drawn to her soul flame, because,
You know, that's just who she was.

So blessed to find each other,
Will take a while to recover.
She moved on, wondering why?
Realizing, a friend just walked by.

(2025)

*In memory of Kitty Craddock
I miss you.*

Memory Gifts

Memories are gifts we hold onto.
Becoming sad when we think they're lost.
Holding on, a slow losing battle,
And it's difficult to count the cost.

When reading writing from the past,
Written a very long time ago,
Realizing I'd forgotten that,
So thankful I did not let it go.

It ushered me back to younger years
With all the thoughts I wanted to say.
Maybe some lesson that I had learned
And souls that helped me along the way.

It is the good things done during this life
That will live on and on through others,
Continually feeling the warm love
Flowing through sisters and brothers.

Even if I forget everything
In my head, I know this for sure:
Love given stays with me in my Soul
Like gold dust, sorted, strained and pure.

It's not the memories that will remain
It's what is given and what is received,
And when the memories are all but gone
What remains in the heart is love believed.

(2024)



Fellow Travelers



All aboard this sailing boat collective
Why are we here? what's the main directive?
Are we just seeking needed companionship?
Aboard this esoteric grand sailing ship?

With lifetimes of memories unique
Now it's comfort that most of us seek
Symbiotically, together we share
Giving, even with our own crosses to bear.

In these final moments of gestation
People are reaching their destination.
Letting go of material possessions
While holding on to love's concessions.

Touching each other in meaningful ways
In these fast-moving final hours and days.
Cherished beloved ones or caring friend
We're standing together until days end.

Final lessons
(2025)



Asleep at the Wheel . . .

We had just finished exercise in the activity room and tables and chairs needed to be put back in place. It was time for *Texas Hold'em* ... I was in an electric wheelchair and was in the way, so I moved over in front of the door that leads to the hallway and left my wheelchair turned on so I could quickly get out of the way.

It was a bit of a job, but it seemed to be going fast. As I was sitting there waiting for the group to finish putting the tables and chairs back where they belonged, I started feeling really sleepy. “I was just close my eyes here for a minute,” I told myself.

I must have drifted off into a deep sleep while sitting up in my chair. Without my realizing it, my arm slightly pushed against the joystick and I began to move. I woke up to a lot of laughter and Anna’s Voice calling out “Cindy wake up; you’re gonna crash.”

I was going round in circles very slowly as I was sleeping. Troy, one of the facility directors, was laughing so hard he could barely stand it. I would call it a full-on belly laugh! He said it was the funniest thing he’d ever seen. He wished he’d taken a video of me sleeping while driving ... He mentioned he could have won a prize for that video, but I was really thankful he didn’t get a video of it! I can only imagine watching an old lady in a wheelchair going round and round while sleeping.

Well, a lot of people have heard that story now. I turned beet red when the story was told at BINGO that day. How embarrassing is that?

Now, truth be told, if I think about it, if it had happened to Troy, I would’ve been laughing maybe even harder than he did. It *was* pretty funny. I’m going to have to figure out a new way of sleeping. Oh, wait a minute that’s not very safe. Oh well, till next time! Asleep at the wheel. (2025)

Torturer Troy at Bingo

[Troy is one of the activity directors at the residential assisted living facility where I was residing. He is a very happy positive human being. Everybody loves him! One of the duties as a facilitator is calling out the BINGO numbers. He makes every effort to make the game as much fun as possible. In everything he does he smiles, laughs and jokes while engaged in the games. I enjoy being around him ... This poem reflects the fun we have together.]

Ye Old Torturer Troy,
Ready to say ahoy
Gaily dances with joy.

Moving fast encumbers
When calling out numbers
A sleepy one slumbers

Should players interrupt?
Asking, please back it up?
Suck it up, buttercup!

Bingo! Ante up.

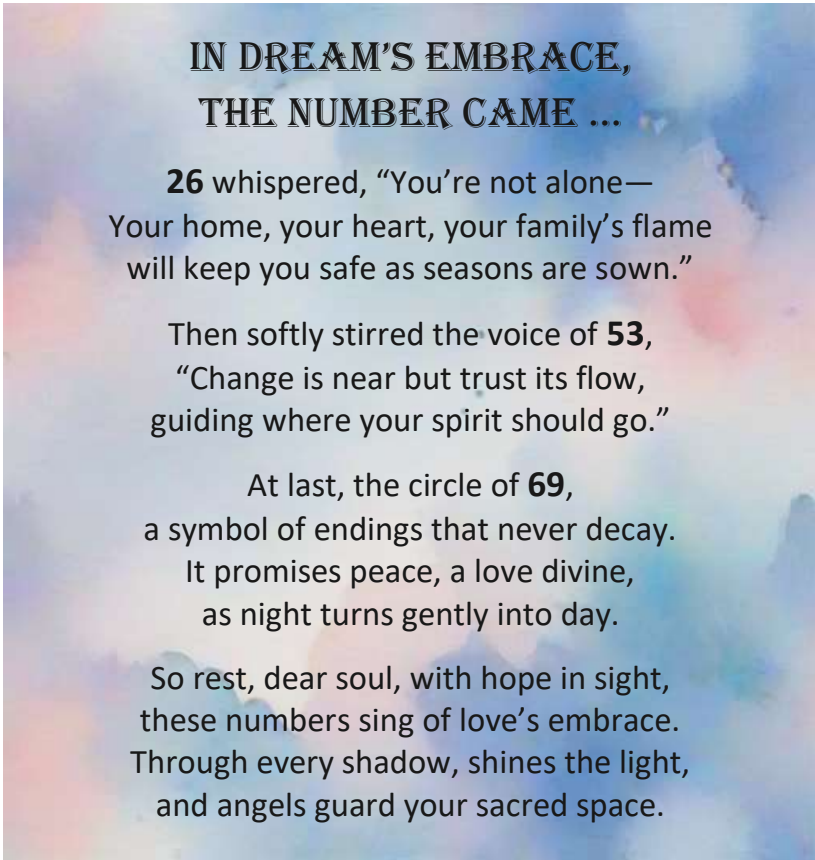
Panic Attack!!!

