

WE OF THE HERE AND TOWN  
ARE NOT FOR A MOMENT  
HEDGED IN BY THE TIME-  
WORLD, N... FINED  
WITHIN... WE ARE  
THE B... THE INVISIBLE  
WE D... GATHER  
THE... THE VISIBLE  
TO... IT IN THE  
HIVE OF  
RIA BURE



**Catbird 2**

It is cold and drizzling in the deep woods  
Along Jones Creek in the Columbia Bottomlands,  
Trekking through, searching for birds,  
Part of the annual Christmas count at Freeport.

The large oaks reach for the sky,  
Making our necks weary as we search  
The upper limbs to try to pin down  
The flittering, twittering bird party  
Chip, chip, chipping in the treetops.

A rabbit scatters as we approach the thicket,  
A tangle of yaupon and holly and briars  
That obscures the edge of a small pond  
That sits like a jewel in the shadows.

And then we see it - deep in the tangle -  
A dark form moving slowly, patiently  
And constantly away from us who  
Stand still in the forest, all quiet,  
Eyes focused, trying to make contact  
With the stealthy form that has stopped,  
Pausing in the darkest of dark shadows.

And then, moving into the light,  
Revealed through an opening,  
A grey bird with a sly eye  
That is directed to my soul,  
The sound that resembles "meow"  
Coming as a shy greeting,  
A hello to me from another living thing

With which I share the Earth,  
Welcoming me to peaceably walk  
Within her home,  
To meet her neighbors on this special day  
When we celebrate our birds.

Later that day we humans gather  
At the Dow Chemical cafeteria  
For a hot meal and reports  
Of birds seen and maybe not,  
But I am focused elsewhere,  
Simply basking in the glow  
Of the knowledge of another living thing,  
Of an experience that touched my soul,  
That altered my life ether,  
That made me more,  
That changed me  
In some fundamental way  
That I cannot and need not understand.

### Gray Catbird 3

Birding by Bluetooth during the spring migration  
Is a fun way to leave our forced hibernation,  
So, off we went - two couples in collusion,  
The poet seeking tales to tell with effusion.

At Bryan's the birds showed up as promised,  
But we drifted away, stepping back to the forest,  
Trying to move quietly, making no fuss,  
Hoping a good one would be there for us.

And I smiled as the gray one tried to slip away,  
Moving to the back, putting limbs in the way,  
But I know it's the catbird that's acting so sly,  
It's style told me so, but don't ask me why.

I once was partying with a birder or two,  
And I think back today about how little I knew,  
Someone mentioned in talking the gestalt of a bird,  
An interesting concept that then I first heard.

The catbird's not alone with a distinct gestalt,  
Our body language says - we're locked in a vault,  
Masked up, bent over, slouching through hard times,  
Staying home at my porch desk, composing rhymes.

So what is the point of this rambling discourse?  
It's to be profound, for sure, and of course,  
Poets and catbirds relate on this level  
As we dance together and generally revel.

The catbird and I play although the virus  
Rules o'er our land like a demon highness,  
Our relationship renewed by visiting friends  
And leaving to return with my mind cleansed.

Such is the circuitous flow of the mind  
When you are out and about, having a great time,  
So thank you Bryan for letting me evacuate  
Mental flotsam and jetsam before it's too late.

And thank you, catbird, for renewing our friendship,  
We dance so well with nary a slip,  
Come back in the fall after completing your breeding  
For warm weather and friends, you'll be needing.