



Red-Breasted Merganser 2

At home with Garland getting my head together
About dealing with this virus.

Did you wake up this morning and look in the mirror
And scream out in despair?
Well if you did, I know how you feel
When you encounter “merganser hair”.

In this time of separation and isolation
We are unlikely to have seen our hair provider,
It's growing unchecked and beginning to curl
And attracting the interest of the local birder.

Now as a professor I've been heard to say
That this is a teaching moment,
That this is a plus, a chance, a beginning
Rather than a look that you should lament.

“Merganser hair” should be the start
Of the newest in viral trends,
We'll wear it with pride for it cannot hide
And don't even think of making amends.

So think of the Merganser and its hair
Which it wears with pride cause it's great.
And in its world its sure to succeed

In getting the bird an exciting date.

There's power in accepting and in reflecting
About what we have and being grateful,
We did not choose but have had to respond
To a viral tragedy and events most fateful.

So think of the merganser and its hair
As a metaphor for these challenging days,
And embrace the face looking back from the mirror,
And don't let me hear any nays.

Red-breasted Merganser

On the frontage road off the Gulf Freeway
Coming back from Galveston on a beautiful spring day.

The duck-like bird sits atop the rock groins
Built to protect a wonderful marshland -
A marsh that is slowly being taken away
By a bay that is rising, ever-rising,
A change due to humans requiring response,
One of many needs since the climate changed.

The red breasted merganser sits like a stoic
Sporting a green head with an unruly top,
A reddish-brown patch sits atop a white breast,
The orange beak still, at rest, at peace.

Thoughts come unbidden gazing upon this bird,
Thoughts about this wonderful place -
A place called Earth,
A place called the Coast,
A place called Galveston Bay,
A place that resonates within my soul,
A place with which I am connected
In ways that I cannot explain,
A place that elicits a deep and satisfying joy
Pervading my essence, entering my soul,
A joy that makes me want to be better,

A joy that restores and rejuvenates,
A joy that simply is.

The merganser rises and gracefully enters the water,
Moving gently, slowly, through the calm waters,
Much like my soul swims in the silky-smooth terrain
Of my being, revealing a depth I can only access
On a joy-filled day watching a merganser be
On Galveston Bay in the spring.