

A Restoration Conversation
August 2022
Dan Leahy $\frac{1}{3}$, Kathleen Byrd

We Wrote of Love: Hand It Over, 2nd Edition

A conversation from the month of August, 2022

Preface

The First Edition of *Hand it Over* was born of spontaneity. We started writing to one another on the 1st of August 2019 and wrote daily postcard poems all that month. At the end of August, we thought we had a collection to share, and so we did. Four years later and we're ready to share another collection, a small glimpse into a conversation that continues to sew our friendship. The thing is, as Dan said "We started writing in August of 2019 and we never stopped."

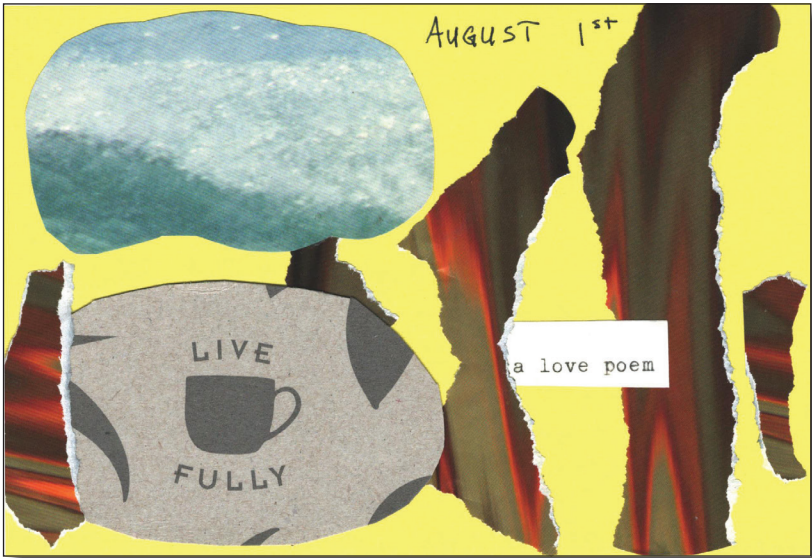
We are still writing to each other after four years, post cards, letters, notes, and texts. We wrote to one another about books we were reading, about the world we were in, about our families and our fears. We wrote 20-minute letters when Covid first abruptly shifted our social lives and we wrote cards, lots of cards. We wrote about my Master's thesis and all the books I read to earn an MFA. We wrote about Covid and then about Cancer after Dan was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in February of this year. We sent valentines. We tried to stay away from text messages, but then there we were with our phones, and photographs, and the impulse to be in touch, to stay in touch. Words are a form of touch. We hope these words will touch you in some way.

This collection, like the first, owes some acknowledgement to Paul Nelson of Cascadia Poetry Fest's "August as Postcard Poetry Month" which was an initial inspiration for the First Edition of *Hand It Over*.

We read a lot of books, articles, and poems together these last four years, too many to list, but this collection includes some of our reflections on two texts that we both found critical to our time, a time marked by social crumble / collapse and by climate change impacts too stark to ignore. Tyson Yunkaporta's book *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World* is referenced in our notes to one another as is Jem Bendell's article "Deep Adaptation" which offers four concepts for deep adaptation: Reconciliation, Resilience, Restoration, and Relinquishment. Ultimately, during this month of August we wrote of love. When it's hard to find any kind of sense, we can still find love.

We hope you will read Yunkaporta's book and Bendell's article and have your own conversations with the ones you love. I mean that's all this is, and it might be the best of what any of us has in the end: our love for one another.

k.b.



Gezellig

A Dutch word that has no counterpart in English but is sometimes loosely inadequately translated as “cozy,” but it conveys a feeling of togetherness the warmth of togetherness when people, two or more, simply enjoy their time together. Like we do.

k.b.

August 1, 2022

The winds are blowing
in a new direction.
You know the challenge...
Its detection.

You've done so much
It's all been good
but a shift is coming
to your life and hood.

I'd like to converse about it
as we "hand them over"
our poetic thoughts
from love to clover.

I am your postcard intimate
A friend at a two block distance
Thanks for the August invite
and for your persistence.

d.l.

SOMETIMES IN THE WINDS OF CHANGE,
WE FIND OUR TRUE DIRECTION.

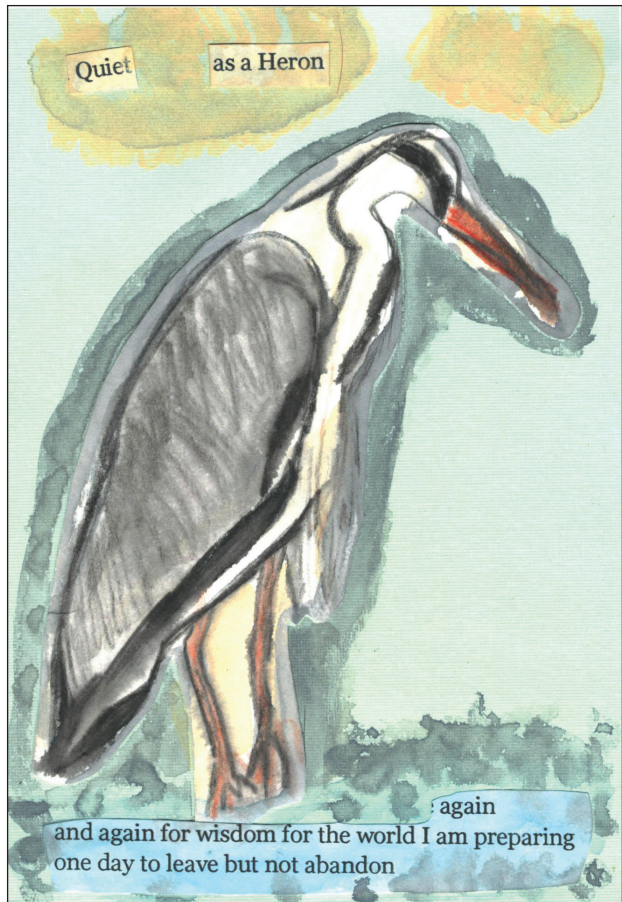


August 1, 2022

A shift is coming

and I wait, here
and watch winds shift
in clouds, on waves
and in the tops of trees. Reading
the winds for a change that is coming.
Harvest. Like we read the signs
of Love in the lines of our letters
and in the lines of our faces,
familiar, here, at home
in our hearts.

k.b.



August 2, 2022

An Oregon Cowgirl

I wanted to tell you about Lou
She passed last week.
A lover to our Grandad
A woman quite unique.

An Oregon cowgirl
educated at the U
came to Canada
to teach and counsel
retired with her crew.

She took up riding show horses
when she was middle aged
the community she created
surrounded her at every stage.

We sat in her kitchen
from the time me and B
were lovers
devouring her cakes and cheeses
while reading her New Yorkers.

When our boys came along
she loved them too
cracking jokes and making puns
like a grandmaw is supposed to.

When Charles passed,
she stayed at home
even as her legs and
hips started to ache
She fought through the pain
and wouldn't budge
No alternative would she take.

Our boys got to see her
just a few days before she died.
She was no longer at home
but setting out on her last ride.

d.l.



August 2, 2022

Summer Swimming



The delight of immersion,
every inch of skin touched,
limbs floating, muscles
propelling, dive, surge,
float. To be one with
the great Mother. To live
seal-like - more kindness,
more play, more pure being
being human, elemental, alive.

k.b.

August 3, 2022

Colette

The organizers came to her
It's gonna rain. Let's move inside.
It rains in June, she said.
Let's stay outside.

Sand Talk:
Can't simplify and control
the complexity of creation
The West meets reality.

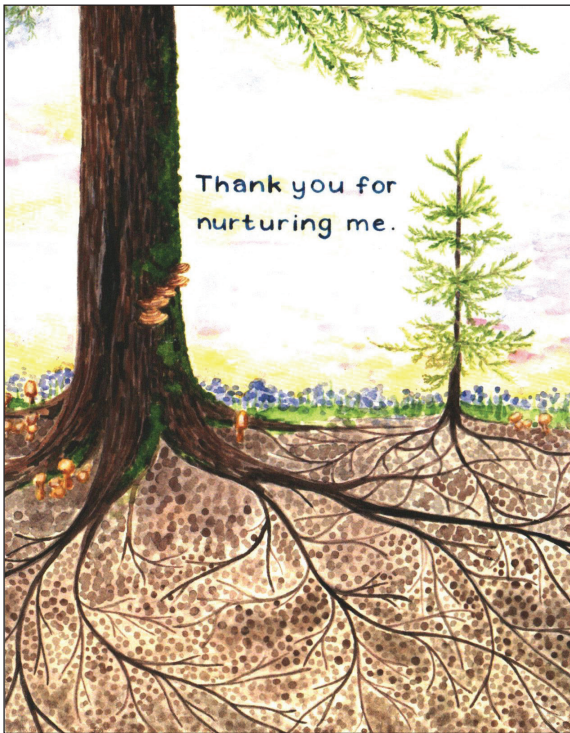
Her grandfather reads history
in the trees.
Like others find memories
in the stones.

Sand Talk:
The majority of the earth is rock
Holds it all together, a solid base
without it, life and creation
will crumble.

Her extended relatives
get in fights, but
no one leaves
the family.

Sand Talk:
The winner and loser
experience the same wounds
and stay together.

d.l.



August 3, 2022

The Mundane has Magic

I need to write a letter
to my dead cousin, Eugene,
but I am afraid.

I dream of being with his mother,
Jeanne, and in the dream, I cry
and cry. But I haven't cried.
Not since he died. He's on my mind

as I take my car for an oil change,
shop for groceries. Just being
in a body is a miracle.

k.b.



