

The Tenth Muse



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The Tenth Muse

“Let us inspect the lyre, and weigh the stress
Of every chord, and see what may be gained
By ear industrious, and attention meet.”

—Keats

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The Tenth Muse is dedicated to
Marian Calle, Jose Morel, Antwan Prayear,
and Mirely Peralta.

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Embracing Tradition

By Mr. Townsend

I think perhaps I'll write on Father Time
And how he changes, then destroys all things,
Or maybe on the power of this rhyme
And on the immortality it brings,
Or I'll describe the birds and their sweet sounds,
The rose its smell, the sun its golden light,
Springtime its joy, bleak winter its bare grounds,
Life its blessed day, death its barren night,
But I will start anew and write of you,
For your uniqueness I wish to explore,
As I forsake the past and all its due,
Robbing the muse of themes she does adore.
Yet novel words that are so fresh today
Will soon become clichés that others say.

Questioning Persona

by Ms. Clemente

That one that you pass off as yourself,
Where did she go?

When you peer in the mirror
Seeing what could have been
Knowing what was always there
It's dangerous, this reflection.

An epic sigh forces the lips
Travels to where dead sighs go.
Hamlet had this problem too,
So I guess it's ok for me.

With embattled and resigned eyes
We face the incredible days,
Fend off the million whys,
Nod at the mundane answers.
I ask only for sincerity
From anyone.

I don't know if this sustains me.
If life itself is even acceptable.
Again, Hamlet comes to mind.
Hamlet, who was himself insincere.

So where does one go from here?
Jump from deflated day to deflated day.
Build a dam of memories,
Imagine they can hold against the onslaught
Of damned and contemptible nature.
Pray that we really aren't this way?
Pretend, that the one you pass off as yourself
Is you?

The Poet

by Marian Calle

The steady words that others could unfold
From parted lips of his did not protrude.
Complacent feelings his heart would not hold,
Unlike the rest untroubled multitude.
With earnest effort, he did try to write
And searched amidst a sea of florid words,
But empty pages issued from his plight;
He drowned and left his wild thoughts unheard.
When struggling for words—his honesty—
How difficult it was to not feel hurt!
With misery alone for company,
All joyous phrases from his mind avert.
A poet's curse: to hold unwritten pain,
Until the time, when he can write again.
(3rd Place — 2010 Newark Writing Competition)

Bitter Warmth

By Jose Morel

How does she paint with such vibrant splendor,
With nothing but her vivid yellow eye,
Shepherding all the sheep with hands so slender,
Her face emerges as they move aside?
In her company, a green sea rises,
Like the moon, she has control of its tides,
And out explodes hundreds of surprises,
The color of her face, intensified.
Why does she walk away ignoring me,
Sea of green dying, cursed with such blight?
The cold wind biting, I'm ready to flee,
Mountains of ice turn green to white.
She looks back, the ocean slowly shifting,
And cries while I wait for her face, so uplifting.

**(New Jersey Counsel of English Teachers,
Best Poem from Science Park, 2010)**

Metamorphosis

by Antwan Prayear

I have departed from the world I love
To dance with stars within the nightly sky,
For they are prettier if seen above,
Like looking at the earth from mountain high.
You see my coffin that is on the ground;
I still tell you I am far from your grasp,
Because a lifeless soul is what you've found
That is beneath the earth where it was cast.
Don't mourn for death; it's everyone's true fate.
It's the cocoon of life; it's just a phase;
Some people go early, some go so late;
From this old dreadful stage, a soul is raised.
I say it once again, you should not cry,
For we all live after the day we die.

(1st Place — Mr. Townsend's English II 2010 Sonnet Competition)

Inevitable Demise

by Kishan Nakrani

Death often comes to us in many ways,
Preying on souls that are completely lost,
Swinging its scythe in a destructive blaze,
I run from fate but that comes at a cost.
The timely hands of clocks will never cease.
The memories that I once had are cherished
And spread across a never-ending sea,
Due to fear of end this all has perished.
Moments of life are like a murky night,
I wonder what I've done with all my life,
A revelation, death that has no sight,
I ponder what I feared in this strife.
There is one thing in life that is so clear,
Death can only diminish life with fear.

