

Hiking the Missouri River Bluffs

alone

we think we are so much of the time, but we are actually not.
the worn path I walk is witness to that, though there is an eerie

silent

hush on the trail with almost no sound, except that I make myself,
and no one else is around, such solitude providing presence

for me

to hold serenity in a world fraught with noisiness.
I hike up and down the hills in mindfulness, spotting a

feather

on the trail that is spectacular even from afar, with a yellow quill
on yellow gray from a nearby field of golden prairie grass, off a

warbler

or a waxwing, a perfect feather up close from a perfect bird,
except he is missing an important wing appendage. and I first

wonder

if he feels a stark draft on that side, so maybe he draws in tight
or turns away from the wind. but then it strikes me instinctively that

perhaps

he left me a reminder to huddle humbly within our common flock,
that even in the stillness of the cold wintry woods, we are never really

alone