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Anticipations

...practice looking forward to tomorrow.

*Poems
and Mini-Posters*



by

David Mansel Dunn

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ANTICIPATIONS

POEMS AND MINI-POSTERS

Can we live fully in the real world?
Can we invent a human future?

Yes!

In bold, exciting images,
ANTICIPATIONS is poetry of affirmation.

ANTICIPATIONS is a collection of powerful poems and accompanying mini-posters for the desktop, dresser or coffee table, that invites everyone to celebrate reality in the last decades before the new century.

DAVID MANSEL DUNN is a writer, poet and facilitator of spirit transformation who has lived and worked in Calcutta, the villages of India and Egypt, and communities in Australia and the United States. He now lives and works in Denver, Colorado, USA.

ANTICIPATIONS

POEMS AND MINI-POSTERS

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**MINI-POSTERS
(BACK COVER)**

FIERY DAWN

One starry night I sat on the roof
Of my home in the desert.
The air was balmy and the sky was clear.
The stars cast a delicate intimation of light
across the sand.
I could not keep my eyes off the stars.
They seemed to pull my sight into the heavens.
The universe called and my heart answered.
It grew until I thought I would disappear.
Alarmed, I remembered myself and went to bed.

The next morning I awoke before dawn
And wandered out into the desert
Under the morning stars.
The air was chill and a breath of dew slept
upon the sand.
I stood facing the darkness of the East,
Straining to see the first light.
But though I watched intently it caught me unaware.
Before I knew it, a subtle light had crept around me.
The desert began to glow.

I was not prepared for dawn that morning.
The horizon began to radiate light.
Then a vast, dull red ball struggled out of darkness,
Throwing off the shroud of night.
It rose to become a sphere of light so brilliant
I had to shield my eyes.
In awe, my legs gave way beneath me
And I sank to my knees on the sand.

Never before that morning had I felt such an echo
in my heart.

The very ecstasy of creation

Began that morning as a faint glow,

Then a dull ache,

Then a fire so intense I had to stagger to my feet

And grope my way back to the room unseen,

For fear of making a display

Of my own catastrophic incineration,

Or at the least, burning someone else

On my way to becoming a piece of ash

In the furnace of the wonder of that dawn.

Great journeys are begun

In the wonder of fiery dawns.

Whether the spark is birth and discovery,

Or the spontaneous ignition of insight and beauty,

From the moment we carry the coal in our heart,

Our duty is simply to keep the fire of creation,

And with its flame to daily light the dawn.

SANDCASTLES

Remember the beach?

We trudged through the sand, all grainy and deep,
Scuffing sprays of grit into the air

Just for the glee of kicking up our heels.

We buried ourselves and poked safely on the sand
The fascinating bodies forbidden below.

We ran and slid and spun around, stumbled screaming together,
Pulling each other into the chill, wild waters of the lake.

No one had yet qualified as an engineer.

There were no architects.

We hadn't even got to adolescence,

Let alone constructive purposes or financial aims.

We were just kids.

But, oh the wonders we built.

Roads and airfields, castles and forts,

Cities and farms and lakes and resorts.

We laid out society there on the beach,

A miniature model with no one to preach

What was proper or feasible, efficient and right.

Sculpting the images which flew from the light

Of our minds, before we had learned how not to be free.

All we were doing was playing you see.

Oh we guarded our castles from destruction by neighbors

For we wanted time to admire our labors.

To allow the public to comment in awe

At the precision and detail and cunning they saw

In the sandcastles we knew would be washed by the waves.

For sandcastles are daring constructions which nobody saves.

Their home is the beach,

That constantly changing place that you reach

When you're facing the waves that pound on the shore

With your back to the past, when what's solid's no more.

Sandcastles are dreams offered the deep,

Prophesies made by seers who leap

Into the future far from the land

While shaping their hopes with the work of the hand.

FROZEN WASTE

Gathering about us is a darkness,
A foul and brazen storm
Howling across the barren,
Drifted reach of craggy death,
Anxiety and fear
That stand between our dreams and our selves.
From this foreboding place,
The chill gust of winter shrieks down
Laying waste all that stands in its path,
Erect and unsuspecting,
Trusting and brave.

In spite of vast resolve,
Subtle murders and cordial assassinations
Stop innocents in mid-heartbeat.
Corpses of possibility lie hidden
Beneath the sullen, grey blanket
Of waylaid intent.

Never intending to end life,
We stare aghast at the carnage,
The loss, the sadness of the human loss,
Buried low and out of sight
By pride or humiliation,
Twin guardians of the lies of silence.
Our minds advise a humane truce,
Chance for a decent burial of the dead.
Without tears or mourning,
Our hearts counsel letting go of fear,
Facing the future
Without dread of ambush from within.

