Poems

Editorial Staff

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RE-BIRTH

I
The Odyssey of journeying through space!
Can one deny his yearnings,
To Float,
To Fly,
To move motionless through nothingness?
This totally expresses the All.
Only in our dreams and in quiet meditation
Can we unite to the awesome Universal One
To Sing,
To Laugh,
To prance and endlessly dance
To the tune of life and its creation.

II
Words, like feelings, create pictures of the mind;
Remembering that both words and feelings can be deceptive,
One runs into many diverse interpretations of each.
Truth is the only answer to which we may rely.
For it is in Divine Truth that all answers lie.

III
Seeking to find the essence of oneself,
We tend to regress first, then soar on wings of consciousness;
One step, then two, then three... then four,
Before long there is no need for counting anymore.
Embedded in the soul of man is the secrets of Ancient Y'ore.
One life lived, to share, to give, to return undoubtedly to the core.

E. Mellenia DeCoteau Jones
Howard University

Errors of the Essay
Beware of the proverbial essay
When it cries out in distress
When it cries out in pain
When it cries out in anguish
Its structure is laden with gastro-conventional holes.

There are the organizational holes
Indecisive introductions
Squinting substantial parts
Capitulated conclusions
Gnawing at the backbone of unity, coherence, emphasis.

There are the grammatical holes
Sentence insensitivities
Pronoun pranks
Mechanical monstrities
Punctuating the body with verbal vermins.

Then there are the stylistic holes
Diction dummies
Awkward phrases
Meck metaphors
Inflaming the reader with sentence sores.

Beware of the proverbial essay
Soothe its sagging sentences
Give it rhetoric relief
Spell it R O L A I D S
And Bacon will beam again.

Janet R. Griffin
Howard University
On Seeing the Mississippi
For the First Time

The driver said “You ought to go down see the Mississippi.
Lot of chemical plants along the shore and an oil refinery.
But in the antibellum days it was cotton and sugar cane, you know?”
I know.
After the all-night rain through the new-dawn haze
I walked up on the levee which before now was only a word.
Wide, elevated, still, steel gray-flowing waters.
Few shore lights through still-bleak dawning.
Freighter in the unclear offing.
Ghostly bridgeway looming beyond.
How many secrets untold, Mississippi?
Ripples. Not one do I hear.
And how many Black bodies captured in your murk
whose spirit-flight disconsolate arises?
Then I saw cane. Karintha, Becky and her babies.
Riverboat dandies and bales of cotton.
Bent aching backs and worn shoeless feet.
Felt old new pain the sharp cool of your waters cannot soothe.

Escaped time brought me back to the levee.
Desolate. Feeling.
Slowly, steadily leaving deep breathing magnetically backward-glancing with long-looks searching to find what was not there.
Calm does not hide your shame, Mississippi.
And though the sun shine, will I ever see you in a different light?

Njeri Nuru
Howard University