

## The Gift

By Camille Booth  
February, 2009

In the darkness of a moment  
We found each other.  
An understanding,  
Foreign to all  
But the souls of two  
Who stepped off the  
Precipice into an  
Connection that is  
Friendship, yet beyond  
Friendship.

Skin and flesh speaks.  
Distanced from intellect  
And reason, a jangling  
Chemistry that confuses  
The sense of morality,  
Our sense of fidelity,  
But bears it's own  
Integrity of the spirit.

Gears in an incomprehensible  
System, we fuse together  
Meeting profoundly  
With each turn  
Our precise connection  
Facilitating the continuance  
Of respective lives.

Weakness and strength  
Symbiotically combine,  
Acknowledged, accepted  
And appreciated.  
Nuanced silences,  
Intensely stated truths, and  
Deep intimacy  
Define stolen time.

Time and love stand as barriers  
Each are owed to others  
And cannot be offered freely.  
Still, what we share  
Belongs only to us.  
Secret, sweet darkness that  
Cannot identify us in the light.  
A sweetness captured  
By passionate touch and  
The earthy smells of loving  
If not love.

“Never before” becomes the  
Anthem of each discovery  
As we map the hidden  
Spaces in the recesses  
Of the soul.  
A being who touches  
Those spaces is a gift  
Even if questions arise to  
Challenge the wisdom  
Of continuing.

But wisdom is elusive.  
It does not sit,  
A heavy guardian,  
But surrounds,  
A mist...where echoes  
And warnings drift  
Quietly heard but unheeded  
As we accept  
The gift of each other.

## **The Liar**

5/26/09

I tell stories  
Sometimes to others  
And sometimes to myself.  
Either sensationalizing  
Or rationalizing experience.  
Moments in time  
Becoming broadly  
True rather than  
Strictly truth.

Pieces of reality  
Broken with embellishments  
In my favorite places.  
Euphemisms and irony  
Taking the place of  
Dark moments  
Which would make  
The tale too real  
For me to relate.

I am, after all, the  
Author of my experience  
Creating a fictitious haze  
Around my spirit  
So that I might survive  
That which haunts me  
At the times when  
I must face myself.

In the silence of  
My thoughts when  
Bravado and pride  
Melt away, like molten wax  
Hardening the shell  
Around me, I begin to  
Internalize the Truth.  
Soon, I will be able to  
Tell it with honesty.

My stories take on  
A voice that rings  
With the authority  
Of lessons learned  
And I take on a

Mantle of wisdom  
Rather than protecting  
My fragile and fearful ego.  
I may then laugh  
At the stories and the foolish  
Character I have  
Played in my tales.

I tell stories  
Sometimes to others  
And sometimes to myself  
So that I might have time  
To come to terms  
With the moments in my life  
That I would prefer to rewrite.

In time, when  
The truth emerges,  
My story comes to life  
On its own.  
Harsh in it's wisdom.  
Fascinating in it's  
Starkness.  
Fearless in the telling.

## Information

February 2, 2010

It's all information, really.  
No blades to the heart  
No useless tears  
No deep welling grief  
That burns the soul.

It's only information.  
Learning that you can't  
Or won't love me,  
That I've been wasting my  
Time and heart loving you  
Wasted time is good information.

You've given me information  
To show that you're all about fear.  
You're afraid that if I don't  
Love you that I'll not be your  
Friend, and I'll stop taking  
Care of you.  
Fear is good information.

I asked for information.  
How do you see me?  
You described someone  
You might admire from a distance  
And I realized how distant your  
Heart was from me.  
Distance is good information.

Truth and lies are information.  
If you believe either  
You are getting what you want, really.  
We all want to believe that love  
Can be ours even if the truth  
Stares us in the face, intensely  
Willing us to see through the lies.  
Lies are good information.

Sifting through the information  
Gained throughout our time,  
I've learned and grown, because  
That is what information is;  
The foundation of understanding.  
And now, I understand.  
Pain is good information.

## Second

June 18, 2009

I stored my pride  
Away. Placing it deep  
Within the empty space  
Where your voice now  
Echoes.

I look in the mirror  
And don't recognize who  
I see there. Rather than a person  
Of action, I see the flat eyes  
Of a fool who waits.  
Surviving on hope and  
Fantasies of a future that  
May or may not come to pass.

My stomach burns with  
Images of the present and  
Memories of the past  
At war with myself but  
Powerless to draw the line  
And step away.

Questions drum in my head  
Incessant, forceful, often angry  
Conversations with my best self  
And my worst self...neither able  
To reach a satisfactory conclusion.

Knowing as I accept less for  
Myself, I deserve less.  
Because I am ridiculous in  
My love, my passion, for you  
Waiting, waiting  
As you give your love to another.

Intermittent reward has become  
All there is. The rest is empty.  
I have chosen this path.  
No other may take responsibility  
For the torment and tyranny of  
My intellect. For ignorance  
Is sweet bliss. It would be better  
To not know what a fool  
I am for loving you.

At my weakest I wonder  
What it is about me  
That has failed to earn your love.  
A love that would walk through  
Fire and put the classics to shame.  
Then, I realize that in taking  
Second...  
I have not presented  
Myself as a woman  
Who is worth  
Magnificent, consuming,  
Committed love.

Who would choose a woman  
Who has not chosen herself?

## What Is Lost

Camille Booth (1996)

This pain is too deep  
    To form into a structure  
    That may be examined  
Without folding  
From the ache in my  
    Soul.

Thrown away  
Like moldy morsels  
    Of rotting bread.  
That which sustained  
    Now poisoned  
    With anger.  
Creaking demons  
    Take flight,  
Landing spoorlike  
    To reproduce  
Clawing away  
The thrumming  
Heartbeat song.

I protect  
What remains of my  
Sweet small memories  
Wonderful bursts that  
    Escape  
    Running away  
    Laughing  
Into the corners of  
    My spirit.

From there,  
I may take them out  
Caressing them lovingly  
In quiet moments.

I take steps  
Through the  
Window of Grief  
Allowing that I may  
Sometimes look back.  
But in the darkest times  
I see only a reflection  
    Of Myself.  
The space beside me  
Rings with unanswered  
    Echoes.

I bow to the wishes  
    Of anger  
    And bitterness  
Knowing my loss will  
Brand my heart forever.

Deepening shadows  
Slide silently between  
Laughing memories.  
I have no power in  
These moments  
To change what is...  
And what is lost.

**POTLACH**  
**(For My Mother)**  
**Camille Booth 9/6/96**

Rededicated to the Past  
Embracing the future  
With quite pride.  
Heartbeat drums  
Beating out the  
Rhythm of a People  
Seeped in Self-discovery.

Grandmother sings the song  
To Pass through Generations  
Black Wings masking  
The Trickster  
Who understands the  
Force of Will  
Needed to bring back  
His Legacy

Flashing buttons spell out  
The History  
Of a lineage lost  
To a people  
Turned from the balance  
Of Natural Patterns...  
The Circle;  
Endless, Timeless, Resolute.

Moccasined feet now  
Stamp in the  
Circular Patterns

Of Shining Pride  
And belief in the future.

The Spirits of  
Our Mothers  
Our Grandmothers  
Hold us with their  
Silent Approval.  
Quiet whispers speaking  
“My children,  
Move Forward, Be Proud.  
Spread your wings.  
Feel your power.  
Dance with Passion  
Sing Loud so all may hear.”

We feel these whispers  
In our souls and we Know.

We are finding  
Our Power  
Our People  
We know that the gift  
Of Eternity is Ours—  
The ancient ways are  
Reborn as we gather  
Dedicated to our Pride  
And our Past.