In Disguise

I cannot forget that noisy night,
The wheeze of the calliope,
The bright warm circle of the tent
And the man in his ragged suit,
His tangled hair, his reddened nose
And sad, fresh-painted frown,
And next to him the pink-faced lady clown
In her cat suit, mouthing and writhing;
The sudden both-of-them laughing.
Why do such scenes obsess us? Why
Do we need the circus?

Martha M. Pickrell
The Encounter

You catch me with a surprise show of affection and move swiftly in my direction.

Just when I'd given up on such encounters, you, with the look of a deer I've spotted at the edge of the woods, wide-eyed, and for a few seconds still; feet embedded and statuesque. And then, all at once, the breaking loose in a forward run.

Nancy Botkin

Religion

After two weeks of deadly tossing on an ice-green boiling Bering Sea, I tossed my rosary off the fantail and by nightfall all was calm.

I knew that sacrament was good for something.

I always carry a spare.

Chris Berreth