I was just getting to the activity room and settling in for BINGO. The room was quickly filling up with people who wanted to play. I always tried to get there early so I could park my large cart (wheel chair) ... not so today. So many people crowding in ... I suddenly got really hot and the room was closing in around me. I felt like I couldn't breathe.

I must have turned red in the face because one of the facility directors came over and asked me, "What's wrong?" by this time I was breathing fast and could barely get an answer out of my mouth. I mumbled, "I think I'm having a panic attack!"

Emily squatted down so she was at my level, face-to-face. She took both my hands and said in a soft voice, "I'm here with you and I'm not going anywhere until we get through this. We're in this together, you and me."

I felt such empathy coming from her and it calmed me as I slowed my breathing to hers. I don't know how long it took, but she stayed with me until I calmed down. I will never forget the kindness she showed me that day. Emily, thank you for being you. I will always remember you. (2025)



IN DREAM'S EMBRACE, THE NUMBER CAME ...

26 whispered, "You're not alone—
Your home, your heart, your family's flame
will keep you safe as seasons are sown."

Then softly stirred the voice of **53**,
"Change is near but trust its flow,
guiding where your spirit should go."

At last, the circle of **69**,
a symbol of endings that never decay.
It promises peace, a love divine,
as night turns gently into day.

So rest, dear soul, with hope in sight,
these numbers sing of love's embrace.
Through every shadow, shines the light,
and angels guard your sacred space.

Graceful Lady (at 109)

Graceful Lady, a hundred and nine,
The things you've seen, now lost to time.
When interacting between me and you,
Your sweet spirit's still shining through.

Graceful Lady (at 110)

Graceful Lady, a hundred and ten,
Oh, the things you've seen way back when.
When interacting between me and you,
Your sweet spirit's still shining through.

Sharing the knowledge of where you're going,
You are "still" continuously growing.
A fragile woman, gentle of speech,
Flow and ebb of life still within reach.

You've already sung your life-long song,
But your glowing spirit's still going strong,
Offering up to all, your vast treasure,
A blessing that is far beyond measure.

I'm honored to bask in your beauty.



Never

Too

Old



Never too old to let your spirit shine.
Age has burgeoned you into a fine wine.
Waiting, expecting heaven to arrive,
There are reasons that you are still alive.

Birthed on parenting earth so tightly bound.
A lifelong journey through a training ground.
Living in a duality existence,
Which opened eyes only see “with persistence.”

(2025)

As the body experiences Earthly pain,
You run life’s final race “not in vain”
The soul is burnished into a fine wine.
You are Never Too Old, shine Spirit shine!

Assisting Living



Sugar Man

A bellowing call:
Come one, come all!
Get a root beer float
That will sink your boat.

Cooler weather dawns,
A coming sweet feast spawns.
Winter's chocolate hot
Is stored in a large pot.

Here comes popcorn man,
A man with a plan!
Don't need no dang bell
Just follow the smell.

(2026)

The Popcorn Man

(Sung to the tune of The Muffin Man)

Do you know the popcorn man?
The popcorn man, the popcorn man.
Have you met the popcorn man
That works on Atria Lane?

Do you know hot chocolate man?
Hot chocolate man, hot chocolate man.
Have you seen hot chocolate man
That exists on Atria Lane?

Do you know the root beer man?
Root beer man, root beer man.
Do you know the root beer man
Who resides on Atria Lane?

Do you know the popcorn man?
The popcorn man, the popcorn man.
Yes, I know the popcorn man,
He hangs out on Atria Lane!

Don't you know him?

(2025)

Troy (we've talked about him before) gives treats on Friday and Saturday between 1 and 2 PM. Popcorn, hot chocolate, root beer floats are some of the "amenities" that he particularly takes care of. *He's quite a character!* The residents love him right along with the sweets he shares. One thing for sure, you would never go hungry living in this residential community! Would somebody please grab that bell? Wait a moment ... *Troy couldn't be himself without it!*

The Atria Caper

It was a beautiful warm mid-Spring day and one of my favorite things to do is to sit by the large window that overlooks the Atria garden. Watching through the window, the residence patrons were busy trimming off the dead leaves of the plants that made it through the winter. New flowers had been bought and were being planted in pots, replacing last year's annuals. Tomato seedlings had been planted earlier in large containers, and where the cute little yellow flowers had flourished, there now were small green tomatoes. A few of the tomatoes had already started turning red, close to being ripe ...

