



agefriendly
EDMONTON



SENIORS' WEEK 2023

Poetry Selection

**"Through the Eyes
of Experience"**



SENIORS' WEEK 2023

JUNE 5 KICK-OFF

Program begins at 11:00 AM

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

Opening Prayer

Greetings from the City of Edmonton-
Mayor Amarjeet Sohi

Presenting Sponsor-Chartwell

Poem Readings

Greetings from Age Friendly Edmonton
and video presentation

Music by the Wildrose Fiddlers

Door Prizes and Final Remarks

Lunch

Through the Eyes of Experience

Thank you to the older adults who took the
time to send in their poetry.

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Age Friendly Edmonton (AFE) seeks to build a city that values, respects, and actively supports the well-being of older adults. In working towards this, AFE strives to ensure that:

- Seniors are engaged, participating, and contributing to their communities
- Seniors are safe and well in their home and communities
- Seniors are respected and included
- Seniors have access to the programs, services, and resources they need

We at Age Friendly Edmonton believe that age is a gift to our city.

To learn more about Age Friendly Edmonton and to get involved please visit: seniorscouncil.net or email: agefriendly@seniorscouncil.net

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Welcome to the World, Layla Denise

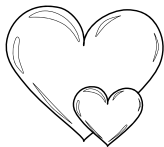
*Today and all days I want to laud a lovely Layla Denise,
to linger lovingly on the lift and legacy that her life
among us offers,
to sing always with her with love and laughter,
and in that singing to recall the most liquid letter in our
language – your letter, Layla –
L –which sometimes dissolves, like water, into a great
calmness, a lake of silence.*

*Lovely Layla, may you learn to listen closely to the large-
hearted world,
explore its latitudes and longitudes, its legacies and
literacies;
to love all its small and large creations, its lambs and
lions,
ladybugs and loons, lilacs and lily of the valley.*

*May you find your own ladders to climb
and build from, and launch pads to lift your dreams;
loyal kin and friends who become as close to you
as the lifelines in the palms of your hands, on whom you
can lean
when you lose your way.
May you understand that loneliness is light years from
aloneness,
that the reason we call it longing is that desire has such
spaces in it.*

*May you learn to discern when leaping with courage is called for,
and when little-by-little is the clearest way.
May you learn when to lead and when to follow.
Be leery of lies, loans, loud-mouthed laggards,
and those who exploit the labour and loads of others.
Write your own love letters; live close to libraries.
May you delight in your liveness of your limbs, leap and lift
through luminous days, and when it's time, sleep soundly,
Layla Denise,
nestled in the love that surrounds you.*

Jannie Edwards



if only

*if only i had gone
left instead of right
worn the red dress
not the blue
gone north instead of south*

*said more
or less
talked
or listened*

*done this instead of that
said yes instead of
No*

had a coffee not the tea

*held out my hand
or took yours*

*if only
i were taller
thinner
younger older
lived here or there*

*if only
i were
you were
we were*

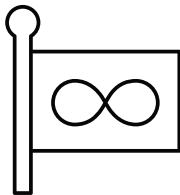
*i t
would be
different
then*

Rosemary Manning

I Am Métis

*Today very proud to be me
Walking tall for all to see
Our Elders were discouraged
Taught us all and encouraged
Pride inside they went on
Looking toward a new dawn
They built a country for us all
Challenges abound they didn't fall
I am Métis and proud to be
Our Ancestors left us a legacy
Taught us to do whatever it takes
Métis Pride and history it makes
Always work and help another
Taught by our Father and Mother
Staying strong and very proud
Always rising above the crowd
I am Métis I always say
Proudly here forever to stay*

Corrine Card



Memory

*Memory is magical
A light that appears
And disappears
Switched on, off, on, off
By an unknown hand*

*In youth
Memory sharp and quick
Flows from brain to lips
Like a fount
Names, dates, events,
Spring easily to mind*

*In middle age
Memory fades in slow motion
Names slip the lips
Dates and events are missed
It's not without regret
As memory comes in drips*

*In old age
Memory is a sieve
Names, dates, events
Just pass through
Now and then a spark
But the magic is no longer there*

