

THE MURMURATION AND OTHER POEM

By kusumita p. Pedersen

These poems are about birds and describe actual experiences, “The Murmuration” in New York City and “The Eagle” on Mount Desert Island, Maine.

In early December by four o'clock

The sun is low. On this grimy road

Crowds of cars strive:

Stopping, starting, blaring.

Held there, I look up

And see a thousand birds

Flying in one body, winging

As if cars do not exist.

Flowing this way, then that,

They are murmuring

In unison of moving curves.

Now looking east, I see

Above the city's buildings

The moon rising full and orange,

Present as a person.

In a different direction

Only look – and see another

World complete is here.

THE EAGLE

When we arrived we were told

There was a golden eagle on the island.

For days we watched for him,

By the lakes, in the woods,

At the ocean's edge, hoping to see

This numinous bird, a bird like no other.

Never did we find a trace of him,

And we resigned ourselves.

The day we left, driving

North on the mountain road,

He came – flying down the slope

And west over the lake where

Blue Hill lies on the horizon –

Up close before our eyes,

No mistaking his majesty.

Somehow from somewhere

A smile fell on our farewell.

We came in hope

And after all, at the end,

In joy we departed.

Bio

Kusumita P. Pedersen is Professor Emerita of Religious Studies at St. Francis College.

Co-Chair At The Interfaith Center of New York, Trustee at Parliament of the World's Religions and Vice President at Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations. Her poems have previously appeared in Assisi: An Online Journal of Arts and Letters (St. Francis College) and Moments that Speak: Stories and Images of Connection (KIT Publishers, 2012), a project of Earth Charter International. She is an academic and interfaith activist living in New York.

EPISTEME