



# ANIMAL TALES

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## FEEDING PEANUTS TO THE CORVIDS

by Darrell Parry

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## THE UNICORN'S RESPONSE TO THE HUNTER

by Pamela Longo

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## THE POWER OF ONE

by Kimberley Stanley Huber



# LIBRARY ANNOUNCES WINNER OF SUMMER WRITING CONTEST!



The Bethlehem Area Public Library presents the winners of its Summer 2021 writing contest for adults. Library patrons were challenged to submit a poem or short story on the theme “Animal Tales,” telling about an animal that played an important role in their lives. They responded enthusiastically with entries that celebrated pets, wild animals, sea creatures, and even insects! With such a rich selection of entries, it was challenging to pick a winner! Thank you to everyone who entered, and congratulations to our winners:

- First prize - **Kimberley Stanley Huber** for her entry, “The Power of One.” Kimberley’s prize is a Lenovo Tab M10 HD tablet
- Second prize - **Pamela Longo** for her entry, “The Unicorn’s Response to the Hunter.” Pamela’s prize is a Kindle Fire HD10.
- Third prize - **Darrell Parry** for his entry, “Feeding Peanuts to the Corvids.” Darrell’s prize is a Barnes & Noble gift card.

**Congratulations also to Camille A., winner of the Kid's Summer Writing Challenge! She wrote a wonderful story that our librarians loved! Prizes were donated by the Friends of the Bethlehem Area Public Library. We appreciate their support.**

# FEEDING PEANUTS TO THE CORVIDS

## BY DARRELL PARRY

Pervasive petrichor on damp heavy air.  
The beasts have emerged from shelter  
among the cemetery's chestnuts  
and sugar maples.

I toss peanuts between the stones  
and watch the crows dive and fight  
over the tasty treasures.  
Chipmunks want a piece of the action,  
but opt to wait for the leftovers,  
considering the competition too fierce.

I think if I chose a spirit animal  
it would be a crow or a raven.

Sleek, graceful, mysterious  
and, of course... black!

But I don't really care for heights  
and, anyway, I don't think  
you actually get to choose.  
Not consciously, at least.

More like the spirit animal chooses you.  
On the walk home  
I see movement  
by the stones  
of a squat retaining wall  
bordering the path.

A pudgy groundhog  
takes note of me  
and disappears,  
I cannot tell where.  
Not a single gap  
in the stones  
seems big enough  
to have swallowed his girth,  
yet he is gone.

And I think of the groundhog:  
quiet, shy and unassuming,  
often ignored, unseen  
and run over by people  
on the highway of life.

Suddenly, I know  
I've met that spirit animal  
I so desperately sought  
amidst the trees.



# THE UNICORN'S RESPONSE TO THE HUNTER

BY PAMELA LONGO

*Based on the Aberdeen Bestiary and  
the medieval allegory of the unicorn*



You can call me wild and lament that I will not be tamed. My recalcitrance only intensifies your desire to subdue me. Though you say I am too swift, too clever to catch alive, you continue to pursue me with baying hounds and iron darts. You are moved by a restless heart you do not understand. If only you would ask, I would come to you.

Take up your book; find me there neatly classified: monoceros - monstrum - the horned monster who resembles stag and horse and elephant in one. Your book observes my likeness to creatures familiar and fabled, verbally dissects me, catalogues my composite parts. Read between the lines. The marvel of creation is written on my flesh. Look up my other names. You'll discover I am less and more than you think I am.

You say beauty alone entices me. How close to the truth you are. Do you know the beauty I seek? It is patient and kind, meek and humble of heart - the complement to the fierce beast you have imagined me, the mirror of what I am if you would open the eyes of your heart and see. Learn from me and know yourself as vulnerable as I. We are both hunted and hunting and longing to be loved.



## "The Power of One"

By Kimberley Stanley Huber

She crossed my path on the back steps of Moravian House one chilly November day. A beautiful Black Swallowtail butterfly, not flying.

*What to do?* I scooped my untimely friend over to the grass, scrounged a few straggly zinnia flowers from last summer's garden, and stuck them in the ground next to her. I put out a bowl of sugar water and then left her to the elements, naming her Salida, Spanish for "exit," because I figured she was already on her way out.

Little Salida weathered that night outside through pouring rain, and I found her the next day clinging to a zinnia stem, her wings whipped about by a rough wind. She kept hanging on! Salida was a fighter! No question, I had to adopt her.

A summer butterfly farm confirmed from my emailed photos that Salida was indeed a "she" (smaller white wing spots), and coached me to feed her Gatorade and fresh fruit. In the wild, Salida would have had a life expectancy of about 12 days; in captivity, they said she might live two to four weeks.

*Much to learn!* That butterflies can't get circulation in their wings to fly when it's colder than 55 degrees. That they don't drink from a dish but through a proboscis that rolls out from their head, like a wire. That they can reject second helpings by pushing away with front legs that retract like telescopes. I was fascinated!

Salida was a big hit in the building, as friends came over to hold her and have their photos taken. Reach out your hand and she would walk onto it, sitting there contentedly till one of you got tired or wanted to fly away. On Day 35 of her captive life, I took Salida downstairs to the Senior Center, where she made the rounds bringing smiles to many neighbors. After the day's activity, she refused her supper that evening ... then passed away before breakfast.

Not your garden-variety butterfly life: Salida had no mate, no flower nectar, no flights on warm summer breezes. Instead, she had five whole weeks of shelves and curtains to perch on, watermelon and imported berries to slurp up, and strange living creatures to hang with. She rolled with her reality of being a "people butterfly." And she was not programmed to fear!

I'm glad God created butterflies—and that one of them broke into my world. It was like getting a "big picture" refresher course! A few Salida lessons:

- \* Life is fleeting and fragile.
- \* It's good to be friendly and flexible.
- \* Wonder brings us together: I made new friends because of Salida, and am now known here as "The Butterfly Lady."
- \* We each have a special mission to others: Salida brought sparks of joy to hundreds of people locally and across cyber space.

Salida made a difference, just being her butterfly self. It's now three years later, and I'm still amazed and inspired. By one insect!