Can we save ourselves from the suicide of frozen spirit,
Just at this moment when we faintly perceive
The distant, shimmering vision,
The pregnant chance,
That we might in every moment
Create life?

QUERYING THE UNIVERSE

So many friends
Are trying suicide
As a quick painkiller,
I had to have some answers.

In desperation,
I went one day to a fortune teller.
"Does the universe want them to live?"

The fortune teller stared into the crystal ball.
Several minutes passed.
Finally tears began to stream down her face.
My heart sank.

She said simply,
"The answer is yes".

WHEN GALAXIES MEET

When galaxies meet
In a far corner of the known,
Where dark and light touch uncertainly,
Fearing catastrophe and ruin,
A universe torn apart,
Littered with the debris of cosmic wreckage,
Apprehensions of disaster
Evaporate into nothingness,
As night-startled galaxies' far-flung arms
Mingle like puffs of cosmic dust.
In the radiance of a celestial rendezvous of light,
Silent and resplendent, gravity and destiny turn
In an elegant dance of power.

When you and I meet,
Fearing the collision of dreams and passions,
The universe watches,
Whispering the hope of creation
In the union of unreasonable dancers,
Spinning birth into time and space,
A star's delight to see the future born
In spite of dread.

We are an intemperate conception,
Immaculate enough to shock the universe
Into convulsions of laughter,
The seductress whose caress
Is surprise and celebration.

THE TERROR AND THE ECSTASY

The journey from the no longer to the not yet
Is a trial by tightrope.
Each step an act of delicate bravery,
Each forward movement accomplished
With just a toe of inclination and hope.
One foot shadows another,
Both afraid of losing balance.
The fall would be fatal.

Why is the way across such a fine line
At such a height?
Who can enjoy the scenery anyway,
When sightseers lose the edge
And plummet to their death?
How could history have played such a trick,
Stretching our time between birth and death
With such ambiguous hazard and reward,
Such terror and ecstasy?
Seeking the one courts the other.

The danger of our time
Is not the terror of the abyss,
But the ecstasy of the crossing.
We no longer look down from the side,
But across from the highwire.
In midair, every step is a miracle of invention.
Every movement, a wonder of levitation.
Every moment contains the terror of unending rapture,
Of seeing ourselves on the other side.

CIRCLE OF SPIRIT

We are closed and open, one and many,
Still and dancing,
Leaping like ballerinas frozen in mid-flight.
The Spirit unimaginable carries us.

We shout and pray, dream and build,
Scrambling on the earth,
Terrified warriors watching the enemy
Watching us join the battle.
The Spirit improbable compels us.

Awed and afraid,
Straining at the bars,
Not daring to watch the tamer
March nonchalantly before the jaws,
There we are in the ring,
Chair and pistol in hand
Engaging the lion
After years of waiting in the stands.
The Spirit unavoidable propels us.

The spirit is the head turning;
The walls of the past burning;
The trail of the heart yearning
For men who create the future in their loins,
Women who build civilization heart by heart
With the inventions
Of the fiery, wily imagination
Of their Spirit.

HOLLOW HEART

When I looked within my heart,
I expected to find it solid and sure.
Hasn't it always been that way?
The heart of gold, the center of compassion.
Instead I found a hole.
Bottomless, silent, and profoundly disturbing.
Nothingness.
It took me completely by surprise.
I could not ignore the emptiness,
The hollow heart.
I wept.
I thought it was an aberration,
A congenital deformity,
This centerless heart;
An ignoble fate of being without a place for feeling,
A hook for my love, a focus for my care.
I wanted to leave them where I could find them.
In my heart, faithfully beating in my chest,
Not calling attention to itself.
Small and definible.
But it was not to be,
That gold, that rock,
That solid equation of feeling and humanity.
Instead it was the silence,
The loneliness of the empty center.
After beautiful love-making.
In the most glorious concert.
In the victory of achievement.
In the song of a thousand voices,
Living tomorrow in their dreams and deeds.
In glory, the tears of the hollow heart flow freely.
The more excellent the moment,
The greater the pain of the hollow heart.
It weeps, an infinite, unextinguishable sorrow.

We used to say tears of joy,
But we did not know the half
Of either the tears, or the joy.
Prodigal souls that we were,
We supposed the heart was feeling and caring.
Impoverished beings that we were,
We supposed the heart was falling in love and passion.
Foolish ones that we were,
We failed to look into the void of our hearts
And see there the very Mystery of life itself.
The silence of the One.
The Fire behind the flame and the Wind behind the storm.
We opened the heart and looked through to the Universe,
Not private dreams and passions.
Hanging precariously over that void,
We clawed our way up out of the abyss of our own infinity,
Pulled over the darkness of invention,
And claimed that God was dead
And spirit gone out of human affairs.

