

INTRODUCTION

Three individuals, three lives, three stories meeting in this sacred space where expression is prized, truth is honored, and creativity is housed. There is no present without the past and no growth without cultivation. We create because we've been created. We live because we've been given life. We express because we were spoken into existence. Here, in this space, we're free, kissed by the sun and bare faced. We're free because our ancestors, families, friends, mentors and even opposers both intentionally and unintentionally fought before us, with us, for us. It is our time now to continue to do the same. Spoken word, silent songs of fallen and rising souls untamed. During this time where space is unlimited, emotions are high and visions of varied mental states of our brothers and sisters of the world have come to be showcased on every form of media, we collectively stand as one for life, three spirits combined and unmasked. Silent no more. Hidden no more. Enter our world and stay for a while. Explore.

Blessings.

So I Wrote- Story of Spring

Sunshine set its light on night
And winds bent their arms
Around
Swarms of bumble bees
Bent crooked knees
Hearts, mind at ease
Feeling pretty, pleased
By
Lovers' lane
Memories of dimmed war-houses
Left men somewhat insane
But none of them to blame
Since they were quick-stepped men children
Of single mothers
Who smothered them
Left the girls in a world
All their own
Cyclical movements to the throne
Chills within movements of their own
Family grew and grew
Slid to home
Base encased by lies
Life struggles, present passed by
Future, a dream
Captured in scenes
Unseen
Emote heat from
Wrath of mind

Nadia Stokes, Henry Westray Jr., & Joslyn Caldwell

To keep my peace
I wrote a rhyme
Never to be dead...again
So I wrote to cover all visions
Hidden deep within
Flies flew far away
Buzzing
Nothing left.

Winter



My fear of Winter went away
Blustery breezes did not brittle my bones
Or crystalize my blood to a frozen glacier red
Ash-layered skies did not languor
The heat of my heart
Nor did a Winter's wind whisper my death
But signaled a sojourn to retreat to the soul
Where frigid voices, from the summer's sun
Whispered, that icy havens only heal
From the heat of a loving heart
Are revealed in the radiance of a smile
Revel in the warmth of a hello
Rest in the rapture of a loving ritual
Riveted in time
Only then will icicles of fear fade
Kindling glances of hope
Winter is for wondering beyond windows

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Imagining through looking glasses
For touching celestial secrets
And seasoning ourselves for spring

Untitled

Dream Me
Dream You
Dream me and you. . .together
For real life is our separator
Test and trials I have put you through
But my words confessed
That I love you
For the sun moved me
While the moon caressed you
I rolled in the sand of the desert
While you played in the snow of the Alps
I love you but not enough
To be humane to my own feelings
I never denied them in my heart
Or in my conscious thought
But subconsciously I played the fool
Never showing my feelings thru action
But by mouth
By mouth was easy. . .maybe too easy
Action was the challenge,
I was never truly ready for
Doubt of you in my head
Caused some hypocritical, maybe unbelievable
Things to transpire
So as a result of my stupidity
The only way we can be together
Is in my dreams
One question is in my heart

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That I will never ask you
If my love remained
Today, tomorrow, forever
Do you think one day you could love me too?

**OUR COLLABORATIVE PIECE ON
COVID**

Nubian Voices Unmasked

What do you mean there is no more toilet paper?
Why are you asking if I left the country?
I can't even leave my house?

A part of what was

To gather what is

To breathe in air

Covid-19, it's been said that if there is a number behind your name It
tells you how many reincarnations you've been granted

Of one who lived and still dreams

Stilled dreams

You've murdered millions of good folks world-wide
Who dared to glimpse into your murderous Medusa eyes?

You mean death has been a guest at my table
This whole time?

From finish to start we were made to be

Still

Growing angst for some
Including my next-door neighbor's daughter Debbie
Who we loved dearly for she was such a joyous loving child

With a kind-hearted manner

I feel like a walking panic attack...

This came from bats?

Next they'll be saying that the swine flu came from Mickey Mouse

As a famous mafia hitman once said

"I murder each client multiple times

So, they never have to worry about being my next crime"

Covid, you'll be glad to know, that I've only placed the best

And most painfully cruel schemes in my Covid torture chest

Don't you dare sneeze

And you better not cough

Deepened faith for others

Both in a river with rough waters

Swimming, floating, drowning

Borders

Why is this woman standing so close to me

Is this what 28 days later was talking about?

Why has no one still told me why there is no toilet paper

Covid, I guess you have no mercy for a person's age

Or their worth inside, you'll just kill anyone from nine to ninety-five

Nubian Voices Unmasked

Will my children ever get to be outside again
Will hazmat suits be on clearance at Target for \$16.99?

Hope together, gathered to gather parts that were before

Again

Breath out

Masks down

Grandpa was such a wise old man
Who had pride in family, shared his wisdom and strong faith in God
In dreams, I still hear his gentle voice
Just before I abruptly wake up crying

Pray

Breathe

In

Soar

Wait, where is my mask?

Covid, I hate you and wish death to every life you took
But I just remembered something my grandpa once said
In the Lord's eyes, "Both hatred and revenge are twins of the same
ungodly sin."

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If you don't die by my hands, let the scientists do you in

Will the world ever be “normal”?