August 4, 2022

Kathleen

Watching the winds
Surrounded by herons
That's you, Isn't it?
Swimming in your dreams.

Sand Talk says Knowledge
is stored long-term
in relationships between generations
as custodians in a sentient landscape.

We are between generations.
our relationship long term.
You a custodian
in a sentient
landscape.

I'm a custodian of
cement blocks,
civilized hoods.
I want to
learn about
a sentient
landscape; a new
relationship
to land. Learn
to move with
it. From you.

d.l.

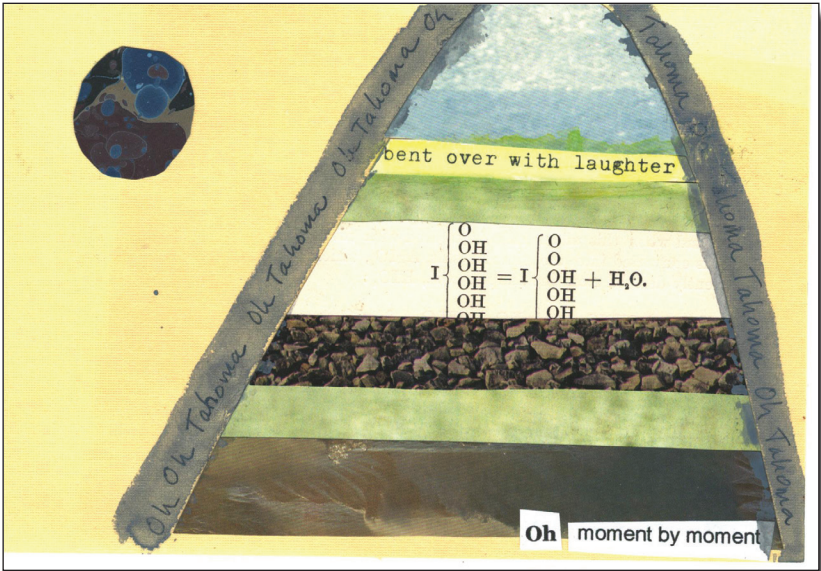


August 4, 2022

I suppose it started

with Ross Gay's Book of Delights,
and then yours – you keeper of records.
I too started collecting delights, taking them,
and now I notice how the taking of delights
leads to the making of delights – one delight
at a time. A spinach-feta blue heron pastry
before a hike at Big Creek, views of Lake
Cushman, and a friend who makes waiting
in traffic a delight. Finally, a swim in the cold
waters of Hood Canal, where my friend
teaches me something new about Oysters.
They seek old shells –old souls –
to begin their new lives.

k.b.



August 5, 2022

Drip Plus Three

Watch your step.
Keep your balance.
Walk slow.
Hold on to the rail

Sit still.
Don't cough
Eat something.
Get home.

Warm up.
Take a nap.
Write a note.
Deliver it.

d.l.



August 5, 2022

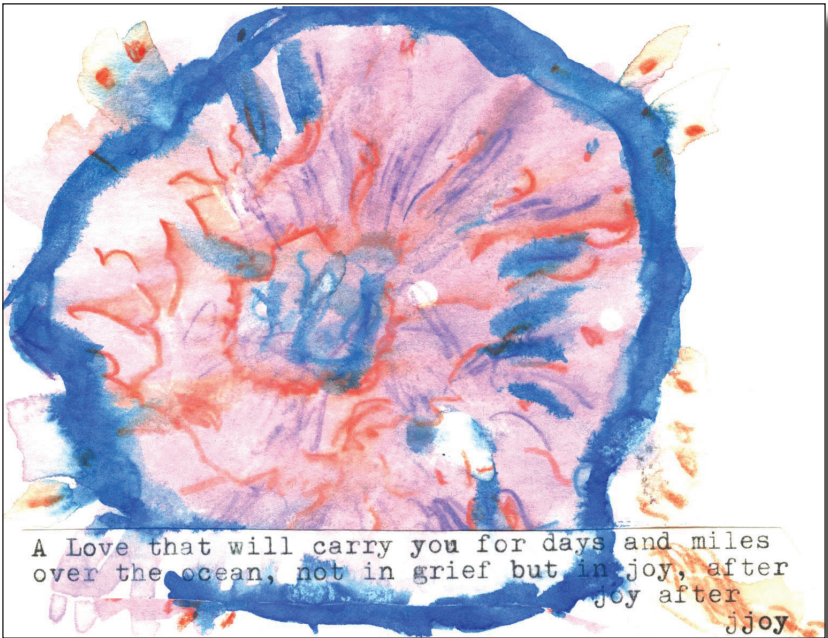
Sand Talk:

“Every time you meet someone and establish your relationship to this person, you are bringing together multiple universes.”

I feel this with you and know it in my dreams and in the pulsing of my heart. You have helped make it safe for me to be me.

Thank you

k.b.



August 6, 2022

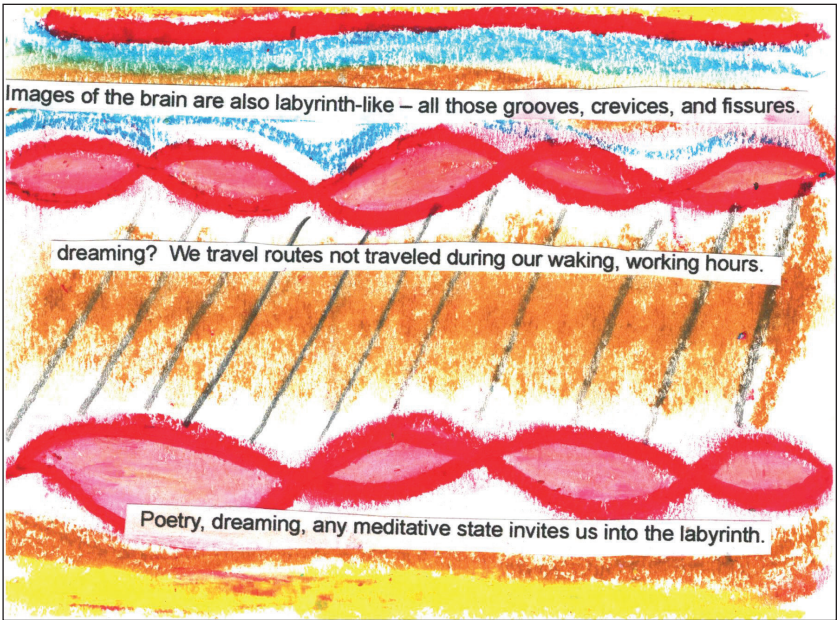
Supply and Demand

The exponential destruction caused by cities feeds the exponential growth of infrastructure and population. For this they misapply laws like supply and demand: in order for economic growth to occur, there must be more demand than supply. Roughly translated, this means there must be more people needing basic goods and services than there are goods and services to meet their needs. Put another way, there must be a lot of people missing out on what they need to survive in order for the anything to have value. As the growth continues exponentially, so do the masses of people missing out, There is no equilibrium to be found here. - *Sand Talk* by Tyson Yunkaporta.

d.l.



August 6, 2022



”Communities of resistance should be places where people can return to themselves easily. Where the conditions are such that they can heal themselves and recover their wholeness.” – Thich Nhat Hanh

The Raft is not the Shore

Today I harvested poppy heads
for seeds to bake into cakes in September.
Then we will have cake together.

k.b.

August 7, 2022

Excerpts

You make me think
but I need more coffee.
Facing stupidity and simplicity,
how will it set us free?

There are idiots and stupid people
out there in the public square
reshaping our world and home
organizing for “the
rockets red glare.”

You are closer to actual land
while I have only a Platonic sense.
Leahy and Ireland reside in my soul
but they are my only defense.

I'm not sure I see power
in the ways of the Tao Te Ching
but if it will threaten those in control
I'm prepared to give it a fling.

I like the world in creation
and Tahoma's sentient presence
She's been a part of my life
since my early adolescence.

I've been thinking about stones too
and us-two wrestling with Sand Talk
It's fine to keep them on your altar,
but don't pick them up
on your next walk.

Our friend Karl was a
Western thinker.
Scientifically linear, inevitable
was his understanding.
Not progress so much but
revolution itself.
Capital is a closed system;
however, it kept expanding.

Don't you think we're
extending our family?
Your letters to Oma and dreams
of family young and old
There are 200 plus Burkes
meeting up in September
Maybe, as he says, this is where
we'll find the real gold.

d.l.