If only we had known that we tottered on the brink,
Not of disaster, but of salvation.
If only we had known that the mind is not the way,
Only the window on the infinite.
The heart is the door, the way through,
The point where we may choose the path,
If we keep our courage and allow it to be the great no-thing,
Without answers or emotion,
Without slobbery concern for whim,
Without the least inclination to pettiness or depreciation.
Rather the great opening, the infinite opportunity,
The fearsome probability of answering the call:
Step through,
That you may find yourselves safely home.
Where we, though many, are one,
And each one, though singular,
Is All.

ANTICIPATION

Our age is turned around,
Dragging along the ghosts of sense,
Stealing glances of eternity over its shoulder.
It's a sideshow life,
Trapped in a warp of time,
Filled with gaukers
Entranced with the wrecks and frauds
Of a lameduck world,
Coasting on the momentum
Of the last dispensation.

When good is past,
Tomorrow's ill.
When celebrity is power,
Pontifs are powerless
To commend goodwill and peace.
When weapons guarantee peace,
Peace is uneconomical,
And peaceful people are kept in deadly quarantine
Against the lively spread of love.
When the pressures of winning
Can drive a man to drink,
Drink can drive you to the brink of sanity.
When sex has lost its punch,
Punch-drunk ballers itch for safe satisfactions.
When the terrors of sexuality
Drive men and women into anonymous beds,
Commitment lasts until a better bargain
And scratching the surface of a tear
Unleashes a flood of pain and grief
Damned in the stainless steel hearts
Of abandoned intimacy.

When childhood is accelerated into extinction,
The race's young hide in terror
Behind the rouged and coiffured facade of character,
Whose mind is stuffed with images
As useless as sausage stuffed with sawdust,
Linked only by constrictions in the skin of sense.
When religious devotion is dogmatic belief,
Faith, control,
Hope, persistence,
And love, philanthropy,
The power of grace itself is wasted,
Mislaid in the search for a mere shadow of the substance.

It is a crazed and lunatic time,
The indiscrete birth of an unnamed conception,
And we are either midwives or abortionists,
Loving or hating in direct measure
Of our faith in life itself.

It is a shocking time,
Perplexing that death and transformation
Dance so brilliantly;
That flames and fountains look alike;
That despondence and delight dog every step.

It is a stunning time,
When falling is flying,
Letting go is taking charge,
And anticipation is the memory of tomorrow's promise.

THE PROMISE

Welcome to the land of milk and honey,
It has not turned out as we had dreamed.
But life and love are here and we could not ask for more.
We waited on the other side,
Praying for the gift of peace and hope,
And now the powers which kept us back
Are in the throes of death on every side.
It is not a pretty sight, this agony of passing away,
But it calls us to our journey.
We greet you with a smile,
From a heart with nothing to hide.
Despair went his separate way years ago.
We have crossed to the other side,
Finding here the promise of our ancestors,
A future which you may call home.
The land is rough and our tools crude.
You may expect labor and pain,
Fatigue and anguish to be sure,
For we are builders now, every one.
But the world has not seen
The glory which we shall raise
Before the watchful gaze of the universe beyond.

Welcome to this grand new home
The Mystery has prepared for us.
Do not be afraid of its size;
Every corner is filled with grace,
Every turn with adventure,
Every vista with promise.

Grow slowly, like the finest crystal,
Atom by atom into your glory,
For the new world will need you
To refract the light of your own bright dawn
Into the rainbow of The Promise.

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When falling is flying,
Letting go is
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And anticipation is
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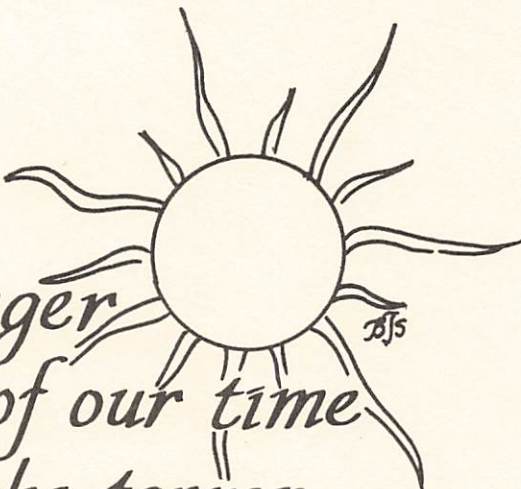




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STARS

*Great journeys
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In the wonder
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STARS

When you and I meet,
Fearing the collision
of dreams
and passions,
The universe
watches.



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