

Women's Worthy Words

Here are some samples of writing that emerged in my Word Worthy classes, by some of the amazing women who participated whole-heartedly. The first emerged from an exercise where we each added a line, and then the initiator, Joanne Brothers, shaped the result into a poem.

"Women Weave Poem Together"

Blue heron lifts her leg into stillness
Preparing to command the dawn
Above, the sky paled
Stars disappeared bowing farewell
Out of that stillness
Glistening shimmer of bass
Arching half moon over smooth surface
Rings of water
Spreading intricate mandala
Reflecting rock vegetation sky
Infinite pattern

Sliver of silver
Quick reach
Her fast is broken

By Joanne Brothers, Kim Hansen, Laura K. Deal, Kathy Fosnaugh, Clare Schoolmaster, and Cynthia Swan

Sestina

by Clare Schoolmaster

Dearest one, brought to me in a tragic dream
I cannot recall any glimpse of that dream without a gasp.
Ethereal messages were whispered to a young wondering heart
Haunting then discounted, why didn't I pay attention.
I did not try to connect this visage to meanings or affects of fears
But twenty years later, incongruities became realities.

Dearest one, you were reincarnated from my past realities.
Would you be with me now if this dream
Had not opened my eyes to the fears
That were conjured by this message? I still gasp
When a guardrail steals my attention
Away from the present and I feel the wound reopen in my heart.

Dearest one, shall I reveal to you my wounded heart?
I am driving a car with someone next to me. The realities
Of my past makes that someone, someone I would expect to love, pay attention.
As I drive into a turn, the car slides toward a guardrail. My dream

Becomes a nightmare. I realize we are to fall to our deaths. I gasp,
I caress the nape of my loved one and whisper my fears.

I profess my love and cringe at our impending doom. It was my fears
Of such a sorrowful loss that woke me twenty years ago but my heart
Never forgot the images; my hand on your neck, my gasp
At my loss. Later there would be many messages sent and more realities
to ignore. But twenty years later an unexpected chance is taken and the dream
Was lived. A mountain drive, why wasn't I paying attention?

You were driving, why not let you continue? Pay attention.
I'll drive now. We are wallowing in our joy, living without fears
Of tomorrow. Slowly the road climbs and the forgotten dream
Becomes a terrifying event. This nightmare rips at my heart.
No! Not now! I love this man, this can't be my final realities
Of joy. As that guardrail revisits my life, I gasp.

Desperate crises are answered with your calmness and resolution. I gasp
At your acceptance but it quiets the cacophony of my pleads. I pay attention
To your words. We slide away from the rail and stop. New realities
Replace a dream. It was you who I professed my love to and the fears
Were the loss of your love, your life. Panic held amazing control of my heart
And mind. I was as confused as if waking from someone else's dream.

Guardrails still make me gasp but I know these are unreasonable fears.
I give full attention to the messages of my heart.
Ethereal whisperings are considered realities and I am no longer afraid to dream.

Sestina

by Kim Hansen

I lay upon my bed to rest,
Loosening my muscles to sink my bones,
Waiting for the unprompted inrushing of breath.
I am suddenly whole.
I have reclaimed by belly
And leaned into the curve.

Your finger meets my pelvis at the curve,
And now I can no longer rest.
We both are absorbed by the waves in my belly
Splashing over my bones.
Do our parts form fractions or a new whole?
We swim, for these few moments, outside of breath.

There is a shape to each breath;
Faint dashes linked within a curve.
Arriving in my seated body, I am gloriously whole.
Here is rest.
These are my bones.

Here is my belly.

Now comes the whispered secret of my belly,
Voiced without my breath
But hummed in vibrating bones.
Shame and desire hide in the curve
With scarcely a rest,
Stranded, naked, in an alleyway toward whole.

What is the sound of a body whole?
Does it radiate from the heart or climb roots of the belly?
Or does it rest
On a fluttered breath?
I've heard it purr along the curve
Of elegant long bones.

I am tethered to this form by my bones,
These props to support what is already whole.
Like beams for a suspension bridge's curve,
The crests of two pelvic bones cradle my belly,
Hammocking each breath
Into rest.

Blood, marrow, bones hide secret in my belly.
Seeds of the whole hitched to my breath,
Drawn along the curve and finally to rest.