

Moving Forward

~Volume three in the collected poems of Sean T. Clark -
3rd edition

Foreword

I am extraordinarily grateful - for God, for life, and for you!

I hope you enjoy these gently edited poems, previously published on my [Website](#)

Or at [Mobile App](#)

Table of Contents

~Remembrances

1. [When I met you](#)
2. [Mehring and Blitzsch](#)
3. [The jumping bean v4](#)
4. They toast with the beer of their youth
5. We Have Trauma
6. A life well lived v3
7. Yesterday's Tomorrows
8. And Then the Dumpster
9. Light Slants in Summer, too
10. The Whirlwind
11. Even Paradise Can Burn up
12. Some Day, if You're Lucky
13. Luckiest Man Alive
14. I am The Dreams of My Fathers
15. One Last Push

~Remembrances

1. When I Met You

When I met you, I didn't know who I was.

But as I fell in love with you,

I figured out who I want to be.

The kind of man who deserves you.

2. Mehring Avenue

The bulk of my young, impressionable memories of several lifelong friendships started and/or ended there.

A meeting

The two boys timidly inspect one another,

One, a seven-year-old emigree from Midlothian, a near southwest side suburb of Chicago.

The other, one year his senior, an Irish-Protestant outsider in the German-Catholic burg.

Each at his mother's apron strings, they size each other up, subconsciously assessing their relative positions on the pecking order.

Both the sons of ex-military men (God rest their souls).

"Bet I'm faster than you," the offered test of childhood ability and neighborhood status.

"Uh-uhh," the clever retort.

A race decides it, the last time I bested the lad, who owned me in the other sports that defined our youthful neighborhood worth.

The bike spokes

His 5'2" mother tears down the street to rescue her youngest.

Perched on his brother's handlebars,

His canvas Chuck Taylor-shod foot has become wedged between a spoke and the fork securing wheel to briskly pedaled bike.

Running bases

The collision was so loud and stomach-turning that my mom left her post at the kitchen sink to come down the back walk to the side yard to see what was the matter.

The brother stumbled,

Holding his head and wincing in pain.

The sister responded to my mom's inquiry about whether she was O.K.

With glassy eyes, and some vague babble about needing to get home to help her mom with the dishes.

The game-interrupting spectacle having reached its end,

We resumed, bemused, though largely unconcerned about this new addition to the lore of Jak Anna Heights.

3. The jumping bean v4

He came home smelling of Marlboro,

Aramis, and Passport scotch,

With a token of affection,

A jumping bean sealed in a blue plastic box with a clear lid and a scrap of

Paper describing the creature inside,

Struggling to free itself for my amusement.

When he left again,

I sat at the desk where it had been

Quickly abandoned.

And was devastated to see that the moth,

Having escaped its natural prison, had perished

Inside the inescapable manmade one.

4. They toast with the beer of their youth

They toast with the beer of their youth.

As they inevitably slide toward sixty.

After lunch at the barbecue joint. (Cont.)

The afternoon filled with gentle, mirthful nostalgia.
 Before he leaves, I give him a picture of our mothers at approximately our current age.
 A memento for his mother of mine, now gone.

5. We Have Trauma

His cousins taught him to swim,
 By rowing him to the middle of Lake Coldwater and throwing him in.
 Her father was an abusive alcoholic.
 Theirs the recipient and conduit of that addiction gene.
 I pray I've not screwed them up too badly.

6. In a life well lived, all things spring from love v3

In a life well lived. all things spring from love. Starting with the love of our God, And continuing with the love of family,
 Including friends, the family we choose.
 Love is so important, in fact, it is the subject of two cornerstone Biblical verses: 1 Corinthians 13, Which says, in the NIV version: "If I speak in the tongues[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.
 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.
 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.
 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.
 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.
 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." Even our savior, Jesus highlighted love's critical role, saying, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another" (John 13:34)
 So, what a joy it is today to surround our friends with love as they commit to a lifetime of love.

