

"Out Of Reach"



A Poet In Permafrost

Abigail Kloss Aycardi

Out of Reach

A Poet in Permafrost

by

Abigail Kloss-Aycardi

Out of Reach - A Poet in Permafrost
by Abigail Kloss-Aycardi

Cover art by Anna Marie Fritz

Published by Abigail Kloss-Aycardi, December 2011
Copyright © 2011 Abigail Kloss-Aycardi

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/). Essentially, this means that you are free to download, copy, print, and share this book (including by e-mail), but you are restricted from altering it or profiting from it. This doesn't affect its status as a copyrighted work, and anyone breaching the terms of this license will be vigorously pursued. This book is free, despite the significant time, effort, and resources that went into creating it. Contributing in some way will encourage the release of further work under similar terms.

Special Thanks To -

My husband, Eduardo
for your support, encouragement and
all the help with the technical stuff.
I couldn't have done any of it without you.

Dad and Mom
for always taking "my stuff" seriously.

Anna Marie for the truly eye-catching cover
and for all of the editing help.
You really got everything moving.

Tonya Cerna for being my
poetry connection
when I thought I'd never
be able to write again.

Debra Sternhagen for respecting
my creative frustrations, for appreciating
my expressions and helping me stay calm
when I lacked inspiration.

This book is dedicated to Nana Guerrero.

*Table of Contents

Cover
Title Page
Copyright
Thanks to
Dedication

Out of Reach
A Poet in Permafrost
A Little Too Tired
A Rhino in the Bathtub
A Thank You to My Heavenly Father
A Treasure Almost Wasted
Contents Under Pressure
East Twin Tour
Epitaph for the Deceased Poet
European Nostalgia
Faith
Grade School Memory
If Only for a Moment
Imperative Expressions
It's Not About the House
My Enemy the Ticking Clock
My Words – Diminished or Domesticated
Of a Dream
Pure Confessions
Refuge for All Seasons
Relentless Repetition
Riverbed Yearning
Show Him Up
Someday
Success by Faith
That Stupid Song
The Reason for This Smile
The Screaming Mime
This Abandoned Instrument of Release
Tracherous
Unforeseen Poetry
Unpleasant Commotion
What Would It Take?
Where My Thoughts Die
Within My Last Exhalation
Your Voice

For more information...

Out of Reach

It's not that the words are gone
I see them in front of me
In the forms of partial images
I hear them in half choruses
I almost taste them on my tongue
They even tickle my nose with their faint aroma
But they are cruelly out of reach

I am the house cat that pounces
On the bird just on the other side of the window
And bruises its nose against the glass
Leaving it bewildered and disconcerted

If I could just burst through this shell
That has encapsulated me
If I could just let the expression
Break free
Maybe that would stop
The constant angry screams in my head

A Poet in Permafrost

I don't know how anyone can sleep
When the sky isn't black
But a dirty shade of glowing pink lemonade

When the sound of crickets chirping
Is replaced by the sound of trains
Police cars and buses

When the hooting of inebriated party goers
Is the closest thing to the hooting of a Great Horned Owl
On the hunt, obscured by tree branches thick with veiling foliage

I don't know how anyone can feel comfort
When they look to the heavens
And the only sparkle they see comes from airplanes
And cell phone towers
When there is no space between buildings
Where trees are something of an oddity
And no one knows the name of the birds that fly overhead

I can't understand how anyone can draw a breath
In this air that's thick with exhaust
When somewhere else you can smell oak leaves and
Wet earth under your feet

I don't know how anyone can feel alive
In the midst of this impenetrable city of cement
That doesn't let you out of its filthy, cold grip without a long fight

But here I am...
Like a tender seedling removed from the soft soil where it fell...
Now forced to grow in this permafrost that I call, "The City"

{My ode to Milwaukee Wisconsin}

A Little Too Tired

As I sit before the screen
I know I must come clean;
There are a million things
 I would
 I could
 I should
 Be doing
But I'm too tired to think
I'm standing on the brink
Of a new set of challenging moments

I don't want to look ahead
With this feeling of dread
 To another week
 Without a dime
Between two places
 I split my time
What will I wear?
How's my hair?

Another week
Much like the last
 It's all going by
Way, *way* too fast

I look at this room –
 (My part-time dwelling)
I wonder what all these piles
 Might be telling
A psychiatrist that stepped inside
And looked at this corner where I hide
To write about the gibberish 'round me
Or other feelings that have bound me

But none of that matters
Because each moment of analyzing
Leaves a mess that's agonizing
As I wonder if amber shatters

A Rhino in the Bathtub

If it makes you feel better
 We can pretend.
 We can decide that we
 Are five years old again
Trying to find a dark wooded place
 To hide.
 If you can't find me
 You can't punish me
For the nail I drove into
 The trunk of the tree
 That Grandpa gave you
For your fifteenth wedding anniversary.
 If we never see the tree
 Or the nail
Then nothing ever happened.

