

Moonlit Journey

A Poetic Quest from Urban Decay to Paradise

by Owen Johnston

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"Moonlit Journey: A Poetic Quest from Urban Decay to Paradise"

Poetry

1st Edition

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Published by Owen Johnston

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THE TABLE OF DESTINY

Poetic Foreword	- 4
Urban Decay	- 5
Spirit of the Past	- 5
Ghost Hunting	- 6
Abandoned Factory	- 6
Lucid	- 7
Farewell Party	- 8
To End a Journey	- 8
Into the Light	- 8
Of Light and Dark	- 9
Castle of Bones	- 10
Antiquity	- 10
Renovation	- 10
Necrophony	- 11
Midnight Musings	- 12
Dawn	- 14
Future	- 15
Horizon	- 15
Astral Poetry	- 16
Haiku	- 17
Moonlit Meditation	- 19
Verdant Dusk	- 19
Nature	- 20
Snowfall	- 21
Trials	- 22
Life	- 23
Redemption	- 24
God in Everything	- 24
Omni Presen(ts)ce	- 25
A Prose-Poem Prayer	- 26
Eternal Hope and Glory	- 26
Eternity Begins Now	- 27

Poetic Foreword

Astral Pla(i)n(e)

I silently say farewell
To the shadows of earthly vale;
I seek to paint a vapor trail
Across the lunar sky
As destiny passes me by.

Urban Decay

Slowly descending
The spiral staircase
Into urban decay
On this night long journey -

Preceded by flashlight
And followed by the full moon,
Whose eyes hold us all in
His view as the street light
Flickers in and out in orange shades.

Spirit of the Past

The spirit of the past
Lives in
The whispers of the wind and
The hoot of the hoary owl,
Which echoes sadly evermore
Against the lonely trees -

Who for days uncounted have seen
The endless journeys of men
Come to an end beneath them -
This final respite
Marked by names and dates
On lonely tombs.

Ghost Hunting

There is a ghost in the shell
Of every old place -
Whether the unclaimed metal skeleton
Of an abandoned steel mill,
Or the spirit that lingers
On the grounds of a historic graveyard.
These ancient places carry
The immortal remnants
Of old civilization.

Exploring them to
Examine their secrets
Like an urban archaeologist -
Chasing down the answers
To urban legends and ghost stories -
Simply to know what came before.

Abandoned Factory

Once full of life, this old building -
Memories locked away under layers of dust.
Cigarette butts and broken beer bottles
Litter the lonely lot.

Once vital and active
In the world of mortal men,
Now immortal in its skeletal frame -
The ghost in the shell of the
Abandoned factory
Speaks secrets of
Long misused tools,
Broken cinder blocks,
And locked away rooms -
Modern ruins and electric tombs
Long left behind on this hidden highway -
And evermore in urban legend.

Lucid

I. Stomping Ground

Traversing the rural fringes
Of urban reality,
Haunting the spirits
With lamps and curious minds.

II. Marble City

I know when you were born and died,
But I want to see beyond the moss
On your gravestone.
Who were you in life?

III. Old Church

a. Cathedral.

I go back in time as I brush webs of dust
From the stained glass window,
Wondering what secrets this
Old church buried with its dead.

b. Esoteric.

As stained as memory,
This old window yet reflects light
Like the sermons once held
In the holy hall.

Farewell Party (Leaving the Old Church)

The ravens on the roof
Stand guard like gargoyles -
These grim feathered ghouls
Perch atop the once proud passages
That they now pretend to own,
And sing a sad a cappella
In mockery of memory.

To End a Journey

I leave as the morning light
Lifts the late night's velvet veil
And the moon bids farewell
To the starry sky,
Wondering if warning signs
Will be like hieroglyphs
To a future age.

Into the Light

Walking at the crack of dawn on
This early morn,
Through fresh cut grass
And beside foggy fields,
My shoes soaked with dew -

I stop to take a drink
And pause to think:
This simple heaven's
Greater'n
That urban hell.

Of Light and Dark

Faith and prayers
Are your only hope
In this hopeless place.

The flickering candle flame
Of your spirit
Should light a small path
As you stumble towards destiny;
Pray that God would guide your way.

The great light of countless souls
Converging towards a common cause,
A strong, spiritual, sacred cause,
Would help to dispel the shroud
And lift the veil
Upon many of our souls
And help us on our way
To finding salvation.