Lovely Lie

by Marcília Lamas

Fair love does act like a pretentious word,
A word that is just hateful as all do know.
Because of things that previously occurred,
This love does act like a sad name for woe.

Love is an emotion that fades you thin,
It locks you in a bubble kept distant,
It buries itself underneath your skin,
In an abyss that is nonexistent.

Love is a heartless word with senseless pain,
Unless it becomes a great part of you,
It is uneasy and hard to explain,
Or maybe it is just my point of view.
Whether or not your feelings are like mine,
Love is a word only you can define.

Undesirable Need

by Sarah Michelle Labrador

Repent not of your foolish, splendid ways,
That which is tempting and completely lost.
For treasures of the world are gone and tossed,
With nasty insults that cannot be fazed.
Sweet falsities articulate clichés,
Trustworthiness between us at a cost.
Time brings our paths together as they cross
And every painful thought makes me amazed.
You whisper words of emptiness and lies,
Playing with feelings like I am your pawn;
Your glance that mocks the inevitable,
Future foreseen through your dark sinful eyes.
This bottle of your memories is gone.
My thirst for you becomes insatiable.

Fighting Time

by Jean-Carlos Arenas

As minutes pass and moments quickly tell
Of times well spent in an eternal bliss,
They do remind me of the things I'll miss
As constantly on past events I dwell,
And linger 'til I'm ready for farewell;
Adieu, I'll bid, and lock with a sweet kiss,
A fate already sealed, and leave all this;
Against the wretched clock, I won't do well.
My quest for endless youth will never cease;
Like a field marshal, I too plan my moves.
Manipulating pieces in my prime
Is what I do to gain a lasting peace.
On my death bed, as I depart I prove
There really is no point in fighting time.

My Rising Sunset

by Arabia Winston

A golden sphere that brightens up the night
Warms hearts and air and casts away the cold.
Such brightness that removed from me my sight,
It was renewed with wonders to behold.
Surrounded by darkness, engulfed in love,
Drowned in sorrow, like a boat lost at sea,
Ignored by the sun, whose light shines above,
Like pretty flowers ignored by their bees.
Warm in its presence and frozen alone,
For new world wonders my sky's no contest.
No longer can I call the sun my own,
For it left the East to shine in the West.
But for that dear sunshine, my heart still cries,
Though return it will to familiar skies.

All Will Be Well

by Adriana Aviles

Each day the world does change around young me,

And weather alters as the days go by,

The many twists and turns made me now see

That life does force us to many goodbyes.

There is a thought that never leaves my mind,

I wonder how and when this all began,

Which only makes me feel as if I'm blind,

Why things won't ever go just as I've planned.

Each morning I wake up and seem to face

More changes that are coming out my way;

I wish that they would come at a slow pace,

Instead of rushing every single day.

Knowing that every thing will come together

Is the one thing that makes me feel much better.

Yancha No Kitsune

by Mirely Peralta

The tall and slender fox with cheeks so high,
A mischievous shape shifter whose strong power
Allows deceits and tricks beyond a bored sigh,
And relishes sweet youth before the sun's shower.
Fire, lovely blue with mesmerizing light
Is playful little Kitsune, with no sense
Of man's attachment is loved...loathed...beyond sight.
Small fox, escape with your ball—carefree, hence.
And do not be upset, my dear Kitsune,
When our lack of wisdom annoys so.
Remember, we know not our minds; do you?
Through our weak bodies let not your form flow.
It is sad tragedy that you could fade;
Please stay and bear descendants, we bade.

Time's Taunt

by Alexandre Martinho

Oh Father Time, you laugh and mock us so,
When all the world wants you to go away,
And if by chance we ask for you to stay,
We see how fast the sun can lose its glow.
When bored you taunt us with your gait so slow;
Our joy, you end by quickening the day;
Annoyed, we hate this game you love to play,
Yet time, you started playing years ago.
When summer's warmth brings joy and bliss again,
Nearby is winter's devastating chill.
When forced to stay at home because of rain,
Indoors it seems that time is frozen still.
How many times a day do we complain?
Until the end of time, it moves at will.