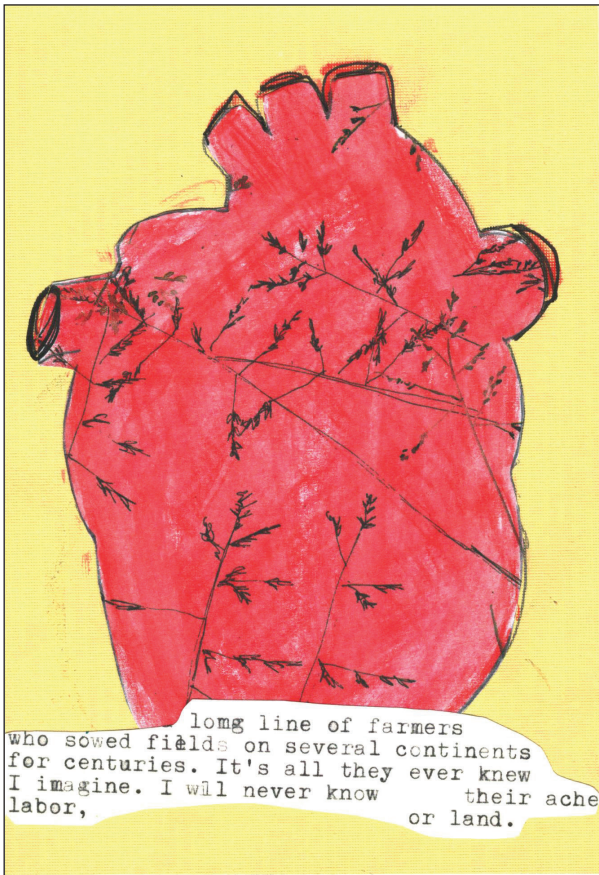


August 7, 2022

Synchronicity

Catherine and Kathleen
poets in your life. Connected
only through you. On 8/8 or
Lion's Gate, a poem by that title
moves through you. We are portals
for love, for starlight. The "news" is
a distraction, a waste of our energy
– at this time. We know what is happening
in our hearts and in our worlds. Sand Talk
teaches us to commune and attune to the wisdom
of stars and grandmothers, and our Hearts.

k.b.



long line of farmers
who sowed fields on several continents
for centuries. It's all they ever knew
I imagine. I will never know their ache
labor, or land.

August 8, 2022

“The News”

I used to wait for it.
Sit and Listen to it.
Learn something new
and important from it.

Now, I don't want it.
I don't anticipate it.
I avoid it
I actually hate it.

Can you tell me why,
Ms. Byrd?
I've got some possibilities.
What do you think:

I'm old and dying.
There is nothing
“new.”
Causality is absent.
Chaos overtaking.

Personalities are not facts.
Trump, Biden & Taylor Green
are boring, as are Kim and Pete.
They just get in the way.

The best news is your postcard
scanning oysters and
brain waves
proposing new relationships
with stones, land and
custodians.

d.l.

*Kathleen: I like the coffee
pot brewing up ideas on
your kitchen table.*



August 8, 2022

Wu Wei

Dear Dan, Today I realized
I am already living
the next life, past
penance, swimming with seals
in salt water – and it just happened
without trying: wu wei, or effortless action,
and I suppose, I am falling in love and
I am not afraid to say it.

k.b.



August 9, 2022

A Stone Child

He's been trying to get
there for years
back to Parker canyon
have a home stead on land
named for his grandfather.

There were difficulties.
Membership, Siting, Purchasing
Mundane things, but frustrating
for a native son.

Still, all got settled and
there was a homestead
he was going there this Fall
A Stone Child, a Rocky Boy.

He didn't make it.
He died August 5, 2022
Yet, Sand Talk reminds us
that stones are sentient.

Alan is a Stone Child
I'll keep talking to him
as I leave stones in place
and ask him questions.

d.l.

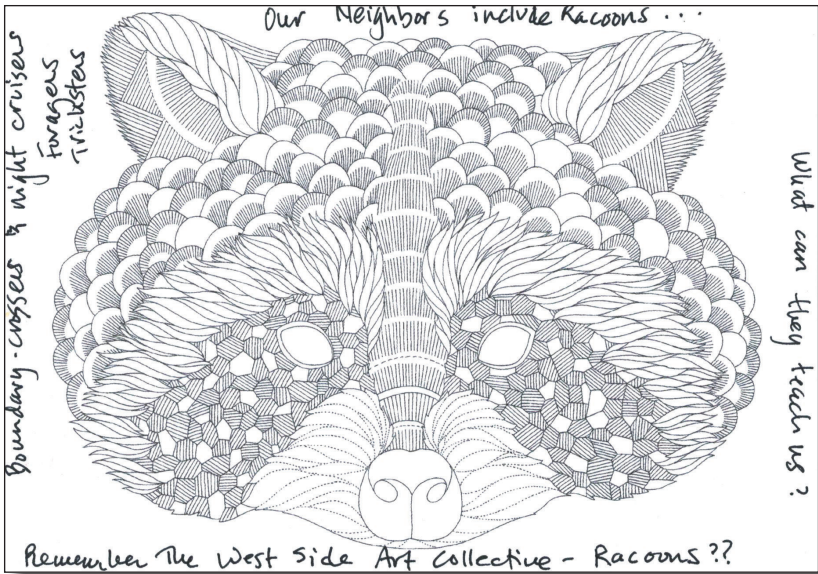


August 9, 2022

Synchronicity 2

Drove you to the train station
and we walked circles, talking
Then I met an old friend at
Blue Heron Bakery where we talked
circles, no walking. Laughed hearty,
belly laughs. She lent me Ruth Ozeki's
novel *The Book of Form and Emptiness*,
who quotes Walter Benjamin, my friend,
in a chapter titled "Home": "Every passion
borders on the chaotic, but the collector's
passion borders on the chaos of memory."
We talked of your collections – all that
you save, but so much is held
within you, dear Elder.

k.b.



August 10, 2022

Elders Calling

Name and Place?

Dan Leahy, Olympia

Work? Organized Labor.

Where? N.Y., Washington, Mexico

Your Vision: A Community of Resistance acting as a custodian for our neighborhood's land, housing and community spirit.

What's preventing it?
Predatory Capital, Government Collusion,
Systemic collapse
with all its
uncertainties.

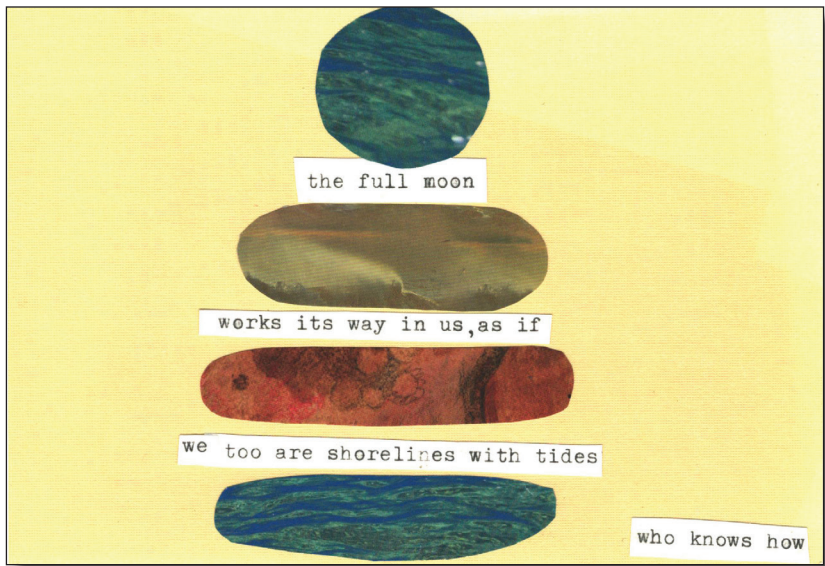
What kind of
systems needed?
Face to face dialogue
Agreed upon
principles
Active engagement
in the work.

What actions should
be taken?
Keep expanding
your reach
Recruit
organizational
mechanics
Clarify the shape
of the enemy.

d.l.



August 10, 2022



Perhaps it's the feminine
in me: Yin, the dark,
the moon's pull. I want to be
defined by creation, not resistance:
not by fight, but by flow.

Sand Talk: We are all parts
of the story of the
Universe in creation.

k.b.

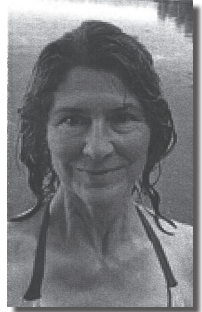
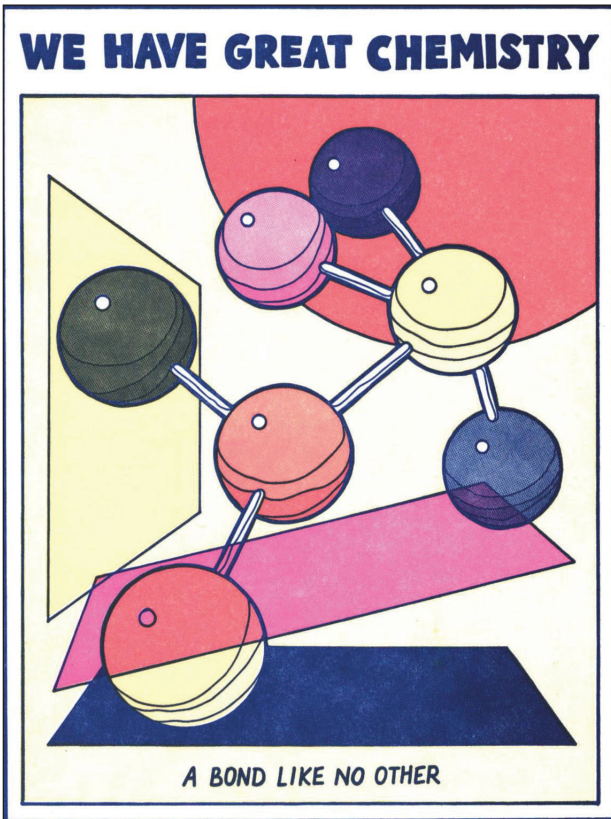
August 11, 2022

Salty and Sexy
She said she'd turned
a creative corner
I liked her either way
Her current shape or the
resistant former.

I'll find out on Monday
she says she wants a date
I'll bring a suit just in case
The Salish sea is my fate.

d.l.

The question is what will it take
to get the hug that is my due.
A stop at her front door or
a dip in the briny slue.