As we trudge through this
Murkiest of swamps,
Holding our
Softly glowing lanterns
On high
To peer into the void of
Fog and phosphor,
We should follow the path
Laid out for us
By the Eternal Lighthouse
Of the Holy Spirit,
And believe in God with all our hearts,
And follow His Word,
And go to dwell with Him
When He calls all those that are His
To walk the golden streets of Heaven
And rejoice in the Spirit Forever-more!

Castle of Bones

I built a castle of bones
From my closet of skeletons;
A life of unreleased regrets,
A life of unpaid debts.

Take a one way trip to despair
Inside these castle walls,
Forgotten years of bloody tears
Inside these ancient halls.

Antiquity

A book unopened,
Covered with dust.
A knife unsharpened,
Covered with rust.

A door shut tight,
Covered with cracked paint.
A room dark as night,
Covered with years of taint.

Renovation

A Renovation,
An Innovation,
From Antiquity
To Equity,
Bleaching the bloodstains away.

Room by room,
Tomb by tomb,
Lighting up my gloom
And scaring my monsters away.

No more regrets...
Time to pay my debts...
Time to place my bets
That I will succeed one day;

And when the night yields to day,
I re-enter the fray,
But there are still shades of gray,
And I pray God would light my way.

Necrophony

i.

Across the Stygian depths I set sail
For the Halls of Abandonment
Where the theories of life fail;
My malignant quest was hell-sent.

ii.

From the shores of Necropolis
I view endless ruination
Circling the Castle of Abyss
Where dwell many an aberration.

iii.

These dark denizens, full of hate,
Are encroachingly hell-bent,
But death this day is not my fate;
My victory is Heaven-sent.

iv.

That ferocious foundation,
Amidst a somber stench of death,
Sits in silent celebration
Of its chance to end my breath.

v.

On reaching the Rooms of Ruin,
My mettle must face the Great Fiend,
In whose cauldron dark death's brewing;
This wicked wizard I must end.

vi.

By the light of the Demon Moon
I destroy these undead devils;
With Godspeed I shall very soon
Climb the castle's highest levels.

vii.

I have strongly stormed the evil halls;
My holy might resists his spells;
His vile blood stains ancient walls
As my sword dooms him to dark hells.

Midnight Musings

In so many ways
Might I describe the
Eerie,
Illuminated,
Calm,
Darksome,
Yet thought-provoking
Realm of night.

Even as the
Blanket of Shadowy Calm
Envelops
And Enraptures
Our side of the planet
And Reveals
Mother Earth's
Hidden, sentimental beauty and
Inspiring, glorious view of
The Heavens,
Do we not also cover ourselves
In a shadowy calm of introspection,
And reveal our own hearts' yearnings?

Starry,
Starry
Skies
Do I see,
As dotted and
As versatile
As my memory!
How shall I explore
Either of these?

Is not the
World of
Well-Worn Pathways
Within my mind
But one universe
Contained within another?
How can I understand the cosmos,
If I don't understand the mind?

Even as I behold
Nature's Beauty,
Should I not also recognize
Humankind's Beauty?
Dear God,

Midnight Musings continued

How shall I thank Thee
For the life
You gave me,
For the world
You gave unto us,
And even for Jesus,
Whose life
You gave up for us,
That we might live!

I do pray that,
On this night,
Even as
This side of the world
Rests,
That I as well
Should find my
Midnight respite,
In order to
Awake refreshed,
And observe
The beauty of
A new beginning,
A new start,
A new day,
To rejoin
The Entourage
For Eternity!

Dawn

Watching the sun rise
On this brand new day,
Another day to invest
My God-given talents
To bring glory to Him,
To help carry out
His great plans
To shine His Son's light
On the world,
That everyone may know
That the Son rose
And ushered in
A Brand New Day
For mankind
That will never end.

Future

Toward the distant horizon I tread,
Wondering what the future may hold;
I can only imagine what is ahead,
And the many sights that I will behold.

Yet, there is so much that has gone unsaid,
And so many great stories left untold;
Yet, I must keep praying that the riverbed
Keeps feeding the ocean of hope that has always flowed.

Most of what we've seen, heard, or read,
Whether it is modern or old,
Will one day, with this world, be dead;
It is God's Word that we must uphold.

In Jesus' footsteps we should walk day by day.
In knowing that He has already won the war,
We are sure that our faith will never stray.
Let us praise God now and forever-more!

