

Naked Lady
A Poetic Memoir of Rape and Recovery



*Elizabeth
Buckner*

APPLAUSE FOR
Naked Lady

About to be homeless, boyfriend in jail, drugs not working, disillusioned Elizabeth Buckner abandons the fading San Francisco counterculture for a weekend at a Marin commune. Warnings flare during the visit and when she attempts to return to the city that night, the driver takes a different turn, a detour to a Hell's Angels camp. Buckner unable to escape, is trapped as sacrifice in a brutal Hell's Angels "Red Wings" ritual.

In blameless, unflinching poetry, Buckner embarks upon two separate, yet intertwined journeys, that of the older woman looking back wide-eyed, and of the lost, younger woman groping forward. The former is a steadfast linear journey guided by the heart; the latter meanders and twists upon itself like a snake biting its own back.

The seeds of the Angel's ritual take root in Buckner's soul. Fertilized with shame and guilt, they grow for twenty years. When innocently asked to preview a rape video for work, the blood seeds begin to bloom. Buckner lets them. Encouraging painful memories with bravery, compassion and wisdom, the seeds planted deeply in the silent past, at last bear fruit, flowering into the graceful resilient "Naked Lady" of the present.

– Baxter Claire Trautman

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INTRODUCTION

The brightest light comes
from the darkest night
if we will walk
through the shadows



FOREWORD

Join me
in the story
that changed
my life
imprisoned me
for years

Know that
only
when I began
to shine light
share my story
did my healing begin

Join me
in celebration
of my journey
of transformation
made possible
by love and light



DEAR READER

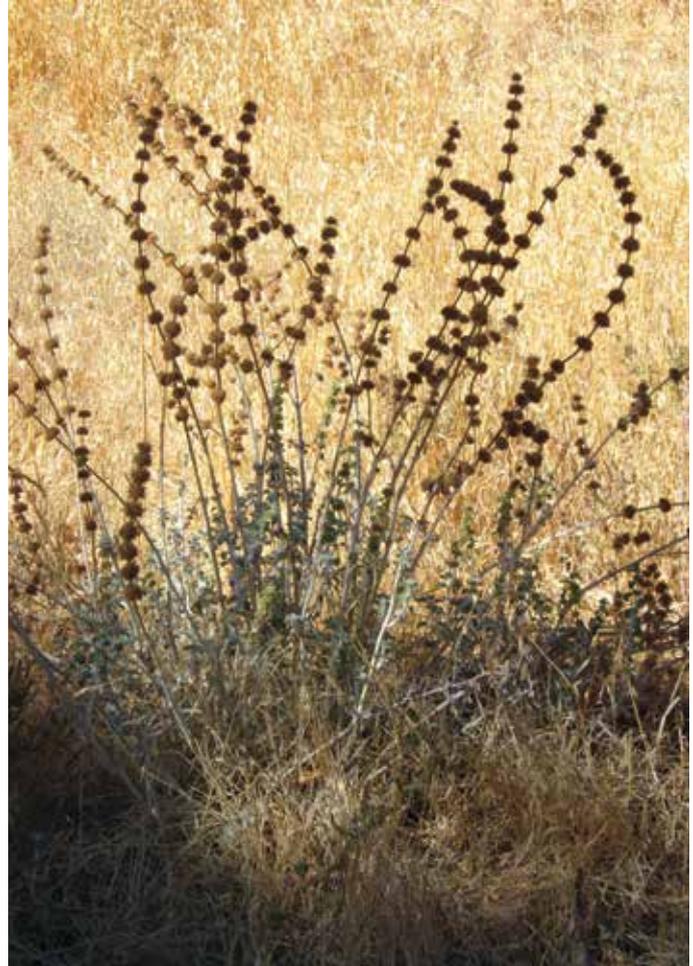
Read these words
in a candlelit cave
with your fingertips
or by a flashlight
in a closet with
your eyes closed

My words are for you
dear reader and
they will change us
if we allow
the transformation
from soul to soul

ISSUES OF INTIMACY

This morning
I walk a mile around the house
wash dishes/clothes/windows
open bills/while
horses and cattle wander
the pasture next door I herd and
corral dust bunnies/mop
floors/vacuum rugs/water
flowers/take a shower
wash my hair/ponder what to wear
running from my words

I begin three verses three times
chase remnants of a dream
research/think/re-
think as clouds
of memories escape
into the ether of afternoon
running from the mind fields
of the golden pasture



PROCESS

I write
I feel
I hurt
I sigh
I gasp
I grasp for breath
I breathe noisily
to prove I exist
I pace
I rock
I hide my head
I hug myself
I wail
I weep
I want to eat drink kill
sleep read or run
Instead
I breathe and
I write



I write
I feel
I sigh
I rush
I catch my breath
I raise my head
I hug myself
I laugh
I leap
I breathe and
I write

BEFORE

To get away
from the damp dreary
City by the Bay
in the summer of '69
my life coming apart at the seams
recovering from a major illness
partner in jail no bail
imminent eviction
from our Victorian flat
To get away
from the promises of flower power
now crushed under the weight
of a world of violence
I go with my friend
to a Marin County commune
for a few days of R&R.
She has an aura of excitement
seems supported by the 1% free universe
I want a bit of her magic
to rub off on me
so I tag along for the ride





On this berry-picking
pie-baking Saturday
a buck knife cuts
my hand in the V between
thumb and index finger
a sure sign which says
Danger Ahead!

Memory serves up
another dish of pain
Almost asleep on a pallet
in the kitchen I refuse
the advances
of a now famous actor
who kneels and whispers
erotic words in my ear

After midnight a guy arrives
offers us a ride to the city
I want to go home tomorrow
is visiting day at the jail

First stop
a coffee shop somewhere
I sense trouble and a trap

Second stop
Hells Angels camp
in the middle of nowhere
but surely my friend
will save me