7. Yesterday's tomorrow

Yesterday's tomorrows become today's.
 And what have you to show for it?
 Will you run the wheel,
 Until it breaks loose its moorings,
 Callously casting you into oblivion?
 Or is there more?
 Something you'd like to accomplish?
 Then, best get on it.
 The wheel threatens to break loose
 At any moment

8. And then the dumpster

I see the ambulance on the street in front of her house.
 The daughter of a prominent family in our small town.
 She lived a quiet life in a small house across from Brown park.
 The family comes, and takes the photographs and other meaningful mementos.
 But, oy, the clutter and claptrap a lifetime collects!
 Most of that Tchotchke and outdated or worn out furniture and technology.
 No longer of use to anyone, it fills the dumpster several times over.
 The final act includes strangers wandering her sanctum.
 Admiring the built-ins, but also
 Kvetching about the expense of updating the 1940s home.
 She'll gaze no more from her morning sunny spot at the world going by.

9. Light Slants in Summer, too

An homage to Ms. Dickinson

The light slants in Summer, too, Emily.
 And, though it runs counter to your gothic aesthetic,
 There is a unique slant of light,
 Summer mornings.
 That uplifts with the
 Sun's first burnings.
 Love of God it gives us.
 In spite of any scar.
 Despite any distance between us and our Maker.
 Light joins us where we are.

10. The Whirlwind

by Skipperdoodle Productions

I stand at the top of the main staircase as they stream in the front door.
 They swirl around me, as do the years.
 World spinning so fast but goin' nowhere. Their names change, but not their faces. Staying the
 same age while he ages.
 And, then, it's over.

11. Even paradise can burn up

Even paradise can burn up,
 A prayer for Hawaiians.
 We pray that you will be with those suffering, oh God.
 And I pray that we use the lesson of earth's impermanence.
 To awaken us to the consequences of.
 Both our actions, and of our inaction.
 Though the earth will heal,
 Those lost will not return.
 Let us act before it happens again.
 And also, to use the impermanence of earthly things.
 To rejoice in the gifts You have given us.

12. Some day, if you're lucky

Some day, if you're lucky,
 Someone will think about you.
 Your chance to mold their feelings,
 Begins and ends today.
 #spreadlove while you can!

13. Luckiest man alive

I have You, my Lord.
 And I have all of you, my family and friends .
 So, in spite of my struggles.
 I have always been,
 And will always be, the luckiest man alive.

14. I Am the Dreams of my Fathers

by Skipperdoodle Productions

Generations ago, a poor, young Irish couple,
 John and Katie,
 Tearfully, trepidatiously left their ancestral homeland.
 To escape starvation, imperialism, and
 Hopelessness.

Emigrating to Coldwater, Michigan,
They did what they knew,
Farmed, worked like dogs, and raised a large family.
One of whom married a Donihue girl,
And started his own farmstead and family.
Resulting in the birth of my father,

 The last in a line of thousands of years of Clark farmers,
Who left the land, dreaming of “a better life.”
Getting an education, he never returned to the land.
Raising a poet son who here honors.
The strife, the courage of his forebears,
And who keenly feels the ennui:
Though much has been gained, much is lost.
And the mighty heft of an unpayable debt.

15. One last push

 With One last push from the tribe,
A metaphorical walking with you to the edge of the forest.
We stand amongst the limit of the old growth,
And watch you walk off.
Until a bend in the path lets us know you are on your way.
We turn back, holding hands.
A melange of pride and nostalgia.

11.

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We turn back, holding hands.
A melange of pride and nostalgia.

16. We are but vessels

We are but vessels,

More or less full of treasure.

If our journey allows, we encounter foreign lands.

Will you unload your treasure

Before the inevitable shipwreck,

Or will that treasure be lost and wasted?

17. The Red Tailed Hawk

The red tailed Hawk plummets, screeching.

My spirit sister of the skies.

She arrests her descent on an updraft above the patio.

Seeing no prey, she climbs and sails away,

Leaves only me fed by the encounter.

