

Spark

When I was 4 years old,
Chubby cheeks
Voice a squeak
Hair sprawling down my back,
Unbrushed like the bird's nest
That sat at the top of the oak tree I would climb and play under

I was animal changer Neesha
With a snap and a spark of my fingers
I could transform,
Reform
Into any animal of my choosing
Stripes, spots two feet, four, soaring, cruising
I could be any animal, every single one
And as the daylight dimmed
I would fly into the night

Animal changer Neesha,
As the daylight dimmed,
And the stars sprayed the sky in splatters of white
I was an animal saver
I was a hero

Now I'm 15,
My hair flows down my back,
Like the curtains that shut out the light as I study at school,
My imagination, has slowed,
Refined?
Destroyed
Animal changer Neesha- her sparkle gone

My eyes could not see light
They could only see the darkness
Trees swaying then crashing
Onto the ground
Animal's blood bleeding through the valleys that they once lived in
Dogs' collars, tight, too tight, eyes glancing up at their owners
As if they could be saved by the human that has lived to terrify them
Chickens in cages so small they can barely breathe,
Never to see the golden glow of day

The sad stories, the sad pictures
Slowly twine around my body,
Tangle me up,
I can't move, speak sing
My strength lost.

But finally the daylight dims
She has returned
Animal changer Neesha,
A sparkle in her eye
A piece of my heart

She's the teeth that smile when she counts the coins as she slots them through the SPCA
bucket
She's the ink that sprawls as she signs petitions
She's the hand that chops up vegetables,
And feeds them to people who thought only meat could be tasty,
She's the voice that speaks, and yells
And will not stop until she is heard.

She is
Animal Changer Neesha
A spark to light up the darkness of the night.

She lies in all of us
Those of us 75 years ago,
Those of us today.
Let her shine.