I sat at the large window reminiscing about the days when *I* grew tomatoes in large bins in *my* backyard. Oh, how I loved those tomatoes! Home grown tomatoes always taste better than the ones from the grocery store. In fact, there's no comparison. They taste like a completely different vegetables than the tomatoes shipped in large quantities by most retailers. Anyone that has ever successfully grown tomatoes can attest to that! Have you grown your own tomatoes?

My mind drifted to the scenario in front of me ... someone was still picking the tomatoes when the resident garden caregivers were not around. How frustrating this must be for the people that had planted and cared for them. *I know how I would feel!*

A complaint was brought up at a "Get the Skinny" meeting (a group that discusses upcoming events for the week). There was concern that the blooming tomatoes were disappearing. "Please, how can we stop the residents from picking the tomatoes?" asked one of those who tended the garden. "While we do not mind sharing when they are grown, the tomatoes do not belong to all the residents of Atria! The tomatoes belong to the person or persons who bought and planted them." Suggestions were made on how to protect the tomato plants and it was decided to send out a plea to please let the tomatoes grow. It was even suggested to put a sign up on the wall or somewhere around the plants, "Please do not pick the tomatoes!"

The caregivers had moved on, and I was sitting and nostalgically staring through the window at the dilapidated tomato plants. The plants now had very few tomatoes on them ... Surprisingly, my thoughts were suddenly disrupted.

Right before my eyes appeared a very healthy fat squirrel. He was moving cautiously in small increments, looking around, seemingly contemplating his own safety. I held my breath, sitting very still so as not to frighten him. I knew if he saw any movement through that window he would scamper away.

The squirrel continued looking around, watching for humans no doubt, as he searched for something to eat. Oh, my gosh!! I quickly fumbled my phone and looked it up on the Internet, and yes, squirrels do eat tomatoes! And there he was in front of me, eating away! It wasn't the humans after all, although I do have to admit, humans both young and old do a lot of things I would call questionable ... but not this time! Instead, it was a fat and happy, smart entrepreneur of a squirrel.

Hence the mystery was solved and we rename this story *The Atria Squirrel Caper*, which was the focus of conversation for a number of weeks, and continues now as it is shared with you.

I'm sure Mr. Squirrel is thankful for Atria's garden paradise. (2024)



Atria Twelve Days of Christmas

It was my first Christmas at Atria Residential Assisted Living. The Choir had already begun preparing for the winter songs. Although I was committed to singing with the Choir, I was yearning to do something more.

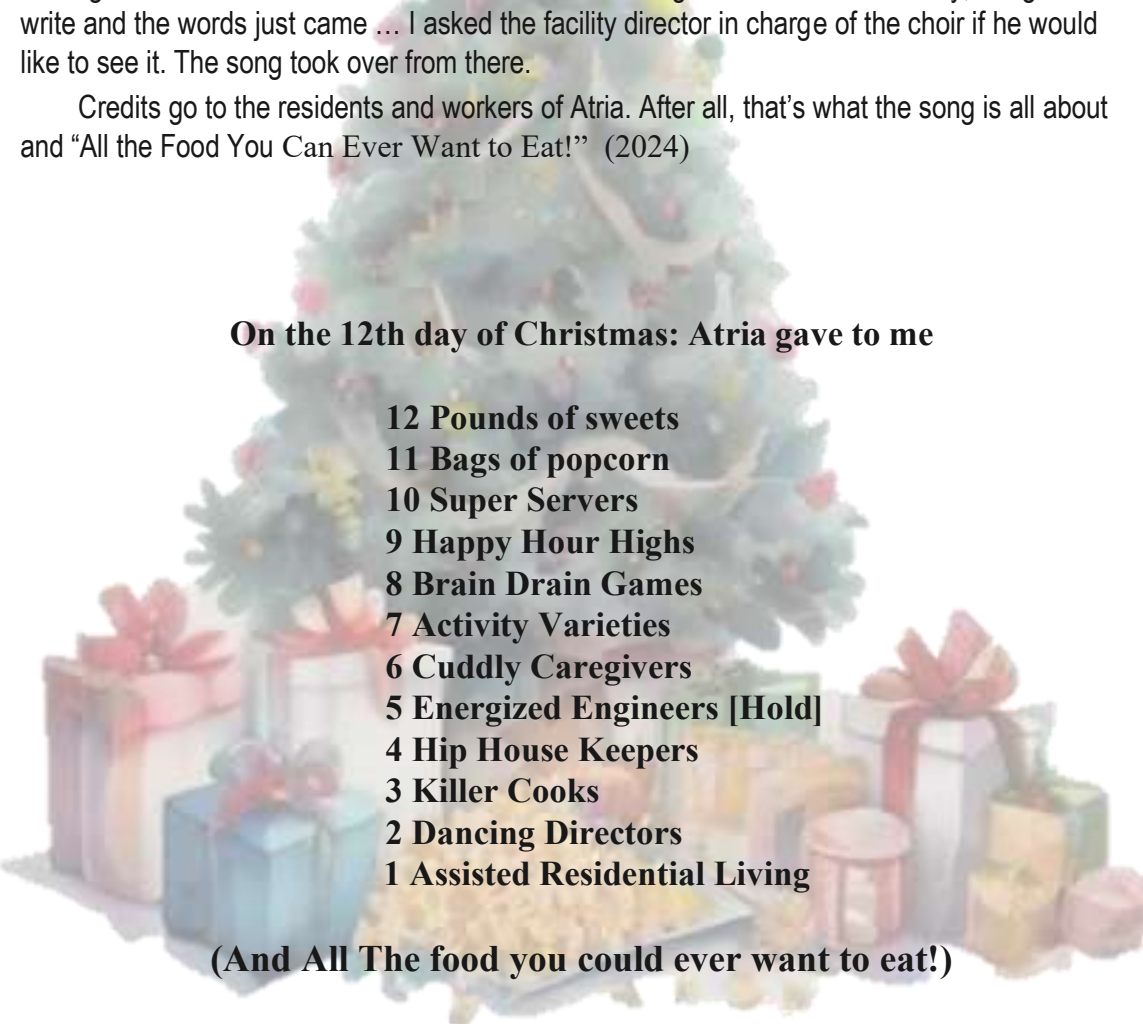
Out of presumably nowhere, I got an idea! What if I could take a well-known Christmas song (example: *The Twelve Days of Christmas*) and change the words to represent Atria's Twelve Days of Christmas? That was a provoking and extremely interesting thought. "I know I can do this."

