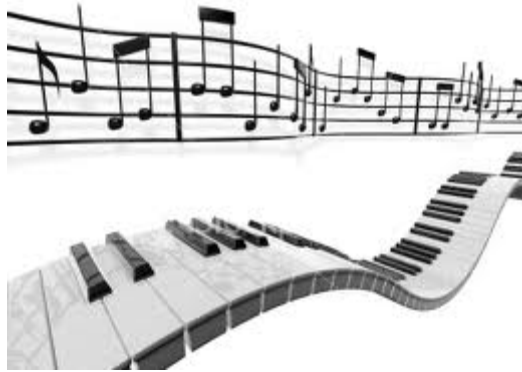


An excerpt from the forthcoming

Poems in the Key of Life



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4

TO ROGERS & HAMMERSTEIN, SPARKY AND GENE

ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN

As you walk through life, keep your head up high,
And, don't be afraid of the dark.
As you waltz through life, let your soul shine through,
And, don't be afraid of the dark.

SPARKY

A round-headed boy still hopes every day.
Though you no longer lead his way

GENE

Star ships still journey to places beyond.
With the wave of imagination's wand

& ME

Walk on through the rain. Walk on through the pain.
Inspire the song of the lark.
Brighten each night with the light of your soul.
You'll never walk alone.

5

MOMENT BY MOMENT

1.

I feel ...

Supreme, as I create

from the depths of my soul

Everything I'm doing is right

Flowing

Dictated by experience

Facilitated by God

“How could anyone not like this?”

It's

Good

Great

Superb

Fantast ...

... a small voice proclaims, “It's a first draft.”

2.

I explain –

My soul pouring out

draft
draft
draft
draft

It's not what he wants

Shock

Dismay

Anger

Disbelief

Denial

Denial

Denial ...

... a timid voice calls out "Next time, listen."

3.

I feel ...

Worthless. Utterly worthless.

A waste of space.

A loser,

with no talent.

Investing time into projects that

have no value

rehash failures

If I died now –

no one would miss me

the world would ...

... I hear my self proclaim, "Wait out the moment."

4.

I am grateful for

Snow covered mountains that glisten

Rainbow within a single drop of rain

The sweetness of silence.

5.

I deserve more!

If I don't stand up for myself ...

6.

Dumb.

I am so dumb.

Won't I ever learn?

... If anyone but myself talked to me this way, I'd walk out the door

7.

Fear

Washes over, into me

Fraying nerves

Challenging faith

Inviting flight

Poison, it courses through my veins ...

... the spark inside of me softly says "Seek the golden-white light."

8.

"You're an Addict

Wasting time

Writing words that no one will ever get to see

Afraid to share

A perfectionist ..."

... my soul proclaims, "You're not destroying yourself."

9.

I feel ...

Inspired

Tantalized

Educated

I've heard a master.

He is

just more practiced

I can do that.

I can do better

I can ...

A voice within me proclaims, "Get started."

6

MOMENT BY MOMENT II

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from the depths of my soul
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Flowing
Dictated by experience
Facilitated by God
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7

DALE PAPPAS

A true potter

Dales does not care about a web site.

It's a clinical thing.

Cold.

A sales vehicle.

I'm waiting for Dale to find the excitement of blogging
where he will share his soul

In much the same way as he does when he creates a pot.

8

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN PROVE

draft
draft
draft

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN PROVE

That a positive attitude makes life better, but
I sure know
Looking at the down side of things
Makes me feel a whole lot worse.

9

TO PROTECT YOUR EGO

To protect your ego
do more than one.

When you've only got one
it has to be good.

With more,
Some can be good
Some not so,
Even junk.

10

A SQUIRREL'S FREEDOM

When I was eight
My mother and I trapped a squirrel in our shed.

We induced it in,
fed it nuts everyday
Built up trust until
one day it entered the shed.
Slam went the door.
The squirrel ripped the shed to pieces.
That's how it is with people.
When you take away freedom,
Life gets ripped to pieces.

11

REFLECTION

Thank you, Liz

In life, as well as in writing
When I'm not down to a final draft.
I *can* get there myself.

I will eventually, but

During those moments when ...

