

Laurie Kuntz – Two Poems

Every Possum in the Neighborhood

Remember when the biggest problem
were critters who begged entry
into every garage left ajar.
Years ago, her keys and doors undone,
my sister, the youngest of us, left an open invite
for every possum in the neighborhood.

This happened before pandemic problems,
before a mandated distance between the living.
The possum, placid in its nature, hunts unwanted critters
the snared snout just a way to self preserve
its many possum possibilities,
preservation, a trait we need in vicious and viral times.

So, leave the entryways open,
invite the useful guest in,
for we never know
just what will save us.

Miracle Muffin

Muffin was a rescue,
but aren't we all rescues in one way or another?

If we speak of dog years, she had many, and her name
was not our choice, but who can ever choose a calling?

Part Shiba, and parts unknown, she was a promised dog,
my son's first friend, when we moved to places unknown--

new house, new street, new routes.
A companion he needed until he didn't.

Then, like a giving tree, she started to slow, her limbs drooped
her gait wobbled, and her kidneys faltered, then came back, filtered like a prayer,

giving her a tad of time to fetch the bargain of days we threw at her,
and each time this happened, the vet called her a miracle,

but aren't we all miracles at one time or another?

Laurie Kuntz is an award-winning poet and film producer. She taught creative writing and poetry in Japan, Thailand and the Philippines. Many of her poetic themes are a result of her working with Southeast Asian refugees for over a decade after the Vietnam War years. She has published two poetry collections *The Moon Over My Mother's House* (Finishing Line Press) and *Somewhere in the Telling* (Mellen Press) and two chapbooks *Simple Gestures* (Texas Review Press) and *Women at the Onsen* (Blue Light Press), as well as an ESL reader *The New Arrival, Books 1 & 2* (Prentice Hall Publishers). Moment Poetry Press has published a broadside of her poem *The Moon Over My Mother's House* (<https://www.momentpoetry.com/>) Her poems, *Darnella's Duty and Not Drowning But Waving* have been produced in a podcast from LKMNDS and her poem, *Darnella's Duty* is published in a new Black Lives Matter Anthology. Her two ESL books have been featured on the podcast ESL for Equality, (<https://eslforequality.com/podcast/>). Kuntz's poetry has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and her chapbook, *Simple Gestures*, won the Texas Review Poetry Chapbook Contest. She was editor-in-chief of *Blue Muse Magazine* and a guest editor of *Hunger Mountain Magazine*. She has produced documentaries on the repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Law, and currently is a researcher/producer for a documentary on the Colombian peace process and reintegration of guerrilla soldiers in Colombia. She is the executive producer of an Emmy winning short narrative film, *Posthumous*. Recently retired, she lives in an endless summer state of mind. Visit her at: <https://lauriekuntz.myportfolio.com/home-1>