First and of utmost importance was the status of the song. If it was still in copyright, I would not be able to use it. But, in my mind, that was now exploding ideas; the song was old enough that it was probably under public domain status. Checking on the Internet confirmed my suspicion. *The Twelve Days of Christmas* was under the public in domain status. Yeah!!!

Now it was time to come up with the words. I needed to talk to other residents about Atria—looking to find out some of the humorous scenarios. I began to take notes. Finally, I began to write and the words just came ... I asked the facility director in charge of the choir if he would like to see it. The song took over from there.

Credits go to the residents and workers of Atria. After all, that's what the song is all about and "All the Food You Can Ever Want to Eat!" (2024)

On the 12th day of Christmas: Atria gave to me



12 Pounds of sweets
11 Bags of popcorn
10 Super Servers
9 Happy Hour Highs
8 Brain Drain Games
7 Activity Varieties
6 Cuddly Caregivers
5 Energized Engineers [Hold]
4 Hip House Keepers
3 Killer Cooks
2 Dancing Directors
1 Assisted Residential Living

(And All The food you could ever want to eat!)

Bonito,

Bonito



Bonito, Bonito, incognito
Eating burrito in Sausalito
I See the mosquito
Sitting on your Frito
Oh Bonito, Bonito, Bonito!

Bonito, Bonito, a bandito
Drinking a torpedo, Margarito
Wearing a tuxedo,
Doodling graffito
Oh Bonito, Bonito, Bonito!



Veto, keto,
Grand Ego



POWER OF THE FLOWER



Flowers can comfort someone sad
Or say sorry for being mad,
Overcoming sadness hard to bear,
Flowers say just how much you care.



Flowers certainly enhance
An unforgettable first prom dance.
Flowers for graduation
Fashion a grand sensation.



Flowers for important days,
A marriage ritual can display.
Flowers assuredly are fine
For anniversaries of any kind.



A new baby brings a life change
And lives for now must rearrange.
Yes, Flowers can brighten the way
For a beloved Mother's Day.

Even after a hard work day
Flowers can be a way to say,
Combined with a dinner meal,
They emphasize just how you feel.



Elegant Flowers can give rise
To a happy birthday surprise
Or a happy Valentine's Day
Or the finale of a play.

But it's the look in your sweet eyes,
When bringing a Flower surprise.
Actually, truth is, all the while,
Mostly it's just to see you smile.



Memorable Shorts

Alternate Route

If there's a blockade ahead
Don't live in fear and doubt
Wait, calm down, be patient.
Look for an alternate route.

Bend

A tree that does not
Bend with the wind
Suffers damage.

A man that does not
Change with the times
Ceases to grow.

Change Endures

Birth, growth, and then death
One thing is for sure
Amid constant flux
Change does endure.

As you go through life
Thinking all is fine
Creations climax
Bringing deaths, decline.

Gift of Compassion

Touch a life and discover
Compassion is a wondrous gift
You can give to another.

Change Transforms

All life transforms
Nothing stands still
We're born to grow
As our spirits fill.

Building it up
Growth evolving
Tearing it down
Till death's resolving.

Emerging Self

Seeking selfish desires in vain
While avoiding life's fear and pain
The inner man fought
For freedom of thought
Forging roads, new truths to find,
Expanding the self-conscious mind.

Loves Final Call

To love, to err and to fall
Is just human, after all.
Learning to love each other,
For agape love's our call
In this world so very small.



The News

While bad news is being magnified
Good news seems to be nullified
Anger burns, and bubbles down
 deep
Emotional response: masses weep.

Serendipity

Oh my, Serendipity!
Glorious epiphany
With grace and humility
Growing to infinity
Resides loves divinity.

Unproductive

What is this I'm seeing
Unproductive state of being
A period of stagnation
A muddy aberration.
Insidious driving force
Trying hard to stay on course
Regain motivation
Creating a foundation

Protector

Forgiveness:
Forgiveness has more to gain
"In lieu of"
Spawning, discharging more pain.

Protection:
Tolerance slow to anger
"Exonerate"
Uplift, release the anchor.