... The grey color of goose tidings

Dominates my moods

and

... I have trouble seeing the inherent value

Of myself, much less every human being

It's difficult to decide upon the course

That I will stick to for God knows how long.

That's when

The perspective you lend

Is so valuable.

12

SEASON SHIFT

Crisp air makes breath show.

Bear begins to hibernate.

Fall into winter.

13

THREAT

Threat!

*draft
draft
draft
draft*

Publish my

You will

Rejected and

Neglected as

An editor

14

HELP IT'S SPREADING

Help, It's S-p-r-e-a-d-i-n-g

The clutter.

Help, It's S p r e a ding!

The c l

ut

t

er

It's spread beyond the office

C lothes on the sofa.

Papers too.

Piles on the entertainment center.

The bedroom is starting to feel stale.

Dishes are in the sink.

Not many. ... Some.

They'll be more

Unless I take action.

I've been O v E r LOADED.

Said, "I'll get to it."

Now, I'm paying the price.

Nothing feels good.

I enjoy a clean house.

Don't necessarily *like* to do it.

Guess it's time

To straighten things up

Get that fresh smell back.

Into this house and

Into my *life*.

draft
draft
draft
draft

15

I DARE YOU TO FEED ON WILD STRAWBERRY

draft
draft
draft
draft

I Dare You to Feed on Wild Strawberry

Butterflies that feed on wild strawberry,
flitter, flutter, dip and sip.

Watch them. It's beautiful.

Why not emerge from your cocoon, and
feed upon wild strawberry.

Enjoy life's fruits.

Flitter, flutter, dip and sip.

Be a beautiful butterfly.

16

A GAIA LIFE CONNECTION

A Gaia Life Connection

We meld, exchange philosophy
This venerable being and me
Placing my hands on the sequoia,
I feel
the vitality of its life pulse
the presence of inner peace
it's willingness to help heal me—offered without request
Wisdom. Thousands of years of wisdom.
I offer
an image of myself
whatever it wants from me

It accepts
something
feels renewed, reaffirmed

I understand
we are one, now, yet separate.
we sense through each other's souls

both better for it.

He taught me to
stand straight
proud, yet flexible
warm my spine
directing my blood
identify true goals
cast off forced images.

She taught me the beauty of
staying still

while traversing the universe
viewing the world
through the eyes of others
communication
without words
communion
between species

If I never touch another Redwood again
it matters not.

I am part of the matrix
aware and enriched forever, and
This is just the beginning.

17

A GRAND DESIGN

A Grand Design

Watermelon seeds
black
flat
small.

Not so small.
Big enough to spit.
Spit I do.

Farther than Joe.
Faster than Sue.
Onto the rich loam.
I win!

Contest forgotten.
Next year, a watermelon grows.
All is right in the world.

18

STOP SNOWING!

draft
draft
draft
draft

Stop Snowing!
Huge, sticky white flakes fall
 one
 by
 one hundred.

Form a wall of Snow that STOPS me, cold.
I like the lovely white flakes when
I have enough food , water, money.

Alas, tomorrow I'll have just
Fritos and
If I can't get down the mountain
I can't close the sale
The sale that will pay next month's rent.
So, please
 S
 N
 O
 W

just a while longer, then STOP.

draft
draft
draft
draft

19

SLICE OF LIFE

Slice of Life

draft
draft
draft

(Sultry and sexy:) Tomatoes, rich and ripe, not pulpy and bland.

(Excited:) Grapes: Big and juicy. Green, black and red.

(Appreciative:) Peaches: Somewhat bruised, soft and sweet.

(Indignant:) Bananas: Golden yellow, not shipped green and sprayed.

(Quickly:) Customers: Mulling, tasting, buying, socializing.

Vendors: Smiling while they sell, occasionally overcharging. Watch the scale.

(Looking around:) Green asparagus

Sweet peas,

Carrots,

beans,

potatoes,

more.

(Still looking:) I love the

Little girls, running round, calling to their moms.

Little boys, pointing guns, eating grapes.

Corn on the cob. Piled high.

