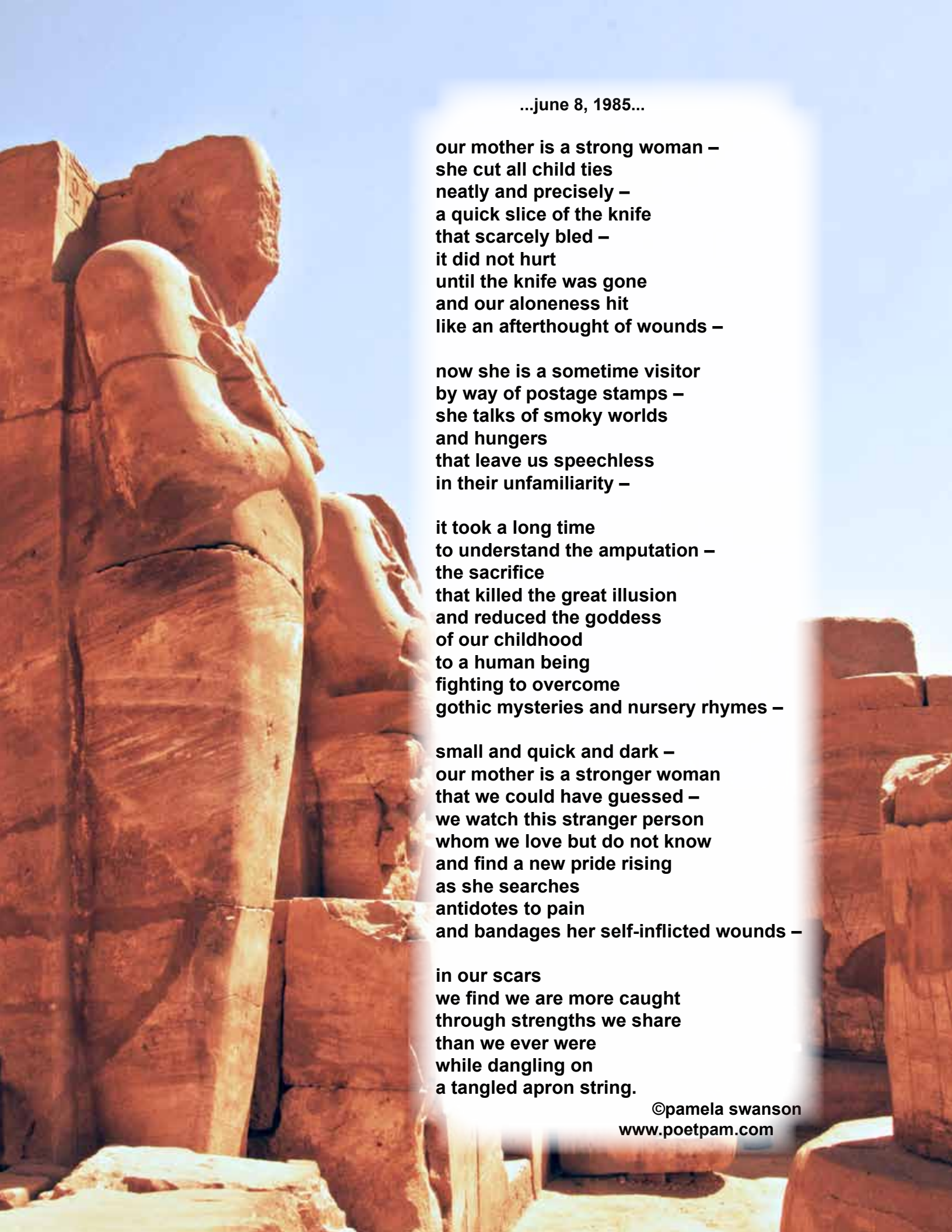




...june 8, 1985...

our mother is a strong woman –
she cut all child ties
neatly and precisely –
a quick slice of the knife
that scarcely bled –
it did not hurt
until the knife was gone
and our aloneness hit
like an afterthought of wounds –

now she is a sometime visitor
by way of postage stamps –
she talks of smoky worlds
and hungers
that leave us speechless
in their unfamiliarity –

it took a long time
to understand the amputation –
the sacrifice
that killed the great illusion
and reduced the goddess
of our childhood
to a human being
fighting to overcome
gothic mysteries and nursery rhymes –

small and quick and dark –
our mother is a stronger woman
that we could have guessed –
we watch this stranger person
whom we love but do not know
and find a new pride rising
as she searches
antidotes to pain
and bandages her self-inflicted wounds –

in our scars
we find we are more caught
through strengths we share
than we ever were
while dangling on
a tangled apron string.

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