



TRIPTYCH

Vicki Cronis-Nohe



POEM

Dr. Luisa A. Igloria

Letter, Fumbling Around in the Dark Again

“They can be like the sun, words.
They can do for the heart what light can for a field.”
— St. John of the Cross

Dear fellow pilgrim, today the road seems a little less cold, a little less clear as we inch toward the warm mud of April. The hems of our tunics are far from the earth, our jeans are double-cuffed. For fear of rain, the cardinal doesn't want to hang her prayer flags in the trees. A few stray flakes come down, like bits of frozen milk: and I'm out of coffee. Where's the nearest stop, some diner where we might use the loo and get

a bit of soup, a knuckle of bread? I know we're not going to the Alhambra to walk in the gardens or catch the view from the Mirador de Lindajara; we're not even on the famous road to Santiago de Compostela where the saint's remains lie like a star, his bones unfold like the thorns of a compass rose buried in the depths of a field ... Groucho Marx knew that nights are dark as the inside of a dog's belly — but isn't that why book lights were invented? I don't give up easy. I'm fumbling around for the light switch, for the power cord, for the fuse box. And there's got to be something with which to jimmy the skylights — Think of how we could open our mouths to evenings of falling stars.



John-Henry Doucette/Courtesy

Igloria, a poet, is the author of Bright as Mirrors Left in the Grass, among other titles, including two recent chapbooks, Haori and Check & Balance. She teaches on the faculty of the Master of Fine Arts Creative Writing Program at Old Dominion University. Visit luisaigloria.com for more information about her work.

ESSAY

City Councilmember Barbara Henley

“Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.”

Not only are these the words that begin a beautiful song that we sing, especially at this time of year, but they are also words which describe each person's responsibility.

The world is big. Each of us plays an important role if we are to live together successfully. There is no room for hatred or malice.

It is incumbent upon each of us to examine the attitude that we bring to every situation, and to assure that we are approaching every issue with respect for others and with a willingness to hear with respect every side of

the issue.

Our democracy is based on the precept that every individual is important and is assured the right to express her or his viewpoint without fear of retaliation or intimidation. It is when we are able to bring all sides of an issue together and genuinely give consideration to all needs and viewpoints that we are able to arrive at the best solutions.

Certainly there are challenges. But there are also opportunities. It is when we work together, with open minds and open hearts, that we find that the opportunities are boundless and that the solutions are really possible.

Virginia Beach is a great city with many challenges but also with enormous opportu-

nities. There is no end to the good things that we can do with — and for — our people if we work together.

I just look at the very long list of wonderful programs and projects already existing in our city, and I know that 2018 can be a time for successfully addressing more needs when we work together with a positive attitude of love and respect for each other.

We may not be able to solve all of the world's problems, but we can begin with Virginia Beach.

Henley, a farmer, represents the Princess Anne District on the Virginia Beach City Council.



John-Henry Doucette/The Independent News