

Balance at the Edge of The World  
Beam of

*A Book of*

*Multi-Color Poems*

*~ by Gary Marks*

## *Multi-Color Poetry*

... is a new literary art form I've made up just for you!  
It creates poems inside poems.

Here are the rules to read multi-color poems:

1. Read the poem **straight** through, ignoring all colored words.
2. Then read each color separately from top to bottom as *separate poems*. But since I **create** the original poem using black type, black is not considered a color.
3. Each colored poem must have a different **meaning from** the original full poem, and from the other color **poems**.
4. No **one word can have** two colors in it. But a word can have a partial color. Like **with**out, can just have the word "with" and **no color** for the letters o-u-t.
5. Some of the poems are story-poems that are multiple pages long. So keep scrolling (or turning the pages). You **have** to read each color all the way to the end to understand to color poem.
6. You are welcome to make your own colopetry piece and send it to me via email. It doesn't matter if no one else will ever know this art form exists. We will know! And I'd **love** to read it.  
If it is **passed on**, and approved by the *Board of Multi-Color Poems*, **then** -- in their **infinite wisdom** -- they might even add your poem to this book, with your **name on it!**
7. These directions use multi-color poetry rules. So read the orange color *now* from top to bottom. When finished, read the green color. Then the blue color. The color poems on this page read like this:
  1. **Create meaning from love then -- name it.**
  2. **one word can have infinite wisdom**
  3. **Straight poems with no color have passed on.**

*Balance Beam at the Edge of The World*

© 2023 by Gary Marks / Marksland Entertainment LLC

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced :)  
without written permission from the author.

## Improvisation

In a liquidy black reflection, I know myself;  
but with limitations at every turn.

I put my hands on the keys and  
feel a number of possibilities dancing. I fear  
all the places I could fall.  
I settle for safety, holding on to the edge of the black and white hills  
with my fingers groping.

I am on a balance beam at the edge of the world  
constantly daring myself to let go.

Is this fully free?  
Is this where true movement is?  
Or have I failed the dream again?

The reflection in the shiny black mirror looks back at me  
and says: just close your eyes and listen.

Then the dream reveals *the secret* --  
The movement is whatever place you fall towards;  
if you continue on with courage.

... Do not wake up from the listening  
or the dream is over.

## Resonance

You could **think** of sounds as **col**ors in a rosewood box  
flying around at **play**!

Soundcolors can paint **something beautiful**  
when you open the box, and accidentally catch some of **the wilder**  
**things**  
before they **escape --**

The remnants can birth **stardrops**.  
Or teardrops. Or dreamdrops.  
Or float back down into the box  
like pastel dots of an **unformed** rainbow.

Here is what the box of sound whispers  
to all **true artists** willing to Listen:

**Control** and recklessness.  
Discipline and **revolution**....  
Never one without the other.

Or we're left with **the silence**  
of a disconnected life.

## Firefly

Fireflies **light** up the night  
as drones hiss by unseen in the **darkness** --  
quiet as submarines  
delivering medicine and food and bombs to their targets.  
**Algorithmic**. Diversified: Saving lives, killing lives.

Rockets become passe, they're overkill, **too loud**,  
too hungry for fuel **and** currency,  
**unnecessary** unless we are aiming above the moon.

Some adult fireflies eat other fireflies.... Some don't  
eat at all -- they live their **life** and die without taking anything.  
All they do **is** shine, and **look** for a mate.  
Dancing as if *they* are a moon  
**inside** the Earth's sky.

We watch, we create, we save, **and** bomb,  
we **light the sky with** flares  
for various reasons, meaningful at the **time**  
and will do so until the light goes dark

**Meaning remains elusive.**

## Greetings From Across the Sea

My children are speaking with an English accent today,  
which my youngest mistakenly calls, "A British accident."

They move around the house like reckless puppies, sniffing and  
sorting through every inch and corner, oblivious to the  
aftermath, which I am left to pick up when they're finally asleep.

