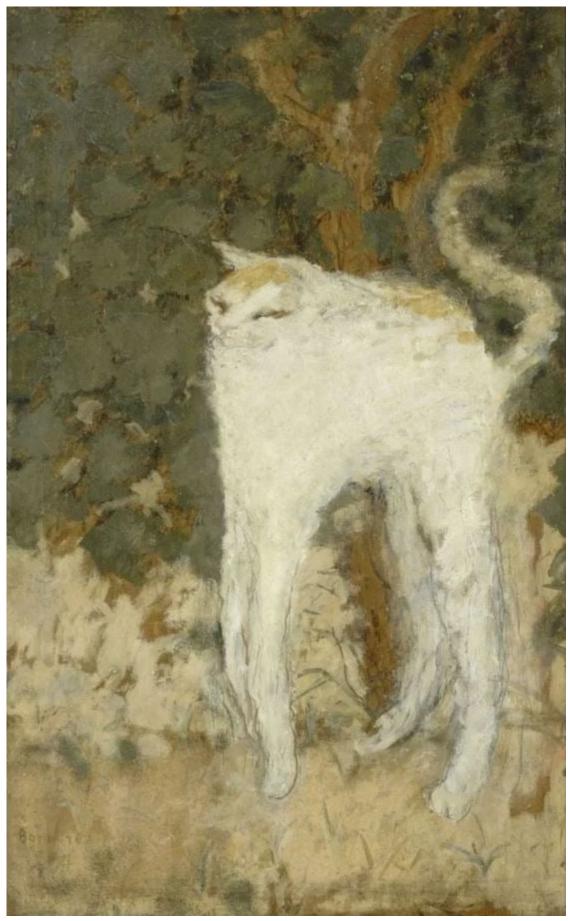
Feral Ferocity & Two More

By <u>Diane Webster</u> (February 2023)



The White Cat, Pierre Bonnard, 1894

Feral Ferocity

Knowing I'm dangerous I retreat into the shed. My butt jams into a corner where slivers of wood attempt to distract my alertness. I see with enough light I hope no one sees me. My ear hairs comb sounds into threat or benign as well as my nostrils wide for scents or nonsense. Like unconsciously tapping nails on a table my claws extend, retract; my muscles flex into memory pounce position every second. I crave someone to enter.

Blood spurts between my fangs until the heart beats a last rhythm against my chest, twins for a moment. I feast in feral ferocity as I savor each shorn morsel of flesh, and I make myself comfortable in the same corner splintered a might more.

From the Bridge

You wouldn't think I'd be able to jump from the bridge not after when I was a little girl my dad held me over the dam's edge

to see what was on the other side and pretended he was going to drop me and laughed.

You wouldn't think I'd be able to jump from the bridge being afraid of heights so much that I was called "flat lander" and teased that standing on a newspaper was too high.

You wouldn't think I'd be able to jump from the bridge since I can't swim or open my eyes underwater, but what does it matter?

If I want to jump from the bridge, I'll get mad enough at all those naysayers that my anger will summon the courage enough to step outside the box like when I swore I wouldn't go back to the counselor's office in junior high when she didn't believe me or didn't listen when I needed help.

I pretended I was fine then; I pretend I am fine now. No one thought I'd jump from the bridge.

Silhouette Climb

Up the staircase I climb

a silhouette
until I step into the darkness
and merge with only the rail
to guide me upward
like the white dotted line
in the center of the highway
reflected back in headlights
barely cutting the night.

Perhaps the rail continues with steps left behind, and I climb onto nothing, plunge or hang fingernails on the rail ... for a moment wondering how far I could drop.
Only a step? As far as I climbed?

What hides around the hairpin turn that my headlights haven't illuminated yet?

If I speed ahead faster than light, will my life flash before my eyes before I blink?

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Diane Webster's goal is to remain open to poetry ideas in everyday life, nature or an overheard phrase and to write. Diane enjoys the challenge of transforming images into words to fit her poems. Her work has appeared in *El Portal, North Dakota Quarterly, Eunoia Review*, and other literary magazines. She also had a micro-chap published by Origami Poetry Press.

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