18. Feeling pretty good v2

Was feeling pretty good as my scooter carried me homeward.

Entered the shade of the trees by the culvert with a smile on my face.

Until another sojourner zipped by me on her quicker motorized bike.

That little girl thought she was so cool.

19. Tankle

Thank God there's not a tankle for every tinkle, as the sound waves would Defeat each other.
So, celebrate the myriad of differences we have.
They bring vibrancy to our lives.

20. Youngest You Will Ever Be Again xxx

Today is the youngest You will ever be Again.

You've got things to do.

Do them now.

5. The Toast

~As it Is

6. Youngest You Will Ever Be Again
7. I am that Old Weirdo
8. Light Slants in Summer, too
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10. Even Paradise can Burn up
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12. Luckiest Man Alive
13. I am the Dreams of my Fathers
14. The Sun Shines Unequally on the Favored
15. And then, an Extra Gift v2
16. On the Anniversary of Her Birth
17. Vantage Point v2
18. Might as Well Embrace it Chicago v3
19. Without You
20. Sprinter or Wing v3
21. Enveloped in Green v2
22. Ya Got Me Again, Chicago
23. As Our Eldest Turns to Leave v2
24. From Stupid and Strong to Wise and Weak
25. Cocaine and Whisky for Breakfast

26. The Red Tailed Hawk

27. Feeling pretty Good

28. Tankle

31. We are but Vessels

I figured out who I want to be:

The kind of man you deserve.

~As it Is

29. Youngest You Will Ever Be Again
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~Ars Poetica

53. The Poet Speaks v2

The Poet Speaks in ways that others don't.
He is aware of his foreign state.
And still revels in the language.
That simultaneously ties,
And distances him from his compatriots.

54. Turn me inside out

Turn me inside out.
For that's what good art does.
For better or worse,
It reveals the beauty and the bruises of the artist.
And by extension, of the audience.
Which is why art takes such courage.
It requires being truthful, naked, vulnerable.
And a transcendent melange of
Giving selfishness.

35. The Toast

As it is

55. Youngest You Will Ever Be Again

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- 56. In a Life Well Lived v3
- 57. Yesterday's Tomorrow
- 58. And Then the Dumpster
- 59. One Last Push
- 60. We are but Vessels
- 61.

~As it Is**~Moving Forward**

TOC, pt. 2

- 62. From Less to Full
- 63. Brilliance Cannot Come from a Formula
- 64. Be Grateful.
- 65. Now's the Time
- 66. When it Comes to Dangerous Life Activities
- 67. To Simulate her Loving Embrace
- 68. How Can I Do You Justice?
- 44. The Circular Saw v2
- 45. The Gas Can v2
- 46. Striated Clouds Streak a Frozen Sky
- 47. And Today It Rises Rose
- 48. One of These Times
- 49. Morning on the Day of Christmas Eve
- 50. Give No Power to Those Who Don't Support You v2
- 51. Matt's Grandma's Homemade Doughnuts
- 52. A Day Wasted v2
- 53. The Sun Rises in a Panoramic Peach, the Moon Sets
- 54. Gorgeous as Ever v2
- 55. Golden Rays of Sunshine v2
- 56. I Love You with my Whole Heart v2
- 57. I Don't Have to Tell You v2
- 58. 22323
- 59. The Oak Leaves Extending Beneath the Awning v2
- 60. Put Here to Love

Moving Forward

1. We Have Trauma

His cousins taught him to swim,
By rowing him to the middle of Lake Coldwater and throwing him in.
Her father was an abusive alcoholic.
Theirs the recipient and conduit of that addiction gene.
I pray I've not screwed them up too badly.

2.

Today is the youngest You will ever be Again.
You've got things to do.
Do them now.

3. I am that old weirdo

I am that old weirdo,
Who shuffles to the end of the driveway in his house slippers.
To take crappy phone pictures
Of the waning Supermoon.
And there stands.
Enraptured by the many
Cardinals' serenade.