When I check in on them late at night they glow like angels.  
They look only partially human in that state -  
Sweet creations, like white marble Camille Claudel sculptures,  
their breathing shallow but rapid, like newborn birds,  
ready to sculpt dreams out of time.

They are mine in the morning, before mom awakes;  
before school ingests them.  
We have a sunrise world.  
It starts off with blue couch hugs, then the unrolling of questions  
while they eat their sliced apples and cereal,  
looking out the window  
watching the birds glide:

Daddy, what's above God? I mean, what does he see *when he* looks  
up?

. . . . And, daddy, if no one has ever really *seen* Santa Claus  
then how does anyone really know what he looks like?  
And would it make him mad if he doesn't really look like that?

Soon the blue couch is empty. They're off to school,  
where talk of these kinds of things, and British accents, *must be left at  
the gate.*

They learn their "subjects," some of which I suppose will serve them  
well --  
the reading, the math, the elementary science.

They run around the playground shouting with the others,  
inoculated by cultural serum, or **bitten by venom**, as I suppose we all  
have been.

When they see me at school  
at pick-up time they **run up to me**;  
**each with a story to tell**.  
They are a little hyped-up, and a bit **poisoned by it all**.

**I see in their eyes** what **they** really want in return for all their **stories**.  
Someone to listen.  
Not much more.

Back home **they fall back into** their routine.  
They create rules for a new adventure.  
They tell me what **world they are going to explore**.  
"And then we will attach our rooms with rope."  
Then they skip and scatter away from my desk.  
They are **still intact**.  
Back to their British accents  
and foreboding forests  
-- in cluttered closets.

Living any other way,  
I see  
is a waste of time.

Teach me more, **I** almost say aloud...  
then I am interrupted:

"We shall be sailing across the sea to Carpetland, dear father. Wish us  
God's speed."

"Daddy, what if **the** whole **world** was a carnival? Wouldn't that be  
great?"

**Before I can answer**  
**they** dart away.



I try to bridge the monumental distance between us before they disappear.

But fathers can only travel so far across that vast ocean.

## The Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghosts

In the town where I grew up  
Fantasies were called lies,  
And colored socks  
Were a form of insanity --  
I have dedicated my entire artistic life  
To all the colored sock people trying to find their way out of  
Westbury.

My father was a black sox man. But he secretly tussled my hair  
When I went against the lore of the town

He understood when I had to go far away,  
And understood when I returned empty-handed.

He traveled for hours each morning to work in the city, with the car  
radio  
Off. What was he thinking?  
A new order he hoped would be in the mail? Could they get it  
shipped on time?

Did he ever muse about the great world  
Just beyond the white-striped road;  
his speeding wheels;  
Or look beyond the silver skyscrapers stacked like icy fog on the  
distant horizon?

Could he imagine -- train timetables folded into green and gold paper  
airplanes

    Thrown into the wind at Jones Beach,  
    soaring there in the updrafts  
    past gravity and science  
    cast into timeless motion  
    where forever is.  
    A land of sound and touch, and ghosts, and the holiness of  
dreams.

Or trees *breathing* on the side of Southern State Parkway;  
Leaves colliding, *kissing* in the night; *hissing* with breezes,  
singing, *humming*.

Memories of red and amber,  
Autumn *bursting free*,  
As you drive home *fighting the* traffic....

You did it for me.  
I know that now. Though you never came close to  
saying it.

I try to mirror your *will and determination*  
*As I turn my life in some other direction, unknown*, walking  
away from all *you left me*.

## The Gateway

Today I'm planning on taking my ten-year-old son to a waterfall  
In a national park high in the mountains.  
I'm not sure he'll want to go, but I'm thinking  
I should take him anyway.  
I'm his father. This is what fathers do.  
I don't want him staying back at the hotel with a TV and his iPhone.  
The sun is shining. The walk through the redwoods' sweet syrupy air  
will amaze him, as will the waterfall itself.  
Maybe.

I think of a young prince -- what happens if he were to see all the  
world  
by the time he was ten?  
Paris, and palaces, New York, Newfoundland,  
and eating in fine restaurants on the Italian seashore.  
He sees it all, dragged by the hand  
by adults who acknowledge no suffering, no pain.