Horizon

Toward the horizon
I continue to tread:
With the Eternal Goal
In sight:
To live life God's Way:
And while we never reach
Perfection,
That ultimate horizon,
God's Plan is
Perfection
And will work out to
His Glory
And
Our Salvation
On Earth
And Forever
In Heaven!

Astral Poetry

I. My Pen.

My pen traces a path
To the innermost
Of my soul
And opens the gate
That leads to
My laid-up store of
Prismatic love
Inspired by
The Heart and Mind
Of the Almighty.

II. Fugue

Life is lines of poetry
multiple metaphor
interwoven Truth(s)
Hidden by
our lack of understanding
Lit (upon) by
God's Great Grace,
His Never-Ending Flame,
Word of Everlasting Beauty.

III. (Re:) Vision

Finding the poetry
Hidden on a blank page,
Freeing the sculpture
Captured inside the heap of clay,
Polishing the diamond
Found in the rough:

Reaching beyond the horizon
To the rising Son
For divine inspiration,
Prophetic revelation,
Golden strands of
Fresh creation,
Weaving a tapestry
With God's Great Glory.

Haiku

Spring

Watching the birds fly,
My mind wanders to the sky,
Searching for beauty.

Summer

Practicing under
The shady sycamore tree -
The sun still finds me.

Fall

I read by streetlight -
Solemnly the silent owl
Watches me walking.

Winter

Wintry tree limbs hang
Upside down and touch the clouds -
Wooden icicles.

June

Lightning bugs like stars
Make the summer trees look like
An early Christmas

Mystery

Thick fog creeps from the
Field and is illuminated
By passing cars

Thought

The moon leads my path
To unknown journeys, secret
Pathways between the lines

Starlit Forest

Walking late at night
I can see Orion's belt
Amidst passing clouds

Ageless Expectation

Through the mossy fence
I see empty school buses
Waiting for children.

Haiku continued

Ladybug

The ladybug crawls
Across my hand before it
Spreads its wings and flies

Zen Garden

The zen garden's sand
And stones; such simplicity -
Subtle and sublime

Omnipresence

Contemplating all -
God's all around - I feel His
Love in all places

Strangely Soothing Storm

A late night rain fall -
Whose dripping meditation
Calms my dreary soul

Nightmare

The cryptic preening
Of my black cat at midnight
Calms my dreary soul

Shady

The thoughtful napping
Of my gray cat at noontime
Calms my dreary soul

Moonlit Meditation

Beetles and bugs of the night
My frequent customers of the porch light
Paying simply with their incessant buzz
As I sit on the steps sipping wine

Verdant Dusk

In the moonlit haze
Of a late summer's eve
Is this well-worn back road,
Set upon on each side by
Darkest woods that smell of
Live oak and dying pine.
Fog rises from the road in the wake
Of a surprise rain shower.

The green freshness
Of the encroaching woods
Tempts a walk through it -
The soft, dewy grass,
Overhanging trees,
Chirping crickets,
Abandoned buildings -
Remains of civilization,
Returning to nature -
And spiders stringing
Their silky portraits
All invite a stroll
Through this verdant dusk.

Nature

The sky is gray
On this late summer day
As the sun imbues
Its various hues
Upon the scene.
A sight to be seen,
A beauty to behold,
A thousand campfire stories to be told.
With the settling twilight
And the settling night
Comes the settling fog
About every log,
Every limb
As the light continues to dim.

Yet, do you hear it?
Yes, a kindred spirit,
As it beckons to us,
Nature's patrons,
Who think deep thoughts of
All things up above, and things all around
And adventures upon which to bound.

Snowfall

Looking out on the field of purest white
That our peaceful neighborhood has become,
I feel wind and snowflakes so very light
Gently touching my face in the night's cold glum.

Coming back in to warm my cold hands
In front of the old fireplace,
I look out at the winter wonderland
Painted with a sparkling layer of icy lace.

Carried on a steady eastern breeze,
This is a snowstorm like no other;
It lays a white blanket on the bare ground and trees,
And makes for beautiful weather.

Needing neither rhyme nor reason,
Children will wake to see the white glow,
Don coat and glove, and enjoy the season,
Throwing snowballs and making angels in the snow!

A robe of white has covered all that is ugly,
Like the robes we'll wear in God's Paradise,
When we join Him for a resplendent Eternity,
Rejoicing on the unending day of our new lives!

Trials

We sow the seeds
God has given us:
We work the ground
Until the day of harvest:

All Things
Of Worth
Are Worth Waiting For,
Worth Working For:

And God's Plan
Is Worth Everything
And All Time.

