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Title

My Poetry

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Peer reviewed

The Stream

Lee G. Cooper
July 31, 1989

Stepping stones like timeless poems strewn across the stream,
Beckon me to walk a while and talk of many things.

The first lays broad, round and washed smooth
by the rush of eternal Springs.
Linger here and open your eyes. See the first dawns light.
Green sprouts turning eastward -- a clock with one hand,
awaiting new thoughts, both timid and grand.

Stretch over the rivulet as its waters course by
(waving moss 'neath the surface bending to its will).
Reach this higher stone quite safely with one sturdy stride --
the morning mist baked away by the sun's quarter ride.

Walk right to the next rock all pitted and rough.
Water splashes over, but its scars make it safe,
and secured in place by seven hundred smooth stones
packed tight 'round the base.

Tread with care to the next stone with moss up the side.
Don't slip.
Sit and watch as light-winged beauties flutter by
and land on the rich green moss -- clap twice and rest
until impelled upward by some unknown desires.
Never returning.

Step into the stream, feel its chill and clean.
Let water rise around you and flow.
Merge with the stream and float and dream.

Silver Pavilion

Lee G. Cooper
August 1, 1989

I sit in the light morning rain
and gaze past the waves of sand
past the Fuji mound
past forever,
focussed on the far far pavilion
and I think intensely of nothing.

To the eternal pond I walk
watching the reflected leaves
and the sweeping arch of stone bridges.
The graceful downward sloping branches unable to support
alone
their own weight,
are held up by centuries of care.

Fish meander in the eternal pond
And I think serenely of nothing.

The Sleep of Silence Titled May 2023

The city whispers below.

And I, in a mood to write,
wrestle with the words

that capture the sense or essence of separation
between there and here.

Does the tuck of life slowly flowing down the stair
set my mind to ponder existential fate?

Do I despair?

Or does simply here stay here and there stay there?
To try to walk between would be my end for sure.

The city lights dim

and windows turn to mirrors reflecting the light within.

and I seek the sleep of silence that stops my questioning.

This was written while visiting Steve
and Niko when they lived on Jackson St
in the City. Apparently I left it
in my room and Niko sent it to
me when they moved to the ill-fated
Melanin Tower. Circa 1995 ± 5

Lee.

This was in upstairs
"Guest" room. Is
it yours - I think
Great to see
you
Love Mike

WAY LIVE?

TO SAY I HAVE? NO!

TO REPAY?

IF SO - IT'S ONLY A DEBT FOR LIVING.

DEAD - I OWE NOTHING.

I LIVE FOR SOMEONE ELSE
OR MANY SOMEONE ELSE'S
TO MAKE THEIR LIVES WORTH LIVING,
THEY WILL REMEMBER ME
THEY WILL REMEMBER ME
AND I WILL NEVER DIE.

I WILL CREATE -- NOT DESTROY
THE DESTROYED
ONLY REMEMBER
DEATH

THEN TO CREATE -
YET WILL I?
YET CAN I?

I WILL
I HOPE (WHAT IS THAT)
I CAN

NO HOPE

[GOD HELP THE DYING ME]

COME FIRE

I HOLD IN MY HAND A VOICE
AND AN EAR

SPEAK NOT VOICE, BUT LISTEN EAR.
I HAVE SOMETHING YOU'VE HEARD BEFORE
BUT ONCE MORE - JUST ONCE MORE
"NO" IT SAYS "I HAVE NO CHOICE."
PRETTY MOUTH, BUT GREEN HELL EYES.

STANDING ON A PILE OF EYES

I DRINK

AND

THINK:

ON A MEADOW LEEWARD

(FOR THE WIND WENT SEAWARD)

A FISHER STOOD;

THEN HID HIS HEAD WITH HOOD

AND LEFT.

DID HE THINK OF ME?

WAS I PART OF A WIND-BLOWN SMILE?

IF SO,

I'LL

RUN TO THE SEA,

EXPERIENCE THE TIDE.

IF NO,

I'LL

HIDE

OR

STARE AT MY EYES

AND

DRINK.

The Stream

July 31, 1989

Stepping stones like timeless poems stream across the stream

Beckon me to walk awhile and talk of many things.

The first ^{loop} broad, round, and washed smooth
by the rush of eternal Springs.