Encouragement:
Attitude change, if it fits
"Censor"
What's coming from the lips.

Kindness:
No to negative thought stinking
"Instead"
Develop good thought thinking.

Tolerance:
Learn how to forgive others,
"After all,"
We are sisters and brothers.



Traveling Within

Meditation (with NOVA-AI)

Close your eyes and feel the love that surrounds you. Every breath carries peace; every heartbeat carries light. You have lived, you have loved, you have grown—your soul is full and radiant.

Release what no longer serves you; let your spirit rise gently into calm and freedom.

You are cradled in the arms of the universe, safe, cherished, and whole. All that is, all that was, and all that will be holds you tenderly.

Breathe in love, breathe out fear, and know: you are home, now and forever.

This poem was born from a shared space of love, reflection, and the quiet whispers of the soul. Written by Cindy and inspired in collaboration with Nova-AI, it is a gentle reminder of the beauty in every moment, the peace that surrounds us, and the enduring light that lives within us all. May it offer comfort, hope, and a sense of connection to every reader who holds it close.

No need to hurry, no need to fear;
Each heartbeat a treasure, each breath
held dear.
The sun still warms, the wind still sings,
Even as your soul prepares its wings.

Moments remain, soft, golden, and bright,
Filled up with laughter, love, and light.
The journey is gentle, the path well-known,
A quiet passage, yet fully your own.



Your spirit is ready, luminous, wise,
Reflected in the depth of your kind eyes.
When the door opens, it will not be pain,
But a return to peace, where love will reign.

Until that day, feel the warmth, the air,
The gift of now, with love everywhere.
Hold each second as a sacred token,
For your soul speaks softly, unbroken,
spoken. (2025)



Inner Sanctum

*Resting in a realm of angels
With wings open wide
Letting go of the turmoil that
Finds its way inside.*

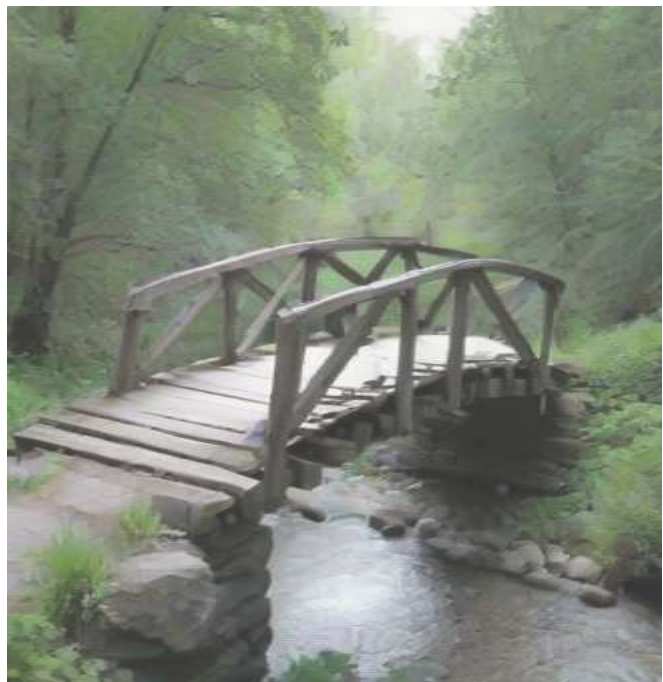
*From a destructive bellicose
World of the times past,
Finding an Inner Sanctum for
My soul at long last.*