God makes the soils
Of our broken spirits
Fertile once again,
He plants seeds in our hearts
That we might begin to
Grow ready to serve Him:

And every day we must
Tend to our gardens,
With God's Guidance
And brilliant, shining Son
Whose love is that
Ever-living Water
That daily cleanses
Our dry, parched earth.

In the end
God will renew us to Him
Through His One and Only Son,
That the curse upon man
May be broken,
And that we may
Rejoice in the fruits
Of our labors
In those trials
Made to serve the
Greater Glory of God.

Life

I.

Life, with all its God-filled splendor,
Is worth far more than just living.
My heart, full of love and valor,
Praises God and continues to sing.
Never will I tire of His great mercy
Or working for His greater glory,
As He, by wisdom, makes me see
How He loves us eternally.

II.

Strife, with all its oppressing strength,
Tries us every living day,
Until finally we, at length,
Wonder if God has gone away.
No, God's love will never come undone!
He would not forsake even one.
He gave us His one and only Son,
That we may be saved, and the war won!

III.

Heaven, with all its God-filled splendor,
Is far greater than 'most anything.
My heart, full of love and valor,
Praises God and continues to sing.
Always will I praise God, for He
Makes the dead live and the blind see,
And gives to us of His love endlessly,
As we join Him for Eternity.

Redemption

Nothing but the Blood of Christ
Can wash all my sins away,
So that I may re-enter the fray,
With a newfound strength from God,
That will help me through
All the strife
In my life,
All His trials,
His purifying fires,
His glorious plans,
So that at His Heavenly Harvest
I may be called
A good and faithful servant,
And join Him Forever-more!

God in Everything

Blanketed by
The warmth of
God's Love,
Compassed round about by
God's Great Creation;
I consider the constellations,
The ebb and tide of emotion;
And yet ponder how
So many could be
Unable to see
God in Everything.

Omni Presen(ts)ce

I rest in
God's
Presence
And
Ever Present

Love
Which
Tomorrow
And
Tomorrow
Present
New
Presents,
New
Victories,
A
New
Day,

A
New
Present,
A
New
Life,
God's
Great
Gift,
Eternally
Present.

A Prose-Poem Prayer/My Psalm

God,

You never left me in the hard times. You were with me always, using the circumstances to teach me, lead me, show me how much You loved me, how to love myself, You, and others. Thank You.

Your Great Work is never done. You continuously create new heights and depths of glory and inspiration within our lives, our souls. You search my heights and depths to find what I never knew I had all the time: and if it is wrong, then please fix it in me, oh God; and if it seems good to You, make it better.

I pledge my entirety to Your Cause that I may help You lead everyone to Jesus, that we would all revel in Your Glory, for ever, and ever. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Eternal Hope and Glory

O God,
An eternity ago,
You wrote the verses of my soul:

Within me
Incessantly burns
The Flame of Hope;
My soul sings the song
Of sweet salvation,
Received from
Jesus Christ,
The Son of God,
The Son of Man,
And the Savior of
All God's children.

Let us now work towards
His greater glory,
That an eternity from now
We can look back at our lives
Without shame.

Eternity Begins Now

The Holy Spirit
Whose grace knows no bounds
Gives freely to
Any heart that
Believes
And
Loves
Him
And
His
Only Begotten Son
Whom He gave to us
That we might be saved.

The wisdom of the spirit gives
True sight
To the closed eye of the mind,
True hearing
To the deaf ear of the heart.

God even gives to us
Wonderful new dreams
To live out,
Life in abundance -
Such a joy it is
To work for the Lord!

Yet there will always be
Struggles
While we are
In this world -
We must remember that
God has put us here
To lead us every day into
A New Lesson,
A New Creation,
A New Heaven on Earth,
As any good father would.

It is the example of Christ
We should always strive for -
God has called us to be
Spiritual warriors
Who will dedicate their lives
To what is right,
According to God's will,
And against all odds.

Eternity Begins Now continued

Let us daily rejoice in God's great plan.

Let us rely on God's strength.

Let us play our part on

The stage of life,

The book of destiny,

The River of the Soul,

That we might have life more abundantly,

A Heaven on Earth,

Eternal bliss hereafter!

Let us continue to

Believe and dream,

For our adventures have

Only just begun!

Eternity Begins Now!

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The author is a native of Lake City, South Carolina and teaches martial arts as a way of life.