If it makes you feel better,
 We can forget all about
 "The Big Purge"
 All that fire
All that garbage that we burned that year.
 We'll just never talk about it.
 See? It never happened.

If it makes you feel better,
We can dismiss the last four and a half years.
We can decide that it was all a strange vision
 In our sleep that came and went.

I think I can do it
 Just as easily as I can forget
 That there's
 A rhino in the bathtub
 Surrounded by shattered tiles
 And a shredded shower curtain
With no safe way to remove him.

{Not all truths can be denied.}

A Thank You to My Heavenly Father

You've given me the sun
That banishes the obscurity of a frightening world
You've given me the stars
Which remind me that my name is important to you
You've given me the winds
Which stir up my excitement
You've given me the clouds
That let my imagination run wild
You've given me my beloved waters – lakes, streams, oceans
Which fill me with inspiration, sanity and build my fortitude
You've given me the color blue
That makes everything seem okay and hushes my fears
You've given me a plethora of foods
Which thrill my tongue with flavor

You've given me other souls to commune with
Those who are so precious and unique
Like each flake of snow
Every bird's feather
All the colors of the spectrum
Each filling me with love un-bounding
In styles so diverse and calming

You've given me a clear hope
So I can hang on
When I'm dragged through the darkened sludge
Of a darkening world
You've given me a comfortable life preserver
That steadies my course
And carries me safely through every storm
You've given me solace
Even when clamped by the jaws of grief
You've given me joy despite constant robberies
Knowing that you will restore it all at the perfect time

Though I have very little to offer
From these poor imperfect hands
I'll give you all I can
For as long as I can give it
I give you my life
Because within it
I carry a love that transcends my innermost being
The part of me that is so deeply inspired
I can only call it "my soul"

A Treasure Almost Wasted

I stood around the corner
With my heart in a pint-sized bag
Dangling from my fingertips
On the side of the street
Near your house

I was ready to hand it to you
In an instant
When you drove by.
If you ever really wanted it
It would have been dropped from my
Anxious fingertips into your hands
Immediately

Sometimes
Out of fear
I'd hide it
From you
Entirely

Sometimes
I almost
Threw it at you
For sheer frustration,
Tired of the wait,
In need of some sort of action on your part

At other times
I cried into the bag
Wanting to leave it on
Your doorstep
Hoping you'd pity it
Like a kind stranger pities
An abandoned kitten left at their door
Taking it into their arms
And into their life

But one day, I gave up and took my little bag
Back home realizing that it wasn't
Something that you could handle
The way such a gift deserves
...and that's okay...
Because my heart appears
To have greater value to someone else
Who may know how to handle such a precious offering

Contents Under Pressure

{Beware of the artist who is repressed!}

I told you that I'm not one to
Be caged -
Not within a tiny room
Without windows
Or light -
Not within the confines
Of monotony –
Not within the parameters
Of a land made of cement -
Not within the iron walls
Of conformity
Or suppressed emotion

The pressure builds until
Seams separate
Supports buckle
Surfaces overheat
Foundations crack

And with the slightest nudge of a breeze
Nothing more
Than splintered glass and steam remain

{Thank you for urging me, Debra.}

East Twin Tour

{For Dad}

If I were to assign a smell to this river muck
I'd say it was melted copper dipped in honey
And rancid tartar sauce

The stomach of this river
That has digested myriads of oak leaves and steelhead trout
And enveloped my feet into its mushy folds
As I tried to capture gargantuan crayfish
Which threaten everyone with their burgundy pinchers
Guarding their armored bodies
I'll point to all the brightly colored fishing lures
That I snagged in the trees or sunken logs
When I over cast my rod
After seeing the swirl of the catfish
We can never catch
(Do you think it was "Elmer"?)

I can show you where the water is so low
That the canoe cannot slide across the filmy surface
When the cotton woods drop their silky locks
And we are beached helplessly
Left only to pick out the river clams from the silt bottom
And when we are finally able to turn the boat against the current
I'll show you the rapids
Where the water squirts and gushes and giggles
Over the softly rounded rocks that threaten our vessel
If we follow the wrong eddy
Of this clear liquid slalom course

I'll take you further down the tranquil stretch
Where the cedars are like castle walls that protect us
On both sides like soaring, massive guards
That command silence and make the waters stand still
And when we get back to the bank close to the house
I'll remind you of how funny it looked
When you fell backwards out of the canoe
While we stood on the dock laughing because we were still dry
And you were not