That Day

by Andreia Da Silva

Looking at you all one can do is smile;
You grabbed my hand and then you pulled me in.
You said goodbye, I said just for a while;
Tears shed while you told me what could have been.
I loved the shining sun upon your face,
How your soft smile did wipe away my tears,
And it's your kindness that I've so embraced
When you did hold me in my darkest fears.
Somehow I thought this day would never come
When your goodbye would always last in time.
The pain of missing you would make me numb,
And all my life would be an endless climb.
I screamed and ached for you to be with me;
When I awoke, it was you I did see.

Without You Here

by Luis Caldeira

On some dull day I thought I'd fall in love,

Just never to a person quite like you.

Like a reincarnation from above

Sent to this earth to make its own debut.

A star that brought to me enormous pleasure

And sauntered neither overjoyed nor sad,

But I was much too blind to see a treasure,

Worth more than anything I'd ever had.

Whenever I did gaze upon your face,

I did rejoice but it did quickly fade.

All creatures remained still in time and space,

And my sweet soul was cut by reaper's blade.

Without you here comes almost as a death

'Cause life without you is not worth a breath.

Live Each Breath

by Jessica Tomaz

Compare the truths of nature to real life
And you will realize that mother nature
Attempts to safely rescue us from strife;
Distress is something we alone do capture.
The breeze can end a life with a monsoon;
That whistling wind may wander through the dark
And chill the beaming heat of soothing June;
Our mother nature leaves a fixed mark.
Most people live in time's divine control.
They want to be adventurous yet think
The tick of time is an eternal toll,
When it's the time it takes an eye to blink.
A life well lived is sweeter than the sun,
For it remains after the day is done.

Dear Journal

by Sabrina Blucher

He catches me off guard with his sweet smile.

His hair so fly with style it looks so right.

To see him sing in person is worthwhile,

But I won't end my love without a fight.

So many options for him to choose from;

I honestly want to be his true love.

In this crowd of girls, I am just a crumb;

I truly hope that I can rise above.

Like he said in one of my favorite songs,

“Many have called the chosen is you.”

Inside his heart is where I do belong;

I want to be his girl, his love, his boo.

I'm ending my journal with a high fever,

For my dream guy, the only Justin Bieber!

Music Man

by Newton Portorreal

So softly, as his tambourine does sound,
Slowly the room echoes his rhythmic grace,
Reverberations leave no thing in place,
The sound that will shift what's rooted in ground.
The earth, his rhythm surely moves around.
His constant beat lets me not stay awake,
Upon his hand back and forth it does shake
Unstoppable, and steadfast as a hound.
In some his tambourine inspires great hope,
In others it does inspire only fear,
But what inspires him, nobody knows.
I'll find myself at the end of my rope
When his tambourine, I no longer hear,
No longer hear his rhythm sound so slow.

Encaged

by Tracy Jerez

As others see how truly they are blessed,
So many thoughts are running through my mind.
Oh God, can you fulfill this dire request?
To let affection free this heart confined.
Where as their fervor fills them with delight,
Impassiveness drinks all my essence dry;
But just as I begin to shun the light,
A long awaited wish drops from the sky.
A stunning dream reigns down from heaven's gate,
His blazing passion melts this once cold heart;
My missing half appears as if by fate,
Two destinies now joined and shall not part.
This heart you rescued from a dreary haze
Rests in your hands where it forever stays.

Becoming One

by Pamela B. Gómez

Sometimes in peace when I am all alone,

I stop and then I think about just you,

And then I see how much our love has grown

And be so strong, so old, and yet, so new.

It seems so long the time that we have shared;

It is like measuring the deep blue sea,

And even though before was I so scared

To fall in love, your love has captured me.

You were the moon that lit up my dark sky;

You were the handkerchief that cleansed my tears;

You were the sweet, short kiss to my goodbye;

You were there always through my fifteen years.

Now you are an essential part of me,

And it's with you that I desire to be.

