

Dear Poet

Notes to a Young Writer

A poetic journey through the creative process
for readers, writers, artists and dreamers

by Charles Ghigna

As I approach my seventh decade on this planet, I wonder what words of wisdom I might have written to the younger me. What treasured tidbits have I learned along the way? What could I leave in a letter to young wide-eyed poets searching the world for advice, guidance, and inspiration? I began as I always do, by closing my eyes and listening to that soft voice that has spoken without fail for the past half century. The voice spoke. I took notes. Here they are. Little poetic pieces I trust will speak to future generations of poets, poets young and old. May they continue to listen. May they continue to speak.

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*"Poetry is not only dream and vision;
it is the skeleton architecture of our lives.
It lays the foundations for a future of change,
a bridge across our fears of what has never been before."*

--Audre Lorde

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Charles Ghigna - Father Goose® lives in a treehouse in the middle of Alabama. He served as poet-in-residence and chair of creative writing at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, and as a nationally syndicated feature writer for Tribune Media Services. He is the author of more than 100 award-winning books for children and adults from Random House, Disney, Hyperion, Scholastic, Simon & Schuster, Time Inc., Abrams, Charlesbridge, Capstone, Orca and other publishers. His poems appear in hundreds of magazines from *The New Yorker* and *Harper's* to *Cricket* and *Highlights*. For more information, please visit his website at FatherGoose.com

I.

Do not tell
the world
your pain.

Show it
the joy
of your tears.

II.

Hang a picture
of truth
in your heart.

Let the mirror
of your eyes
fill the page.

III.

A simple
truth
is light.

A complex
lie
is fire.

IV.

When in need
of the poem,
go write it.

But do not think
you are
needed.

There is no
need
for the poet.

There is only
need
for the poem.

V.

Do not write
another word--
unless you have to.

VI.

No matter
how many poems
you write

to keep
yourself alive,
you cannot.

VII.

Run.
Yell.
Spit at the dark.

Curse the moon.
Throw rocks
at the stars.

Get it all out.
Get it all out.
Get it all out on paper.

VIII.

Style is not
how you
write.

It is how
you do not
write

like
anyone
else.

IX.

Trust
your instincts
to write.

Question
your reasons
not to.

X.

Inspiration,
like lightning,
comes

from the
darkest
clouds.

XI.

Look in the mirror.
If you see a stranger,
write a poem.

If you see
your father,
write a poem.

If you see
yourself,
put down the pen.

XII.

A silent rhyme
upon the page
is what the poet gives,

gentle words
whispered in trust
to see if memory lives.

XIII.

The path
to inspiration starts
upon a trail unknown.

Each writer's block
is not a rock.
It is a stepping stone.

XIV.

Poems are not penned
to the page
waiting for us to admire.

They are only
lonely thoughts
caught by tears on fire.

XV.

Don't plant
your poem
on the page

as thought
you're hanging
drapes.

Its shape
and flow
should come

and grow
like wild
summer grapes.

XVI.

A poet's life
is paradox,
it's more than what it seems.

We write
of our reality,
the one inside our dreams.

XVII.

A poem
is the echo of a promise,
the thunder of a sigh,

the music
of a memory,
a child asking why.

XVIII.

A poem
is a rising moon
shining on the sea,

an afterglow
of all you know,
of all your dreams set free.

XIX.

A poem
is a spider web
spun with words of wonder,

woven lace
held in place
by whispers made of thunder.

XX.

A poem
is a firefly
upon the summer wind.

Instead of shining
where she goes,
she lights up where she's been.

XXI.

It's not the poem
on the page
that makes them laugh or cry,

it's how your soul
touched a heart
and opened up an eye.

XXII.

A poem
is a play
meant to delight you.

A poem
is a party
meant to excite you.

A poem
is a song
full of desire.

A poem
is a sunset
meant to inspire.

A poem
is a secret
shared among friends.

A poem
is a promise
that never ends.

XXIII.

A poem
is a whisper, a shout,
thoughts turned inside out.

A poem
is a laugh, a sigh,
an echo passing by.

A poem
is a rhythm, a rhyme,
a moment caught in time.

A poem
is a moon, a star,
a glimpse of who you are.

XXIV.

The answer
to the poet
comes quicker than a blink,

though the spark
of inspiration
is not what you might think.

The muse
is full of magic,
though her vision may be dim,

the poet
does not choose his muse,
it is the muse that chooses him.

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