

# A Joy That Runs Beside Me

She streaks across the snowy shore,  
a blur of joy, dark as the night,  
black fur against white powder,  
a shadow laughing in the light.

She moves like a ninja—silent, slow,  
creeping toward unsuspecting geese,  
each step measured, each glance sly,  
until—boom!—she lets all fury loose,  
a storm of paws and boundless glee,  
telling them she only wants to talk.

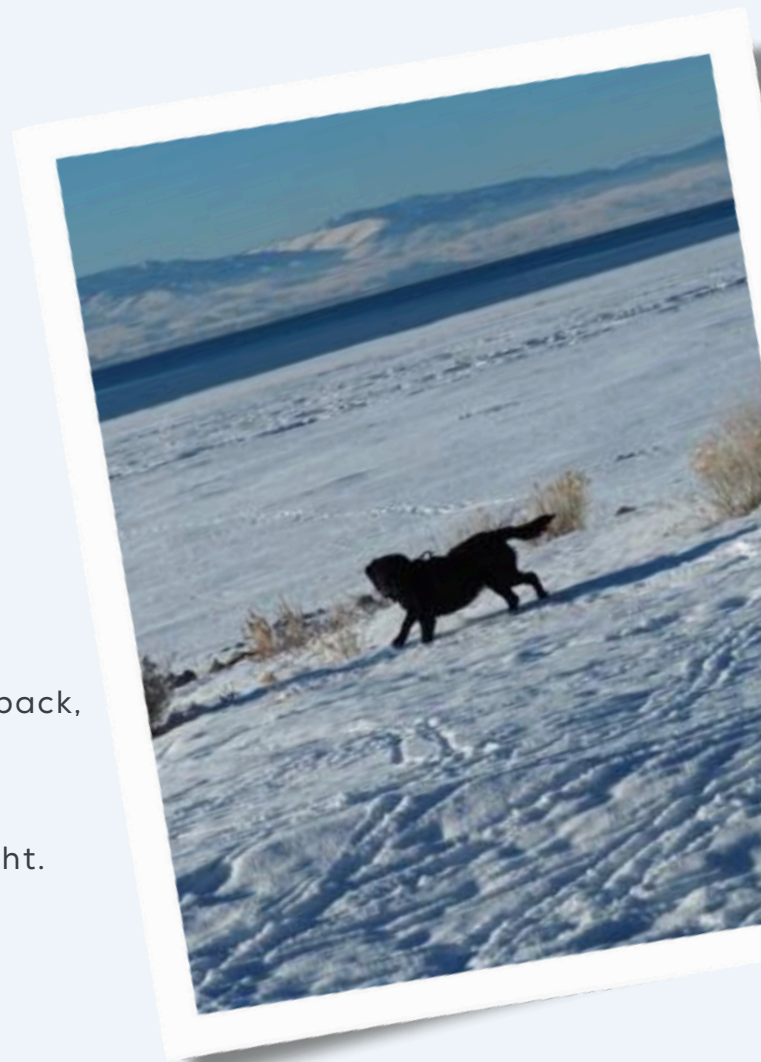
She chases the wind as if it might chase her back,  
rolls in the cold, sending flurries flying,  
a creature who knows, without question,  
that happiness is meant to be lived, not sought.

When she's truly happy, she struts—  
tail high, body swaying,  
as if dancing to a song only she can hear,  
one the rest of us have forgotten.

She loves without limits, without reason,  
leans in close, pressing warmth into my side,  
her quiet way of saying, I am here, I see you, I care.

What if we all let ourselves feel joy like that?  
Without hesitation, without doubt,  
just sinking into the moment,  
trusting in its simple, wild perfection.

And then there was Dexter—  
not just a dog, but a joy that runs beside me,  
a lesson in love, in presence,  
in the art of being alive.



  
Thom Barrett