

This Parkinson's Soul

*for Cyndy, John, Carol, Jackie,
Patti, Marilyn, Joan, Greg, Ann, Linda, Carey, and all the rest of you
incorrigible warrior-kin*

This Parkinson's soul, fecund, fatigued,
and filled
with restless fire,
has little time
to waste.

Although fecund, she does not know
how much time she has-
Years? Or weeks? Or days?-And so, every morning,
hopeful, she'll lay a dozen eggs, and tell you she intends to hatch
every single one
before the sun falls
through her lush, exhausted sky.

And if she stumbles and nearly crushes six or seven; or forgets
where she laid the rest,
know that she will still intend to birth every one of them
that day.

And not just any eggs!
Oh no! Hers
will be hero-offspring, poets, painters,
warriors who, she's sure, will, impassioned, find a way
to restore to everyone in need, all that has been ever lost or seized.

And so, full of fire,
this foolish-hopeful soul of mine forages every day
for food to feed her young.
And in her quest, she's got precious little time
for rules, not least the ones
who govern sleep or call out, "Wait-your-turn!"
Not her! Aware her balance wanders off in crowds, if she's to bring it back,
she'll rarely stand in line.
You'll often see her slipping to the front,
to see or sample anything's that's free,
and, then, no better than a Cheshire cat,
she'll raise her cane
in thanks, and gracious, take her leave.

Yes, she's bold and sly, but don't be let yourself be fooled.

This brazen little soul in her Parkinson's fatigue, still
dreams night after night about the rush
of sudden winds
which may or may not
pinch
her stubborn fire out.

And this is why she needs, like Don Quixote
to clamber as best she can
upon her trusty steed
and clatter through each day towards Trouble, who, Hydra-headed and
relentless, seems to step
always in her way.

Yes, Trouble, greedy and capricious, disguised behind so many shawls,
behind so many unexpected masks,
and who waves about so many sharp
and polished swords.

But swords can not,
will not, warn my soul away.
Slipping sideways off her steed, some days
even practically asleep,
she'll still reach out
her one good hand--
(while she still can)
to slap that Trouble hard
across its cheeky face,

because until those winds begin
to sail her off that horse,
be warned!
She will not, full of fire,
ever fail her young.
She will not, full of fire, ever
fail
herself.

Leonore Gordon, 4/2007