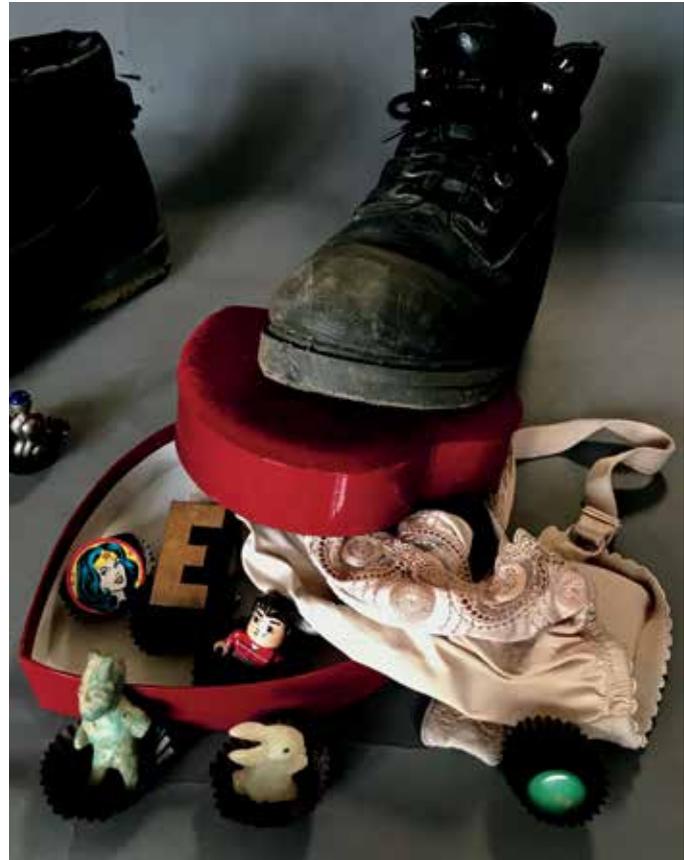




DURING

In the dark and dead of night
at the Hells Angels camp
I am trapped in a trailer terrified
lying on a bed being eaten
by one Angel after another
with at least ten more
waiting at the door
I am aware of funky smells
scruffy beards scuzzy hair
filthy Levi's leathers chains
buck knives jack boots

They have instructions
to eat me because
I have the curse
a blood rite in reverse
One Angel says
"If you try to run
we'll kill you!"
Another Angel says
as he sucks out my blood
"Go on admit it
it feels good
you like it!"



The Angel train continues
hour after hour
tongue after tongue
with an occasional
dirty dick trick until daylight
when released from captivity
I stumble out of the trailer
over to a dying campfire
to the other two women in camp



my friend and a poet
infamous for her erotic verses
With that "Sorry it was you
glad it wasn't me" look in their eyes
one hands me three reds
and a beer to kill the pain
"Don't dare complain!" the poet says
I have made a blood sacrifice
at the Angel altar



AFTER

After the gang rape
not saved by my friend
or the poet's lover
who knew my old man
I was just fresh bloody meat
for the fledglings to eat
in one of their initiation rites



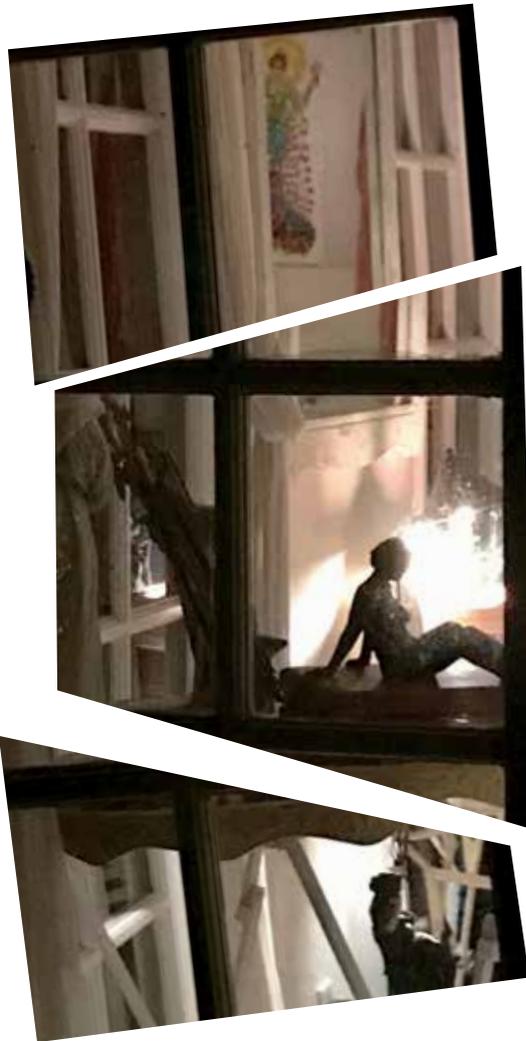
Inside

/

die



After I swallow the reds
my friend and I
thumb a ride
back to the city
The reds come on
and my life
s l o w s d o w n
as we stand along
HWY 101
and a cop stops
picks us up and says
"You can't hitchhike
on this highway girls!"
I sit in the back seat
Stetson hat in hand
with two more reds
hidden behind
the beaded hat band
I toy with the idea of telling
but my fear of Angel rage
is stronger than the law
so I am silent for twenty years
I swallow my secret
with another red
will my body dead
kill my feelings



Once home
I take a bath
change my clothes
visit my old man at jail
but all he wants
is a drug mule
me the fool once again
used like a tool
passed around
Oh the buck knife wound
warned me of danger
but I didn't heed
its message of hurt



I tell my sisters
but not my mother
never my father
nor my brother

I tell two lovers
but they blame me
Why didn't I escape?

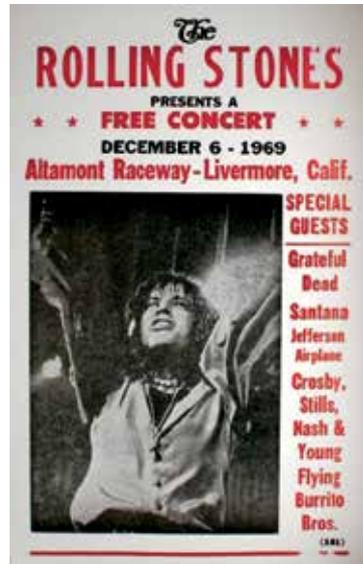


So my small self
wanders in those dark woods
in tears too scarred and scared
with fears to hear
or heed the call for years
to tell my tale

ALTAMONT

(AKA: Woodstock West)

Decade is dying
Angels are too high
Stage is too low
We are too cold
too jacked up too spun out
too weary of waiting
for the Stones to sing



When dark descends
they take the stage
begin to play

Suddenly

Jagger in his devil shirt
stops singing
stares into the crowd
as an Angel thrusts
a knife
into the back
of a black man
in a lime green pimp suit
with a gun/holding a gun/pointing a gun

