

## **AS THE EAGLE IS, SO IS THE DOVE**

*(Tribute to Women in the Military 2012)*

there must have been an eagle flying  
above her cradle –  
she may have felt its freedom's refrain  
the sovereignty of all her choices

once she was on roller-skates  
another time on a surfboard  
or maybe she just walked miles into her future

she may have grown to be a mother  
or not  
even childless she is designed to care  
only if nurtured in the hands of her primary teachers:

those who came before her  
those who passed along the visions and aspirations  
from strong women of all possible worlds

the machinists, welders, mechanics  
the riveters, nurses, philosophers even the poets  
the maids, waitresses, violin and piano players

the ones without shoes plowing the land  
without gloves hoisting large trash bins  
without a home yet building a shelter for someone else

through out this vast living young women still thrive  
daring to reach the stars and carve the finest monuments

not shrines to false designers  
but memorials to the essence of women's efforts

as for the brave – she is the valiant warrior as well  
taking on the shield, sword, musket, M16-fixed bayonet  
she is firm and with resolve on  
stealthy horses, wagons, tanks, battleships, submarines -

the mighty B-29 and yes she can manage the F-22 Raptor

in her return, she has learned to be the commander of her own life  
she may have a family waiting in the endless  
airport terminals and train stations  
may have a child, husband, boyfriend, partner  
maybe no one

this with no one - is no less the hero deserving  
of her own child laughter and tears

the past, present and future defines her merit  
all of those, all of them, all of you, all of us  
we have become our own primary teachers

and this one child with the eagle above her head  
grown, saluted and answered by another flight of  
soft winged symbols  
the white doves of peace – the anchor of her valor  
the journey of her own creations –  
to see a better world for all she has dreamed  
and for all she has imagined  
from our ancient pugilists brought forth to and forever

when you see her in or out of uniform  
greet her not only by a salute or by a thank-you  
honor her by passing on the tribute  
grow into a venerable generation  
a generation that  
as the eagle is, so is the dove

