

Poetry & Environment:

By Sam Rueter





All poems are based upon snapshots of the landscape and the natural world. My poetry, as it always is for me, serves as a means of introspection, reflection, and engagement with my surroundings.

Water

Thunderous swells cascade down upon
 A heart burdened by the calm ripples
 Of a dormant pool of celestial light
 Stagnant as a means of purpose
 Flowing but never overflowing
 Enduring amidst a natural pasture
 Dotted by aged rock and dying shrubbery

Clear water helps distinguish the green
 And oh what a sweet green it is
 Green air
 Green grass
 Green light
 Green life
 A city forged of persistence
 Only to collapse in the tidal waves
 And the roaring swells
 Of a picturesque morning stroll

Follow the Leader

Hastily, they plod along into the long grasses
 Darting in and out of shadowy tessellations
 Stopping to graze and savor a cool breeze
 Which wafts above barren branches
 One stops and all others follow suit
 Wordlessly, they blink and saunter
 Struggling to maintain footing on an endless climb
 And they are moving again
 Because momma knows best



Welcome to the Coffee House

Sweaty palms of earthy hue
Sift through sets of natural treasure
As shadows dance upon the tent
A festive show of peaceful pleasure

But shells do not begin to tell
The story of a popular drink
That permeates my privileged walls
Blessed to be able not to think

Of wages lost and wages earned
Sun beating down upon stilted backs
An ever-present tedium
As day by day they fill the sacks

To ship them across horizons
Across sea swells and jungle land
To those who pay with Lincolns mug
An American drink picked by foreign hands

So pull all-nighters,
Do homework with authority
Just remember that every savory sip
Sprung forth from repetitious uniformity

White Noise

We hope tears may be
Currents, raging so as not
To hear ourselves think





What Would Impress You

Would it impress you if I told you about Panama
About population density, tourism, economics
If I told you about the sunrises
Over the hills of Guadalupe
About constructs that oppress
About oppression that is constructed

Would it impress you if I told you about Panama
That architecture hides suffering
That crimes hide circumstance
That weaponry maintains inequity
As opposed to eradicating it
That passivity is a natural resource

Would it impress you if I told you about Panama
That trees grow new branches to deter cancerous growths
That ants march through a super-sized natural battleground to feed the family
That the cow without a name comes to feed without fail
That the farmers without traditional education have a deeper understanding
Of dependence and humility than an A in Calculus will ever give me

Would it impress you if I told you about Panama
About how my teachers say I am intelligent
About how I tend to tell myself that I am not
If you ask me what intelligence looks like
I need only point to the ants



Butterfly

Float like a butterfly
 Sting like a bee
 Can we ever truly enjoy
 What we cannot see?

A Whispering Landscape

The grasses hold secrets
 They pass along on the tip of a
 prayer
 And the faint breeze of a calming
 wind
 None among them dares keep a
 Single secret for too long
 For fear of the tractor tracks
 And the boot prints
 Of an ascending world
 In the shadow of an ageless forest



Stars

Why fear the stars when
 They are the only ones who
 Always want to listen



Hummingbird

The flutter of honey-tipped wings on apple crisp air
 Shadowy flights encircle wooden panels and glossy
 panes

Heartbeats float and dance amidst morning dew
 Sweet chirping echoes in cloudy dawn

Heavenly Hands

Absolute darkness painted upon
 Stick figures and sticky fingers
 Rich in sap and moss
 Cemented on grassy knolls which
 Collapse to give the lush grasses
 Room to dance and breathe
 In a wind as sweet as
 The sap on the sticky fingers
 Of the heavenly hands
 Which only emerge from darkness





Memory

Remember the swim classes
The chill of tiled, sticky showers
The squeak of slip-ons
The clang of locker doors
The nippy nature of communal air
Remember the harvest
Sun hats swinging wildly in the breeze
Dirt clinging to trembling hands
A maze of tire tracks lost
In a garden of sunflowers
Remember the music classes
Sharp piano keys and weathered violin strings
Full recitals for empty stomachs
Metronomes that never know when to practice
And so sit idly by on a summer's day
Remember the bad grades, and the broken
Bones, and the broken promises, and the
Broken hearts

And remember that it's nice to remember



The Curious Case of an Orange

From deep within the
twisted, tangled branches
Emerges a solitary orange
Self-sustaining and
independent at first
But a second glance
reveals the fact that
The shining orb stands tall
upon the backs
Of hundreds of invisible
mechanisms
And when we take the
first, bitter bite
It is not the orange we
taste
But rather all that came
before