**Poetry from Daily Life: A billboard — and a missed, best breakfast — birth a poem**

By David L. Harrison

*I’m proud to host Poetry from Daily Life. Since starting the column in November 2023, a growing number of featured guests have added their wit and wisdom to a list of wonderfully talented people. The number currently stands at sixty, and they are located across America and beyond. I’m grateful to all of the gifted poets and proponents of poetry for making this such a unique column, and I’m grateful to all of you for reading what we have to offer. I hope you will share these columns with others who will enjoy them. ~ David L. Harrison*

**Roadside Inspirations**

At one time or another we find ourselves in a car on a highway to somewhere. As I drive along, my eyes take in the scene on either side of the roadway. On a trip from Springfield to Kansas City, I counted so many hawks in treetops that Sandy finally told me to put a sock in it and count to myself.

Driving trips are great sources of inspiration, even if counting hawks isn’t your thing. I’ve witnessed, and later written about: A cow giving birth in a field. Road kill in ditches. Buzzards, feasting. Creatures leaping or crawling or slithering across the road. Still too much biology? Then how about billboards?

In a recent feature on Poetry from Daily life, Marcus Cafagna shared a poem that was sparked by a chance encounter he had with a man who was about to lose his job. Marcus went in for a cup of coffee and left with an idea for a poem. On one of my road trips, we passed a large billboard that promised the best breakfast all day. We’d already eaten and were in a hurry so we flashed past the turnoff. But the sign made me think about a woman I would never meet and wonder how she was doing. I eventually wrote this poem about her.

**The Price of Eggs**

The sign says,

EAT AT MADGE’S!

BEST BREAKFAST ALL DAY!

I whiz by Exit 12-B,

forfeit my chance to meet Madge

and sample her cooking.

Can’t help wondering though,

how Madge is doing.

That’s a big sign, cost her a bundle,

sleep, too, I bet,

all that money nailed onto poles beside the road —

cost a lot of eggs.

Is Madge there now, off Exit 12-B,

hoping travelers inspired by her sign

will swing off the Interstate to see if

she’s really as good as she says?

I imagine her, red faced from the heat,

hair showing gray — no time for color —

blowing strays from her eyes,

cracking eggs on the grill,

yelling at someone, “Hey folks!

Thanks for coming! Be right with you!”

hoping this week, this month, she’ll crack

enough eggs to pay for that sign.

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