300,000 people and I
simultaneously
take one step back
up a hill
in a human wave of

pandemonium



VOICES

*To the person in the bell jar,
blank and stopped as a dead baby,
the world itself is a bad dream.*

—Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

BUCK KNIFE

What else can I do
as you prepare the pie
not the kindest cut
into the V
between your thumb
and index finger
Mount of Venus
and Line of Mars



snap shut
soft flesh
bitten and still
you don't wake up
smell the Angels'
blood lust
just over the horizon

ACTOR

Street theater
is my life game
I changed my name
became part of the Free Family
now live on and off the land

in the fool's school
a Marin County commune
overflowing with women
children artists drifters
druggies wanna-be-Angels
all involved in a life experiment
a counter-culture statement
against the suburban nightmare



choosing life on our terms
winging it at the end of this decade
of change and upheaval but
the experiment is failing
and I am dueling
with my drug demons
my lover and my libido
She is just another pretty lady
a warm body to love for a moment
She says no to my overtures

She wants to get home
see her old man in jail
She takes a ride with a stranger
The driver is up to no good
I know but I say nothing
I too fear Angel rage
and retribution

DRIVER

I can be an Angel
if I pass this test
Late at night
I drive to the commune
to find a woman
for the Red Wings Ritual
"Don't come back without one!"

These chicks want
a ride back to the city
I'm trolling for a fish
and I hook two!
One is a stranger
One is a friend and
with one look
we cut a deal
for her silence



As I drive west
into the woods
instead of south
into the city
the stranger senses trouble
tries to escape
when we stop
at a coffee shop
I grab her leg
force her to stay
Then wild-eyed
paralyzed with fear
she sees too late the trap
I drive to the camp
deliver my catch
get my reward

FRIEND

I am a hippie chick
with a heroin habit
I came to the free farm
for a few days
to get away from
the gritty city
and where have
all the flowers gone?
Have there ever
been any flowers
except poppies for me?
Do you think
I've ever recovered from
my childhood burn trauma?
I'm scarred
from neck to knees
with swirls of skin
shaped like waves or flames
Should I blame my mom
for that crepe paper
Halloween dress from Hell?



Where did I get matches
at that age?
Somehow my mother knew
I was on fire
found me in the woods
and saved my life
That's when I learned to love
those pain-killing drugs

Tonight
jonesing out here
on the outskirts of nowhere
I just need some junk
So I trade my girlfriend's
body for a fix better
than trading my own again

POET

I am a belly dancer
beaded jewelry maker
beat girl bard Buddhist
flower power poet
famous for my erotic
exotic love poems
unhappy now
since descending
into the dark world
of the Hells Angels
I am sorry
I can't save her
can only soothe her pain
with sedatives
after the Red Wings Ritual
I must follow my sweet lover
willy-nilly tumbling down
into the underworld
of fallen Angels flying fists
fast Harleys and
I am rapidly coming
to the end of my run





TRAILER

I've seen
action go down man
drug gun hog deals
parties with/without
women

my walls moan
pleasure/pain
my floor creaks
boots/bodies

my door is often closed
my windows/eyes shut
my mellow yellow body
rattles and shakes when
the Angels come

Hells Angels

Because we are outlaws
because we are powerful
because we are high
because it's a ritual
because she has the curse
we eat her pussy

Bitch should be grateful
we don't cut her
because we could
Because she is on the rag
we suck her blood
because we want
to earn our Red Wings

Bitch should be grateful
we don't kill her
because we could





SHE SAYS/HE SAYS

She

I'm enraged but afraid
I'm a victim of this male system
I can't fight this leather tide
I must endure it to survive

I feel
trapped
terrified
turned on
excited in spite of
the situation but
won't admit
to even a smidgen
of sensuous pleasure

I say nothing



He

I have power over her
They have power over me
I'm a victim of the Angel system
Just do it go with the flow

I need to hide
the mother-love that mamas
bring up in me
I'm disgusted by the blood
pressured by the brothers
I fear but
I want my Red Wings

I say Admit it
it feels good
you like it

MORE

She

If I admit
that sometimes
I like the lick
the pucker
the suck
his tongue
on my red flesh
releases a rush
of sensous pleasure
do I betray
all women
in bondage?



He

If I admit
I have heart
I'm weak and will
never earn my Wings
If I admit disgust
for her dirty blood
I'm weak so
I have to save face
and suck

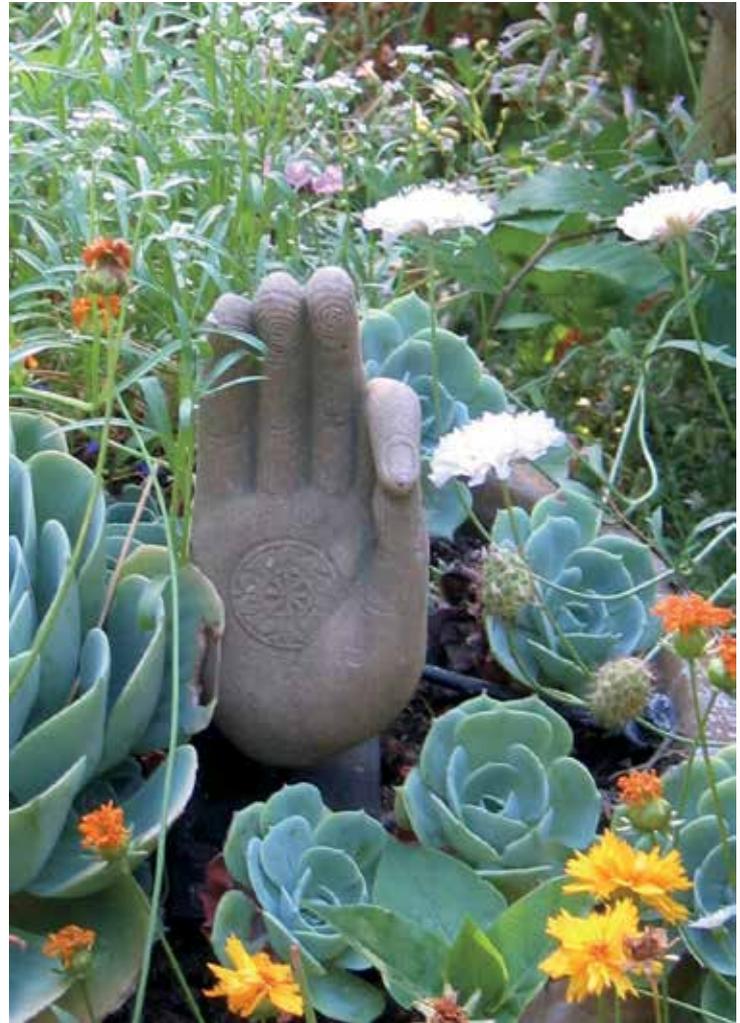


VIOLATED

MY VOICE

*The poem as it is written becomes
my window as well as my mirror.*

—Gary Lemons, poet



REFLECTIONS

After this blood sacrifice
on the Angel altar
I do not get death
disease or detention
The portal of transformation
opens and I walk away
refuse the call become small

