

A Fugue on Meditation

By Eileen Fisher

I

How often I breathe and sit—
Exhale smoke, inhale light
And hope this mood lifts
How often I breathe and sit—
Think nothing or not then quit
I sit again—hope I do it right
How often I breathe and sit—
Exhale smoke inhale light

II

I sit again—hope I do it right
How my past begs for this
But, it's like looking into deep night
I sit again—hope I do it right
Can't be done! Memory blocks my sight.
Life moment, by, moment must be bliss
I sit again—hope I do it right
How my past begs for this

III

Life moment, by, moment must be bliss
The present full of freedom and wonder
What is it like to fully engage like this?
Life moment, by, moment must be bliss
I yearn to engage fully in a kiss
Free of every worry, I ponder...
Life moment, by, moment must be bliss
The present full of freedom and wonder

IV

Free of every worry I ponder
The tug of despair and hope.
The hope, the bliss fade yonder
Free of worry I ponder
Zap! The tug that pulls me under
I sit again—just to cope
Free of every worry I ponder
The tug of despair and hope.

V

How often i breathe and sit—
Exhale smoke, inhale light
And this mood lifts
How often I breathe and sit—
Think nothing or not then quit
I sit again—hope I do it right
How often I breathe and sit—
Exhale smoke, inhale light

NAMI NJ Expressive Arts - Poetry Showcase - November 2018

**Free to Express
By Jennifer Bristol**

Words to represent
what crosses our senses
Music to comprehend
the defenseless
What's so magical
What's so disastrous
While imparting a tale
to hope recipients grasp
And when words fail
such hope a tune can catch
Oh, notes placed together to calm the forlorn
Oh, words strung so neatly to enrage the scorned
Let there be music to curse the world
Or make docile your heart which evil has torn
Never a desire was held so strongly to
Like expressing things to my very own tune
I pain, I grieve, I purge, I relieve
We thrive, we die, we hate saying goodbye
Until one day it's okay
And little does one have to say
When saying "so long"
in song

Masters Over Mania

By Strawberry Gallagher

She used to say that my mind
was like trans-siberian express train
my thoughts were always traveling a mile a minute
but I always reached my destination

She said she wished her mind was like mine
a functioning train
not a broken NJ transit train
that sits on the tracks for hours
settled and undisturbed
but I wish I had her mind sometimes

I cannot tell if it is the result of a social construct
or from genetics but
why couldn't I have inherited something
like hair color rather than an overactive mind
that rages than loves than hates than cares?

Fighting to not be like them
Inevitably I became them
their blood, their dna
their defects
their laughs, their smiles
their mania

Who knew that
schizophrenic upbrings
and alcoholic nurturing
paved way for masters degrees?

Or that survival
could become an obsession
and a compulsion
separately but in unison

Or that the conclusion could
manifest in success
and that love would be the only way out
even when it was impossible to let in

My song asking for freedom

By Elisa Rendon

I wasn't born to be a slave. To walk through the streets of squalor and hear people call me deranged. My lips open in prayer and songs of liberty. Those who don't love me won't accept a crazy woman teaching lessons about freedom, relief from derision, my acceptance of who I am and how I came to be. I was raised from the streets of rejection, having had the love of a mother who loved me fiercely, and taught me I had a right to be loved. Her spirit edges me to go on and defy stereotypes. Show the world the essence of my freedom and the value of my thoughts. Singing about beauty and truth. Living with the strength the good Lord gives me, to show the world I am not a lunatic, or a demented soul. That my soul feeds from love and acceptance that I won't bow my head in despair because I am flawed. Those flaws are my intrinsic value, my bounty, my pot of gold. They are there to remind me the only way is forward and the way to move is to go on.

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Untitled

By Margaret Pernice

I am going to the Partial Care Program at the Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center.

I have called the Psychiatric Screening Service.

I have called Alternatives, Inc.

I have called a friend, or my sister, a member of my family.

I am listening to music.

I am doing cross words or searcher puzzles or color by number

I am taking long showers.

I am taking long walks.