August 11, 2022

Quinta Essentia

Dear Daniel,

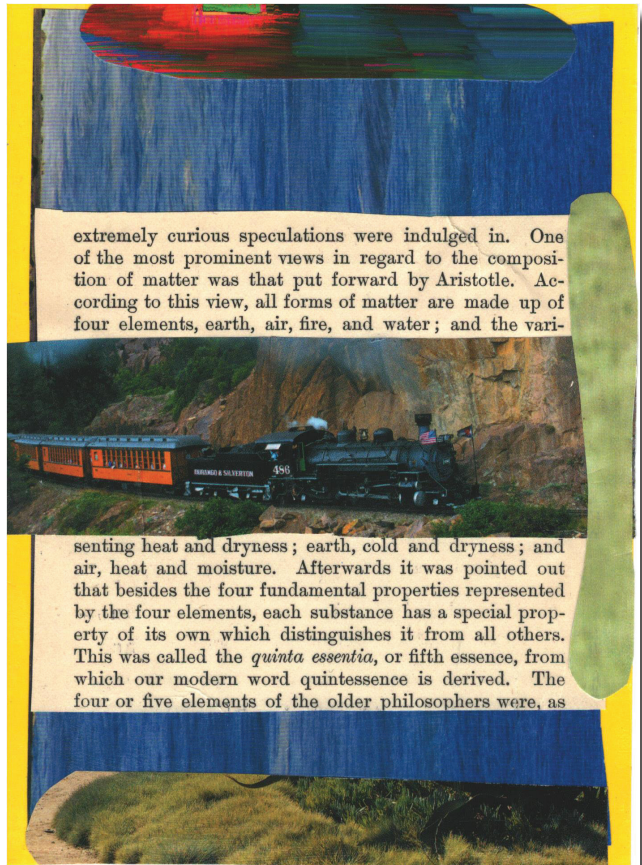
It's true, we are made of salt,
of marrow, or air, earth, fire
and water, no different than the seal
or the mountain or even this typewriter.

But then, there's the 5th thing, the quinta
essentia, and I think that this is where
chemistry is made, the magic of encounter.

One and one makes three, not two.

Sand Talk
teaches we are
no greater
and no lesser
than rocks.
They too
each have a
quintessence.
We know
each other's
quintessences
undeniable and
irreplaceable.

k.b.



extremely curious speculations were indulged in. One of the most prominent views in regard to the composition of matter was that put forward by Aristotle. According to this view, all forms of matter are made up of four elements, earth, air, fire, and water; and the vari-

senting heat and dryness; earth, cold and dryness; and air, heat and moisture. Afterwards it was pointed out that besides the four fundamental properties represented by the four elements, each substance has a special property of its own which distinguishes it from all others. This was called the *quinta essentia*, or fifth essence, from which our modern word quintessence is derived. The four or five elements of the older philosophers were, as

August 12, 2022

Dear Kathleen,

I saw this card today. It reminded me of you dipping into creation, testing it, thinking about it. I'm still thinking there is an intimate relationship between resistance and creation and I want to write to you about this, but...

I'm having a low energy day today and I noticed Eugene's eyes looking at me. He says you'd better treat my cousin right. In this case, he expects me to respond in a substantive way to *Installation Two* of the Summer Book Club of Two. I agree, but not today.

We had a great visit with Abbie. She left for Seattle today. My skin test on Wednesday was uneventful and I had a great time with Cmdta Geel, even drinking bloody mary's and eating fish tacos. I think we might get involved with "archival interviews" during the upcoming Trinationl conference this October in Oaxaca.

JD, Emily and Inian came this morning. Emily and Inian continued on to Portland, but JD is here until Sunday when they will return to Seattle. It's nice to have him here.

I hope you are feeling better and that you still plan to go to Baker. If you change your mind, I'd like to see you before Tuesday.

d.l.



August 12, 2022

Dear Dan,

It's late, it's dark, but the day is not yet done,
and I thought I'd write to you about viruses,
but it's not meant to be - except this: 8 percent
of our DNA is virus.

More importantly, you got me thinking
about rituals for grief and tears to flow;
and immediately I thought of stones
and returning them to the ocean.
The fossils too, and some shells.
Perhaps then what needs to flow will flow,
be pulled back into the sea.

Love you,
Kathleen L.B.

k.b.



August 13, 2022

Belly Laughs and Damned Tears

The tears flashed out once
When I asked you why me?
You're my best friend, you said.
It was something I didn't see.

I know you got a belly laugh
I've heard it from time to time
I also know pieces have been ripped
but if you are ever inclined.

When the feelings start to come
and you wish to let it go
I'll hold you tight or just sit still
until the tears have finished their flow.

You're thinking deeply about our world
and see the harm
that's been done
but if those "damned
tears" get in the way
I say, let them come.

You've lost your
Father and
Cousin Eugene
without a place for
tears to spill or pour.
We should create a
ritual for each
and see what that
process has in store.

d.l.



August 13, 2022

Dear Daniel,

Byrd cousins reunion
today and more stories
churned to the surface
of hardship and hunger
neglect and sorrow. I felt it
so achingly in the listening
– in the vessel in my chest.
A heavy heart. We weren't close
our cousins, until all of our parents
had passed. My father the last.
But we seem to need
each other now. I think it goes back
to wounds of displacement, dislocation,
losses of the city-building project.

k.b.



August 14, 2022

Deep Adaptation

Deep Adaptation
It is a scary term
Don't want to think about it
But the world has turned.

We can't slow it down
or respond to its effect.
Our civilization is over
Climate change produced a wreck.

Looking at the state of climate
with all its non-linear changes
Societal collapse is what we face
It's not in the IPCC's ranges.

If we can get beyond
our denial
and overcome
social panic
they are things
to do that
don't seem so
gigantic.

They are known
as the 4 Rs
Resilience,
Reconciliation
Restoration and
Relinquishment
Let's discuss their
formation.

d.l.



August 14, 2022

Shiny Things

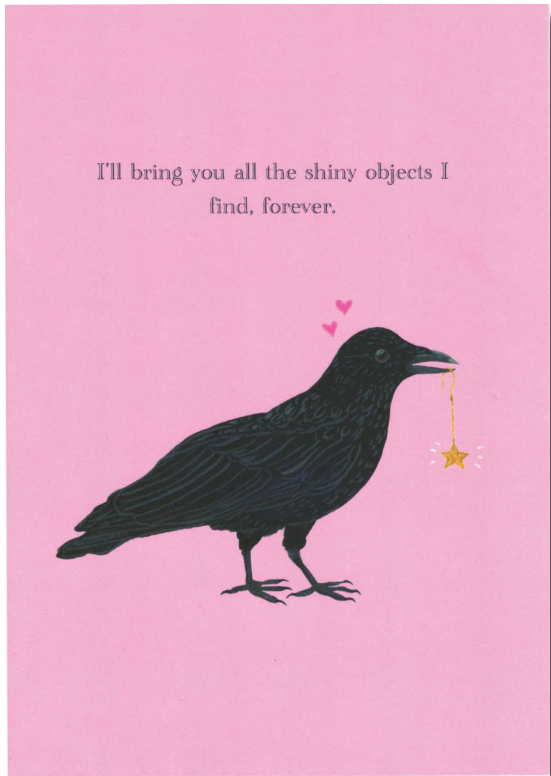
Dear Daniel,

No handmade card today
because I couldn't resist this one
I remembered how we wrote
of talking to crows in our first August
exchange and how we continue to share
shiny things - new ideas and connections
to discuss. It seems the new step
toward something brings together
Sand Talk, Deep Adaptation, and your Elder
talks. Yes, let's discuss the four R's and the 5th:
Ritual.

The shiny things
we bring
to one another
are ideas
that sparkle when
 $2+2=3$ and
- the deepest
of our hearts
- what we desire
and who we love.

P.S. Going to Mount
Baker tomorrow.

k.b.



August 15, 2022

Dear Kathleen,

I thought I'd write a note to you. First off, thanks. The walk in the woods made my day. I was strong and busy all day. Our coffee conversation kept us focused as we tried to think how our learning fits into our current lives. And, of course, I got my hug without having to dip into salt water. When I got home I gave a hug to Bethany. She said, "Feels like you've taken a step toward something-nothing specific." Her comment has been on my mind. I'll have to ask her more about it.

I love you, Kathleen. I think you have been being nice to yourself and I hope you continue to do so even as the school year begins.

-Daniel



August 15, 2022

Dear Dan,

Thank you for being a friend in all the important ways – you challenge me and comfort me, you encourage me and you share yourself with me – your questions, ideas, feelings, and comforts. This is a Thank You card for Gratitude supports resilience and reconciliation. Let's talk about relinquishment.

P.S. On my way to Kwelshan

k.b.



August 16, 2022

The Four Rs.

You are off to Kwelshan
as you restore and reconcile
thinking about relinquishment
and whether resilience is denial.

I do think you should
read his update
It will help us concretize the Rs.
The future is more present
than it was.
We might even grasp
Sand Talk stars.

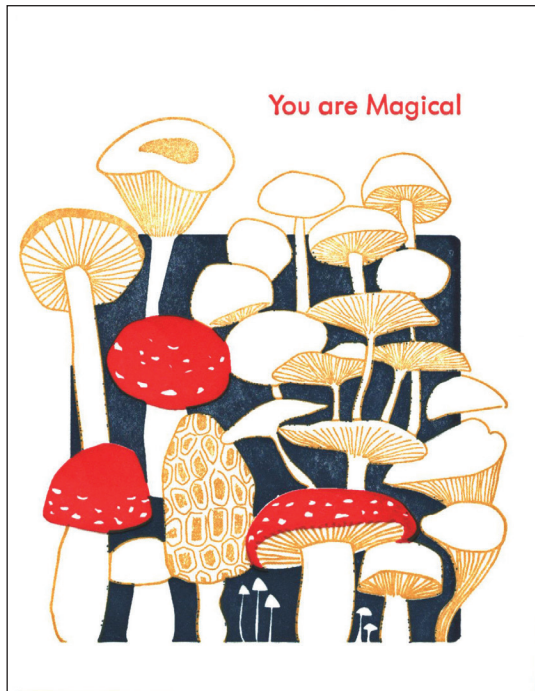
Bendell's resilience is conditional
It's not bouncing back from
the crisis at our door.
He chooses psychology over
progress' promise.
Resilience does not
return us to the way
it was before.

