

7.

Another Postcard Poem Prompt

Postcards are a great medium for the simple recording of images and observations.

Write a few poems, each of which could fit on a postcard. I figure this as half of one side of a 4x6 card, so about 3" across and 4" deep.

Your postcard poems could be a short series of images establishing place and then perhaps finishing with some unexpected statement or pronouncement.

Nancy Willard wrote about an aunt who traveled to places that weren't on the map. This aunt sent postcards home. That is a whole other possibility — postcards from places that don't exist, or perhaps postcards from the future or the past.

postcard from cape cod

just now I saw
one yellow
butterfly
migrating
across buzzard's bay
how brave I thought
or foolish
like sending
a poem
across months
of silence
and on such
delicate
wings

Linda Pastan
in *The Five Stages of Grief*

I Want to Write Like a Postcard

Everything takes a longer time. The rains here have been edifying. Today the sky is like bathwater. But bigger. Wish I were.

Rebecca Radner

A Postcard Home

Things are so expensive in these parts:
yesterday
I was on my way to a café
on the quays
when I noticed in a shop window
a pile of stuffed birds.
I thought of you immediately, dear heart,
when I saw your favourite,
the yellow bittern,
standing stock still, its neck stretched out
looking somewhat worn and weatherbeaten.
I thought I might pick it up
for next to nothing
and bring it home to you as a token.
But when I asked them how much it cost
I was quite taken aback,
it was far over and above
what I could afford.

(Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill
translated from the Irish by Paul Muldoon)

Three Postcards from the Pandemic

The sun, coming up as usual,
gives the floating clouds
a pink tinge above
the spring-sprong earth
where corona virus
now humbles arrogant
humankind.

Yesterday by email
I spoke with people
in lockdown far away:
Derek quarantined
in a hotel in Jinan, China,
and Hemangi, a Waldorf teacher

somewhere in India.
I feel tiny
on an enormous,
frightened, ailing
planet, spinning.

On the cosmic scale
I am miniscule—
a speck on a crumb
whirling around a firefly
surrounded by boundless
black vacuum space.

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Here are some of Ted Kooser's delightful postcard poems to Jim Harrison from *Winter Morning Walks*:

February 8 Clear and Pleasant

The reason the rooster is crowing
so desperately this morning,
his voice like a gate left open in the wind,
is because the rising sun
is displaying its colorful plumage,
spreading its wings for a thousand miles
along the horizon
and the eyes of every hen are lit with fire.

March 11 Sunny and milder.

The sky a pale yellow this morning,
like the skin of an onion,
and here at the center,
under layer upon layer of brooding
and ferment, a poet,
and cupped in his hands, the green shoot
of one word.