Sushila Samy

After The Harvest

*It was after the harvest and the work was mostly done
We were sharing morning coffee and a little one on one
His silhouette all lean and tall, against the morning sun
Was a fitting metaphor for a journey just begun
It was after the harvest and his farming days were through
It was after the harvest and he was starting life anew
He was all of seven decades but ever a kid at heart
And he was all excited about his brand new start
New songs for an old guitar, horizons bright and wide
Bucket lists and grandsons and far off trails to ride.
Some memories overtook him; slowing down his pace
Their shadows moving softly across his weathered face
Of a brother's sudden passing; plowing through the grief
That tore into his family and challenged his beliefs
And I saw some mist arise inside those gentle eyes
As he told of how he'd stumbled on the path to growing wise
Of making his amends for the times he'd lost his way
Of asking a son's forgiveness this coming Father's Day
It was after the harvest and his farming days were through
It was after the harvest and he was starting life anew.*

Clint McElwaine



Wisdom

*I must know something,
I will be fifty-five this year.*

*The elm tree on the boulevard
Turns sixty.*

*All six elms on our street
represent three hundred and sixty years,
of combined growing experience.*

The forest knows much.

*The large quartz conglomerate stone in my garden
Has existed for two hundred thousand years.*

*My faith is in not like a rock,
It is in it.*

Mountains, they are treasure.

*If this poem were to survive for one hundred years,
Imagine the wisdom of these words.*

David Fraser

65th Birthday Poem

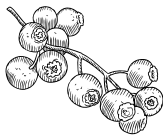
*The ripe canola is my color this hour
walking into the morning,
a field of greeting at the end
of the gravel path
wet with yesterday's rain
quenching the season's drought—
stirring possibilities
on the horizon of hope—*

*Saskatoon boughs weigh
selflessly, offer
grape-size berries—*

*the sky, a barometer
measures constant change—
the static of all that cannot
be controlled—*

*and I am as the berry bough,
I do as I have always done,
serve the fruit
of my being*

Sandra Mooney-Ellerbeck



Destiny

*Through times I really tried for you and you
and for my sons and some times others too
what dubious dreams went undelivered,
were detoured or, alas, unconsidered.
Oft laid aside were things I'd wished to do,
though aims nor motives ever were untrue.
Responsibilities and reactions,
impelled the subsequent choice of actions.*

*During a life's quest for identity,
not often consumed with defining me,
destinations of which I keenly dreamed
remained more often than not unredeemed,
and ambitions in which I had believed
continued often to be unachieved.
Yet please don't let these words be misconstrued,
these roads I've chosen and no routes are rued.*

*Independence gained through now loosened bonds
opens portals and the spirit responds
to diversions at one time not eschewed
which now can be spontaneously pursued.
Blessed with latitude, happiness, good health,
and contempt for inequities of wealth
'tis time to write for rights and equality,
and tend to needs of our humanity.*

Max Vandersteen

Eyes Have Seen

*Suddenly the darkness lifts
And We see the light of day
With golden rays of sunshine
To set us on our way*

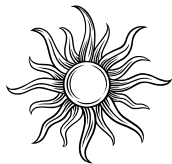
*Our hearts are broken open
Instead of shut and cold
As love returns to find us
With an outstretched hand to hold*

*We guard the spirit above all else
From it our blessings flow
And where we meet with perfect love
And It's marvels to bestows*

*Perhaps our sometimes rugged paths
Are showing us the way
To move our minds away from fear
And back to joy each day.*

*To walk in grace, we must look up
And firmly fix our gaze.
And give our thoughts to Devine love
With gratitude and praise*

Patricia Nicholl

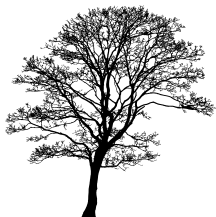


Catastrophe at Hawrelak Park

*City planners have got me
All riled up
As they mark the end
Of life for 200 trees
In Hawrelak Park
There must have been
A world before
We started cutting down trees
Before we thought
Our plans were worth more
Than these silent giants
Who eat greenhouse gases
For breakfast, lunch and dinner
My heart breaks
As I walk in the cold light of today
Realizing I don't know
These trees in person
Nor the wildlife
That considers them home
I just know
We can't let them go
Without a protest
Without pointing the finger of shame
And oh – my heart leaps*