I think restoration
is something you
know about
your naming project alone
is rediscovering life
before "civilization" fueled
its destruction and
led us to this world of
climate induced strife.

You asked that we discuss
relinquishment
It's about assets, beliefs,
behaviors we need to let go.
Consumption patterns, coastlines
and certain industries.
It's agriculture, sea-level rise
and fossil fuels we all know.

Reconciliation is the
heaviest one for me.
It's something we all see; it
challenges our mentality.
I think he's assuming climate-
led societal collapse and
how do we make peace as we
face our mutual mortality.

d.l.



August 16, 2022

Dear Dan,

On the way to Kulshan,

I visited my mom,
made her lunch.

I rubbed her back and as I did,
she asked “Do you ever just want
to be held by a good man?”

Yes, I softly said, I do.

She looked at me with child’s eyes
and a shy smile and said, “Me too. I still want to be held
by a good man. I still do.”

k.b.



August 17, 2022

Relinquishment.

Letting go of certain assets
I wish it was that simple.
We don't control that many.
They are in the money temple.

Market fundamentalism,
for example
It's tied to massive
financial power
and our corporate City Council
bows to its predatory
right to devour.

Another asset we don't control
but our City Council
gives instruction
Climate is separate from
governance.
Sea-level rise is not
about construction.

France has 56
nuclear reactors
cooled by water
from a river
but they are dry
as a bone
is that enough to send
a spinal shiver?

Here we have wild
fires, mud slides
followed by inundation.
Destruction of the tree canopy
for the rich man's
wealth creation.

So exactly what do
we relinquish
Individual behavior
seems insufficient
in the cause of deep adaptation
without massive social
resistance.

d.l.



August 17, 2022

Dear Daniel,

I caused a car wreck
metal impacting metal.
Soft bodies inside
scared, the knowing
sudden and sure. A shift
on the track. No one was hurt.
For this, I am grateful, and for
the kindness of strangers, tenderness
at the center of the scene of the crash.
Why I am fascinated by Oysters: Survival
by shell. What this means now? Change
what you can, but how?

k.b.



August 18, 2022

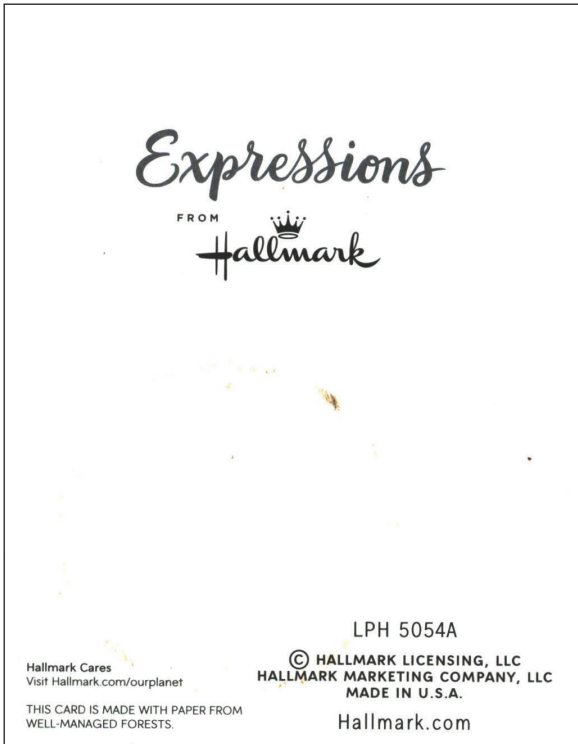
Car accident

Car accident on Wednesday
No follow up text, email or phone
Not to worry, but I am
It's weird, but I'm feeling alone.

August is especially connected
Daily cards and notes
but I can't gin up the energy
when my writing partner is so remote.

I'm sure she's just in the mountains
but she did say she would write
staying off electronics
I await a postcard one of these nights.

d.l.



August 18, 2022

The Precipice

On the shores of Baker Lake
I read about “Effective Altruism”
in The New Yorker. A book by Tony Orb
is mentioned “The Precipice” whose premise
is that humanity’s greatest threat is not climate change
but Artificial Intelligence engineering pathogens to destroy
us. Eventually the article’s author writes: It remains plausible
that the best long-termist strategy is more mundanely custodial.”
There it is: Custodianship; we are to be custodial, relational, tethered
to our work and to one another.

k.b.



August 19, 2022

I Want To

Remain Dan Leahy
as my cancer grows, so
Bethany still knows me.

Know someone will hold her hand
as she has held mine,
when I'm gone.

Sit with my two sons
hold their hands, snuggle their bodies
enjoy their beauty, their partners and kids.

Stay true to my friends,
remain in conversation
and exploration.

Finish my archives
Get them placed
so people can see an organizer.

Index my undergrad classes,
the Trinational Coalition work,
ASJE and Heroico Batallon.

Keep reading books
that show me where I am
and who I might become.

d.l.

August 19, 2022

Home

I made it home. The return journey
only possible with many helpers –
strangers, friends, and family. While away
I swam in a glacial lake, naked, and the sky,
water, and the view of snow-capped Kulshan
healed me some: crawl, back float, lunge,
breast-stroke, breathe, glide, as smoke
blew in from Canada's fires, spreading
its message across the waters. The great
interconnectedness of all beings. Water and smoke
boundary-less. Each of us a part of the great chain of being.
I am, again, home alone.
I love you Dan.

k.b.



August 20, 2022

Forced Relinquishment

So much happened all at once
Kindness and tenderness in the traffic lane.
The sudden certainty of the wreck.
The loss of transport to supply chain

Then the beauty of the glacial lake
under Kulashan's protection
healed you up from civilized trauma
but Canadian fires promise retribution.

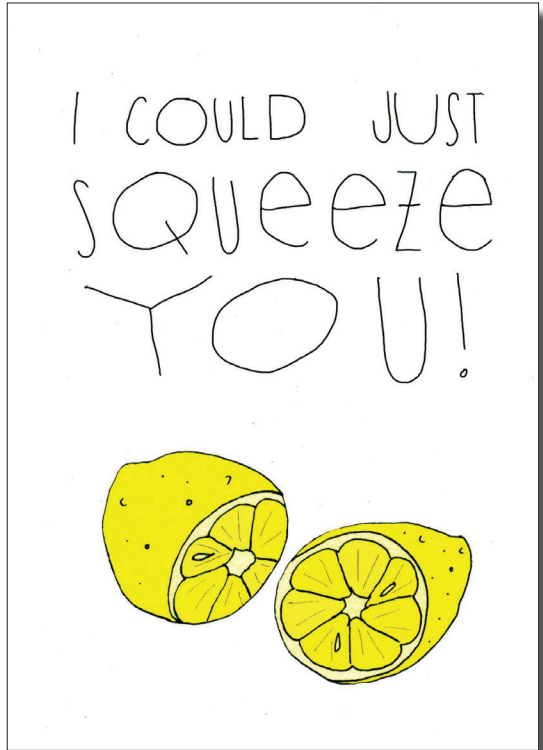
Multiple screens got my attention
as we discussed the location of reality
and our need to focus directly on the land
to signal our intentionality.

*This card made me think
when lemons appear
the admonition is made
to make Lemonade, my dear*

Now you're home
facing restoration
thinking about what
giving up really means
and how to manage
relinquishment
in a way that builds
our new scene.

I think the kindness
and tenderness
you experienced
offers hope for the new
community we seek.
Humans still have the
Eros instinct required
to restore the values
and norms of
which we speak.

d.l.



August 20, 2022

Hope

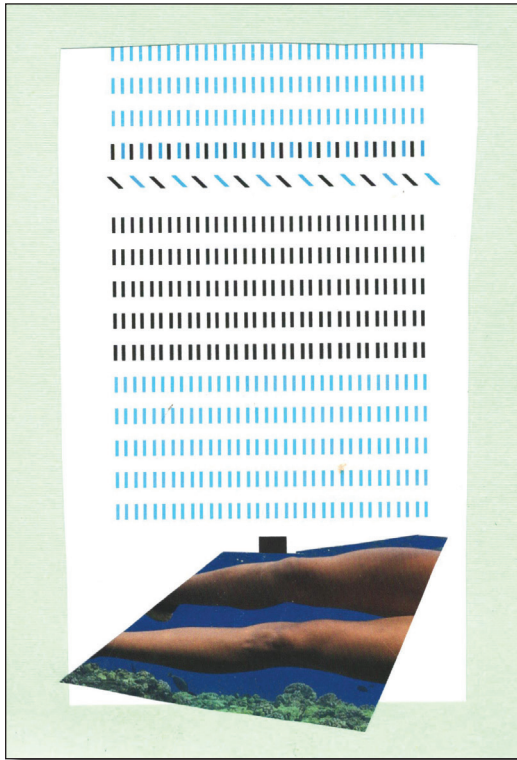
Dear Dan,

I started rereading Jem Bendell's paper this morning. Much to discuss here and to connect with Sand Talk. In our first August exchange (2019), we wrote about Hope.