Twenty years pass
before I begin to talk of it
Ten more years pass
before I begin to write of it
Three more years pass
before I begin to accept
my metamorphosis

When I finally write
about this
blood mystery rite
I free myself
from this bondage
Healing begins
The door to creativity
opens and I enter

I sing songs of sorrow
that will free me
Silence holds me hostage
keeps me clipped-wings-crippled
I must share my story
re-shape my silence into song
Silence is my captor
I sing songs of memory
I sing songs of reformation
I desire the grace of release



RIO DULCE

On a dream quest
to reconnect with my story

in the embrace
of an exotic place

rich with Mayan history
ancient mystery

with creative companions
seen and unseen

where lush landscape
meets rocking river

singing birds and bullfrogs
surround me then

my muse steps out
from behind my shadow





HER WORDS

Wake up

Walk out

Walk on

Speak up

Speak loud

Speak clear

Stand still

Stand tall

Stand proud

Write strong

Write long

Write on

WINDOW TO THE WORLD

I see the world in Technicolor
but live in black and white
I see the world through
the prism of my personal prison
locked up by my history of
sex drugs rape and Hep C

I gaze at the world
beyond my window
desire to open the portal
dance out into the garden





PATTERN

My German grandfather
with absolute authority
controlled my German grandmother
My father age sixteen looked
listened and learned

This patriarchal pattern was perpetuated
replicated and practiced
on his three daughters and one son

Is that the thread that bound my heart
wove into the tapestry of my life
and made me vulnerable
to abuse and victimization?



PRESCIENT

How to visit your parents in the LA suburbs
in the '60s when you have become a hippie
though you have a real job as a social worker
with the San Francisco Welfare Department

Wear a halter top made of two red paisley
bandanas, a long multicolor skirt that falls
below your belly button/on your hips
lots of jewelry long loose hair and no make-up

Because mother forbids you to go into the backyard
(What will the neighbors think of us
if they see you dressed like that?)
you lift from her jewelry box
an art nouveau pin of a naked lady
reclining on a lily The pin had belonged
to your paternal grandmother
and after all you were
her favorite grandchild

You wear that pin before and after the rape
one of the few items you still possess
from that period of your life
a present you gave yourself

RED WINGS

A year and a broken ankle later
I meet a new lover
a serious surfer who spins
fanciful tales of future fame and fortune
but first wants to hitchhike around the world
with his surfboard and me
I wear a heavy knee-high plaster cast
on my right leg walk with crutches
have two weeks of cast time to go
I want to travel so he buys me
a pair of Red Wing work boots
to support my not-quite-healed ankle
After a hot bath to soften the cast
he saws it off with a serrated knife

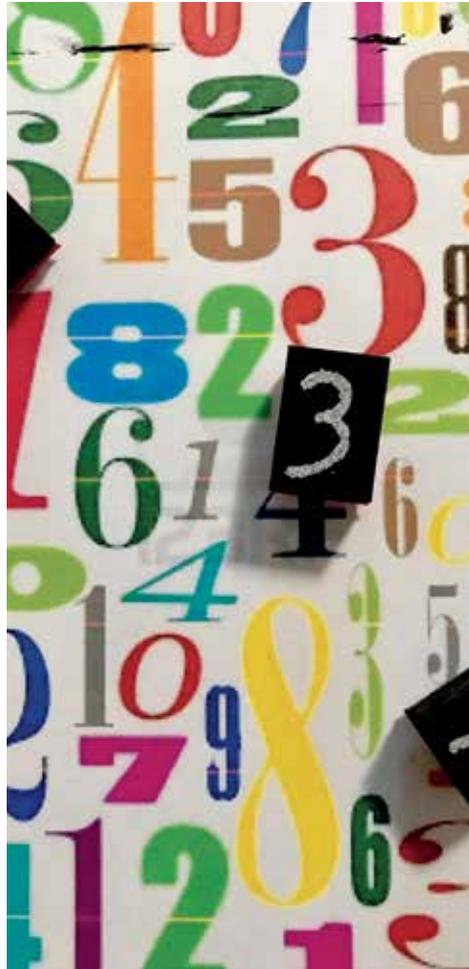
We depart from Tijuana
travel south on the first leg
of our around-the-world adventure
he with his surfboard
me with my boots
we with our emotional baggage



We take three trips in two years
before our relationship ends
with a fistfight in Saint-Jean-de-Luz
There's a 12 Step saying
"Wherever you go there you are!"
I can't run walk or fly away from myself
even in my Red Wings

NUMBERS

14 years later in 1983
I'm 41 1/2 years old
with 2 teaching credentials
3 part-time jobs
2 Labrador retrievers
1 Appaloosa horse
1 9-year-old daughter and
1 wayward husband who is
home only 1/2 the time
I teach for 2 months
at a state mental hospital
for criminally insane men
1/2 of whom are sexual predators
1 of my students is
a 30-something rapist
recently transferred from
another facility where
he'd had an illicit/illegal affair
with a therapist
and when weary of him
she had him transferred
He is wary of women
but wants to learn math



It is 3 weeks before
we can sit in each other's presence
and focus our minds on fractions
so I can teach the 3 concepts:
proper improper mixed
and the 4 operations:
addition subtraction
multiplication division
I don't remember if we ever tackle
word problems
Our 1st common denominator
is that neither of us knows fractions
I am only 1 lesson ahead of him
hastily learned the night before
Our 2nd common denominator is rape
We are both angry for the same reason
but have chosen different roles: raper/rapee
He will never learn that
I am as frightened of him
as he is of me.