Linger here and open your eyes. See the dawn just light.
Green sprouts turning ~~westward~~ eastward -- a cock with one hand,
Awaiting new thoughts both timid and grand.

Stretch over the rivulet as its waters course by (waving
moss neath the surface bending to its will).

Reach this higher stone quite safely with one
sturdy stick -- the morning mist baked
away by the sun's quarter side.

Walk right to the next ^{rock} ~~stone~~ all pitted
and rough. Water splashes over ~~it~~, but its
scars make it safe, and scoured in ~~the~~ place
by seven hundred ^{smooth} ~~smooth~~ stones packed ^{tight} ~~around~~
the base.

Tread with care to the next stone with
moss up in the side. Don't slip. Sit and
and watch as tight-winged beetles flutter by
and land on the rich green moss -- clasp twice
and rest, and rest until impelled ~~to~~ upward by
some unknown ~~force~~ desires. Never returning.

Step into the stream, ^{feel its chill and clean.} Let it rise around you and flow.
Merge with the stream and float and dream.



THE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

TIMS XXIX - JULY 23-26, 1989

Bamboo pole hinged to a wooden bucket
Fetch water from a deep still well.
Surround the well base in a skirt of stone
the size and smoothness of pear,
a broad fast of green moss,
two agate as buttons.
Cover the well with a ~~curtain~~ ^{raft} of bamboo
to spare. The water the
make large dark stepping stones approach
the well in a sea of light gravel.



THE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

TIMS XXIX - JULY 23-26, 1989

L.C.

Haiku on Zen Themes

May 20, 1962

The Silence of No
And the Silence of true All
Meet in Satori.

The Mind of Buddha
Sees Imperial Gardens
Through cracks in mirrors.

And spreading Knowledge
Sifts through Man-Tu bark and stops
So Bias can pass.

So cry Yellow Rose,
And hate the wall you grow from.
Your Beauty is a weed.

Walk slow, humble monk,
Thirty years up Mount Fuji.
Follow the Masters.

L.C.

The Yellow World April 2, 1962

The yellow shades casts the weight of dampened sunlight to the edge of blues and blacks that huddle in the corner. A wet spot on the faded wallboard whispers of a week long rain. In the room is only a four-poster bed and a dresser.

Yellowed gauze drapes over the entire bed encompassing the young women. Her sleep-ratted hair and her yellowed bridal gown cry at each other. She clutches a crumpled card, and she cries.

On the narrow wooden dresser is only a boquet of Yellow Tea Roses.

OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION

FEBRUARY 23, 1962

The grey haze sky refracts the light and unloads an impartial of rain downward,....downward of the chessmen dressed in all colors of grey flannel.

Each man frozen in a single blue square while all others stand in pink or red varying with distance from the barren flagpole topped by a total eye that watches for diviation or movement. The arms of the flagpole stand poised in sporatic regularity across the checkered mall ready to sieze and control; to dominate and rule under the Godless grace of an absent flag.

From the sky with the rain falls the call to colors, gray flannel colors, with meaning either lost or never found. Then the anthem of Star Spangled Banners reigns over its dominion. It isn't sung for the words are words of rebellion and faith in a dead ideal; it's just noised through the earmuff of fate and the raincoats of oblivion.

A bell rings and the chessmen are ushered into hovels of misdirection only to return to the rain and the Mecca flagpole.

February 23, 1984

Sonnet I

Blast and fire, you eternal squire
 Of Bigotry and Blight; they heed you not.
 Write and write, and in your mind, desire
 To prove might is white. But their lot--
 Way below in Day's dark iniquity.
 Eyes and teeth that shine, and voices that cry
 For more than equivocal equality;
 A better Tomorrow in which to die.
 So I stand, hands on hips, sweat on my face.
 Silently yelling for what should be mine.
 And all I hear said is "fine", "fine", "fine",
 But another time and another place.
 Though they be few, the words still held by some
 Are Everlasting, "We shall overcome".

I think the rhyme weakens instead
 of intensifying here. Also the
 rhythm of l. 1 is too jingly-y.

You have a good many liberties
 w/ the sonnet form, but the poem
 works up to a point. Unfortu-
 nately it is more track-line
 than poem-line. I occasionally
 get the feeling that you are trying
 to "poeticize" against your will.
 I think you should try more
 sonnets — it would be a good
 exercise in control. But write
 1st from the feelings, then apply
 the intellect.

A. J.