Every farmer's market is
a slice of life.

draft
draft
draft
draft

20

TOMMY'S JOINT

Tommy's Joint, San Francisco

Still, the best darn buffalo stew.
People who care if you enjoy it
And all of the other food they serve.
It's a pleasure that some things don't change.

21

WALFREDO AFTER DUSK

draft
draft
draft
draft

Walfredo After Dusk

The moon
it emerges.
huge, golden, supernatural, ethereal.

I feel like howling.
Waves crash
life ebbs and flows.

Souls recharge.
Time stands still.

22

PEOPLE

draft
draft
draft
draft

Liz Puts Peanuts Out for the Squirrels

The shells are better for the lawn
Better than the sunflower seeds I would throw.

Some people give from their heart.
Others from their soul.

My mother used to say:
“God feeds me and I feed the birds.”

I feed the birds.
I feed squirrels too, especially when the ground freezes.
It used to use sunflower seeds, now it is peanuts.
It Would Be

My father’s birthday in two days.
I don’t have to buy a card.

Kind of silly, sending a card to a dead person.

I mean, how can they possibly open it.

I believe you can read this, even as I'm typing.
I feel the stream of love that is coming out my heart
Can reach up to Heaven and give you a little nudge.

If you can read this, Dad, you know I love you.
You can sense the tears in my eyes and you can see me typing
H-A-P-P-Y B-I-R-T-H-D-A-Y!

Love,
Alan
P.S. Give my love to Mom, too.
February 4, 1994

Marion

Meeting someone with my mother's name
Is special.

Never failing to bring back memories of
Auburn hair
A love of life
Rides
 in the country
 down the shore
 up the Poconos
 around the block.
And so much more.

She passed away in '69.
Memories that once drew tears
Now bring
 Smiles,

Silent prayers and
Self confidence.

BJ at 15
My daughter
Is growing up, Up, UP.
Just fine, thank you.
That's no little accomplishment for a 15-year old.
I'm proud of you BJ.
A Pressed Rose for Aunt Jean

On no special occasion
I write this poem for you, Aunt Jean.

It's never taken an occasion for you to
encourage me, love me,
urge me to take that reasonable chance.

You've shared yourself, your acceptance, your time, your love, your
everything.
Thank you.

I present this poem, a pressed rose from my heart.

If all of the lives you have touched were to give you a rose,
There wouldn't be a florist who could fill the order.

Alan

That's me.
If nothing else ...
I'll never run out of ideas.

Pound it out!

Use that clay!
Get rid of all your aggressions.

Convert your creativity into
Shapes.

Clay.
Literal and Figurative.

Joy has shaped
The stuff you make pots of and
The stuff that produces adults.

20+ Years as a mother
day care owner
daughter
and
potter
does that for you.

It's wonderful
To step back
As an artist (and a person) and
Admire her work!
2/22/94

23

SOUNDS OF LIFE

I used to wince
when during a service
a baby cried or
a child screamed

Until I realized that
these are the sounds of life.

A church without these is dying
Possibly a slow death, but
dying.

1/3/2010

31

EXPLORING DEATH

1938-N-1 1943-J

The hooded figure stalks
From painting to ...
Surrounded by light
Plunged into murk
Unable to find expression
Fully
in any one work
 One wonders why
But
Isn't that the point
 Why not ask
The white dog (?)
In 1937's
Untitled Piece
Or Those Driven to Drink
in 1936-7 No. 2
And in 1943-J
 Is that the dog (?)
Looking down

Contemplating Death?

Clyford

It's still not too late to explain.

draft
draft
draft
draft

32

JACKSON

Is it the monarch on the right
Or the fox on the bottom
Or all the guys thoughtfully
playing an invisible flute
Or is it me looking at
Your imagery. Who is
The Guardian of the Secret?
Maybe I need to glance left
at Male and Female
Notice the blackboard
With math that will
Wait forever
To be summed
Like a Grecian urn
Described by Keats, or
Maybe I just need to
Pay more attention to
Those kites

If that's what they are.

Inspired by several Jackson Pollock paintings that I saw displayed in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art while the 75th Anniversary exhibit was on display, June, 2010.

(<http://www.sfmoma.org/exhibitions/401>)

draft
draft
draft
draft