

Angela Stoner



Angela Stoner was born in Lowestoft, and now lives in Penzance. An ex drama teacher, she now focuses on writing and much of her work reflects her interest in dreams, mythology and symbolism.

She works as a writing coach encouraging writers to develop their work while relaxing in the magic of the Cornish landscape. She sees writing as a form of healing and prayer ... a way of creatively loving the world around us, and a way to hold and understand all our experiences. She was drawn to the cathedral workshops partly as a way of nourishing her own writing and partly because cathedrals are evocative places, full of dreams, mythology and symbolism. In fact, she found herself increasingly drawn back to the Cornish landscape and the cathedral of nature for her inspiration during the course.

FLIGHT DREAMS

I want to write about muscle, feather, flight
about thermals, updrafts and the way
a wingspan huge as thought
can hold the sky.

My muse snarls back through gap-toothed mouth and spits
You'll write what you've been given.
a slug now. there's a subject for a poem,
an unpretentious thing that never dreams of flight.

A slug is beautiful –
as anything will be that's loved enough.
But every cell in me remembers
how I felt spinning in the grass
as though I'd fallen in the sky
with muscles stretched and open
the space between each bone expanding, growing.

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BOSIGRAN CLIFF

The domed ceiling reflects eternity.
The windows shimmer
The mellow floor has diamonds,
is splashed yellow, green, blue, pink
falling to a rippled silk
a sheen of purple
any emperor or prince might envy.

Its carvings hewn with passion –
hooded monks, sleeping dragons,
brooding giants,
It has a font of holy water
and an altar rocking like a boat or cradle.
It isn't a cathedral: it's a castle.

Its stones have long since tumbled
back to the land from which they grew.
I share this space with none
except the thousand ghosts who haunt it,
spirit of the builders who piled rock on rock
to build this fortress, awesome still and strong.

High above the flight of birds
watch their swoops and plummets.
Sense life beneath the ocean's surface.
Breathe the gorse whose tiny cups of sunshine
cling to this weathered rock
and face the worst of gales

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MATINS

This dawn vigil is no hardship
watching the slow and subtle lightening
catching ocean's blush at morning's wake-up call
tracking the red disc rising
breathing gorse and mist on the west wind.

This baptism's a sacrament of pleasure,
my limbs stretched out,
my body gliding through the water
in parody of flight
my hair some creature of the sea, not me.
I hardly splash, but lap.

I walk back through the churchyard
and he's there, waiting for his blessing,
the sad black little three-legged cat
who always find the corners that the sun will warm
and has an instinct for where scraps of love might hide.

These irresistible wild flowers
I gather in my arms like prayers,
shades of blue and lilac,
harebells, bluebells, something
that is cupped and delicate,
whose flowers hang like tiny dresses from my wrists.
I breathe the punch of earth,
and as I pick, I brush against wild mint
and bushy rosemary.

And this communion:
bacon, egg and toast
and silence, save for the odd
contented slurps of coffee,
the cry of gulls,
the turning of the newspaper.

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REPAIRS TO TIME'S WINGS

I'm not supposed to stand around and wait.
I wait for no man.
Oh, the indignity.....
to have to stand still just because
my wings need a repair.

So I stand still.
Perhaps you'll fall in love
or find yourself transfixed
by a flash of a kingfisher's wing
or a blue light in a cathedral windowpane.

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YOU HAVE ONE WILD AND PRECIOUS LIFE TO SPEND.

You could stay breathing in the stone-dust air of duty,
the warm-skin taste of comfort –
or you might choose to face your fear
gasp for air in a gale,
sense the hot-breath hunger of a predator.

You could watch familiar walls forever
spend your days carefully co-ordinating
the colours of your prison,
letting hands that you despise
parcel your spirit into boxes labelled *safe* and *easy*.

One day you might just dare
to dawdle on a wide wide plain
wait for the thundering as dreams pound towards you.
One wild one is yours, if you can grasp it, fling
yourself upon its back and canter, reckless, free, alive.

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