FIVE

5

I was built to make babies
but not to birth them

Five farewells

One was back alley in a dark house
by an anonymous doctor

Three in antiseptic clinics

One in my apartment

induced by Penny Royal Tea

After the first one I dreamed
of five upright embryos swaying
like baby seahorses in the pink amniotic
fluid of my bruised womb

Five small souls waving
Hello & Goodbye signaling
it's not their time

5

5

5

5

5

BREAKDOWN

Twenty years later in 1989
I'm divorced from
my abusive alcoholic/addict spouse
In recovery programs
single parenting an adolescent
and as a teaching assistant
at the Juvenile Hall
in San Luis Obispo
I'm asked to preview
a video on date rape
Is it suitable to show the kids?
Ninety percent of the girls
have been molested and/or raped
The video begins with an audio tape
of an actual 911 call by a woman whose
attacker has entered her house and
is coming to rape her He succeeds
I watch it with dispassion and
decide the video is okay to show
During the viewing with my students
however I have a meltdown



My buried past surfaces and erupts
I break and run out of the room
shake and cry
have to tell my bosses why
They immediately send me
to the Rape Crisis Center
where the psych intern uses
cognitive behavioral therapy
whatever the hell that is
and later suggests that I
take a job at the California Men's Colony
the state correctional facility (CMC)
in San Luis Obispo
and deal with my issues of rape
by interacting with convicted rapists
She says it works for her
Coincidentally I am on a wait list
for a teaching job there
Six months later I am hired



Twelve years later I still teach at CMC
all my students are under twenty-one
with no high school diploma or GED

Asked to recount my story
for a Voices of Victims program
at Juvenile Hall I return to read
my words to the wards
so similar to my prison students
in age/attitude/behavior

I explain I want to share
my meltdown here because
this is where my healing began
This is my first public reading

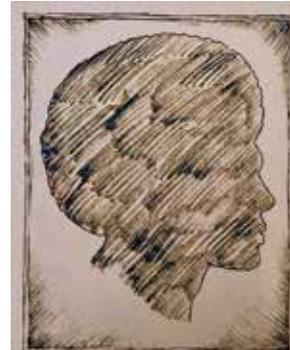
The girls listen/ask questions
The boys listen/look away/look down
some even leave/none want to talk
I hope my story helps someone to heal
Sharing my secret with them helps me

MR. W.

Ms. B. here in my sonnet Casual Strength
are my observations about you
and the condition of your soul
I know I will take a piece of you with me
leave a piece of me here with you
I don't yet know how to heal my anger about
the historical pain of being born black
shattering my ankle and pro-baseball chances
because my dad wouldn't take me to the doctor
my wife leaving me for another man
my beating raping and losing her
losing my daughter
losing my military career
coming to prison
Now at the end of my sentence
as I prepare to leave this place
much of my anger and pain
remains locked up in my heart

So to you Ms. B.
I give my prison softball trophies
and my words

Remember me
as the person I could be
who began to heal
in the light of your compassion
for even though dim it is there
I want to tell you to let it grow
to offer your fears to the gods
for transformation can occur
It's happening to me with your help
you hired me you let me write
and I have begun to heal
Please take my paper offering





CASUAL STRENGTH

*When first you were as strong to me as stone
I only saw the traits I most admired
In face of rain, your strength—I've seen it shown:
So many wearing drops have since transpired,
You know that life is pain by all you've lost,
But faintest hope still gives your soul a lift.
You've seen that living life exacts a cost,
But have you seen your life's redeeming gift?
Decide what reasons led you in your life,
And add up all their battles that you've fought:
Subtract the times your efforts failed to strife,
Then grant your wins a deep and careful thought...
And if you find there's honor in that breath
Then not degrade your pain with fear of death.
MLW*

The diseased magnolia
the day before its demise
birthed three beautiful blooms
"white soul" blossoms
that expressed the mystery
of the eternal life force
light source—LOVE
EAB

MS. B.

Mr. W.

When I hired you as a teaching assistant
I had to see your mad sad face
at 7:30 each weekday morning
and keep my mood from matching yours
It was good for my practice
Of course I knew your crime
but I needed an educated assistant
You knew
of my father dying and grief
of my impending operation and fear
but not of my rape and rage

I have carried you in my heart
all these years since 1993 along with
a blue diskette of your poems
the words 'phenomenon' and 'fungus'
you included in the language arts pretest
your softball trophies decorating the classroom
your relentless writing of a fantasy novel
and the beautiful sonnet you wrote
to me about me for me
before we both left the prison

me to have brain surgery
you to parole

You took a chance
when you wrote the sonnet
for that was against prison rules
but I never gave you up
I continue to send you love and light
Please take my paper offering



FLIGHT INTO LIGHT

My work in prisons for thirty years
reflects my self-imposed lock-up
Even though the cage door is open
I see shadows of the bars
on the window shade
How this jail bird wants to be free
to take flight toward the light



QUEST

Seeking sacred truth and beauty
even from profane secrets
I often travel to the dark side
searching for the light
Just look at my life
Oh sure I have been in therapy
in 1965 during my turbulent twenties
with a Scottish psychiatrist
who had trained with Jung
in 1976 living with a young daughter and aging parents
with a marriage and family therapist
in 1987 after divorcing an abusive addict
and single-parenting a teen
with a clinical social worker



since 1994 after surviving brain surgery
and asking the question
"Why am I still here? What is my purpose?"
with a transformational psychologist
who assists people to discover
or recover their creative identity
in personal or group sessions
and guides small groups
on Dream Quest Expeditions
to Central America
to study the ancient and interact
with the modern Mayan civilization
Of course he knows all my secrets and stories
In 1995 on a trip to Guatemala
he suggests "Write the story of your rape"
I say "I will NEVER share this experience"
He says "Oh yes you will
this is your historical research"



On a later trip he says
"Tell your story of transformation
through pain and suffering
of shining light into the darkness of your soul
to free you from the prison of silence and shame
to flower your creative expression
from the heart of the universe
through the wisdom of possibilities
You can live a larger life and be of service to others"
Oh I have written on other subjects
but these poems always interfere
and demand to be done
I have alternately worked on and
run from these verses for years



SIGNS

Reluctant to write about my rape
stuck in my story
I go on a retreat
to commune with my muse

I'm always in search
of a sign from the universe
to show me the way
Before I leave I go shopping
find a Winged Liberty Head dime
mounted on a silver band
minted the year of my birth
symbolizing liberty of thought
I buy it and put it on
my talisman for the trip

However the universe decides
I need more and so
in Honduras airport security
I set off a metal detector
and the officer extracts
a small Swiss Army pocket knife
from my backpack
a reminder
a red road sign