And it comes up here: Radical hope "is directed toward a future goodness that transcends the current ability to understand what it is." and this

"Consider the value of leaving mainstream values behind." We are ready, ready to build our kinship networks while uncertainty is our only hope.

k.b.



August 21, 2022

Taking Stock

We did it once before. Checked out
our neighbors' food, services, talents and stuff
Connected some here and there.
Thought it was enough.

Three years on we need to do it again
We all see, but we don't know when
we should admit its presence
and discuss societal collapse as an end.

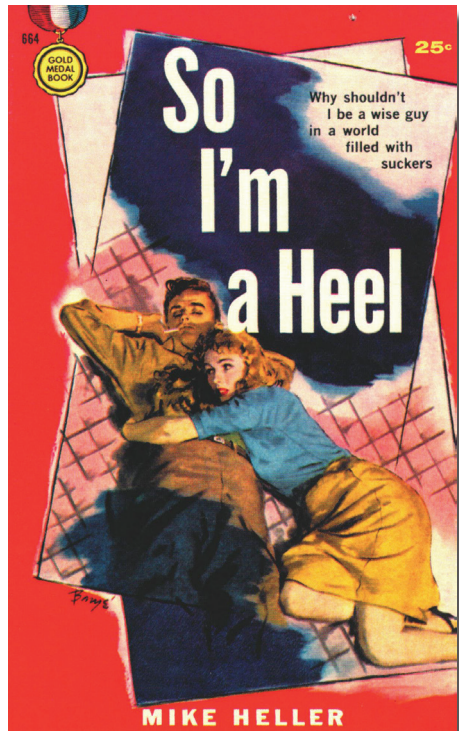
Our immediate community is our best hope
and I think they will agree
but we need to contextualize our ask
we have a limited time to remain free.

Massive one-time, climate induced disasters
fill our screens every day
as politicians and scientists
fear hysteria
if "hope" is no longer in play.

Still, hope flows from an
accurate assessment
of what we are facing.
There is no reason to
deny the obvious
if a possible solution is
what we are raising.

I'm prepared to ask again, but
I'd rather meet face to face
across some lawn in
rickety chairs
and pretend there is
a human race.

d.l.

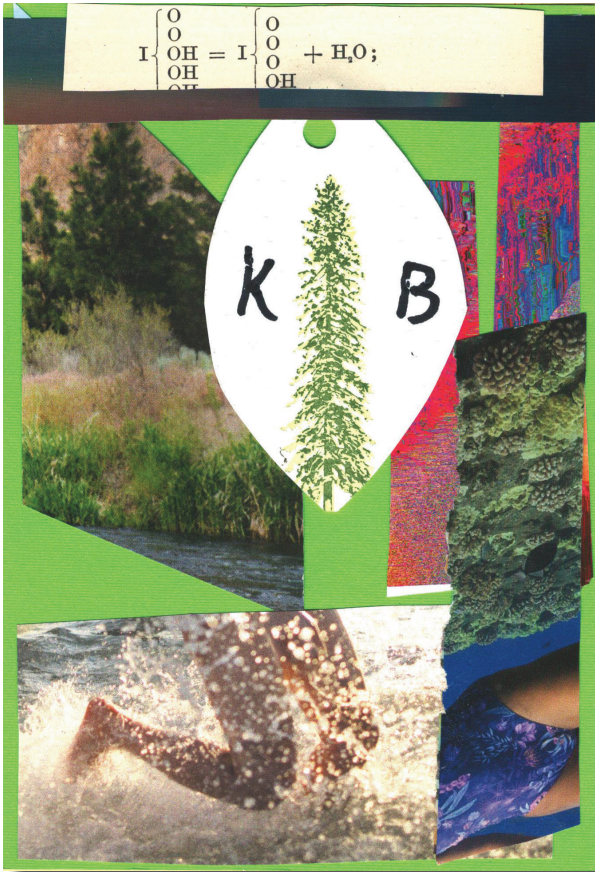


August 21, 2022

Let us start here

Kindness. Jem Bendell asks: “What are the valued norms and behaviors that human societies will wish to maintain as they seek to survive?” After kindness equitable distribution of resources, diversity of views, beliefs, practices. Do no harm; reduce harm; respect all forms of life and life systems; mutual aid; cooperation versus competition. Value all gifts, time, labor and love. Love. Love you,

k.b.



August 22, 2022

Easy Morning

Sitting here in the carboretum
mid-morning breeze
surrounded by earth smells
It's comforting to be at ease.

Morning breakfast at the Spar
pancakes and eggs
shopping for cards at Compass Rose
then, a modest stretching of the legs.

It's almost embarrassing
sitting here in such peace
when the world is filled with turmoil
and the resolution seems out of reach.

Still, here we
are in the
Capitol City
with all its
flaws and
imperfections
awaiting some
leadership
with a promise of
new directions.

d.l.



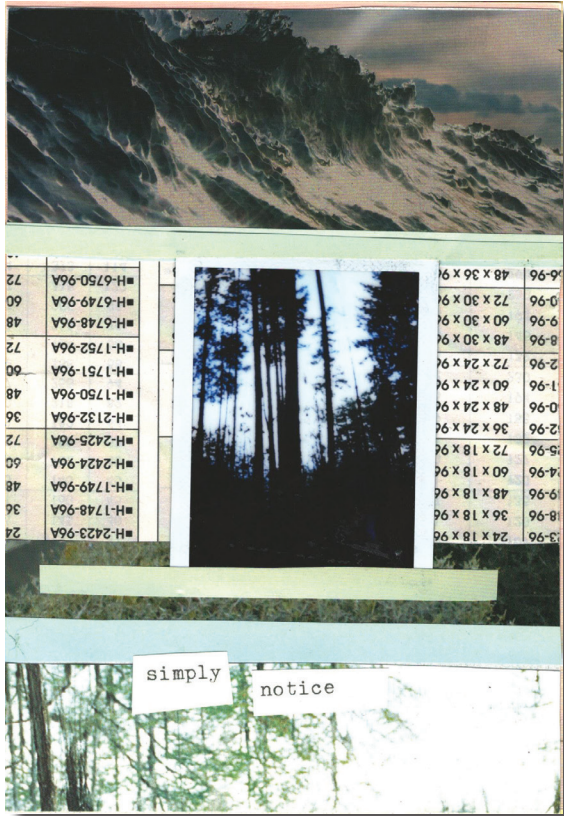
SOMEONE IN
OLYMPIA
LOVES YOU.

August 22, 2022

Dear Daniel,

The morning is coastal. Last night I held your hand after dark. You read me & B a Levertov poem: “What it could be”... “for the continuing act of nonviolence, of passionate reverence, active love.” The human capacity for love, active love, and tenderness might prevail and carry us through the crisis we know is here. We shift – subtly – with nuance from fear to love. holding hands or listening, or lending a hand. Joren fixed my camping stove, for example. A hand.

k.b.



August 23, 2022

Black Mercedes

Lately I've been thinking
just let it go
shouting at speeders on 6th
for more than 30 years in a row.

Yesterday, at about 6:00 pm
Talking with neighbors and their kids
A Black Mercedes convertible raced up 6th
I screamed, but he only increased his bid.

If it ended there, it wouldn't matter much
But, for me, it's the beginning of action
dreams, confrontations, searches for his car.
I want him to pay for his infraction.

One speeder I stopped asked if I was police
Worse, I said, just a neighbor look for relief
from men with small dicks
as we all watch their
driving in disbelief.

I'm going to let it go now.
With kids walking
to school,
there are plenty of
young dads
no need for this
screaming old fool.

d.l.



August 23, 2022

Hope Flows

Dear Daniel,

Hope flows in imagining a different world – (and in response to accurate assessment). Some years (12) ago, I wrote a poem imagining a world without mining. A woman in the workshop was angry when I read the poem aloud. It's not a good poem, but she was angry about what I imagined. Now, I think about how it can threaten – a poem, an idea, the human imagination threatens the status quo – the dying world.

I found the poem I wrote in a book and realized you have never read these poems, so I am leaving you the book, and I see I was thinking even then of collapse-grief, reconciliation, relinquishment, imagining a world with starlight and love. And yes, we need to meet face-to-face in lawn chairs to imagine the world together.

k.b.



August 24, 2022

The Developer Called

There was a burst of email yesterday
a neighbor asked city staff a question
how to explain a traffic plan
with a Comp Plan contradiction.

The staff didn't answer the question
future traffic will head in an easterly direction
asserting their traffic plan correct, even though,
this would ignite a neighborhood insurrection.

The developer's engineer, however,
was on the email exchange
and soon the developer called me
to tell me plans for his domain.

He would never
open up the road
It's the City that
wants that
whether or not he
develops the land
he will always
have our back.

He was a straight
forward guy
and I believed him
from the start
If he doesn't
proceed, I said
neighbors will buy
the land for a park.

d.l.



August 24, 2022

Isn't it something ...

