

## Patricia Wellingham-Jones

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### Floor

What the foot calls floor  
the earth calls skin  
that covers its smoldering core.  
Fissures and fistulas vent,  
the blood-red flow devours,  
cools black and sharp  
in crusted scars.  
The skin of the earth  
is pebbled lanes,  
craggy peaks and tors,  
grass-waving plains  
that beckon and reject  
man's intrusive foot.

## **Basso Profondo**

for Vladimir Miller

He sings  
ancient music with monks  
among icons of saints.  
The voice  
created by the utmost of powers  
rumbles and thrums  
in the lowest register.  
The voice  
rivers through me  
warms the blood  
thuds in the drum of my heart.  
Belly and bone quiver  
in its fingering shade.  
The voice  
booms elemental force  
into the frosted night.  
Swoops  
across Russia to the world.

## **To My Friend**

I know I send your hair straight up  
with words that arrive stark and sere.  
In their lack of gentle flourish  
they land with a thud.

I do try to snare those words,  
cram them back, then let them go  
with more bell, less whistle  
to your sensitive ear.

Still, I wouldn't be offended  
if you were less prickly,  
if you didn't feel tossed and bossed  
when I am merely stating.

I phrase things now as requests,  
overwork please, what do you think.  
Maybe you could tone down  
your insult-detectors for me.

Tiptoeing among verbal flowers  
grows tiring.

## **Stompin' in Red Boots**

I'm a bomb-blast burst on the world  
in tall red boots with four inch heels.  
Over my boots a kaleidoscope skirt  
whirls with every stride.  
My hair is a riot of magenta and green curls,  
a floppy hat with peacock feather balances on top.  
I drive my single mother wild with worry at my antics –  
I bet she's jealous.  
Imagine, my high school counselor thought  
I'd make a good secretary.  
Really.  
Is anything more boring than typing all day?  
For peanuts?  
There's a great big world out there  
and I plan to dance all through it.  
Wanna be my partner and pay  
for the tickets?  
Only for a while, though.  
There's so much world,  
so many delicious men.

**Patricia Wellingham-Jones** is a former psychology researcher and writer/editor with poetry widely published in journals, anthologies and Internet magazines. She has a special interest in healing writing, with poems recently in *The Widow's Handbook* (Kent State University Press). Chapbooks include *Don't Turn Away: poems about breast cancer*, *End-Cycle: poems about caregiving*, *Apple Blossoms at Eye Level*, *Voices on the Land* and *Hormone Stew*.