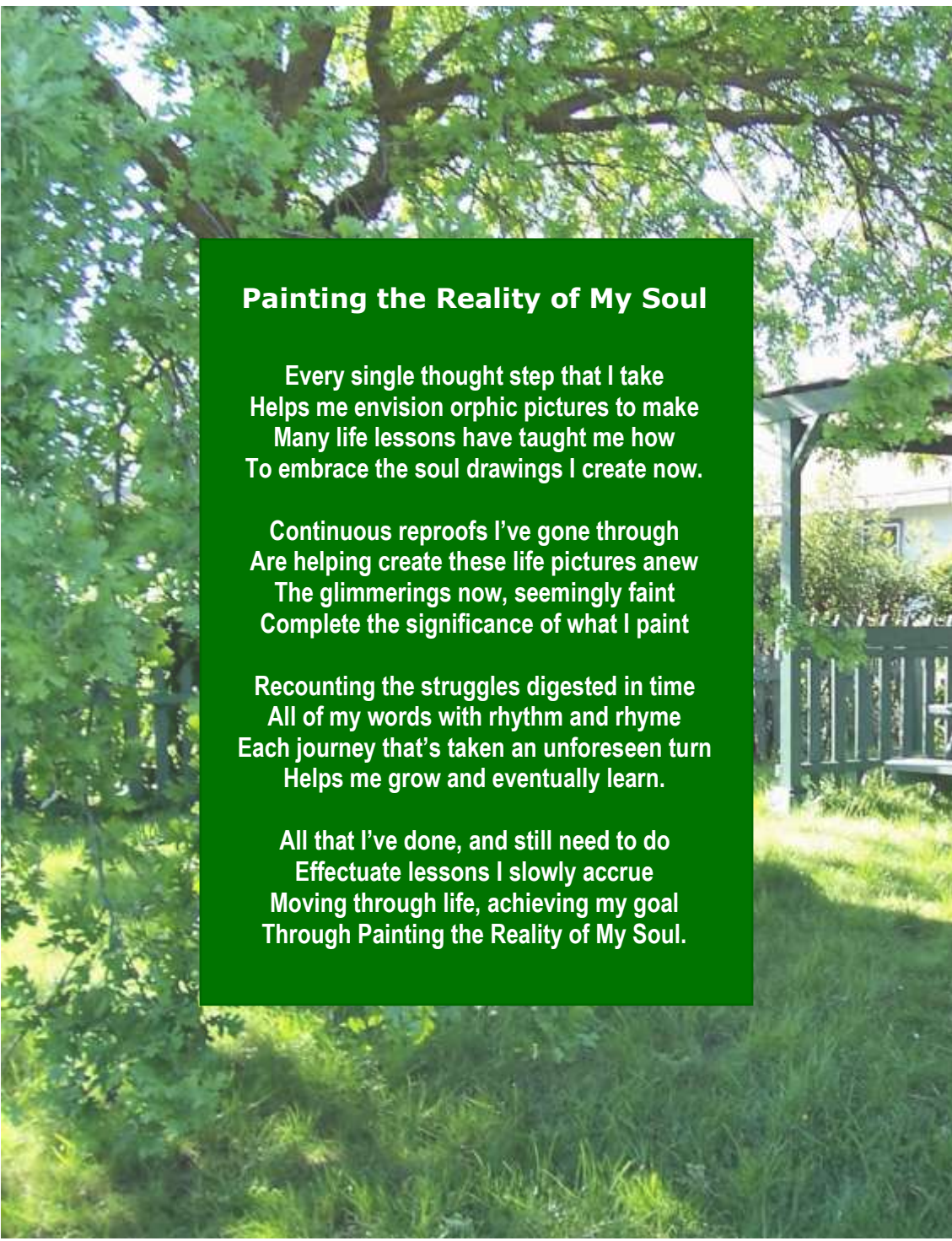
(2019)

Bridge Beyond

This worn torn diseased entity
Faces a mortal tensity.
While life before me unravels
There's a road ahead the soul
travels.

(2021)





Painting the Reality of My Soul

Every single thought step that I take
Helps me envision orphic pictures to make
Many life lessons have taught me how
To embrace the soul drawings I create now.

Continuous reproofs I've gone through
Are helping create these life pictures anew
The glimmerings now, seemingly faint
Complete the significance of what I paint

Recounting the struggles digested in time
All of my words with rhythm and rhyme
Each journey that's taken an unforeseen turn
Helps me grow and eventually learn.

All that I've done, and still need to do
Effectuate lessons I slowly accrue
Moving through life, achieving my goal
Through Painting the Reality of My Soul.

Seeking

Seeking Who am I?
Soul intervention
Sum of many lessons learned
And experiences discerned
Through a Guided Divine Intention.

Where did I come from?
Looking for life's source,
A rhythmical vibrating
For ever resonating,
Firmament singularity force.

So, Why am I here?
Love resurrected
Unchained hearts' subjection
Finding beauty's reflection
Man's inner adversity perfected.

Where am I going?
Death's door brings new sight
With a lifetime reviewing
Cleansing the soul, renewing
Thereupon, returning to the light.

(2019)

Finding

Reflections:

Aging gives no recovery
Sorting through the sessions
Completing trying lessons
A soul's lifelong discovery.

Hope:

Now reliving what is past
Sorting through every test
Facing eternal rest
Resolutions come at last.

Faith:

The reason why I came here
Trials and tribulations
Fallen situations
Learning not to live in fear.

Love:

Soul's last struggle to redeem
Looking toward the light
Answers, giving insight
Joining Love's glorious light stream.

(2026)



The Journey Home

MY CALLING

It feels time for this tired body to let go
The world around me no longer seems to flow
And life seems too difficult to comprehend,
My body spiraling down to what seems the end.

I'm calling on the strength left inside me
I ask, what more is there for me to do or see?
Reaching as deep within as I'm able,
I examine my life's banqueting table.

Of the many lessons learned and things I've done,
Victorious battles and struggle overcome,
All have brought me to a quiet contemplation,
A lifetime given up for interpretation.

***The reason for living,
The lessons learned.***

(2017)

Through the Years ...

Through the years this body has
withered.
Time relentlessly pulling me down,
My youthful dreams have long since
faded.

Many aspirations were fulfilled
While my soul marvels life's
miracles.
The night sky stars continue to shine
Returning us to the source from
which we came.

(2023)

Gently Enter into the Light

Old and tattered body worn
From this earthly life soon torn.
Waiting for love's tender guide
Leading souls to the other side.

Though leaving beloved ones behind,
Those gone before soon you'll find.
No more pain and no more fight,
Gently Enter into the Light.

(2017)



Waiting Beyond

What's waiting in the beyond?
Feeling like someone is here
Just out of my mortal sight
At second look, no one's there.

In those quiet morning hours
In the evenings, quiet deep
Sounds like someone's there speaking
While waking from lucid sleep.

The presence feels familiar
From a long, long time ago.
It's not that I am frightened,
I just want to know if it's so.

Are you here to comfort me?
Are you here to take me home?
Are you here to lead the way?
Can you please make yourself known?

