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been there then she would have been completely alone toward the end. I felt I had taken care of her a lot in the past and in many ways I thought she would never die (though I prayed for it-relief for all of us, including her).

I was exhausted by her. Shortly after she died in 1998, my five-year committed relationship ended, and the big message was that I hadn't given enough.

The result of these two incidences in my life changed me profoundly. I began to examine my giving. I do not regret not being there for my mother, but I can also tell you that none of my beloveds will ever pass without my being there-without my full support or my hand to hold.

I don't think that most of the poems in Danger are "angsty," but it is certainly there in some of the earlier poems, which reflects the processing of the pain attached to the events (and that is not to say that everything in every poem in the book is 100% true to life - that would not be an accurate statement). Sometimes angst can be used for effect, to make the poem "work," like a line break or simile.

My new poems are revelations for me—a new way of seeing the world; experimentation with metaphor and looking simile; closer at line breaks, revision and forms. These new poems

are explorations of life in a different way—a way of looking at the terrestrial and mundane world that we are part of and acknowledging it as just that. Greeting the common pain—as well as the joy, andwitnessing the relationship between the two. Many of the newer poems since Danger have nothing to do with childhood directly, but are reflections of a current vision witnessed by past influence. I enjoy taking everyday, common experience and elevating it to a metaphoric level that points to the universal. I believe something as simple as standing in line at the Post Office can be an amazing experience and a great poem.

[Monday, April 16, 2001 1:29 PM]

LI: Have you ever considered writing short stories or novels? There seems to be a lot about your past and present that could develop into a compelling piece, or that you could draw out of to create characters and places in a fictional setting.



One thing I noticed about your poetry is your abilities with description and metaphors (as you have pointed out), which are strong attributes that could be applied to other genres of writing. What is your feeling on this?

[Monday, April 16, 2001 8:14PM]

JW: I believe we all have a story to tell. I have written a series of vignettes of the past several years that I hope to, one day, string together into a coherent whole: a book that would tell the story of one boy's last summer before adolescence. These vignettes do not call to me very infrequently, but when they sing I hear them distinctly. One day I hope to have the discipline to write more of them. They are very funny, but sad, like a dark comedy (which is how I see my

Ironically, I started out writing short stories, but soon fell in love with the craft of poetry - the idea of compacting language, knitting in metaphor and simile. I enjoy all aspects of writing and feel that what I bring to poetry could also be applied to other genres, but poetry is so demanding and requires a certain amount of discipline that to break from it would almost feel like a betrayal—like cheating on my loyer.

There is a rich backdrop to my life that I do hope to catch one day in the net of some genre—maybe in the vignettes that I've started, or a novel, but for now it only breathes through poetry, and I am content with that. The characters (my mother, relatives, neighbors) of my childhood are bright coals that are hard to let go of-I enjoy their burning company, their radiance, keeping them far and near at the same time.



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