



Herring Gull

On the beach in Galveston in the winter,
The big, bad Herring Gull stands alone
Looking over her domain – stern and serious,
Like a federal judge looking over her courtroom.

The small grey sanderling and the brown
And black turnstone keep their distance,
Loyal bailiff and recorder,
Watching the judge with caution,
Knowing that at any moment
They could receive the ire of the court.

I approach the Judge with respect,
Asking the court to consider my motion
Regarding the conduct of humans -
A plea that we be issued a citation
For being wanting and indulgent,
For never having enough,
For negligent endangerment of all living species,
For spewing carbon dioxide from the economy,
For chasing never-ending growth
By burning and emitting too much carbon,
Leaving a climate that is warming -
Absolutely and undeniably -
Changing our patterns of rain and food,
Harming all for the gain of a few.

The Judge turns and looks at me
And rules in favor of all living things,
Granting my motion to require a circular economy -
One based on natural cycles and patterns -
Enjoining us to be creative and frame-breaking -
Commanding us to go forth and be good stewards.

And so it was recorded that
Justice was rendered at beach court,
Judge Gull presiding on a cold winter day.

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Back before Judge Gull on a new motion
Regarding the handling of the virus attack.

Your honor, I say, to start my plea
I have a motion of importance to me,
My health is at risk, I feel an attack,
My arms and legs are tied to the rack.

We were all at ease when it came to pass
That a virus evolved - a particular badass,
It swept over China and came right at us
Our defenses had holes - we had built a lattice.

Where was our government and their great brains
With their tests for the virus indicated by stains?
No testing, no plan, no protection for all
No advance warnings issued, no clarion call.

Your honor I move to replace the team
We need leadership greater than they seem,
We need those who care showing love and compassion
Rather than hating with such great passion.

The Judge responds with a harsh, squawking cry
For judgment was rendered as she rose to the sky
She looked down at me and gave me a wink
And assured me that all could move back from the brink.

"I hereby rule that our government's a mess
And its major figures should be labeled as pests,
I give you authority to go out and vote

To kick'em out as you all emote".

And I look at myself and smile in the mirror
If I try really hard, I can still hear her,
Calling back as she flies up the beach
"You have the power, it's within reach".