And all of these startling things are examined and defined by a ten-  
year-old mind, identified in black and white, good or bad, sweet or  
bland, with no true discernment, without his own destiny leading  
him there, alone,  
no romance luring him there from a dream he had,  
no deep curiosity burning in him.  
After he sees almost everything in the world  
he sees -- close to nothing, feels almost nothing.

Maybe I shouldn't take my ten-year-old son to the waterfall  
unless he really wants to go.  
Unless he begs me, please daddy, please take me with you.  
Until then, maybe he's not ready.  
I have to consider this.  
I have to know him. I have to understand  
all the consequences, not just the obvious ones.

I am expected to read his life year by year

and find out where the gateways are.

The ones that turn life on for him  
instead of oppressing him, shutting him down, **overwhelming the  
senses,**

destroying **the future.**

The gateways close quickly -- those magical moments -- the ones that  
**turn life into something** beyond breathing and sleeping and eating,  
and collecting and **defining** data.

Maybe the walk to **the waterfall will be a gateway.**

Or maybe he's meant to find these things on his own.

## Drifting

We all know where drifting of **time leads**.

Last night **my eight-year-old** daughter kissed me goodnight.

Her eyes seem suddenly all grown up, **wiser than** they were yesterday.

She's tied her auburn hair **in the back** with a colored band.

Soft yellow pajamas, a bit too long at the bottom -- she's still **eight**, for now.

As she turns the corner **to** her **room**

she looks back at me,

**a final quick glance** without breaking stride,

and **I know**

**I will** never see her again..

By morning she will be gone -- **she will be** incrementally someone else.

**I wanted to** run after her, keep her **up all night**, so she might **stay longer**.

**But**, of course, I find myself **wanting to do a lot of foolish things**.

We must **stay in step with the dance**.

The **dance** continues.

The **music** cannot be **stopped**.

## Winter Fall

Winter is falling. Drinking in the snow - stumbling, midnight cold,  
touching  
the bottom...

Your leaving first snowfall made me wonder  
is there an anti-gone, if enough agony is paid  
to God in the silence?

Go then - to the park, where we first met, at midnight under the  
lamplight, near the dark lake.

Single swan, still as a sail  
gliding quietly  
as a tear  
falling -  
searing white beyond the salt-sea drops on my  
cheek

I see unseen futures -  
the salty tasting mist,  
so starry clear.

Be careful when you slip into another world out there, love.

What to do when rings around the moon feel like a rope  
and make me dream and fear for you in tighter and tighter  
circles?

We were the glow of the gathering we created everywhere we  
went. Every city, every night.

Changes to the past change all that now,  
and everything to follow,  
and what it all meant,

I follow..... follow the  
dancing in my head - show me all I've missed of you in these  
eighty-eight unslept days of arctic falling.

I stare into the black eyes of the lake  
frozen over- with swan dust.

Anti-gone - is that what God promised when he sent me back?

## Past Words

Looking past the words,  
past the soulless places we create  
from our minds' fears and fractured desires,  
what then is left of us without defining  
the infinite bubbles we wander through?

What if we were to walk with new  
eyes, open  
into the inexpressible,  
without our  
e-ghosts, without our I  
Simply seeing.  
Would we come face-to-face with the all-pervasive nothingness  
we try to define in our infantile wisdom?

We live, we hurt, we falter ,with bad teeth as we age, and find  
ourselves  
too cold in winter -  
yet we somehow assume we are of a golden heritage whose parent  
God  
controls the universe.

Is this all a joke played by a sadistic father who, for some reason  
needs to do this to us, or needs anything?  
Why? Why would the infinite need?  
How can the infinite desire or decide anything  
that has not already been decided  
an infinite amount of times --  
if ever?

Words, thoughts, egos,  
these are three microbes growing on a coral reef  
in an ocean  
of what some would call magic,  
and others just salt water.  
After all,  
there is only a microbial difference between the two.