4. In a life well lived, all things spring from love v3

In a life well lived. all things spring from love.
Starting with the love of our God,
And continuing with the love of family,
Including friends, the family we choose.

Love is so important, in fact, it is the subject of two cornerstone Biblical verses: 1 Corinthians 13, which says, in the NIV version: "If I speak in the tongues[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

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For we know in part and we prophesy in part,
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5. So, what a joy it is today to surround our friends with love as they commit to a lifetime of love
- 6.

63. 22323

Yes, numbers have their poetry, as well.

Only this year, the loam of an early Spring February seems to breed that verse.

Read them aloud, and you will hear.

Hear the ancient soul and creator of our calendar.

The longings of the indomitable human Spirit against the mysterious Ocean of Time.

In the last two days, you must have felt, however faint, however transient,

The thrill of symmetry and sound, the heft of eons.

Introduced by the diaphanous lightness of 22123,

Followed by the staid solidity of 22223.

But then the awesomeness of the realization,

We are unique observers of these unique events.

43. How can I do You Justice?

Moving Forward

1. When I met you

When I met you, I didn't know who I was.
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I figured out who I want to be:
The kind of man you deserve.

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As they slide inevitably toward sixty.
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 That little girl thought she was so cool.

21. Tankle

Thank God there's not a tankle for every tinkle, as the sound waves would cancel each other.
 So, celebrate the myriad of differences we have,
 They bring music to our lives.

22. The jumping bean v4

He comes home smelling of Marlboro,
 Aramis, and Passport scotch,
 With a token of affection,
 A jumping bean sealed in a blue plastic box with a clear lid and a scrap of paper,
 Describing the creature inside,
 Struggling to free itself for my amusement.
 When he leaves again,

The boy sits at the desk where the creature had been
 Quickly abandoned,
 And is devastated to see that the moth,
 Having escaped its natural prison, had perished
 Inside the inescapable manmade one.

23. The sun shines Unequally on the favored

The sun shines unequally upon the favored,
 To the rest, shade.

And even then, all in its season.
 But even with these vagaries,
 Those in shade lack no nobility.

~Alternate ending

The sun shines unequally upon the favored,
 To the rest, shade.

And even then, all in its season.
 But even with these vagaries,
 Those in shade lack no Nobleness.

25. And then, an extra gift v2

The sunrise illuminates the starkly beautiful, bare trees to the east.
 Climbing above it, a pure white cotton cloud.
 Whose soft underbelly reflects the sun's shifting hues.

26. Vantage Point v2

My Insta post showed only a series of images the privileged promontory offers.
 And assiduously avoided the ecological pillaging viewable with a 180 degree turn.
 As the privileged look down at the less fortunate,
 Remember to be humble, thankful it isn't you staring up at the scarring to which the privileged
 feel entitled.

27. Might as well embrace it, Chicago V3

Might as well embrace it, Chicago,
 The heartbreak of Spring.
 Its yo-yo-ing weather,
 It's manic-depressive on/off switch.
 And your codependency and enabling.
 You're in need of couples therapy, and you know it.
 But I feel you.
 I, too, am alternately drawn by the siren song that is our city, our shared sickness.
 I, too, was kidnapped by parents who birthed me here,

Who bequeathed their love/hate of all things Chicago to me:
 After all, every freezing puddle I step in, eventually flows to The Lake.
 So, go ahead and run away to points south until the pendulum slows.
 I don't judge, but rather envy your temporary respite,
 And hope soon to emulate it.

28. Without you

Without you, my heart would surely cease to beat.
 And I would wander the earth,
 Carrying its dead weight.
 Like a cold boulder in my chest.

29. The toast

I have opened the drapes and made my morning coffee, the beautiful one shuffles downstairs,
 opens the window to let in the breeze I hear rustling through the majestic oaks in our neighbor's
 backyard. A beautiful start to my day. The sun through the East windows and the songbird's
 Aubade complete the tableaux and I am stunned with gratitude.
 After dressing, I go back downstairs and have fresh homemade egg salad on rye I've not toasted
 adequately.

