



**Ronda Miller's** favorite saying: "Poetry is our most natural connection between one another," applies to her personal life as well as her professional one.

A Life Coach born in Ft. Collins, Colorado, she was raised on a farm by her maternal grandparents in the high plateau region of NW Kansas, where love for the beauty and healing aspects of nature and poetry began. She holds degrees in Human Development and Creative Writing from the University of Kansas, is a Fellow of The Citizen Journalism Academy, World Company, and a Certified Life Coach with IPEC (Institute of Professional Empowerment Coaching).

She created poetic forms Loku and Ukol. She began volunteering her services as a Life Coach via Grief Works, for those who have lost someone to homicide, in 2008. She is Poetry Contest Manager for Kansas Authors Club (2011 – present). She became President of Kansas Authors Club, District 2, in November of 2013.

Ronda's poems have appeared in numerous journals. Her memoir, *Gun Memories of a Stone Eyed Cold Girl* was released fall of 2014.

## Creek Play

If you look closely,  
small, freckled limbs  
not yet diagnosed with MS  
make their way boldly  
up a dusty hill once  
mountainous in size.  
A creek, both deep and dry,  
drew us in season after season  
as our bodies changed and  
dreams grew larger than the sky.  
Hiding, playing cowboys and Indians,  
each passing car a threat from near and far.  
Years later, shared dates and  
hope for future plans left less time or attention  
to the barren, rugged beauty of the land.  
To climb those hills, fill my nose with the dusty smell  
of Kansas, sneeze out the ability to be young again.  
We searched for fossils, dinosaur teeth,  
found rattlesnakes and cow skulls.  
I became a mother and a writer,  
you manufactured crack – just think about that.  
If we would back and did it again  
would the sunset still inspire,  
Would our desire to escape have changed?  
Would my body, spasming in pain, be made whole?  
Would you still feel the brutal Kansas winter  
from within a castle prison on the prairie?

## Spanish Moss

hanging low,  
swinging, swaying to and fro,  
dark and damp  
against the moon's no show.  
It's there you know,  
just unseen.   Black

I'll gather the moss,  
place it under your head,  
carry you out to your ocean bed.  
Wave goodbye as you float away  
on ocean waves.   Blue

If I could ease your sleep  
into the deep, I'd do it.  
I'd kiss your lips one last time,  
you're so old and you're too young.  
Your journey's just begun.   Red

But first I have to let you go,  
kiss the lips that have grown so cold,  
push you out to sea,  
away, so far away from me.  
The moon hangs low.  
It's there you know.   Gold



# Ronda Miller

Distinguished Kansas Poet

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## Meeting Noah

I met Noah today. He rests along a road  
I'd never been down before.  
Two dinosaurs adorn the front of his headstone.

He was four days old when he died; these days  
he would be nine years old. We plant a pink  
peony, his dad and I. He digs a large spade of grass.  
I hold the plant in place as he places one shovelful  
of moist, damp earth after another over its bare roots.

I listen to the circumstances of Noah's  
death where a definition means more than a word.  
Omphaloceles – born with internal organs on the outside of the body.  
The telling and retelling help mend an exposed heart.  
"He was like a comet flashing across the sky; here, and then just gone."

I feel as though I've watched Noah grow up, even though he never went home.  
The cross stitch his father did of him squatting in the sand  
on a beach shows him at age three. His blond hair is tousled, blue eyes large,  
wide eyed, in wonder of the beauty of the universe surrounding.

A Chevy truck breaks our silence as it goes slowly past the  
cemetery turn off. Noah's younger brother and sister are  
inside with their maternal grandparents.

We wonder aloud what the kids are saying;  
if they ask to come to their dad, what their grandmother replies.  
I wonder, silently, if this family of Noah's, now separated by death and divorce,  
will continue to come to this site several times yearly for generations.  
I hope down the lineage, they will stand together.

We head west, Noah's father and me, where brown earth has rolled onto her back.  
Her soft, warm belly, recently itched and raked by farm machinery,  
unashamedly exposed.

Poems continued on next page



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## Tell God Hi

for me I joke as he lists a kiss to my  
lips and walks out the door on his  
way to Sunday school.

I stay in bed propped against a  
pillow and heating pad. I fell  
on the snow slippery driveway yesterday.

My commune will be the spirituality  
I find in poems I edit for a favorite poet  
from Wichita. Both my lover and the poet  
were raised Catholic. I wonder how different  
my spirituality might be had it been the same  
for me.

Movement outside the window draws  
my eyes upwards to view a squirrel on  
the neighbor's roof doing a downhill slalom  
ski move around the chimney.

I think of poetry, where it takes me;  
how it soothes and heals, invigorates,  
connects me to humankind, here and now,  
for eternity.

I think of turning onto my side the night  
before; the feel of his warm belly spooned  
against my back, legs curved, feet entwined.  
That afterglow as natural, as fulfilling,  
as poetry.

All poetry on this page  
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