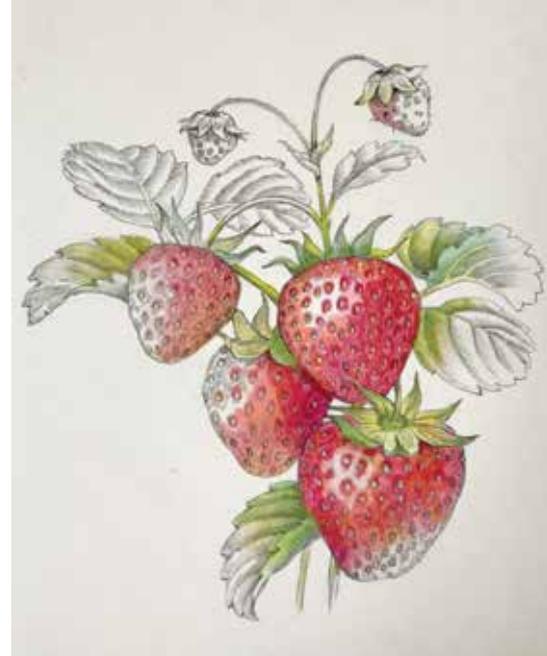


The first time
I didn't heed
the warning of danger
on the horizon
What will it take
to free me from this pain
to cut through blame shame and guilt
so I can tell my story?



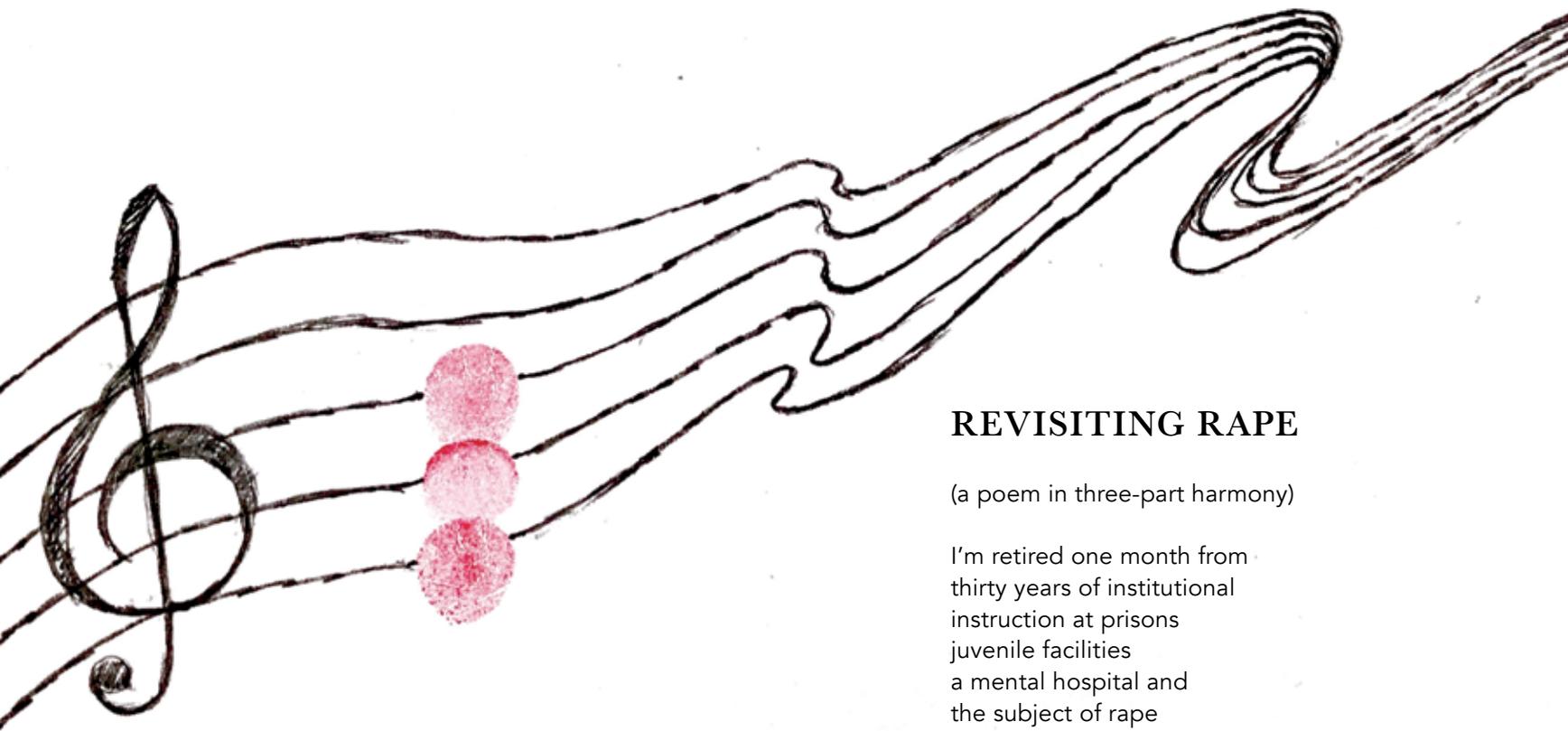
STRAWBERRIES

Speaking of strawberries
a few years ago
one summer Saturday
a friend phones
says come over
see a butterfly-shaped berry
I just bought
at the farmer's market
says bring your camera
I photograph the berry
I bite the berry
again I photograph
the bitten and bloody berry
which becomes
a symbol of my assault
then a symbol of
my ascension
my transformation
my transmutation
The lily comes later



And so does Dolores
known as Red Butterfly Warrior Woman
in her Aztec dancer days
Now a shamanic Mayan weaver
of beads cloth and thread
creator of the strawberry necklace
to whom this berry
also carries
symbolic significance





REVISITING RAPE

(a poem in three-part harmony)

I'm retired one month from
thirty years of institutional
instruction at prisons
juvenile facilities
a mental hospital and
the subject of rape
reappears in my life
three times in one week

1.
When sent a notice
for jury duty
I think sure
I want to be a juror
at least once
a combination
of civic duty and curiosity
I am summoned to
a "he said/she said" rape trial
of a young male
I have taught
incarcerated young men
just like him
for thirty years
I know the consequences
of such a conviction
and sentence

I sit in the courtroom
for three days
as the jurors are selected
then deselected
either by themselves
the attorneys or the judge
The pool of potential
jurors shrinks
because they
can't or won't
look at or listen
to the evidence
to be presented



HOBSON'S CHOICE

Did she see a choice?