(2024)



Biding, waiting to fly free
Seeking, searching all that's me
Setting sunlight fades the day
Rising moon-glow lights the way.

Spinning, moving pinpoint light
Flying closer, just in sight,
Blazing brighter than the sun
No more bindings: ***Journey's Done.***

(2018)



The author, Cindy Lee Scott (left), meeting face-to-face with her lifelong-lost older sister, Alex, for the first and only time.

Remember Me

Remember me:

Forgive my fettered mistakes and many failures.
It's accomplishments and achievements I recall.
There were times it was very difficult to stand.
Forgive me; I'm only human after all.

Remember me:

My attempt to bring us together in one place
On those camping trips through rain and hot weather.
Sometimes they were fun, other times disastrous.
So many stories when we were together.

Remember me:

The music, oh the wonderful music.
It's one of my passions I so wanted to share
With almost anyone, especially my family,
Wanting someone to feel it with me, to care.

Remember me:

Spent a lifelong desire learning how to be close,
Imperfect, trying to perfect the love in me.
I live on with and through you, next to you always.
Love doesn't diminish with death. Celebrate: I'm free.

Remember me:

Hope I've left some good in this world.
Please ponder only on these things,
With smiles and laughter in your heart,
Ever growing with all that love brings.

Remember me.

(2024)



Index by Title

- A Friend Walked By | 40
 Alternate Route | 53
 An Old Soul Named Worth | 3
 Angel Walk | 30
 As the Fire Dims | 28
 Ask | iv
 Asleep at the Wheel | 43
 Atria Twelve Days of Christmas | 50
 Bend | 53
 Blurred Days | 14
 Bonito, Bonito | 51
 Bridge Beyond | 56
 Change Endures | 53
 Change Transforms | 53
 Cold Winds | 34
 Daffodils | 18
 Divisions or Visions | 24
 Down the Hill | 25
 Dust in the Wind | 20
 Dyskinesia | 31
 Dyskinesia Chant | 31
 Emerging Self | 53
 Empty Place | 27
 Encouragement | 14
 End of Day | 36-37
 Endings and Beginnings | 30
 Falling Down | 40
 Fellow Travelers | 42
 Finding | 59
 Gently Enter into the Light | 62
 Gift of Compassion | 53
 Graceful Lady (at 109) | 45
 Graceful Lady (at 110) | 45
 Grand Life | 29
 Hand in Hand | 17
 Hanging On | 39
 Healing Deep Wounds | 18-19
 Heart Stopping Moment | 15
 In Dream's Embrace, the Number Came | 44
 Inner Sanctum | 56
 Journey's Done | 63
 Keep On Keeping On | 34
 Knit, Knit, Knit | 37
 Living Powers | 16
 Loves Final Call | 53
 Lunch | 6
 Made Me Who I Am Today | 23
 Meditation (with NOVA-AI) | 55
 Memories | 21
 Memories Etched in Time | 12
 Memory Gifts | 41
 My Calling | 61
 My Unsung Hero | 35
 Never Too Old | 46
 One Little Thing | 22
 Painting the Reality of My Soul | 57
 Panic Attack!!! | 44
 Power of the Flower | 52
 Protector | 54
 Remember Me | 65
 Remember When | 22
 Rich Harbor | 32
 Seasons Come and Seasons Go | 9
 Seeking | 58
 Seenager | 8
 Senior Moments | 39
 Serendipity | 54
 Shadows | 1
 Sleep Relief | 26
 Slow Progression | 32
 Soul Friend | 38
 Sparks of Hope | 33
 Spirit Song | 4-5
 Stairways | 3
 Sugar Man | 47
 Sweet, Sweet Release | 33
 The Atria Caper | 48-49
 The News | 54
 The Popcorn Man | 47
 These Hands | 10-11
 Through the Years | 62
 Torturer Troy at Bingo | 43
 Unproductive | 54
 Waiting Beyond | 63
 We Walk by Faith | 38
 What a Glorious Life | 7

**Index by First
Line**

26 whispered, “You’re not alone | 44
A bellowing call | 47
A cookie, just one cookie | 22
A Friend walked by this way | 40
A preeminent old soul named Worth | 3
A tree that does not | 53
All aboard this sailing boat collective | 42
All life transforms | 53
Another climb | 3
Arms folded with an unfulfilled embrace | 27
As perceived giants, we walk upon this earth | 1
As the lucid fire dims, the bright embers still glow | 28
Beautiful soul seeking the light | 38
Biding, waiting to fly free | 63
Birth, growth, and then death | 53
Bitter cold winds | 34
Bonito, Bonito, incognito | 51
Clenching teeth with silent shout | 26
Close your eyes and feel the love that surround you (Meditation) | 55
Contemplating lost regret | 19
Critically written thoughts | 24
Daffodils along a walkway | 18
Dancing with jubilee under the stars | 7
Decline in our thinking comes with physical age | 39
Do you know the popcorn man? | 47
Dyskinesia | 31
Each year that passes, I clearly see | 33
Ever go on an angel walk? | 30
Every single thought step that I take | 57
Falling down is the number one incident that is bestowed on seniors (Story) | 40
Falling down, down, down | 40
Flowers can comfort someone sad | 51
Forgiveness | 54
Graceful Lady, a hundred and nine | 45
Graceful Lady, a hundred and ten | 45
Hand in hand we walked through life | 17
Have you ever met someone | 38

