

I hear elephants
keep their trunks at half-mast
when a member of the tribe dies

I hear they parade like lost souls

Do pets ever mourn our passing?

Do animals worry?

I don't see evidence
in bees or birds
worrying about the sudden change
in weather passing storms
kids have left the nest
haven't called in a week took off
with that dirty bird

Mourning takes space and time
can be triggered by any sense
or by a slight vision
of personal intake

The man walking in front of me
had my Father's legs,
that funny skinny pale
and I choked on a lump
in my throat Do birds
suffer for lack of imagination?
Do they "not feel like it" sometimes
the arrow flying north next stop
the Great White North?

I stress therefore I am
and I am because you were
you made me aware you
gave me colour scheme
appreciation of art & music why
I plan to eat ice-cream
next Thursday and take a trip
to the Museum I don't
expect to see any elephants
or birds there

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Danika Dinsmore

Danika Dinsmore's early writing career was built on experimental poetry & collaborative spokenword performance. In 1993, she and poet Bernadette Mayer launched the annual *3:15 Experiment*, during which participants wake up at 3:15 AM throughout the month of August to write. While living in Seattle she performed with the 12-person Word Orchestra and the performance group ForWord ForTete. Her inspired performances earned her the Washington Poets Association award for Performance Poetry. She blogs about her multi-disciplined writing life as *The Accidental Novelist*. Her accidental novel, the children's fantasy adventure *Brigitta of the White Forest*, was released in 2011 by en theos press.