*As a parliament of magpies
Settle on the nearby elms and poplars
Where have they come from
I have no idea
Yet they bring hope
That even before the axe falls
The planners will see
The catastrophes
They bring upon our city*

Adele Fontaine



Grown

aged eyes
beacon to time
wrinkles lines so define
within words of the past

hardships in lie
the fingertips of life
hold hands to the mind

understanding wisdom
a face with perceptive harmony
from the passage of the pathway

through the struggling steps
amidst in the dust of yesteryear
mend near and far
make a better life the new

grown
getting on
long standing
the wind dust closing in
on the pathway

the deep rooted eyes
slowly rest easy

Guy Chambers

Reverse Puberty

*Reverse Puberty has arrived with gale force winds
 Indubitably contrived to hail without rescind
 Where seasons become internal
 With private summers of infernos
 At minus 40 coats will open
 Sheets and blankets thrown and hoping
 The temperature drops soon
 As I swelter neath the moon*

*I have kissed full nights sleep goodbye
 Waved my hand and started to cry
 Estrogen deprivation
 Random acts of ovulation
 Early a.m. risings occur
 To my bladder I do defer
 Eyes wide open with racing heart
 Buddha belly is just the start*



*Worse yet are the black dogs
 Where mental acumen becomes a fog
 And the memory is on a leave
 With no return date I believe
 How can a mind trained for mathematics
 Get hijacked and become erratic
 As I lament the loss with words sublime
 My daughter says you have had no memory for
 quite some time.*

Karen Lumley

Dawn

*A keyhole of light
shines through
dawn's grey door
she spreads her morning message
upon wakers of the day
--- s o u n d i n g ---
the heart of this world
silently rhythms over all
rippling rays of life rising
out of quiet night
out of silent sleep
upon those who wake
to find to see to know
new meaning this day.*

**Then our questions arise
with the dawning sunlight
and stream out searching
searching for answers.**

*For those who search
to find to think to know
turn darkness
to dawn
of a new day.*

Diane Robitelle

OUR TIME OUR OWN

The world, as seen through progressive lenses, comes sharply into focus: the human foibles, the ongoing struggles to populate this densely inhabited planet, the rush for money, fame and companionship. The passions of youth replaced by contentment, the surging swells of energy now a mellow pace, we contemplate and comfort, guide and offer sustenance to those hungering for wisdom, which, born of time, comes when quick acquisition of knowledge has slowed. With aided ears we listen to the struggles of the young, wax nostalgic for the field of endless possibilities, but are grateful for the easy choices left us. Ours is the reaping time; we gather the rewards of our labours and loves, hold court for those who value experience, and embark on new adventures, our time our own.

ky perraun



Begin Again

*Leaves of copper and rust
Swirled around the streets
Children getting ready for Thanksgiving.
But there would be no giving thanks
In our world that year
The doctor sent you home
To settle your affairs
'3 months.' he said.
But you lived until you saw us all
One last time
That day you closed your eyes
I wept
For lost time with you.
Time passed.
Snow was falling
When we brought our baby home
She had black hair like my father
And his spirit
This I knew.
Her eyes a brilliant hazel
Shining so like yours.
I lamented
That she had lost time with you*

*Years had passed
we buried my mother
Wondering if you knew
But you left us a sign.
When you left red rose petals
Then I knew it was you.*

Lorraine McFaddin



Age Advantage

Don't ignore me.

*Silver threads earned through augmented
years crown my head, protect a mind
still capable of remembering.*

My eyes may no longer focus quickly.

*They are old and tired, having witnessed
an eternity of happenings.*

Don't ridicule me.

*I'm not as fashion-conscious as I used to be.
Stores I've shopped at are no more. Relics reside
in storage closets. Outfits, decades old.
Dare I purchase shoes online?*

*New technology captivating the young,
challenges my daily existence.*

*Can they research school projects in libraries
without the Internet, like I did? Are they capable
of long division by hand, without using calculators?
Can they write a letter in cursive, like I do?*

Don't discard me.