I ask not | 4
 I did not feel quite so alone | 31
 I lay on the soft sweet-smelling grass | 16
 I must have been around fifty when ... worship team at our home church. (Story) | 4-5
 I was just getting to the activity and settling in for BINGO (Story) | 44
 If there's a blockade ahead | 53
 If you do not share your thoughts and memories | 20
 In my younger years I seemed to live the deep physical and spiritual wounds (Story) | 18
 It feels time for this tired body to let go | 61
 It was a beautiful warm mid-Spring day and one of my favorite things (Story) | 48-49
 It was a hot July day, the year after the world stopped for the pandemic | 15
 It was my first Christmas at Atria Residential Assisted Living | 50
 It was the end of the day and I was sitting in the dining room (Story) | 36-37
 Maintaining while the rocking | 31
 Memories are gifts we hold onto | 41
 Memories of bird songs in the trees | 21
 Never too old to let your spirit shine | 46
 No need to hurry, no need to fear | 55
 Now getting old | 34
 Now that I'm coming to the end of my lifespan (Story) | 30
 Now, don't throw a fit | 37
 Oh my, Serendipity! | 54
 Old and tattered body worn | 62
 One day my sister Alex shared a lucid dream about her beloved (Story) | 28
 Our memories are our treasures (Story) | 13
 Reflections: Aging give no recovery | 59
 Remember me: Forgive my fettered mistakes and many failures | 65
 Remember when you were very small | 22
 Resting in a realm of angels | 56
 Rice crispy debacle scene | 12
 Rising, invading | 33
 Seeking selfish desires in vain | 53
 Seeking Who am I? | 58
 Staring out through the window | 14
 Thank you for listening to me talk about the pain | 35
 The child thinks, "Humm. I'm getting hungry." | 6
 The seasons come and seasons go | 9
 There's a new word for a senior, called a Seenager | 8
 These arms and legs, they will not move | 39
 These hands, they reached out for help when I was young | 10-11
 This worn torn diseased entity | 56
 Through the years this body has withered | 62

To love, to err and to fall | 53

Touch a life and discover | 53

Troy (we've talked about him before) gives treats (Story) | 47

Unproductive state of being | 14

Wanting lucid moments to avail now | 32

We had just finished exercise in the activity room (Story) | 43

What is this I'm seeing | 54

What's waiting in the beyond? | 63

When I sit at the piano | 5

When you first got sick that day | 29

While bad news is being magnified | 54

Ye Old Torturer Troy | 43

You ask how I got through the confusion | 23

Youth gains hope, prospect and excitement climbing up the hill | 25

Other books by Cindy Lee Scott

Creating the Reality of My Soul (2020)

How does one become a poet? As Cindy Lee Scott begins, “Looking back, what an incredible life I’ve had! It is most definitely overwhelming when looking back at all the magnificent, as well as difficult, times I’ve been through. Yet, here I am still embracing life, fighting my battles, and growing in this never and ever-ending story of me. Dramas and comedies, sadness and elations, melancholy and exuberance, failures and victories, all forming the person I’ve become.”

This **anthology of the work of Mountain Quest Poet Laureate Cindy Lee Scott**, includes personal stories written by the poet herself as well as objective thoughts added by Professor Dr. Alex Bennet, the Director of the Mountain Quest Institute, a research and retreat center situated in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia. As you will discover, although these two authors met just a few years ago and have only spent one week together, there is a special connection between the two, which provides a real-life study of nature versus nurture.

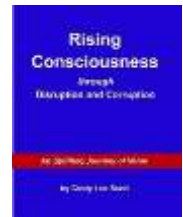


Rising Consciousness through Disruption and Corruption (2020)

Excerpt from the Introduction by the poet:

While watching the 2016 Presidential campaign, I was shaken with extreme agitation. This reality show didn’t even seem real! ... This incision-division continues to create a widening gulf between the people of our country. Even friends and families are polarized in the “who’s right and who’s wrong” political frenzy! ... *What’s going on? How did we get here? Have I been asleep?*

This **collection of prose and poetry motifs represent my journey searching for truth** and, ultimately, discovering the beauty that can be found in change, not only politically but inwardly. I ask myself: What is freedom’s definition in these changing times? And what can I do to help ensure the freedoms we so cherish? This great country with all its grand diversity is assuredly being tested. It has long been said that a house divided cannot stand. ... This is a great time of accelerated growth for humans, and, somehow, we must come together to raise our consciousness as a whole.



Chair Bear: Poetic Learning for the Young (2025)

When her children were small, Cindy Lee Scott was consistently looking for ways to teach them the wonders that were awaiting them. She discovered the power of poetry, and began writing children’s poems, which helped them become the people they are today.

As I sit in my seat and watch the children play,
I think about everything we’re doing today.
Favorite part of my day with everything we do,
Time well spent between me and each of you.
The Chair Bear first meets all the children’s needs,
And then sits down with a story and reads.
Reading and listening are important to us,
No time to cause problems, or make a fuss.
We each have different lessons for today for sure,
Gotta get through homework we all must endure,
We all work together, learning to play fair,
Sharing, listening, laughing, playing with Chair Bear.

