

Poems by Richard Wehrman

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Magic Box

Into his
bag of tricks
He reached,
and lifted
one by one the
magician's mysteries:
a gleaming star,
a tiny growing tree,
Saturn ringed
in mystery—
a human heart,
a letter penned in love,
a mirror flashing
brilliantly.
He raised a stone,
a blood red density,
a flower blooming
soft and warm—
a skull of death,
a tiny buzzing
bee,
a blue-green eye
that turned
to look at me—
Then swung his wrist
and all were
gone—
while silence
like a bell had
struck,
and we all floated on
in silence
ringing:
our simple
smiles
our thunderous
applause.

—Richard Wehrman

Thunder, Storm

Last night
the thunder boomed
in the distance,
and a great joy rose in me—

the curtains blew,
a white light flashed
upon the walls.

My bed shook
and the hills rumbled—
in the dark rain
trees splintered,
wet stones cracked.

I lay by myself
in the darkness,
listening and loving it—

fearful and serene
at the same time—
as though

a Great King—
long away and half-forgotten,
had finally returned
home.

—Richard Wehrman

Beautiful Women

Only the beautiful women
can save us
from the end of
this cold frozen Winter,

only beautiful women
with their dark eyes
and soft souls
peering out

from fur-lined afghans
and warm sweaters,
with their promise to hold
God's directive—

to welcome us,
the hairy and unkempt,
the worn and oak-kegged,
weather boarded men...

only beautiful women,
no matter what age,
no matter how large or small,
prune wrinkly or slippery smooth,
all of them the only

glorious way we will ever
get to Spring,
to new life, to the place where
our chests beat again

with love,
banging over and over
until our ribs crack and the
light flows out—

only the beautiful women
can do it, with their
strong intent fists,
their sharp white teeth,

their grip like iron,
their incredible,
undefeatable
beauty.

—Richard Wehrman

Old Story, Good News.

Together since the beginning,
You and I—
growing up this way,
how could we tell each other apart?

One being—just this body.
It was always so obvious—
there was nobody here but “me”.

Does the car get confused with the driver?
Does it feel itself alive, as it
drinks gasoline and drives
all over the town?

And the house?
As it warms itself in the morning—
furnace firing away,
then windows widened
and thrown open to the new day?

Don't be too sure about
what I am saying.

Old hand, wrinkled and pink with spots,
scratched from pruning
the cedars in the driveway,

writes words with a plastic pencil.
The carbon trail:
both a clue and all the proof
that is needed.

The pencil keeps writing.
The hand gets older.

Who is still here at the end of the day?
I have a suspicion, but what about you?
The sea tastes itself and says
“Yes! Absolutely salt!”

Lick your own skin,
then close this book.

—Richard Wehrman

Going Around Again

Who can we be,
we who are born in these bodies,
grown from seed to
sapling to tree?

Who can we be,
we who keep turning into
something else, yet never change—
always our selves?

Who can we be,
as the clock rolls around,
as this year's mystery stares back
from the bathroom mirror?

The morning comes again —
when Mother completed her labors,
her heart asking
your bright open eyes —

Who can he be?
Who in the world
will he be?

—Richard Wehrman

Swimmer

Oh, I have swum here before,
in these grassy fields of Summer,
in the waving green among
the dandelion stems,

with young grasshoppers leaping
between milkweed flowers and
the pink throned thistle.

Back and forth I glide, pushing out
from the edge of the apple tree shadows,
sliding past zippered walnuts,

into the deep green haygrass
of a new mown lawn.

Diving below, the sky dome
ripples above me, as ants and
beetles, millipedes and mayflies

do their hot summer work at the bottom
of the grass-green sea.

Then I break onto my backside,
to float away on white blossoms of clover,
carried by honey bee wings

and the drift of summer wind, out toward
the edge of autumn, way past winter, around
the cold bubble of spring

to the warmth of shore
and sunshine,
to the Summer that never ends, again.

—Richard Wehrman

Early morning,

before thoughts
arrive,
everything is fine:

my soul
sits with God,
each enjoying
our coffee.

By the pines,
in the first
blue-grey light,
six deer wind
between the trunks
of the trees—

a slow
lift and step
in last night's
new snow.

To each of us,
our One
quiet being
bows to the other.

Above,
from nowhere,
first thoughts begin
to fall.

—Richard Wehrman

Soon

Bud of life,
let go of what
you might become—
pictures in your mind
of other flowers
blooming.
Feel your own sap,
the green electric
tingle of cells climbing
your stem,
building around you
yellow and gold
translucence.
Let yourself be pushed
by your own Self—
up, out and free
into Spring's cold blue air—
warmed by the
brilliant light everywhere.
Then let them in,
those clear-winged
buzzing beings,
to wander in your golden
soul-dust—
offer it freely to
their gathering arms—
let them mix
your essence with
the sweetness of a
thousand flowers,
become as you
were meant to be—
honey of love,
Sweet taste of
Joy..

—Richard Wehrman

Sweet Tea

Today's humidity makes
even my pencil perspire—
every word of clarity turns damp
and curls up at the edges.

Insanely I sip a steaming cup of coffee:
sweat beads instantly along
my forehead.

Licking my lip I taste my interior sea;
two hikers swim by on the road,
breast-stroking in mid air.

I feel the glue that holds all the parts
of me grow soft and loosen—
soon I will drift away
in a thousand different directions.

God lifts his spoon and stirs
my sugar and cream into his tea—
smiling at the swirling circles
in his sweet, delicious
drink.

—Richard Wehrman

Treasure House

Rumi sends one ant
into a granary—
what a ludicrous happiness!
I've dragged you out here
to show you my single grain:
the whole morning world!

Wet from last night's rain,
crystal jewels drip from every leaf;
bird calls fill my head full of ears,
a hundred cars whiz happily by
on their Monday way to work.

Step a few feet up the road—
here's another seed in Our granary:
This one is yours—
the broad field full of morning fog,
the golden orb hovering over the horizon,
the wide sky a heron, floating to Boughton Pond.

A billion of these grains
fill the little bowl of our town;
think of all the stars in the Milky Way,
in the universes unending.

Of course we dance like madmen;
the Beagle Boys have fallen into Scrooge
McDuck's treasure bin,
and we are swimming and splashing together
in mountains and rivers of gold!

—Richard Wehrman

Wind Blown

When the wind
moves in the trees,
I feel that God is talking
everywhere around me—

His voice—
silent for days—
now fills the hills and valleys
totally.

I can feel him move about me,
around my arms, over my nose and face,
lifting each hair, tasting every
piece of me.

Glorious wind of God,
blow me away.
Lift me, drop me,
carry me or kill me.

All is your caress,
anything your wind brings
will carry me
Home.

—Richard Wehrman

Rainbow

Over the darkened
Eastern sky
the rainbow bloomed!

Miracle of mist
and evening light,
lit into the world:

Sign of miracles and joy!

Head thrown back,
with little rain drops on my face
and grinning glasses,

I know it will quickly
fade away...and yet, it stays.
My god, it does not fade:

It stays!

—Richard Wehrman

One Tiny Cup

Certainly I am here—
but the wind blows,
and I am only dancing lights
shimmering on the surface
of the water.

What then can hold
the miracle of being
inside this single
tiny cup?

Am I not most glorious
when thrown into the sky,
back to the wind
and the bird's beak,

and the morning glory's eye—
to behold you
and all things,

Mirror reflecting mirror,
eye beholding
eye?

—Richard Wehrman