30. Sprinter or Wing? v3

Forties, Thirties, Fifties, Thirties.
 Days that are three distinct weather days in one.
 And the next night and day, it snows.
 A snow that has melted three days later.
 Chicago has officially entered its schizophrenic season.
 Some final puffs from Jessie's chimney, a train whistle,
 And then the sun bursts forth!
 Have faith, fellow lifers,
 In just a few short months, we'll be bitching about how humid it is.
 And cramming in as many beach days as possible during another blazing summer.
 Enjoy the only one and a half upcoming good weather months in the Midwest.

31. Enveloped in green v2

A mild Winter's still summer-green grass provides the backdrop.
 To the mic drop of an explosion of leaves.
 Shedding their life-giving bud caps.
 To stretch toward the nourishing Spring sunshine of a cold Chicago Spring.
 The hefty biomass simultaneously feeding and obliterating my soul.

32. Ya got me again, Chicago

Fifty-seven, and a Lifer,
 I should know better.

But I'll admit, you got me again.
 But if you think you'll squelch my optimism, guess again.
 I'd rather ride the hope your weather gave the last four days, even when met by the jarring snow
 of an oh, so typical false Spring morning.
 You can't kill my Hope as you do the daffodils.
 I kid myself next year will be different,
 But we both know you'll try (and fail) to steal my joy for as long as I live here.
 I assure you, you will fail.

33. As Our Eldest Turns to Leave v2

As Our Eldest Turns to Leave for his commute,
 I offer, "Watch out for the Crazies, and don't be one."
 He offers back a noncommittal wave, and leaves.
 At twenty-nine, the man has little need for my prolonged parenting.
 But, it's hard to stop loving them in this way.

34. From stupid and strong to wise and weak

Could not have been dumber.
 Thought those times would last forever.
 Even in the storms of change.
 Thought our love would never age.
 Unconcerned and unaware.
 It slipped by without a care.
 Only in retrospect do I see the peak.
 Cruel reality to be wise and weak.

35. Cocaine and Whisky For breakfast v2

Help me Jesus.
 I know this cannot last.
 If I will live to see tomorrow.
 Your strength I need to borrow.
 Whose floor this is, I do not know.
 Help me, Lord, stop having.
 Stop craving.
 Stop needing.
 Cocaine and whisky for breakfast.

36. Mehring Avenue

The bulk of my young, impressionable memories of several lifelong friendships started and/or ended there.

A meeting

The two boys timidly inspect one another,

One, a seven-year-old emigree from Midlothian, a near southwest side suburb of Chicago.

The other, one year his senior, an Irish-Protestant outsider in the German-Catholic burg.

Each at his mother's apron strings, they size each other up, subconsciously assessing their relative positions on the pecking order.

Both the sons of ex-military men (God rest their souls).

"Bet I'm faster than you," the offered test of childhood ability and neighborhood status.

"Uh-uhh," the clever retort.

A race decides it, the last time I bested the lad, who owned me in the other sports that defined our youthful neighborhood worth.

The bike spoaks

His 5'2" mother tears down the street to rescue her youngest.

Perched on his brother's handlebars,

His canvas Chuck Taylor-shod foot has become wedged between a spoak and the fork securing wheel to briskly pedaled bike.

Running bases

The collision was so loud and stomach-turning that my mom left her post at the kitchen sink to come down the back walk to the side yard to see what was the matter.

The brother stumbled,

Holding his head and wincing in pain.

The sister responded to my mom's inquiry about whether she was O.K.

With glassy eyes, and some vague babble about needing to get home to help her mom with the dishes.

The game-interrupting spectacle having reached its end,

We resumed, bemused, though largely unconcerned about this new addition to the lore of Jak Anna Heights.

37. 22323

22323.

Yes, numbers have their poetry, as well.

Only this year, the loam of an early Spring February seems to breed that verse.

Read them aloud, and you will hear.

Hear the ancient soul and creator of our calendar.

