

Yesterday's Doorway and other poems...

By Susan Dale

Poetry Editor Hezekiah writes: The most beautiful poetry is so often written in pain. Ridding those from our hearts and off our chests will forever remain a universal language of latter rejoicing.... Yesterday's Doorway and The House Where I Live do this; as does The Color of Time. With hope, words can make us hurt less, in so much, as they can harm. Here is to Hope. Whoever left this person must be sorry not to be saddened by the loss of forsaking such a profound being: ... 'How deep our shadows / In doorways where once we stood / Thin, distant figures / Etched in soft strokes' ... 'Our dreams burnt scarlet by sunsets of delirious colors / To be measured by the star spun seconds / Of the hours in our time.' ... I invite you to delight or disparage in everything in between...What maybe even more tragic is that we are forever attempting to make people who we wished they were...but who knows? We are often, as well, better for being rid of them..(Spacing is poet's own.) HS.

Yesterday's Doorway

How deep our shadows
In doorways where once we stood
Thin, distant figures
Etched in soft strokes
What always we knew
But didn't know we knew
Being caught in a downpour of melodies
The truth of them shining
In a sun gone to sea
Thinking for a thousand miles
Of earth to time

Of songs on slow journeys

And life quick as a eulogy

Over our buried secrets

The House Where I Live

You've not seen the house where I live

Have you?

It sits among cubicles of memories

But impulses older than thought

Yearn to see you

If you're driving down route four

There's a road where dreams

Will trip you up at a lonely corner

There, turn then drive through

Winds whispering secrets

Come to a yard bordered by lilacs

The lilacs tight with purple bundles

Bloom in late spring

When the air is crystal

And poke up among the tall pines

that sway

In their long green gowns

This yard:
the one where you will feel passionate distances
And time beating in metronomes
There, Stop!
In back of the lawn
spread fields with fierce blades
Of winter wheat sprouting up within
The recent spheres
Of winter-white serenity
Knock on the door; say-
“I heard this is where you live.”
“Oh, come in and I will show you
A window in the kitchen
Where I watch the sun come up
In explosions of color
And while coffee is brewing
Steam rises above the cupboards
And leaves kisses on the windows
“Sugar, cream?” I ask, like once I did in another house
Far off in another year
The year when our hours
fell through sand
And you said, “Black” in that narrow passage of the then

When time paused to stand still
But that was in another house
A house of babies and diapers
Of wooden toys, clothes to fold
Those walls harbored memories
This house: the one you haven't been to
Has echoes in the ceilings
But no words between us
There is instead a clock that tick-tocks
Through the annals of time
And an energy that spills out to listen
You've not pulled up, have you
When I was spading ground
Or yanking weeds with fierce aplomb?
Stopped, on the curb with motor running
Or in the stone driveway
When spring was in a sun's lingering smile
And the air moist with rebirth?
"Just driving by and thought I'd stop
and say: what?
So this is where you live?
I wondered if you were you."
Then would come a sadness

That stops further words from being said
Instead, a cup filled with silence
Would spill into the moments
Of coming together when we didn't
Come now, let's not be melancholy.
Instead, I will show you a sunny lane
Where birds gossip
through long summer days
And point out an alcove between the pink almonds
Where daffodils nod in glorious gold dances
And surges of light
Where soar Van Gogh sunflowers
That follow a map of the sun
I'll take you to the back garden
Where roses nap on a barn roof
That sizzles in the bronze body of July
“But what to do about the willow?” I would ask
You, always practical, would say, “Cut it down
It's too close to the house.”
“But birds' nests are fashioned
In those vines climbing up the tree
In them reel intoxicated butterflies
And ephemeral flowers that bloom in the clouds

The bees, the pale moths
How to lose them forever?"
Caught, we would be
Between crossed-out words
That crumble in realizations
And the souls of songs
That once passed our way
But in a slow reckoning moment
I would have to agree
"Yes, that is the way life often is
Ours, when you didn't stop
To see the house where I live."

The Color of Time

Our dreams with tendrils,
coiling to climb the tree of life
And swim with a bruised moon
and a cup of stars poured into the sky
Fragile the spring petals
falling from flowers
blooming under the light that left us
we stumbled blindly through our days

Until spring ... traipsing off with minute winds
To summer with fat fingers and firm feet
and full crowns of treetops
Syllables of light galloping across the skies
in three-quarter rhythms
to the glory of fecundity
suffocating the meadows with
A bonfire sun and barefoot dances
Gliding down rivers and hours
In our sampans too wide
Our dreams too heavy
for the narrow canals we sailed
The noose of our fears
strangling us
The monopoly others had on luck
A lady they courted with lusty songs
and syrupy endearments
Lady luck on the balconies
we sat beneath
wearing masks to shield our faces
from the desires shackling us
The fingers of mortality
squeezing, tightening

The solemn command that brought autumn
with gold veins and cream clouds
To winter waiting in the sacristy
We stepped up to an altar of chalky skies
and the silence of frozen years,
And frozen tears of snow
The waves of winds, the stone cold silence
Filaments of white lights
Leather straps binding us to our pasts
The powerful jaws of our determinations
Wrapping to clamp down on the
Skeletons of the dead
searching for old lovers with hollow cheeks
carrying dreams they'd long outgrown
Caught we were in whispery webs
We, with moth wings
Trying to find the light of life,
We beat ourselves to shreds
Our dreams burnt scarlet by sunsets of delirious colors
To be measured by the star spun seconds
Of the hours in our time

THE POET SPEAKS: *My poems are inspired by what is happening in my life and in the world. I don't have any stylistic influences. I just write them and then go over the poems until they flow:*

often the rhythm and the rearranging of words take time. I love poetry, both to read and write. The darkness of Shakespeare, the melancholia of Archibald MacLeish, the spontaneity of Pablo Neruda, the genius of Emily Dickinson, the variety of Larry Smith. All of them and more are inspirations to me. Poetry is important to me because I love it.

BIO: *Susandale's poems and fiction are on WestWard Quarterly, Mad Swirl, Penman Review, The Voices Project, and Jerry Jazz Musician. In 2007, she won the grand prize for poetry from Oneswan. The Spaces Among Spaces from languageandculture.org has been on the internet. Bending the Spaces of Time from *Barometric Pressure* is on the internet now.*