Did she have a voice?

No!

With each passing day
my chance of being chosen
escalates
but now I don't want
to serve on the jury
I become anxious
because
I have to revisit
my own rape
day after day
the blood of it
the hell of it
the horror of it
the hiding of it

Now I know
I can't be fair
to either him or her
I know if chosen
I will have to reveal
my rape to the court
Once again
shame becomes
my middle name
In the end
I am excused



2.
When asked
by an author and friend
to review and help revise
via telephone and text
a play set in prison
whose main character
is a rapist
I don't hesitate to help
even as I detect
the faint echo of fear
in her voice and
in my memory
I say sure
When the main character
is changed into a "snitch"
we both relax and breathe
sighs of relief

3.

When cast in
The Vagina Monologues
at the local junior college
I say sure
That will be me
one of fifteen women
each reading
a graphic monologue
to a large audience
for three nights in a row
That will be me
reading and rating
several other brutal
graphic pieces
about abuse one
will be included
in the performances
That will be me
who buried my own rape
for twenty years until
twenty years ago
it broke out of
a carefully constructed cell
in my psyche demanding
to be heard and healed



"The hearth"

The woman are keeping her bodie ~~off~~ with a blanket to protect her self from hurt and scars. But the hearth is going out her, cause hearth never be afraid is feeling always and learning about life and experiences.

D. Miller 2005

BREATHE



FLORAL FAMILIAR

I am the August amaryllis
a seed planted in the rocky soil
of the seen and unseen world
here to experience
the cycles of life's adventures
I slumber underground
for several seasons
Then one spring I grow
green sword-shaped leaves
that later turn golden brown
lie down on the ground
and feed the seed now a bulb
healing nutrients
until late summer when
I emerge from the earth
like a cerise serpent
rising day after day until
I burst into a pink cluster
of fragrant bell-shaped blooms
translucent trumpets
that proclaim
I am a new woman
born of the fire and fuse of nature
I follow the light

I stand tall in my truth
I speak for all who suffer and want to heal
I am the late blooming lily
I am the Naked Lady



NAKED LADY

Standing like a statue
at the seam of the seen
and unseen world
I am a living goddess
astride a river of wisdom
white water of words
like Lady Liberty
but instead of a torch
I hold a pen and it erupts
with signs and symbols
shooting like holiday sparklers
I gather the scattered letters
cluster them into words
and phrases sage messages
across cloud pages
After thirty years of half-life haunted
I learn to ignore the curses and threats
of Angels on Harleys
who rev and rush wheel motorcycles
round and round angry cuz they can't
scare touch terrorize or silence me
and at century's end they regress
into boys on bikes
race each other along the riverbank
to impress me



The millennium begins and
they're oblivious toddlers on trikes
who ride back and forth
thrill with the rush of the wind off the water
and now they're a squad of sperm
with training wheels
Morrison coaching them to
"Break on through to the other side!"
to impress me

I bloom into words with power
a hothouse flower
a belladonna lily
a resurrection lily
a naked lady



FORGIVENESS

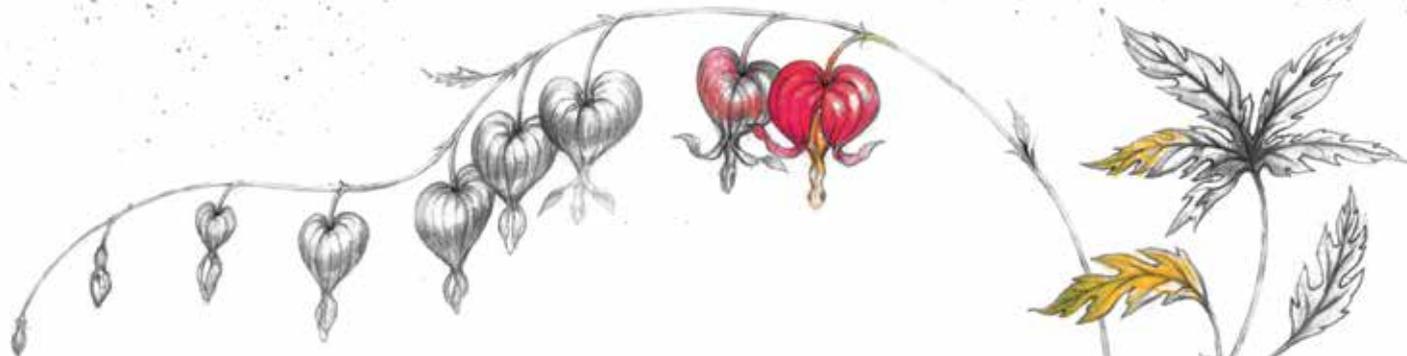
Rape and repeated abuse

body violated
soul wounded

heart hardened
default mode victim

Existed on excess

alcohol drugs sex
blame shame guilt
sadness secrets silence



taught in prisons for thirty years
married and divorced a sociopath
Hepatitis C cured, 5 abortions
Brain tumor surgery
recovering tapped into
the unseen world.

self light
soul light
light of the world
soul of the planet
the devas
flora and fauna of my mother's garden
senses forever altered and expanded

Transformation
a long journey of
writing about my life
forgiving my abusers
forgiving
myself
opening
to love



BECOME

Butterflies

Beautiful

Become

Berries

Bloody

Bitten



AFTERWORD

Blessings to you
for joining me

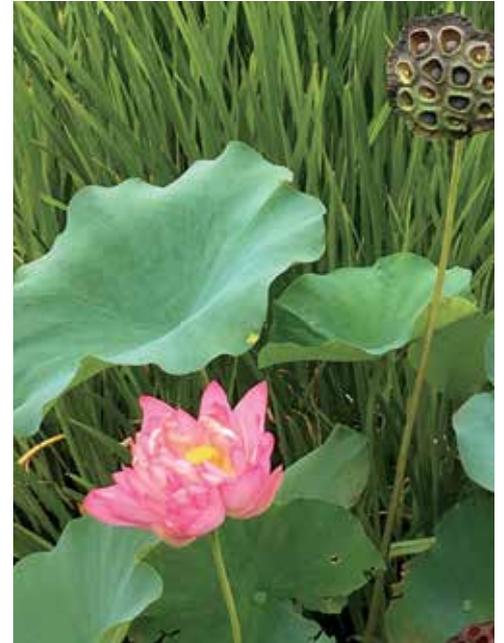
Let's celebrate
as we continue
the healing journey