The longings of the indomitable human Spirit against the mysterious Ocean of Time.

In the last two days, you must have felt, however faint, however transient,

The thrill of symmetry and sound, the heft of eons.

Introduced by the lightness of 22123,

Followed by the staid solidity of 22223.

But then the awesomeness of the realization,

We are unique observers of these unique events.

38. How can I do you justice?

In attempting to express my love for you in writing,

I face two issues: One, to capture you, I must avoid cliches, because no trite, overused expression, no matter how useful, could ever hope to express the complex wonder that you are to me.

And, two, the words to do you justice haven't been invented yet.

So, my only hope is to rely on the profound simplicity of our hearts close together,

And beating in synchronicity; the touch that still sets my heart racing these thirty-odd years later;

And the smell of you, which can only be described as home.

So, on this day, 2/14/23,

My forever Valentine, I'll devour you with my eyes.

When I met you

When I met you, didn't know who I was.
 But as I fell in love with you,
 I figured out who I want to be:
 The kind of man you deserve.

Even paradise can burn up

Even paradise can burn up,
 A prayer for Hawaiians.
 We pray that you will be with those suffering, oh God.
 And I pray that we use the lesson of earth's impermanence.
 To awaken us to the consequences of.
 Both our actions, and of our inaction.
 Though the earth will heal,
 Those lost will not return.
 Let us act before it happens again.
 And also, to use the impermanence of earthly things.
 To rejoice in the gifts You have given us.

They toast with the beer of their youth

They toast with the beer of their youth.
 As they inevitably slide toward sixty.
 After lunch at the barbecue joint.
 The afternoon filled with gentle, mirthful nostalgia.
 Before he leaves, I give him a picture of our mothers at approximately our current age.
 A memento for his mother of mine, now gone.

We Have Trauma

His cousins taught him to swim
 By rowing him to the middle of Lake Coldwater and throwing him in.
 Her father was an abusive alcoholic.
 Theirs the recipient and conduit of that addiction gene.
 I pray I've not screwed them up too badly.

I am that old weirdo

I am that old weirdo,
 Who shuffles to the end of the driveway in his house slippers.
 To take crappy phone pictures
 Of the waning Supermoon.
 And there stands.
 Enraptured by the many
 Cardinals' serenade.

In a life well lived, all things spring from love v3

In a life well lived. all things spring from love. Starting with the love of our God, And continuing with the love of family,
 Including friends, the family we choose.
 Love is so important, in fact, it is the subject of two cornerstone Biblical verses: 1 Corinthians 13, which says, in the NIV version: "If I speak in the tongues[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.
 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.
 For we know in part and we prophesy in part,
 but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.
 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.
 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.
 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." Even our savior, Jesus highlighted love's critical role, saying, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another" (John 13:34)
 So, what a joy it is today to surround our friends with love as they commit to a lifetime of love

Yesterday's tomorrow

Yesterday's tomorrows become today's.
 And what have you to show for it?
 Will you run the wheel,
 Until it breaks loose its moorings,
 Callously casting you into oblivion?
 Or is there more?
 Something you'd like to accomplish?
 Then, best get on it.
 The wheel threatens to break loose
 At any moment.

And then the dumpster

I see the ambulance on the street in front of her house.
 The daughter of a prominent family in our small town.
 She lived a quiet life in a small house across from Brown park.
 The family comes, and takes the photographs and other meaningful mementos.
 But, oy, the clutter and claptrap a lifetime collects!
 Most of that Tchotchke and outdated or worn out furniture and technology.
 No longer of use to anyone, fills the dumpster several times over.
 The final act includes strangers wandering her sanctum.
 Admiring the built-ins, but also
 Kvetching about the expense of updating the 1940s home.
 She'll gaze no more from her morning sunny spot at the world going by.

Light Slants in Summer, too

An homage to Ms. Dickinson
 The light slants in Summer, too, Emily.
 And, though it runs counter to your gothic aesthetic,
 There is a unique slant of light,
 Summer mornings.
 That uplifts with the
 Sun's first burnings.
 Love of God it gives us.
 In spite of any scar.