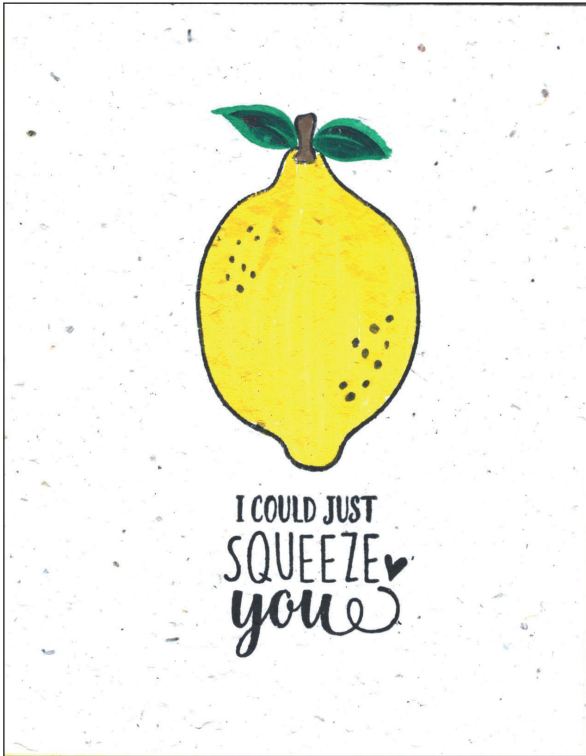
I hiked to Lena Lake near Hama Hama which means “stinky stinky” in reference to salmon carcasses that rotted there for centuries. Isn't it something?

that I found this card in Brinnon before swimming in the brackish waters of Point Whitney - with seals -

And now the days are getting noticeably shorter, mid-August, so I'll walk this over in the morning.

Synchronicity: To find this card today, I knew at once that the universe is keeping us together just as the orchid my father gave me continues to rebloom for years now. We have to watch for the signs.

k.b.



August 25, 2022



Dear Kathleen,

It's been a slog around here, Thursday and Friday... low energy, coughing, temperature spikes. My muse is nowhere to be found.

Thank you so much for your book *Conserving Water - poems* (2010), wonderful photos and great poetry. I really liked your "I Will" poem and the line, "When I really rebel..." I think you are a rebel.

It is quite amazing our two lemon squeezie cards. There were even by two different artists; I found one in Olympia and you found one in Brinnon. The Universe is signaling.

continues...

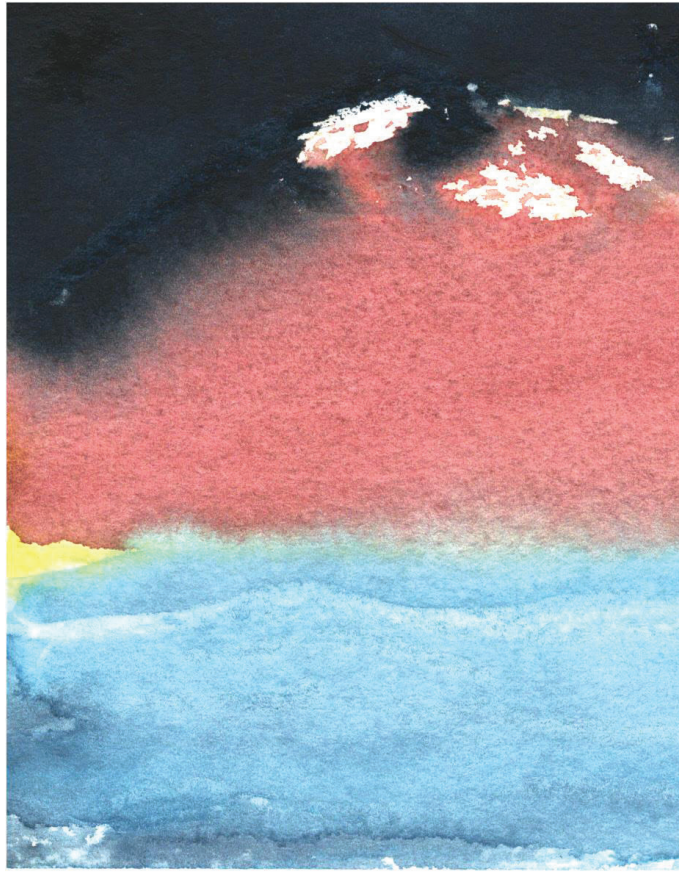
August 25-26, 2022

On my way North
to be with my mom
up to Chucanut Drive
for views of the North Sound
and Oysters at sunset.

Breezes are blowing in today
-Signs of fall -
Always change and pattern and change.

(I'm so very tired today)

k.b.



August 26, 2022

I did watch about two-thirds of the
SYSK student presentations on
Thursday night: Home cooked meals
for daughter. Grieving process to
healing. Fear us. No one is coming
to save you. Simplify your life,
disconnect from tech. Self love is
a journey. A new city is needed.
Be confident. There is a risk in
everything you try.

d.l.



August 25-26, 2022

Digging

Things I learned about my mother
on the last day of her 86th year:

She had a nickname of Doris, or Doreke,
which was both diminutive and endearing
though she may not know these words.

She saw her first car at age ten, the town's taxi.

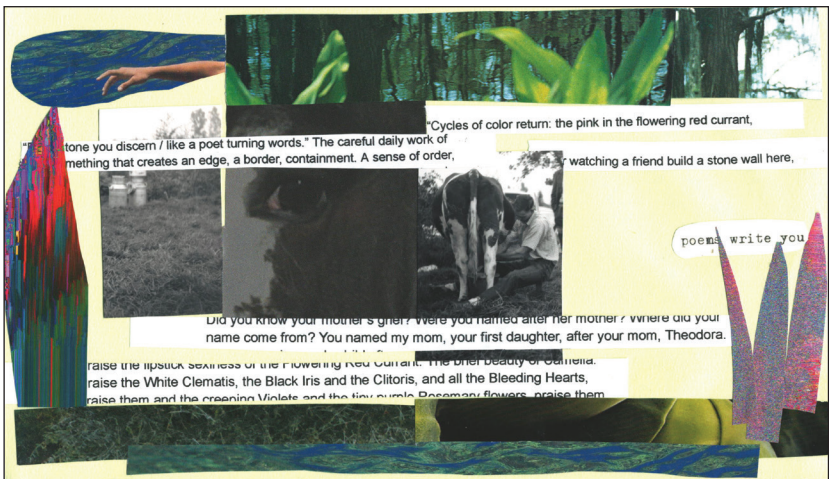
At 18, she rode her horse from her village
nearly to Breda, an adventure. She didn't know the way
to go, but she knew to follow the river.

When she moved to the states in 1962, she couldn't
stand to pay a penny for a potato, so she planted them
in the yard of a rental house in Seattle where the rent
was sixty dollars a month. The soil was poor, but still
potatoes sprouted there for years to come.

She was 27, when she first ate beef. Everything
she ate had come from their farm or was traded
except maybe sugar and spices. She still hasn't forgiven

my father. She wants to be cremated – though she'd
always said before that she wanted a burial, but now
she asks: What difference does it make?

k.b.



August 27, 2022

Transition

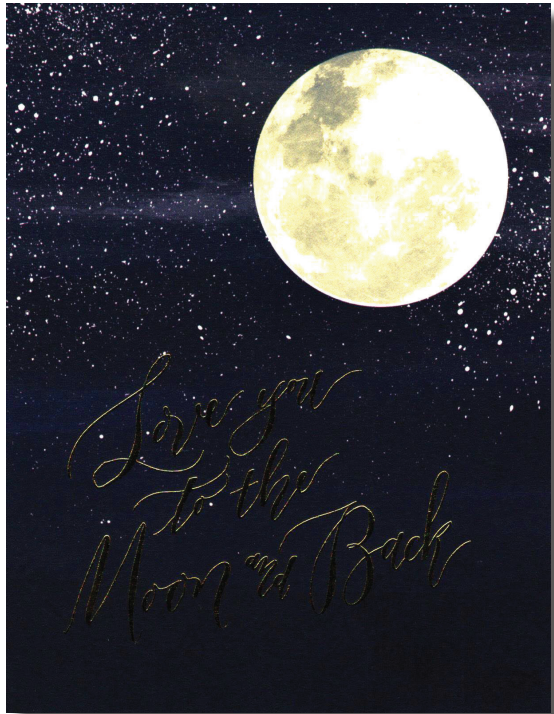
The window shades
were up all day
It wasn't that hot and
they weren't needed.
The carboretum
was windy & too
cold for sitting
Days are changing
and warnings
should be heeded.

I sat in the kitchen to
write my daily card
There's a heat vent
next to where I
was seated.
The heat wasn't on, but
still I was thinking
Days are changing
and warnings
should be heeded.

The last three days have been definitely different
It makes me wonder how my cancer is being treated.
Not that it matters much for a terminal case, but
Days are changing and warnings should be heeded.

Tomorrow I'll get some more blood tests and
my discussion with the doctor will be a bit heated.
I'm tired of "take two Tylenol" as the answer, but
Days are changing and warnings should be heeded.

d.l.



August 27, 2022

To the moon and back

I love you like that too.
You sent that moon card
on the day of the new moon
in Virgo, but you didn't know that,
just like the coincidence of Lion's Gate.

I know that you and your days are changing
and that touches me deeply. I'll be back

tomorrow and ready to see you when you are able.

I love you.

k.b.



August 28, 2022

Walking

My first street is south on Plymouth
past Knudsons, Salima and Steve,
then Ted and Jennifer, I believe.

Cross 9th to Erin Shields
family home
and all of Angela Bowen's estate.
Wide streets. Peaceful.
Keeping up my gait.

Turn right on 12th. The
street is now a slog.
Aristedes and Jane, Terrilyn,
Michael and Jill
Nancy is much closer to
the top of the hill.

Decatur is next and no
one stops their car,
as I cross to the sidewalk
on the other side.
Even closed south, Decatur
is a major divide.

I sit for a moment in the Park and
watch little kids negotiate the bar
with a homeless kid
and his dog Star.

Criss-cross the Church's parking lot
and challenge traffic to Milroy street.
No cross walk allows
pedestrians to compete.

