

“Tangled Vine Nest”

This tangled vine nest is full of empty,
needing no walls to hold its solitude,
needing no doors to enter or leave,
no windows to connect my eyes
to the tiny trumpets guarding its space.

This tangled vine nest, my home, is safe
though open, is cozy though exposed
to all the elements. It calls to my
childhood wonder to furnish it spare,
to adorn it with bittersweet and moss.

This vine nest is more a home than
brick and mortar, more attuned
to the call of neighbors high in the trees
or skittering in the brush. They each
pause a moment to breathe,

to notice my soul among the many.
They wonder how I came to be here
taking over their marsh scrub, asking nothing
more than solitude and a way to press
my hands against the sky,

and reach for God’s gentle touch.

This tangled vine nest enfolds my spirit,
invites in the safety of tall grasses and cat tail
fronds, fiddle ferns and the last dried flowers
of the fall. Leaves provide a bed and pillow,
and the gentle rustle of dry oak leaves above

lulls me to sleep. Ah, gentle sleep.
I surrender. Eyes close. I rest at last.

“Bittersweet”

The bittersweet has burst, tiny orange
berries nestled in a straw-colored hat.
It is the season of colors lost and dried
and mulched to ground. Color is now
a premium that flashes amid thin branches
in the marsh.

They’re like small explosions of happiness
when days get shorter, darker, grayer.
The gentle almost snow falls fine and wet,
and makes each starburst shine even redder.
Once covered over by a tangle of marsh reed,
it now becomes the decor of fall
with all its blemishes and imperfections.

The bittersweet, the red clad dogwood
branches
become the texture, the pattern, the beacon
of hope as days no longer shine on their own,
and often weep as splats of green holding on
by the root.

Bittersweet lights another gray day
guiding birds out of nesting and into
the not so inviting sky, only to fly away
toward a sun we can no longer worship,
that hides behind the solstice and fades
the year away.

The day the berries burst open in their silent
breakout, they have no idea what hope they
bring
to all other drab and spent branches. They
have
no idea what hope they bring to onlookers
who hide from frost and an almost snow
premonition of what’s to come.

“Silent Connection”

I give you my heart
for love of the earth and to remind you
of your wild Self.

I give you my trunk
for strength and tenacity, to hold your
back straight and true.

I give you my branches
to reach out and spread your words
and wisdom far and wide on the breeze.

I give you my roots
to ground you and remind you
you're connected to every living thing.

I give you my leaves
for the pages of a book to record
your story, and mine, and ours.

I give you my seed
as a new beginning, to watch and wait
and witness life unfolding.

I give you my shade
to remind you to see with new eyes, to slow
your pace, to notice even the shadows hold
beauty.

I give you back yourself
so you can look inside and find roots that
bind us
together in silence and grace.

“Help Me Out Here”

I lean into you, Pine, you support me
from below and from above while I give in
to drought and heat. Not the stalwart soul
I make out to be, but a weaker self, healing
self.

I thank you for your shadow, your strength,
your calm voice, the sigh of breeze
that dances through your branches.
You give me pause.

You show me remnants of the cones
you've dropped, dashed to pieces, flakes.
They become my bedding, my soft place
to land. And I do...land.

Before me against your base, where you
join the earth, sits a fairy door. Beside it is a
bench for tiny souls to rest as I do above it.
Blue and green pebbles lead to it from the
brush.

A tiny horse shoe for luck and a plaque
echoes the message you share with me—
AFFIRM.

Pause where you are, find a soft place to land,
hold onto the earth and heal.

Let the twined branch you hold rescue me.
Let your branches embrace me below,
the sky above. “Be the respite you seek”
wafts across the breeze and lands in my open
palm.

