

## Dennis Herrell

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### Holding On

He grinned and winked and nodded  
as he made some headway against the wind,  
his hat proper but a bit askew, call it rakish;  
all in all, looking somewhat daft and mostly elderly,  
until you felt his eyes upon you,  
with their little spark of mad, not of mind,  
but with a clear light of reason  
and reckoning and sorry knowledge of his infirmity,  
as he accepted the offered arm, a murmured  
thank you trailing off into the fine April air.

## **Talking With Brian**

For years I have been watching for a son  
who would not disappoint and grieve a father.  
My first and only son went his own way  
on a path away from family and promise,  
into fields mined with drugs  
and altered brain waves; could not be contained  
by closed windows and caring parents,  
could not be deterred by early therapists,  
school counselors and private education,  
but was misguided by some evil inner twin  
without conscience or self-worth,  
with no personal compass  
for love, consideration or a simple hug.  
So, after 37 years of his life and 5 of death,  
I still see some young Brian at the gym,  
and talk with Paul or Bob or Phil,  
drawn to someone, anyone,  
I might cry out to as the son I could not keep.

## **Waiting For Nightfall**

He waited under a thorn bush.  
There was little shade, but he sat,  
there on the hot sand,  
patient in his sweat.

The sun burned through his closed eyes.  
The day crept along with his thirst.  
And his breath was the still air.

The only sounds came from highway trucks  
and the low rustle of the sheep nearby.

He was waiting for the cooler night  
and slivered moon and starlight  
to take him one day closer,  
and one day farther away.

## Woman

I was available as was the lamb  
to its master  
to its shepherd  
to the urgent ram wild with my scent.

I was available as was the young virgin  
presented to all the altars  
offered to all the man priests of society  
eager to attend my sacrifice.

I was available as was any unequal  
kneeling serf to the lord  
slave to the overseer  
wife to the husband.

I am more available as a woman  
sweet but bitter  
forgiving but reckoning  
frail but strong  
temporal but eternal.

**Dennis Herrell** writes both serious and humorous poems about his life in this civilized society. (Poking fun at himself is almost a full-time job.) He especially likes to look at the small things in everyday life that make us (him) so individual and vulnerable. Recent acceptances by *Atlanta Review*, *Aura*, *the Aureorean*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Iodine Poetry Journal*, *Pearl*, *Poem*, *Poet Lore*, *Poetry Salzburg Review*, and others. Forthcoming poetry books: *About Women*” by BookLocker.com, *Writing My Dictionary* by Finishing Line Press and *Hanging Out the Wash* by Kelsay Books.