

Farewell

November 5th, 2023

The email arrived - Subject: Please Call Me
From a name
That barely rippled the surface of
Recollection.

Inside 3 lines -
One a phone number
Then a promise of a poem to follow
Then another a name.

The surface raised into waves and surfed into
recollection.
I knew what this was about.

Right above that email,
The one with the poem.
I read it - two times.
It was beautiful, haunting and a farewell.

It was not definitive,
I would have to call for that.
I read both emails again.
They could mean something different,

It could mean 'come,
visit our mutual friend
before, before... '

For a moment quite still
In action, thought and feeling.
I had things to do,
I had to be somewhere.

I put the number in my phone.
Driving to the barn I corralled the time
To arrange thoughts which were racing.
The emotions quietly waited.

Later, in exactly the right place to make this call,
Under a huge cottonwood
dropping leaves,

A bay horse on the end of a long rope
Eating dried grass barely green,
The leaves crunching beneath both of us
I called.

The details were sparse, relevant, and complete.
Driving back to the house,
A little door opened to memories.
And with them, emotions.

A trickle, a tiny spring reaching the surface.
Then the right song played, releasing
A flood into the desert of forgotten memories.

There was only one place to go.
In the fading evening light,
Outside in warm desert air, a breeze promising cool
I visited the stupa.

Walking clockwise 9 circles -
Three times for my loss and regret,
Three times for forgiveness,
Three times for gratitude.

One more step in the farewell.
Up the red dirt path
To a very low wooden bench beneath a pinon.

Turned my full focus to the man
Who that morning had been set free.
I didn't know his journey
Over the years since we last saw each other.

I most fervently wanted to know,
Wanted it to be true,
That he left with peace and lightness in his being.
And as I sat, my tears beyond my feelings and into his,

I felt it, I saw it.
The body shed of pain and grief,
The heart shed of disappointment and hurt.
His Spirit flew as it always had even beneath the human trauma.

I felt a little tug of envy. 'You're free! I want that!'
He smiled with all the love we had shared,
And my envy transformed into his joy.

He was whole, I was free too.
The gentle, sad goodbye from years ago was a small thing.
This farewell from one heart to another
Was complete, without the residue of 'what ifs'.

The email, the poem, the friend who reached out,
Across more than a decade

Through her heart and love for the man who just left
Had given me a gift I didn't know I needed.

Thank you - both.

for Kally and David