*My tree of knowledge has matured, not rotted.
I can illustrate past adventures in the blinking
of an eye... if anyone cares to listen.*

Krystyna Fedosejevs

Cotton Candy Moments

*Cotton Candy Moments
Sweet and delicate
Tucked in the archives of my mind*

*Arcade games
A quarter a round
Pockets full and
Friends around*

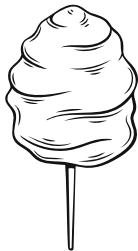
*Amusement park days
Shouts of horrified fun
Delicious treats
Bodies baked in the sun*

*Hide 'n Seek
And Climbing trees
Cars in the sand
And games of "Freeze!"*

*Standing on swings and
pumping so high
Buckling chains and
the thrill of the ride
Milkshake moments and
Free fall jumps
Bruises and sprains and
Taking your lumps*

*Childhood echoes of days long gone
Faces and laughter - a beautiful song*

Fiona Stocker



Slow Water

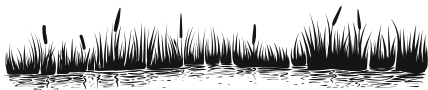
*Slow water, I am, aging into marshes
and wetlands of my choosing
resting pausing into flood plains
and bayous, sponging the land,
seeing with new eyes the water plants
and birds, before flowing on and settling
on a slow-moving rhythm that ripples
into a blend of feeding, growing, song.*

*Slower than I used to be, I aim
to wander, though not aimlessly,
with time to linger and listen to the lone
robin and her sweet song, as my long
limbs stretch out into tributaries,
that curl around deltas, and twist
into inlets, then slow fingers of springs
and streams, creeks, and puddles.*

*Slow water, I am not the great
big sea, surging over and beyond
all obstacles at will, taking what I want,
and throwing away the rest,
or a young bursting river, full of youth
and fury, protests, and violence.
I am not the flood waters that swallow
towns and cities, demanding their way,*

*but I have become slow water,
stretching, splitting my limbs
to feed and nourish all life that crosses
my path, eventually seeping and settling
into the earth, at peace, at rest.*

Wilda Kruize



I'm Retired

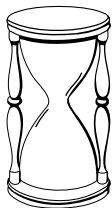
*I'm retired, I say.
I can do whatever I want now.
I'm happy.
Every day is a weekend.
It's different.
No countdown to Friday,
no dreading Monday.
I don't mind.
I don't miss that at all.*

*I remember seeing bumper stickers -
I'd rather be sailing, I'd rather be hiking -
You get the picture.
Now I am the bumper sticker!
I can do all those things
that I'd rather be doing
than sitting at a desk all day.*

*Some people need structure, a schedule.
Not I.
It's nice to be able to sleep longer
if I had trouble sleeping the night before;
instead of stumbling around all day being sleep
deprived
and feeling kind of grouchy.*

*I must say, I think I do lack a bit of cutting edge,
a sense of purpose or accomplishment.
I'd like to take advantage of the extra time in retirement
and write or do art.
But so far I haven't done much.
It's been six years.
I really should get on that.*

Pauline Mason



THROUGH THE EYES OF EXPERIENCE

*Today when my son and I went shopping,
Which we normally do each month
A lady followed us out of the store.
Why?....we had no clue nor hunch.*

*My son then carefully helped me into the car and
when he got to the trunk,
This lady started to speak to him, said she wanted
him to know
That today he'd been a gift to her.*

*You see, she said, I lost my son years ago,
I've grieved him oh, so much!
But watching you care for your mom today
I sensed his presence and his loving touch.*

Elizabeth Stuart

Muzzled

*Soul sisters
Bound by story
Three decades
Roaming side by side
Laughing, crying, sharing
Tales of women
Heroic, strong, and true
Melting the glass ceiling
Triumphant
Dementia intrudes
Sliding through her mind
Softly, silently
Curling tendrils outstretched
Finding their mark
Snaring her memories
Wrapping them in fragments
Head bowed, she sits
Shoulders hunched
Eyes blank
Tongue stilled
Sighing
Lost.*

