

# The Vintage Voice

Serving The Church Pension Fund's Family of Beneficiaries

■ April 2002

## Poetry? Try It, You Might Like It!

*Emily S. Getz*

In retirement there is more time to write and it's a fun challenge. Most poetry and some prose just pop into my noggin at any time of day or night. I've written in cars (as a passenger!), in stores, on airplanes and in shops; somewhat like spontaneous combustion! Writing poetry is a great pastime for the retired. For me, the insistent prodding comes when least expected. A person, place or happening may trigger it. The response to it eases tensions, fires imagination, sharpens the mind, tickles the funny bone, calms frustration. And it's a release for many emotions — from grief and concern to reactions to beauty in many forms, to unusual accomplishments, humor, nonsense and tragic events. Here are some examples:

### A MESSAGE FROM THE ASHES OF GROUND ZERO

I am the ashes of someone you love.  
Roar of the crashes that came from above  
Signal my changing from man into dust,  
My spirit deranging, my soaring a must;  
I'm mingled with woods, with metals and dreams,  
Withstood all I could, I drift on sun beams;  
Particles floating that rest on your hand  
Are blessings from me — my bond? Nay, my brand.  
For this I am bound by mortal caring,  
Tied to this ground with deeds once sharing.  
I'm grateful you came — you've freed me to soar.  
The tie is the same with love as before.  
No more is the pain; no more is the fear.  
You've loosed me to gain a peace ever near,  
Release to arise, reaching to heaven  
But bound in aught guise, part of life's leaven.  
Bless you for coming — this closure we need;  
You to resuming and me to be freed.

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### THE HUNTER

To stalk indulgent tabby's tail,  
    To chase a spool of thread,  
To tangle with ferocious yarn,  
    To romp across your bed,  
To hunt for vicious ping pong balls,  
    On walnut shells to pounce —  
Such courage and such nonsense seen  
    In every furry ounce!  
There is a very special joy  
    When you bring to your house  
A tiny purring ball of fluff  
    To slay your catnip mouse!

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### I COME

As I travel the roads that my Saviour trod  
And I trace to the cross my dear Lord,  
    and my God,  
The spiritual's wail sounds so soft, yet I hear,  
"Were you there when they crucified my  
    Lord?", ring clear.  
Nay, Lord, not there then, and I'm not sure  
    that now  
I could follow You boldly to Golgotha's brow;  
But I'll strive to look upward to Heavenly Home,  
And with eyes on Your face I'll sing softly,  
    "I Come."

© 1985 *M'lou Getz, after return from Israel pilgrimage*

## FAREWELL

I chose to end your life today,  
    My precious one, my queen.  
Your sight has failed, your world is grey —  
    How limited your scene.  
The sphere in which you move grows small  
    As hearing's faded too.  
At times you cannot rise at all —  
    Rear limbs seem frozen through.  
I've sat beside your dozing form,  
    You've whimpered as you slept.  
Were you in pain? Or visions warm  
    Of puppyhood? — I wept!  
Your graceful racing lines I'll see  
    Forever in my mind.  
These years of joy and loyalty  
    Cannot be left behind.

No more in isolation, pain,  
    Will dreary days unfold;  
In youthful style you will remain  
    Ruler of this household.  
Dear gentle soul, I'll miss you so;  
    I dread that we must part.  
Within my dreams you'll romp and grow,  
    Sweet Empress of my heart.

© June 1984, Sun City, AZ On putting down a beloved whippet, aged 16 years!

## A LETTER TO A GRANDSON

Your Grandad is a nifty chap  
    He reads to those near-blind;  
Right now it's myst'ries of two cats  
    Who help their owner find  
The clues to deal with murderers  
    In make-believe small town.  
Three chapters read aloud each week  
    Earn stars for future crown!  
Like clergy everywhere I know,  
    He adds a little "ham"  
Expression in his voice is great,  
    These folk can "see" what am!  
I'm proud of him — you would be too  
    Retirement means "stir stumps"  
And do the things to brighten days  
    Yes! Move your lazy rumps!!

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## THE VISITOR

In still of night a silent form  
    moves in to take his place —  
He stretches full against my side  
    Though I can't see his face.  
The warmth that comes from supple limbs,  
    Like toaster set on "high",  
Repels the cold of winter night  
    From shoulder down to thigh.

The hairs upon his unshaved chin  
    Near bring me to a sneeze,  
I wish his nails had had a trim,  
    They're digging in my knees!  
I hope we've many years to spend  
    In such a cozy pose —  
But how I wish our Siamese cat  
    Would not upset my nose.

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## A PARIS MEMORY

One Sunday on a Paris street  
    The noonday rays were welcome warm,  
We strolled and chattered merrily  
    Until we spied a huddled form.

With bleary eyes he watched us come.  
    We noted gesture, hasty, sly;  
Drew in a jug, some bread did hug,  
    His peace disturbed as we passed by.

He wrapped his faded overcoat  
    Round his waist and boney knees  
As gathered to his chest his loot.  
    I also spied a knife and cheese.

In mind's eye I remember now  
    That sorry man who meant no harm.  
In Sabbath lull with city calm  
    He gloried in his supper's charm!

© 05/14/85, Sun City, AZ — a 1963 vignette



M'lou and husband, Henry, live in Scottsdale, Arizona in a life-care center. There they do volunteer work. In early retirement, M'lou published two books of poetry and prose, "Heartbeats," and "Heady Wine." In retirement, art classes have replaced golf, chicken foot has replaced bridge, but travel in the U.S. and foreign lands continues, as does writing. Early retirement 21 years ago freed them for an active team ministry with the Order of St. Luke — he as president of the board, she as a commissioned missionary — serving missions from Hawaii to California and across to D.C., and a number of states in between.



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445 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10016