Despite any distance between us and our Maker.
Light joins us where we are.

The Whirlwind

I stand at the top of the main staircase as they stream in the front door.
They swirl around me, as do the years.
World spinning so fast but goin' nowhere. Their names change, but not their faces. Staying the same age while he ages.
And, then, it's over.

Some day, if you're lucky

Some day, if you're lucky,
Someone will think about you.
Your chance to mold their feelings,
Begins and ends today.
#spreadlove while you can!

Luckiest man alive

I have You, my Lord.
And I have all of you, my family and friends .
So, in spite of my struggles.
I have always been,
And will always be, the luckiest man alive.

The Poet Speaks v2

The Poet Speaks in ways that others don't.
He is aware of his foreign state.
And still revels in the language.
That simultaneously ties,
And distances him from his compatriots.

I Am the Dreams of my Fathers

Generations ago, a poor, young Irish couple,
John and Katie,
Tearfully, trepidatiously left their ancestral homeland.
To escape starvation, imperialism, and
Hopelessness.
Emigrating to Coldwater, Michigan,
They did what they knew,
Farmed, worked like dogs, and raised a large family.
One of whom married a Donihue girl,
And started his own farmstead and family.
Resulting in the birth of my father,

The last in a line of thousands of years of Clark farmers,
Who left the land, dreaming of “a better life.”
Getting an education, he never returned to the land.
Raising a poet son who here honors.
The strife, the courage of his forebears,
And who keenly feels the ennui:
Though much has been gained, much is lost.
And the mighty heft of an unpayable debt.

One last push

With One last push from the tribe,
A metaphorical walking with you to the edge of the forest.
We stand amongst the limit of the old growth,
And watch you walk off.
Until a bend in the path lets us know you are on your way.
We turn back, holding hands.
A melange of pride and nostalgia.

We are but vessels

We are but vessels,
 More or less full of treasure.
 If our journey allows, we encounter foreign lands.
 Will you unload your treasure
 Before the inevitable shipwreck,
 Or will that treasure be lost and wasted?

The red tailed Hawk

The red tailed Hawk plummets, screeching.
 My spirit sister of the skies.
 She arrests her descent on an updraft above the patio.
 Seeing no prey, she climbs and sails away,
 Leaves only me fed by the encounter.

Turn me inside out

Turn me inside out.
 For that's what good art does.
 For better or worse,
 It reveals the beauty and the bruises of the artist.
 And by extension, of the audience.
 Which is why art takes such courage.
 It requires being truthful, naked, vulnerable.
 And a transcendent melange of
 Giving selfishness.

Feeling pretty good v2

Was feeling pretty good as my scooter carried me homeward.
 Entered the shade of the trees by the culvert with a smile on my face.
 Until another sojourner zipped by me on her quicker motorized bike.
 That little girl thought she was so cool.

Tankle

by Skipperdoodle Productions

I thank God there's not a tankle for every tinkle, as the sound waves would Defeat each other.

So, celebrate the myriad of differences we have.

They bring vibrancy to our lives.

The jumping bean v4

by Skipperdoodle Productions

He came home smelling of Marlboro,

Aramis, and Passport scotch,

With a token of affection,

A jumping bean sealed in a blue plastic box with a clear lid and a scrap of

Paper describing the creature inside,

Struggling to free itself for my amusement.

When he left again,

I sat at the desk where it had been

Quickly abandoned.

And was devastated to see that the moth,

Having escaped its natural prison, had perished

Inside the inescapable manmade one.

The sun shines unequally upon the favored

alternate ending

The sun shines unequally upon the favored,

To the rest, shade.

And even then, all in its season.

But even with these vagaries,

Those in shade lack no Nobleness.

On the anniversary of her birth

On the anniversary of her birth,

I let her know she's my 2nd favorite Cooper woman, responsible for my first.
 We feasted and we laughed It's been a tough year
 But all that melted away as the family gathered round her and heaped love upon a woman We all
 revere.