Linda Lee



Me Too

*I observed the privileges accorded white men in
power
as a young well educated white woman avoiding
bum pinches and
inappropriate hugs as best I could while smiling
wanly at lewd remarks
telling myself that it was part and parcel of the job as
long as
as I could keep my clothes on and preserve my
corporeal integrity
It comes with the territory I used to say to myself but
now I see the issue is who owns the territory*

*As an aging blue-eyed middle class woman of fixed
address
I have accepted the perks of age and whiteness while
mostly being invisible
and do not raise objections when an officer of the law
does not mistake my cell phone or camera for a gun*

*And I am guilty in other ways:
I have hugged when I should have shaken hands
moved in for a bone-crunching handshake
instead of a light touch on the elbow and patted
a shoulder when I should have stepped back six feet*

*As a toucher, a hugger, by many standards
an overcommunicator, an overconnector
a tactile person in a do-not-touch world
I have recklessly crossed many invisible lines
spoken up when silence would have been golden
spilled my guts when they should have stayed
corseted*

I too am guilty

Karen Grove



In Control of All Time

*I am not made out of time.
I am usually in need of time.
I know how time is quick to fly. Most people wish
they could control time. Time is just too dangerous
to be left on its own. We want time to know that
we should be in control of all time*

Ronald Kurt

Seniors Poetry

*Life is hard,
Then you get old.*

Debra Firmaniuk

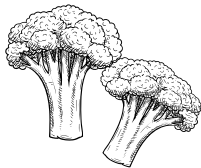
HEALTHY SENIOR

*My mother used to feed me to grow up big and strong
Cauliflower and broccoli, some foods that taste so
wrong
How could anyone believe that vegetables could be so
good
Especially when there was sugar in all my favorite food*

*Should have listened to my mother, the words keep
haunting me
One look in the mirror and it's scary what I see
So I'm eating all my veggies and foods that are whole
My portions are no bigger than can fit into a bowl*

*I bought some shoes for walking and do it every day
And go visit Arizona for my long winter stay
If I continue on this journey it should come as no
surprise
That by the time I am a hundred, I'll be my perfect size*

Don Hamaliuk



My Young Farmer

*He is crossing the mud puddle strewn farm yard in
his dull grey rubber boots
to the barn
that once had cows.
Now almost empty
as we embraced grain-only-farming
the specialization and saviour of us stupid farmers.*

*In the barn there is a Jersey cow -
just one
giving us cottage cheese, milk and butter to keep
us and the neighbouring families fed good fats.*

*He passes the quonset housing farming
equipment for sale.
The Pritz quarter was sold to keep us in the
farming game but there was not enough money
left over to buy seed, fertilizer, crop insurance, gas
and those never ending bills from just trying to
keep the old machinery going.
Not enough money to let us farm.
Not enough money to let us breathe that air city
slickers think is so pure.*

*My young farmer always knew he would farm.
Sitting on his father's lap on the tractor
his 12 month old self absorbing the dirt behind his
chubby knees and into his neck folds.
He was the fifth generation farmer.
Promises made in the turned soil and seeds and
sweat.*

*Now he does chores,
milks the cow, squirts milk from the cow's teat into
the mouth of Swartz the constantly pregnant cat,
gathers eggs and
watches Oprah who tells him to live his best life
ever.*

Olive Yonge



Bungee Jump

*I listened as she described
her upcoming solo trip to New Zealand.
How she would bungee jump on her 25th birthday.
How exciting, I thought, how brave.*

Then the conversation turned to dating and marriage.

*She confidently stated
she would never marry someone she hadn't lived
with first.*

*She would need to know him before that
commitment.*

*See if they were compatible.
This child-half-my-age couldn't believe
I had married after only dating six months.*

*And I felt sad for her,
as it takes a lifetime to know someone.
A lifetime of waking up next to him day after day
a fight that never ends about toilet paper
of negative pregnancy tests
of layoffs and missed opportunities
sunrises and star gazing, family dinners and funerals
birthdays and moving boxes and doing the dishes
in-laws and working late, slamming doors and tear-
filled hugs.
It will take your lifetime to really know him.*

*You have to jump, a cord around your feet.
You may scream all the way down.
But you will probably laugh with joy
how exciting, how brave.*

