

The Umbrella Fixer

Reflections From Life in the Rain



a book of poetry by
Vashti Stopher Klein

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Fixer

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EPIGRAPH

The umbrella fixer is there
when the sky is falling
and the sun explodes
and when the weeping rain
floods the earth, he softly whispers:

*I will help you fix this one
small thing.*

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PROLOGUE

A life lived in the rain embraces the entire spectrum of love, from the peaks of joy to the valleys of despair. Some years blend both, while others tip the balance. These past two years have profoundly challenged me, compelling me to confront my past, embrace the present, and build a future rooted in newfound strength and inspiration. My journey is captured in the poetry within this book. For now, the future remains a dream in progress.



THE UMBRELLA FIXER

A broken rib repair, as simple as
binding the dislocated pieces
with a length of wire, not even
the distance from your arm
to your heart
that is all it takes...

That and the eye of the man
squatting on the street corner
when the rain begins,
and you walk by,
surprised at the impoliteness

with which the deluge began...

The umbrella fixer,
with eyes as discerning
as any eyes that pass him by,
looks for the simplest way
to help you.

You hurry by shoulder to the wind,
furiously flicking
your broken umbrella,
wanting to cavalierly throw its
carcass away
as it is of no use to you now;
but you brace against the wind from
which its spindly form shields you.

It was of no importance,
though it protected you from
the heavenly waters
which drowned you in
a suffocating embrace
that nearly killed you.

But perhaps this winter
you did not die of an illness
from the wet cold, from being exposed
from being vulnerable to the bitter wind
that didn't care whether you were strong
enough
to withstand its onslaught.

You wouldn't have seen
the umbrella fixer,
crouching nearby;
who understood its value;
you wouldn't have noticed him
but for the rain
and your broken umbrella.

He politely smiles and offers to help.
You quickly hand him
your damaged stick, with torn fabric,
where rain pours in with the force
of God; and quickly, expertly,
with his needle and nylon
he quickly stitches,
and restores your defense against the rain.

What manner of man is this?
He goes to your very soul.
You quickly walk away
protected again, and warm
without a thought
of the man who bows, smiling
behind you, as he waits
for the next hapless soul.

The umbrella fixer is there
when the sky is falling
and the sun explodes
and when the weeping rain
floods the earth, he softly whispers:
*I will help you fix this one
small thing.*



OPERA

The sadness of continuing
to reach out
to connect
to be with,
to love
to know...

and face the withdrawal
the pulling back,
the retreat
the coolness,
that put space between us;

I grow old, though I treasure
those memories,
my own goodness
and lack of anger,
my deep sadness;

for now I see so many
who are hurting
as they run,
run, run
to and from love.

I remember the beach,
the smooth jazz of Earl Klugh
wafting through the Tideline,
the sound of pounding waves
that caressed the shore;

the smell of funnel cake,
the setting sun,
a pink and golden sky...
and the humid, salty air
that tangled my tousled hair;

I felt alive, yet alone,
though I was a part of life,
this precious life,
and the natural world
that never disappoints.

The rest is opera.



QUINTESSENCE OF YOU

Moving through the world without you
is exquisitely painful,

though perhaps not pain from losing you,
but losing who I thought you were...

It almost doesn't matter.

That man now exists in my head.
He's the one I want.

When I see you,
you remind me of him,
the man I thought you were...

So how do I let go?
You're all I have of him.

He wouldn't have left me bleeding
on the battlefield.

But the universe will spin off its pins
if I let you go,
...and let go of the hope of him.

I must consult
Emily Dickinson.



ODE TO HARLEY

The cicadas come at night
with soft music.

You and I move around
roll over, and brush by each other.

I feel your small warm body next to me.
I hear you breathing and
sometimes
I feel your heart beating.

You are my comfort in the night
My joy during the day,
My little child my little son,
song of my heart
You fill my life with love.

Sometimes you awaken in the dark
and whimper to be touched.
I am here I am here
I will always be here
for you.



YOUR VOICE

Your Voice is in
the trees, the wind
the sun and rain
the ground
beneath your feet.

It's new beginnings,
thoughtful repose
the feeling of home,
the fragile rose.

All life rests in you,
that single note
that only you can sing,
that breath of life
that only you can bring.

Your full-throated
exuberant Voice
is all that matters
in this lonely vigil...

The exquisite nakedness
of your truth
spoken loud...
is all you have;
pray do not wait.

Feel it
Know it
Be it,
Your time is now.



VASHTI STOPHER KLEIN, AUTHOR



Vashti Stopher Klein is an award-winning filmmaker, and singer-songwriter in the Washington, D.C. metro area. She formed Butterfly Effect Productions, Inc., in 2012, dedicated to creating artistic works that sooth the mind, body and spirit.

In 2014, Vashti released her first album, *The Heart of Things*. In 2017, her album, *Path to the Sun, Moon, and Stars*, was born, followed by several singles.

In 2019, Vashti published her first book of poetry and music titled “The Soprano, the Monster, and the Dragonslayer,” beautifully illustrated by her friend of many years, Carol Collett of Carol Collett Desert Studio.

Vashti earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Arts at the University of Maryland, and a Masters of Business Administration at Johns Hopkins University.

Vashti continues to sing and write music, short stories, plays, and poetry. Her original music ranges from that heard on a Kentucky farm, to a Gaelic pub, to a concert hall. She believes in the healing power of poetry and music and hopes her readers will experience this transformative effect.

