

# Stumbling Grace

*by* Dan Cafaro

I'm not sure if my heart is breaking  
Or attacking  
Like an aged lovesick romantic with a faulty beat,  
I sense a valve needs replacing  
But only after the main artery has been sutured and made whole  
By a seasoned and skilled Midwest surgeon in a lambskin trench  
coat -  
Who's weathered more storms than I care to admit - Nor she cares  
to remember.

I'm not sure if our fights are petty  
Or forever.  
Like misguided missiles  
Launched by allied nations  
We feud over coveted territory.  
Like unconscionable instruments of war,  
We cause immeasurable pain -  
Then pat the pillows and dim the lights -  
With no resolution or gain in sight.

I'm not sure if this map is useless  
Or irreplaceable.  
Like petulant teens  
Wandering with great intention  
Through the wooded indifference of nature's instructive and  
destructive path,  
We snicker, and then sulk -  
Pouring another forbidden nightcap to forget troubles -  
Depressed at the thought of losing our way.

I'm not sure if this poem is perfect  
Or pathetic.  
Deplorable  
Or recoverable.

Doomed  
Or destined.  
Recyclable  
Or irrefutable.  
A sham, a shamble  
Or rather memorable (and possibly frameable with a lifetime  
guarantee).

I'm not sure if this road is paved  
Or potholed.  
Like a traffic signal whose fuse has stopped connecting,  
Making red lights green lights yellow lights no lights,  
Causing all sorts of havoc and unplanned detours  
For two drivers unaccustomed to making spot decisions  
Without being told what to do, when to act - how to feel -  
I write with the stumbling grace of art's redemption  
And the hope of your forgiveness.

