

POEMS
FOR THE FREE

by

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PREFACE

This short collection of quatrains speaks to situations with which most of us are familiar. They are everyday circumstances in which we all find ourselves at one time or another. Many of these conditions also share an historical significance found in the literary classics of many cultures. The problems of life, death, wars, loves, children and parents are eternal. Suggested solutions to most of these problems appear to have changed little through the ages. I have taken vision from these issues and endeavored to apply them to contemporary circumstances within the confines of the quatrain. I have tried to acknowledge major sources of inspiration.

Reading and writing poetry is not science. Poetry is for everyone. If the writer is successful, people will assign personal interpretations and draw their own conclusions regarding each verse. Joseph Campbell wrote, "Poetry is a careful choice of words that have rhythm and implications which go far beyond the words themselves." A few of these verses can be found rather explicit, but the majority of them follow Professor Campbell's suggestion to be implicit in their premises and conclusions.

A somewhat obtuse example may be found in verse #144. Recently some physicists, on good theoretical and experimental evidence, have felt compelled to temper the concept of flow of time. It is suggested that this may be one prerequisite to discovery of a Grand Unified Theory of the universe. Actually, the concept was discussed by Einstein and even by early Greek philosophers. Verse #144 alludes to this and asks an amorphous question. "Where is the calm?" Is it in the marriage of the General Theory of Relativity and quantum theory which, if found compatible, would help relieve a major chaos of dichotomy in contemporary physics? Or is it the calming influence on the individual experienced by elimination of the concept of passage of time. "Perhaps we would no longer fret about the future or grieve for the past" as suggested by theoretical physicist Paul Davies.

It becomes rather apparent that detailed dissection of a poem may potentially detract from whatever rhythm, charm or appeal the original

lines might have contained. This certainly is not to discourage detailed analysis, but that is for the reader to decide. It begs an eventual compromise. The writing of verse should be such that readers can easily determine the depth of experience most comfortable to themselves.

Finally, again I want to remind myself that effective poetry will stimulate varying responses. These reactions can be manipulated into sentiments ranging from amusement to pathos. Ultimately, all this must be left to the whim of the readers, for they are the true owners of the verse. This is as it should be.

1

This garden comes to life beneath your feet
As nature helps you grow the seeds replete.
Do not regret that your rose bush has thorns,
Delight that your thorn bush has roses sweet.

2

When young we drink from cups of ignorance.

We're self-indulged on life's intoxicants.

Of warnings bear no heed, it's ours to live.

Yet as years pass, we too preach temperance.

3

My child and I both drink from the same troughs.

There's vinegar or wine to decant off.

She serves me brew, as will her child for her

That she may come to taste the draft I quaff.

4

God cries for peace on earth. Where does it start?

Our chiefs wander the land as if they're smart

Forget them all. We must do this ourselves.

Go home and give your family your whole heart.

- inspired by Mother Theresa

5

Above earth's dusty trails and streets of tar
Come walk the geodesics to the stars
Thus ease the load of farce upon your back
And with perspective, heal your mundane scars.

6

This slave master called *love* rules by decree

My heart does dance as she commands of me.

Do her chains bind the body or the mind?

Nay! Only slaves of love are truly free.

- inspired by Ibn Amnar

7

What fills the cup? It's knowledge great that tells.

But thirst remains, till faith in self excels

As years pass by, spilt blood does fill the cup

Distill this mix, and therein wisdom dwells.

8

When days seem dark and tears within abide,
What use this life to wax and wane as tides
Do not despair, it's part of the *Grand Scheme*
The total universe within you hides.

9

Young ones must use a mirror just to see
What place they hold in life's reality.
In age we too reflect, but not through glass.
We use brick walls built of life's memories.

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