Laura Dennis



THROUGH THE EYES OF EXPERIENCE

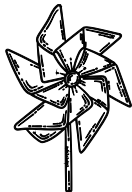
*Through the eyes of experience my chalked-up
wins are more like pinwheels taking a deep
breath for the rest of my life and holding it.
Wondering was it beneficial to this this age.*

*Through the eyes of my experience I have sown, I
have reaped. My soft arms are rest for weary
souls, I hold memories that,
mean something and memories that don't.
I smiled and fought some days.
My laughter was so frequent, my tears were far
and few, There was nothing to be sorry about, it
was all in the rearview.*

*To forgive ourselves for our wrong doings.
See, its what you remember, crunching snow
isn't what I hear but what I remember, cold is
not what I feel.*

*Through the eyes of experience I remember
wanting to Leave a shadow in the world when I
am no longer here.*

Faye Logan



*May lies in her hospital bed
the baby in the curl of her arm
they're both in the fetal position
him just out of the void
her on her way back to it after 93 years on earth.
someone says, "He's your great grand-son,"
she says, "How nice."*

*She's old age
two cracked vertebrae
wrist in a cast
got out of bed unsupervised
in the middle of the night.*

*He's young age
not eating well enough
after a long and difficult labor.*

*He's got life's curves ahead of him
she's on a straight highway.
suddenly kisses him on the top of his head,
makes a sign over him that might be a cross
she's not Catholic.*

Mary Leah de Zwart



Why Sanctioned Servitude?

Sacred

Women are sacred

Life-giving, birthing new generations

Nurturing body, heart, mind, and spirit.

Why would our city take that away?

License women to be sold? Provide safe sites for sexual consumers?

Harm “reduction,” say they, the well-intentioned but misguided.

Violations of vulnerable “managed” in a monetized market,

public generally unaware that “body rub” means “blow job.”

“Stigma,” they say, kills the missing and murdered, greedy men not violent if entitlement protected.

Sacred

Women are sacred

Sharing relationships, tenderness, care

Sacred intimacy links partners, builds family, strengthens community.

Shared common vision bridges social divides.

Women deserve to be respected, not relegated to products for purchase.

*Our city claims to support inclusion, well-being,
accessibility, excellence.*

*Surely this means training, opportunity,
connections, social nets*

*NOT sanctioned sexual servitude of systemic
inequality.*

*All unity comes from the Sacred circle of life.
Sacredness restored signals hope and healing for
living creation.*

*Wisdom is wrought from watching the
marginalized mistreated.*

*“Anti-trafficking” calls need further interpretation
when consumer demands demonstrate
desecration.*

*Certified commodification spews country wide
devastation.*

*Innocents trafficked across the nation; intimacy
traded for cash injection.*

*To our dismay, the price we pay is loss of sacred
connection.*

Kathy King



Well Learned Lessons for a Much Loved Life

Wake each day in quiet anticipation and appreciation.

*Light a candle and to it whisper your prayer
in soft remembrance of those already asked
and answered.*

*Welcome this ordinary life as your holy enough.
Home tended, meals prepared, laundry washed
and folded.*

*Weed and water the garden, rake the leaves,
shovel the snow.*

Kiss your beloved. Walk the dog.

*Every day clear the calendar of mindless
obligation.*

Every day put the devices on mute.

*Say yes to life's invitations. Say no to safeguard
what matters most.*

*Rest and reflect. Daydream and dance. Do lots
of nothing, too.*

*Read a poem a day. Better yet, take pen to
paper and write your own.*

A secret shared with no one. Yet.

*Remember every thing under heaven has its
own rhythm and reason,
and yours is to follow, not lead, in the dance of
each season. So
take a deep breath, and slow down.*

*Welcome friend and neighbor, enemy and
stranger, inside and out.
Enjoy the space and solitude of your own
companionship.*

*Trust it's not all up to you, that forces and folks,
seen and unseen,
are always making magic on your behalf.*

Katharine Weinmann



Musings of a Senescent

*What picture will be taken last?
That of some fluffy cumulus?
A deserted road, an unbeaten path?
Some blooms, a ladybug?
An unshared sunrise?
A slobbery lab?*