Now I'm on sidewalks
with cracks and all
Dennis & Beverly, Nancy & Mick
Jon, Kathy & Stan all make
this street tick.

At the corner is our nurse
extraordinaire
talking about the health care crisis
maybe soon there'll be a
strike to entice us.

On to Ann's for some
blueberry picking
as I walk pass vigilantes
sitting on their butts
taking money from a neighbor
who is a little bit nuts.

Then Tom and Donna,
Ray and Delores
I'm just about home past
Megan and Ethan
up the stairs for water and
one more completion.

- d.l.



August 28, 2022

You walk these streets

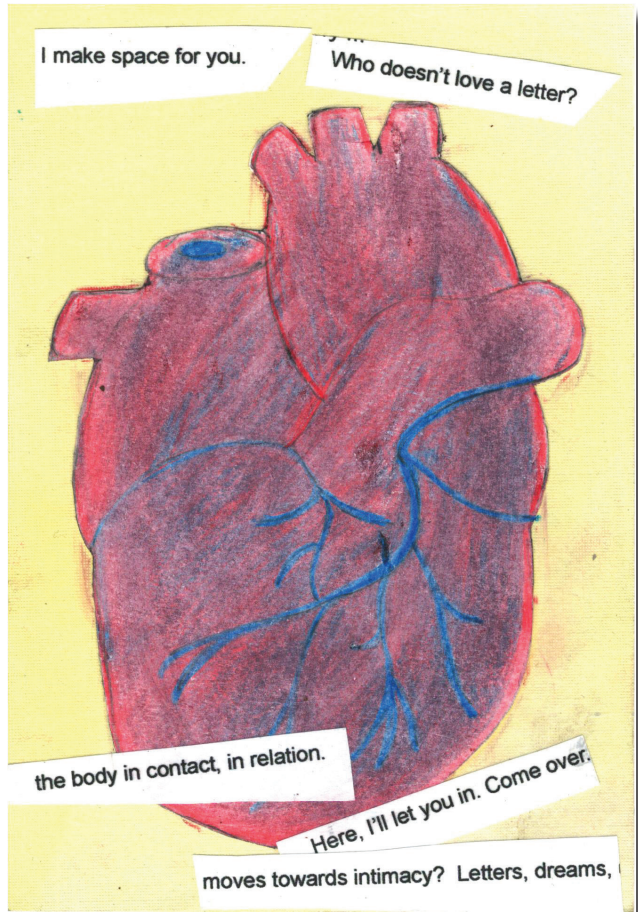
connecting the path to the people
who make up the community who hold us
together. The streets are ours. We walk them
at night sometimes, or we did a few times.

Walking and talking as we do. Today I need to talk
to you – walking or sitting in your car. My heart
uncertain, maybe even hurting – I don't want to type it.

I want to talk with you seeing me. Thank you for seeing me.

I love you.

k.b.



August 29, 2022

A Lover's Quarrel

Got a postcard today
with a quote from Robert Frost
mailed from Vermont
by a woman I don't know.

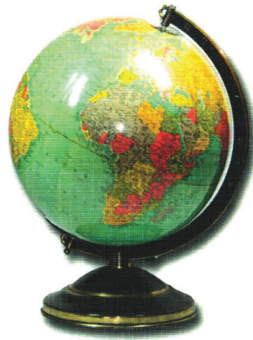
I had a Lover's quarrel with the world,
Frost wrote back then.
Is that what happened to me?
I did love my life but the world disagreed.

She also had just read *Hand it Over*
called it an amazingly rich work
made me think I should get a copy
and read it with you.

She said I had inspired her for years
reading *Works in Progress* and
following the Westside
Decatur Raiders.
Obviously, a local
girl, retreated
to Vermont.

We're close to
done this time.
It will be fun to
get it printed
and see what
people think.
It's been so nice
being with you.

d.l.



A world of thanks.

August 29, 2022

Sanctuary

It has been, is, and will ever be
so nice being with you – as August
draws to a close – the heat persists

and we talk of resilience, restoration,
relinquishment and reconciliation.
We make space for each other's hearts
dreams and tears as dragonflies fly in
and out of the sanctuary of your garden.

k.b.



August 30, 2022

Physical

The word's been on my mind
for several days in a row.
I need to write my doggerel
so I can get on with my show.

If I knew men,
I'd tell you the truth.
But it looks like self centered
is close to the root.

There's a time and place
For physical. Even a need.
But the intent is important
To make it more than a deed.

If one is looking for love,
a companion for sharing.
The other a break from
a life one's bearing.

There will be no future
Beyond what is usual.
Making impossible
a relationship
That will become more mutual.

d.l.



August 30, 2022

Dear Daniel,

Here we are at another ending, another month of writing daily to one another. August was hot and dry; we wrote of swimming, of Sand Talk, returning stones, hope, grief, but most of all we wrote of love.

I am happy knowing I know love. You are a part of that happiness. The physical is essential, the tangible necessary. Daily acts informed by attitudes of an open heart. Our work toward a future begins in love and connection. We will never give up on a vision. I will never give up on love. Like our cards embedded with wild flower seeds, we sow a future.

“Looking for love and looking for a man are two different agendas. Most women without male partners are looking for a man ... and guess what, men are easy to find ... Looking for a man who can love is a search that can take ages.”

“... the problem is not men. The problem is patriarchy”
– bell hooks,
Communion (2002)

k.b.



August 31, 2022

Next Chapter

I really like the yellow
typewriter
You've been typing all
month, writing
notes, observations, reviews of
Sand Talk and Deep Adaptation.

I know you are not re-
reading, but
going forward with
more analyses,
creating rituals of return
and asserting
your relationship to the land
and the sea.

I know we wrote every
day in August
but we really haven't
stopped since 2019.
We wrote all through
the pandemic.
remember our 20
minute letters?

Once a week in
September
seems good.
You send the first one
and I'll follow up.
I'll start typing up
your August cards
Getting ready for
layout and printing.

August was fun for me.
Staying connected
to you, each day. We did
some hard thinking.
I hope to stay in touch as
you go back to teaching.
I'll be ready to hear your stories.

d.l.

You can't **start** the
NEXT CHAPTER
of your *life* if you
keep *re-reading* the
ⓁⓐⓈⓉ one.



Olympia 'SM4' 1961

August 31, 2022

Bios



Kathleen Byrd was born and raised in Seattle, spent a couple of years on boats in Alaska after high school, then a couple years in the Netherlands getting to know her extended family. She studied in Seattle's community college, The Evergreen State College, earned a Master's in Education at The University of Washington, Tacoma, and a Master's in Fine Arts at Western Washington University. She's mother to one spirited daughter who also lives on the Westside in Olympia Washington. She's worked as a deckhand, server, barista, library clerk, warehouse damage inspector and UPS loader, research assistant, editor, writing tutor, and English Professor. She's recently joined the Thurston Climate Action Team of artists. She teaches English, literature, and creative writing classes at South Puget Sound Community College, and she still rides her bike around town.



Dan Leahy was born and raised in Seattle. Attended St. Edwards Seminary, Seattle University and went to Turkey in the Peace Corps. Entered NYU Graduate School, refused the draft, and became a community organizer for the Quakers. Ran a field study education center at Cornell University and married Bethany Weidner. They had two sons, JD Ross and Chad. Organized a national political party, the Citizens Party, and a Washington state party called Progress Under Democracy. Taught at Evergreen. Organized Washington state's first Labor Education and Research Center and ran the New School of Union Organizers. Retired from Evergreen in 2008 after 24 years. Ran around the world. Favorite trip three weeks on the Mongolian steppes. In 2014, organized a region wide strategy summit to fight oil trains and worked in Greek refugees camps in 2016 and 2017. Archived his political campaigns in university libraries and Library of Congress. Lives in Olympia with Bethany Weidner, tries to be a neighborhood custodian and fights City Hall.

Art credits

Much of the art used in Hand it Over was created by Kathleen Byrd. We also used recycled images from old postcards. In many cases the artist's information has been lost. All possible credits are listed below.

From Dan

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August 6: Photography by Dan Leahy
August 7: Kluh. Juliekluh.com
August 8: Art by Chiara. www.artbychiara.com
August 11: Lucky Horse Press. Luckyhorsepress.com
August 12: nikkimcclure.com
August 13: DebbieDrawsfunny.com
August 14: www.banquetworkshop.com
August 15: gingiber.com
August 16: ilee paper goods
August 17: www.shopantiquaria.com
August 18: Expressions. Hallmark.com
August 20: Tayham.com
August 22: sapling press. Printed in pittsburgh,pa
August 23: Twisted Wares
August 24: www.banquetworkshop.com
August 27: www.shopantiquaria.com
August 28: Art by Chiara. www.artbychiara.com
August 29: www.flypaperproducts.com
August 30: thebowerstudio.com
August 31: fly paper products #FTO2

From Kathleen

August 15: www.rosemetting.com
August 17: Van Gogh Museum
August 28: www.chroniclebooks.com
August 28: dinoanddoll designs@gmail.com
August 31: dinoanddoll designs@gmail.com

We offer our gratitude to Cecily Schmidt for book cover design and to Melissa Roberts for editing, book layout and design. The creative gifts offered by Cecily and Melissa add to the book's magic and beauty.



Dan Leahy and Kathleen Byrd started writing to each other in August, 2019 as part of a nationwide poetry postcard project. That conversation became the first edition of *Hand it Over*. They continued to write to one another over the next four years and committed again to a daily exchange in August of 2022. This second edition of *Hand it Over* reveals their deepening conversation - A conversation that explores the possibility of love and restoration as we face undeniable changes in our worlds and in our lives.