The Woods

by Darius Thurman

When I do leave, I hear many a thing,
Inside the forest where the creatures roam.
From wolves that howl to birds that really sing,
I go to a place where each beast calls home.
I see squirrels run in and out of trees,
By noon I then hear the call of the deer,
Which always may cause the buzz from the bees,
Nightfall does bring sight and sound by the ear.
In the sunshine, the fish do start to swim,
But first before the sun, the crickets scream,
Still as I walk I feel immensely grim,
I feel distress for near are many bears seem.
I shall return to my residence now,
But voyage to again this I will vow.

Je Mata Ne

by Nathalie Fernandes

I walked your streets and felt a peace like no other.

This place filled a missing void in my heart.

Nowhere I look can I find another,

Because nothing else has given me a clean start.

Your friendly nature, so hard to forget,

Each street distinct, each street a sweet surprise.

You should know my life changed the day we met,

And seeing you was winning a great prize.

Visiting you has taught me many things,

There is so much more in the world to see.

Instead of just what your daily life brings,

It's now I get: understanding is key.

It was with you we had all that fun,

And a whole new adventure has begun.

Story of a Muse

by Jean-Carlos Arenas

The lack of inspiration on a page
Presents a challenge: what will I become?
My inability produces rage;
My point I can't deliver; I'm struck dumb.
Eraser in hand as I start anew,
But my inspired thoughts remain delayed,
I need a muse, and I do call for you,
Your visage comes to mind and to my aid.
Your golden hair resembling shining suns,
Your eyes so blue like pure and stainless seas,
Your inner saint-like goodness like fair nuns,
All make me feel serene like a fresh breeze.
A sunlit church, a lake where good things lurk,
Fine maiden, you've inspired my next work!

The Endless Cycle

by Stacey Pereira

Everyone can see fall is here:
With once lively fresh green leaves on trees,
Hitting the ground, lying there decaying
From green to orange from ripe to wrinkly,
Hitting everyone with a preview of what's to come.

Everyone can feel that winter is here:
The harsh cutting cold against your cheeks,
Finding every fiber of your being to just make it home,
Hold on to your belongings -
They can become your lost love,
But a glimpse of hope comes as snow melts away.

Everyone can see spring is here:
Rain pours every once in a while,
Flowers begin to bloom with those familiar fresh colors,
Your toes are no longer cold when you step outside,
It's time to put away your hats, scarves, jackets -
Something better is yet to come.

Everyone can feel summer is here:
The sun captures the sunshine within your soul
That has been held captive for the past three seasons,
The creatures inside come out to bathe in the bluest oceans
And begin to live,
With fall creeping right around the corner -
It's time to start the cycle again.

The Apology

by Marian Calle

I sat next to her but someone else sat with us,
(unseen but felt by me)
and I tried to apologize
for What I Did,
and I tried to bring the Old Days back,
and she listened and smiled and nodded,
but the unseen person told me she
hadn't forgiven me,
and never would,
so I sat back
(to hide my face)
and cried inside,
and the unseen person
wiped away my tears.

The Climb

by Fatimah Tareen

How could I fall so hard?
Because I was dropped from a greater height.
I hurt my loved ones tonight,
Because I left them seedless,
I began to crawl again.

Bound to walk again
I spoke again, I tried again,
But I promised myself that I will never fall again,
I blossomed into a new woman,
And gave the wind something to fight against.

Fully covered, bundled up,
I was hurt but it wasn't enough.

The Lido

by Michelle Fernandes

“Tom Smith, a man with a smile that could brighten anyone’s day, and a personality for which any woman could fall,” Emma repeated as she gazed at Tom from across the room as he sweet talked a few ladies at table four of her father’s restaurant *The Lido*.

Her father’s restaurant, located at the center of London, was quite small, yet elegant, and a place where only the wealthiest ate. Being from the wealthiest family for miles, Emma used it to her advantage when it came to men. Besides this asset, Emma was also one that could catch any man’s eye through the elegance of her slim body. Her father’s restaurant was a place where Emma would spend most of her afternoons, and this afternoon was just like all the others. As Emma gazed straight at Tom from across the room, she couldn’t help but wonder what Tom was talking about. Leaning against the rail, with one hand holding up her chin, and the other dangling over the wooden railing, Emma finally worked up the courage to go up to Tom.

