



Write a poem

Bởi:

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“Considering the ways in which so many of us waste our time, what would be wrong with a world in which everybody were writing poems? After all, there’s a significant service to humanity in spending time doing no harm. While you’re writing your poem, there’s one less scoundrel in the world. And I’d like a world, wouldn’t you, in which people actually took time to think about what they were saying? It would be, I’m certain, a more peaceful, more reasonable place... In writing poetry, even those poems that fail and fail miserably, we honor and affirm life.”

Ted Kooser: *The Poetry Home Repair Manual: Practical Advice for Beginning Poets*

Writing poems is great therapy for someone whose world has turned upside down. I think there are several reasons for this. First, most of us have not seriously attempted to write a poem, at least not since fourth grade. Sitting down to write a poem drags you into corners of your brain that you have not visited in many, many years. It can also be highly therapeutic. Poetry can express the highs and the lows of life, the pains of the past and the faith for the future, in ways that prose cannot. And while you’re writing a poem you are not thinking about your problems (or, as Kooser suggests, committing a crime).

When I was going through a particularly time some years back I started work on a book that eventually became *The Healing Tree: A Mermaid, A Poet, and A Miracle*. A somewhat ethereal character named Maggie somehow wormed her way into the story and insisted that she was a poet. I had never in my life written a poem, did not like reading poetry, and tried to convince Maggie that she was something else – an Olympic ice skater, maybe, or the first female president of the United States. She would have none of it, and kept insisting that I had to make her a poet.

What could I do? I started reading poetry, and to my great astonishment found that I enjoyed some of it – especially that of former Poet Laureate Billy Collins. I started writing (really bad) poetry, and found that I actually enjoyed doing it. Maggie became a poet, and she is now one of my favorite invisible friends!

This is the only life I have and I never step out of it except to follow a character down the alleys of a novel or when love makes me want to remove my clothes and sail classical records off a cliff.

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Billy Collins, from "One Life to Live" in Questions About Angels: Poems