Vantage Point v2

by Skipperdoodle Productions

My Insta post showed only a series of images the privileged promontory offers.
 And assiduously avoided the ecological pillaging viewable with a 180 degree turn.
 As the privileged look down at the less fortunate,
 Remember to be humble, thankful it isn't you staring up at the scarring to which the privileged
 feel entitled.

Might as well embrace it, Chicago V.3

by Skipperdoodle Productions

Might as well embrace it, Chicago,
 The heartbreak of Spring.
 Its yo-yo-ing weather,
 It's manic/depressive on/off switch.
 And your codependency and enabling.
 You're in need of couples therapy, and you know it. But I feel you.
 I, too, am alternately drawn by the siren song that is our city, our shared sickness.
 I, too, was kidnapped by parents who birthed me here,
 Who bequeathed their love/hate of all things Chicago to me:
 After all, every freezing puddle I step in, eventually flows to The Lake.
 So, go ahead and run away to points south until the pendulum slows.
 I don't judge, but rather envy your temporary respite,
 And hope soon to emulate it.

Without you

by Skipperdoodle Productions

Without you, my heart would surely cease to beat.

And I would wander the earth
 Carrying its dead weight.
 Like a cold boulder in my chest.

The toast

By Skipperdoodle Productions

I have opened the drapes and made my morning coffee, the beautiful one shuffles downstairs, opens the window to let in the breeze I hear rustling through the majestic oaks in our neighbor's backyard. A beautiful start to my day. The sun through the East windows and the songbird's Aubade complete the tableaux and I am stunned with gratitude. After dressing, I go back downstairs and have fresh homemade egg salad on rye I've not toasted adequately.

Sprinter or Wing? v3

By Skipperdoodle Productions

Forties, Thirties, Fifties, Thirties.
 Days that are three distinct weather days in one.
 And the next night and day, it snows.
 A snow that has melted three days later.
 Chicago has officially entered its schizophrenic season.
 Some final puffs from Jessie's chimney, a train whistle,
 And then the sun bursts forth!
 Have faith, fellow lifers,
 In just a few short months, we'll be bitching about how humid it is.
 And cramming in as many beach days as possible during another blazing summer.
 Enjoy the only one and a half upcoming good weather months in the Midwest.

Enveloped in green v2

by Skipperdoodle Productions

A mild Winter's still summer-green grass provides the backdrop.
 To the mic drop of an explosion of leaves.
 Shedding their life-giving bud caps.
 To stretch toward the nourishing Spring sunshine of a cold Chicago Spring.
 The hefty biomass simultaneously feeding and obliterating my soul.

Ya got me again, Chicago

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Fifty-seven, and a Lifer,

I should know better.

But I'll admit, you got me again.

But if you think you'll squelch my optimism, guess again.

I'd rather ride the hope your weather gave the last four days, even when met by the jarring snow of an oh, so typical false Spring morning.

You can't kill my Hope as you do the daffodils.

I kid myself next year will be different,

But we both know you'll try (and fail) to steal my joy for as long as I live here.

I assure you, you will fail.

As Our Eldest Turns to Leave v2

By Skipperdoodle Productions

As Our Eldest Turns to Leave for his commute,

I offer, "Watch out for the Crazies, and don't be one."

He offers back a noncommittal wave, and leaves.

At twenty-nine, the man has little need for my prolonged parenting.

But, it's hard to stop loving them in this way.

From stupid and strong to wise and weak

Could not have been dumber.

Thought those times would last forever.

Even in the storms of change.

Thought our love would never age.

Unconcerned and unaware.

It slipped by without a care.

Only in retrospect do I see the peak.

Cruel reality to be wise and weak.

Put here to love

We were put here to love.

I know this to be true.

Because the creator of all things.

Made love into flesh.

A human who loved us so much,

He died to kill sin for us,
And lived to exemplify love to us.
Let us follow the example by loving one another.
Give, support, and love.