Tap, Tap! As Tom turned around, he was greeted by Emma. “Well, hello there, Tom. Would you care to go for a walk down to Hyde Park? I heard the flowers have blossomed in the rose garden, and the weather sure has cleared up.” Standing there in front of Tom, with sweaty palms and shaking knees, was something Emma could not believe she was doing.

“Uhh, actually I think that...” Just as Tom was about to reply, the two ladies from table four approached him. One of the ladies was tall and dressed very elegantly as if she were going to church. Her tall red heels perfectly matched her long stylish dress, covered in little white flowers. The other was dressed in a quite short green skirt, and a low-cut white button down shirt, which looked a bit provocative.

“Well, hello there, Tom. Would you care to escort us to the store down the street? Having a tall, strong man by our side could come in handy, dear,” said the lady in the green skirt.

“I’m sorry ladies. I already have plans with lady Emma.” With these words, he grabbed Emma’s hand and they were off to the park, leaving behind two of the wealthiest and prettiest girls in town.

After a long walk around Hyde Park, Emma and Tom took a seat on a brown bench that was next to the Weeping Beech. Sitting down on that bench with Tom brought back memories of her childhood back in the 1870’s.

The Weeping Beech use to be her best hiding place when playing with her friends. She would crawl under the tree, and no one could ever find her. Sitting there with Tom brought back many memories, and she hoped that she could create new ones with Tom as well.

“Emma, have I ever told you that you have the most beautiful eyes and the nicest smile I’ve ever seen?” With these words, Tom gently placed his soft hand on her pale white face and slowly leaned in for a kiss. Emma soon began to ramble about how wonderful it would be to spend forever with each other. “We can live in a huge house just south of London, and have two children. You know I cannot handle more than two, and we can...”

“Shhhh!” Tom said as he placed his index finger over her soft thin lips with a look of disgust on his face. “Let’s take this with time.” Ecstatic and overjoyed, Emma began thinking about her future with Tom, and how she too could bring her children to the Weeping Beech where they could create their own memories. Their children could play hide-and-seek around the Weeping Beech just like Emma did when she was younger, and it was even a place where they could spend many ordinary afternoons with their boy-friends, just like Emma planned to do with Tom.

Getting lost in her own world, Emma had completely blocked Tom out, and forgot he was there.

“Hello? Emma? ...Emma?” Tom questioned as he desperately attempted to grab Emma’s attention away from her daydreaming and back to him.

“Yes, I’m here darling, and always will be,” Emma said as she gently placed her hand on his.

“Emma, I’m sorry, but I’m not ready for all of that right now, especially not with you. Our kiss, it wasn’t what I was expecting. There wasn’t a spark. The spark that gives you butterflies in your stomach and makes you excited and nervous all at the same time.” With these words, Tom got up and headed towards Emma’s restaurant. Emma got up from the bench, but slowly sat back down. Feeling useless about not being good enough, Emma suddenly broke down crying. Never before had a man rejected her.

Sitting once again on the bench brought back memories, memories of the past when she would play hide-and-seek and tag. She remembered the late afternoons playing around the Weeping Beech, and when she would scrape her knee from a bad fall. She remembered how every time she fell, she would get right back up and keep on playing, even if the other kids told her to leave.

Playing around the Weeping Beech was something that Emma enjoyed doing as a child, and did not give up every time she fell down. Looking back on her walk through Hyde Park was a moment that Emma had been looking forward ever since the day that her hazel eyes saw Tom’s smile.

It was then that Emma realized that she would not and could not give up on conquering Tom’s love.

Just like when she was younger and fell down, she got right back up. She had to get back up from her fall with Tom.

Back at the restaurant, Tom went on with his usual, sweet-talking the young ladies at table four. Believing that conquering Tom's heart was still possible, as usual Emma gazed from afar, leaning against the rail, with one hand holding up her chin, and the other dangling over the wooden railing repeating the words, "Tom Smith, a man with a smile that could brighten anyone's day, and a personality for which any woman could fall."

The End