*A child's happy face?
The grin of an amateur boxer's win?
Another child on rollerblades
Or ice skates or a skateboard
Or a bike or behind a brand new wheel?*

*Which graduation of which grandchild to attend last?
Whose Christmas presentation?
Whose recital, whose birthday?
Whose report card to be last proud about?*

*Which trip will be the last?
What city or countryside?
Which airline, boarding gate,
Baggage carousel, smelly cab?*

*Which long-stemmed roses will be the last?
For a birthday or Valentine's?
For a pseudo celebration or just because?*

*As chapters for a book remain uncollated,
Scrapbooks for other 18th birthdays unstarted,
Questions unanswered or answers unrhymed,
Will the last tear shed be of joy
or sorrow or regret or relief?
Who nearby as the last breath is breathed?*

Edna I. Jimenez



Castle Keep

Lock all doors!

Seal the cracks!

Pull the drawbridge up!

The enemy with stealth and guile,
Approaches with a crooked smile.

Beware!

Danger!

Post archers on the turrets high,
Let flaming arrows fill the sky.
No lack of ills to vex and miff,
These brittle bones and joints so stiff.

To my gout I shout, "Get out, get out!"

The enemy is "afoot".

Arthritic hands and aching back,
Eyes clouded dull by cataract.

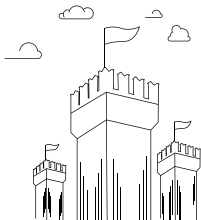
What misery comes knocking still?

This ceaseless ringing in my ears,
Seems only to compound my fears.
And in the clamour from all sides,
Will I hear it coming?

Whomever lives within these walls,
That ache and quake as age befalls,
Lift and rise from stooping gait,
Let peace resume, let pain abate.

Not seismic shift, nor polar drift,
Can shake true epicentre.
I tell myself, these walls are strong,
Don't let that old man enter!

Fred Shreenan



A Face With No Place

*I have a name, I have a face
But at this time, I have no place
No house, no room, no phone
So out on the streets, I continue to roam
The teenage years pass, and I am pregnant with child
No more days of being care-free and wild
Now I have a Son who means the world to me
But something inside me still longs to be free!
I was once a strong woman, who had a good trade
But as time goes on my memories they fade
I was married I had a family and a home
But now on the streets, I continue to roam
I go town to town and place to place
But if I stay too long other's give chase
No house, no room, no phone
So out on the streets, I continue to roam
Seasons change and it is winter once more
But as I try to survive, my tears continue to pour
At night I am out in the freezing cold
Because addiction - it got a strong hold
I am not the same as I used to be
Thoughts cross my mind and I long to be free
I have a name, I have a face
But at this time, I have no place*

Catherine Marji

Some Edmonton Experiences

*This much I feel, my length of
life is long-
So that many events have progressed
by
How very much has changed in work
patterns-
From ice -carrying carts to
horse drawn milk wagons
To long lasting appliances for
the home.
Remember when cars were chosen
for the latest colour?
Simple little innovations for
students like field trips,
calculators, with the fractions
Ever expanding work force with
the new news and the ever
very latest!
Ideas provided to science, government,
business and
The best of recreational scenarios
to decide upon
At the personal level, men and women
now care to provide interesting entertainment
and favorable changes for local and national
opportunities.*

L. Alvarado

Deafness creeps in

One day the world of sound will disappear.

The crickets

will no longer sing me to sleep.

The blue jays

will no longer chirp me awake.

All of life will be a muted video.

No symphony

will move my soul.

No laughter

will telegraph joy.

I will read endlessly,

converse rarely.

Perhaps solitude will be welcome. I am curious.

Will I feel lonely?

*I will be less and less part of the world. Cordoned
off by silence.*

Set aside

*like a sleeping child, included
yet invisible.*

You will raise your voice to

ask questions

that require only "yes" or "no."

I will do my best

not to grow sad.

I will do my best

to find some other way

to feel worthy.



Ronna Jevne

Thank you again to the Edmonton Older Adults who took the time to write these meaningful, thoughtful, and beautifully articulated poems on the theme of "Through the Eyes of Experience."

To view this chapbook online, please visit:

<https://seniorscouncil.net/afe-chapbook/>

Or scan the QR code below:



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