I send you
love and light



EMERGENCE

Out of the ashes
Up from the mud
I rise reborn





RUBIES AND PEARLS

I hold seeds of
hope
potential
possibility
promise
wisdom
to carry
into the future

SEEDLINGS



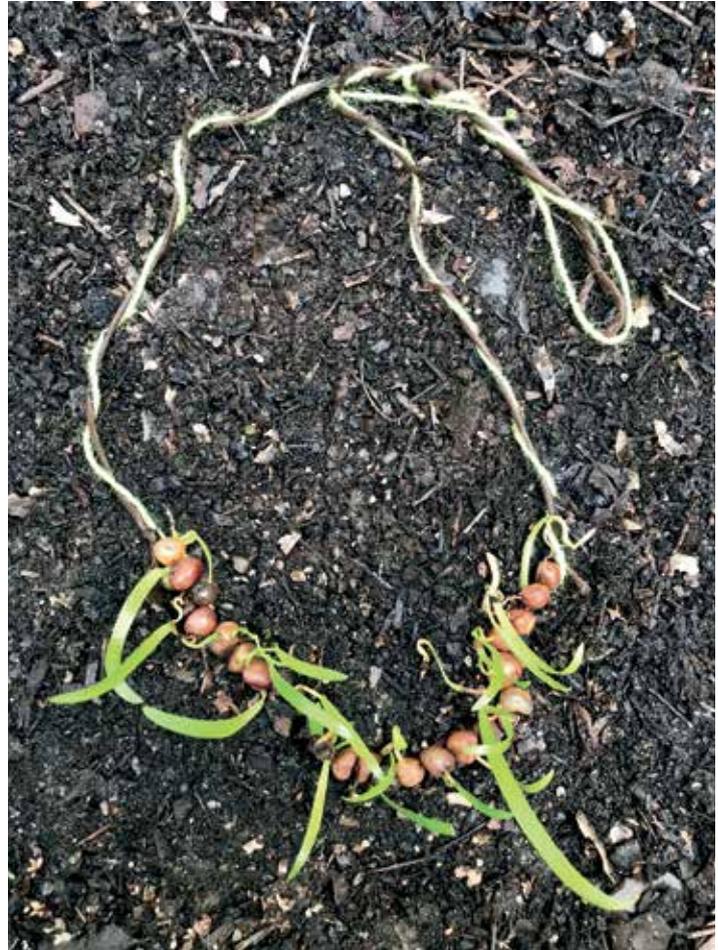
SPROUTS

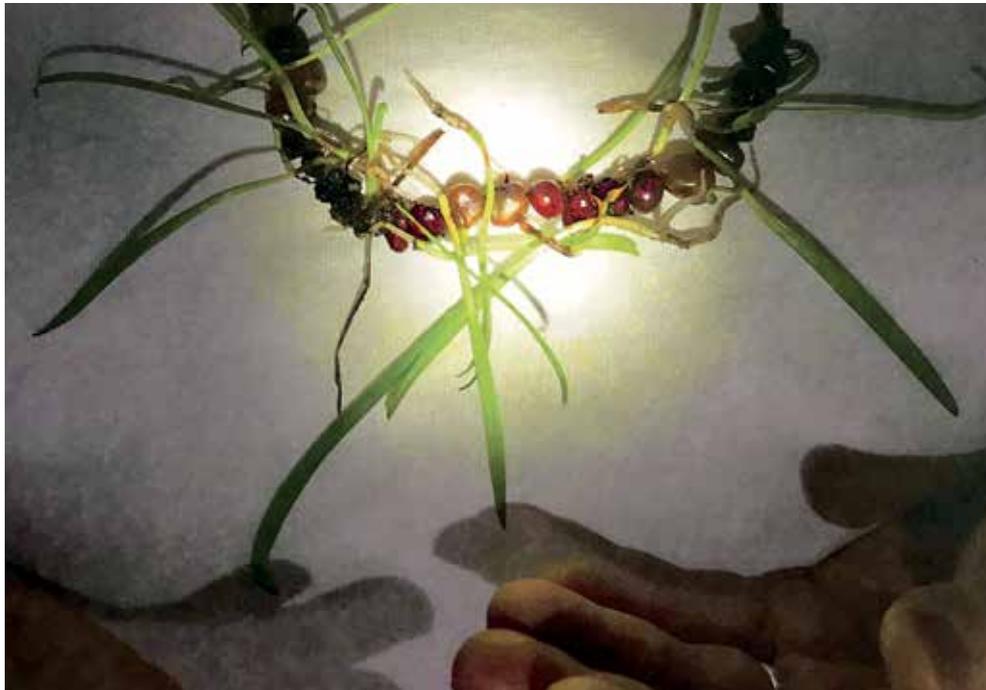
I create a shaman's necklace
I connect to the web of life



SHAMAN'S NECKLACE

The shaman's necklace
sprouts new hope





TRANSCENDENCE

Can I embrace this necklace
accept the mantle of a shaman
that connects and ignites
both my inner and outer
light of emergence and wisdom?

CONTRIBUTORS



Muse

Ilene Satala



Mentor

Conrad Satala



Visionary

Catherine Deeter



Companions

Many



Editor

Deborah Tobola



Poet

Elizabeth Buckner



ABOUT ME

I was born in
The City of the Angels
and have lived in
San Luis Obispo County,
California, since 1979
I am a lover of the arts,
nature and travel
I create words and images
from the heart





1964



1969



2019

THREE FACES OF ME

CREATIVE CREDITS

All Art Work (Illustrations, Paintings, Sculptures)
by Catherine Deeter

All the photographs were a collaboration by
Catherine Deeter and Elizabeth Buckner except for
the following:

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Rolling Stones Poster Public Domain

PATTERN Page 41
Family Photographer unknown

NUMBERS Page 44
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MS. B. Page 50
Photographer unknown

REVISITING RAPE Page 58
Illustration by Gerardo Bonillalezama

BREATHE Page 63
Art by Michael Mettler

CONTRIBUTORS PAGE Page 153
Muse, from a painting by Ilene Satala
Mentor, a photograph by EAB with an
overlay of a painting by Ilene Satala
Visionary, painting by Catherine Deeter
Companions, photo by Catherine Deeter
Editor, painting by Catherine Deeter
Poet, photograph by Catherine Deeter

ABOUT ME Page 155
Illustration by Eliabeth Buckner

THREE FACES OF ME Page 157
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Art is good medicine.

—Ilene Satala

