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Every Poem

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Every Poem

By Jason Ahlenius

every poem is a scar
 where the painful pen strokes serve to cover
 each cut to our dignity
 and on shelves like bubbling, wretched jars of acid
 they wait on the page to be rediscovered
 reopening the laceration and seething in pure pain
 given time it will heal and the words will fade
 but the scar still remains

every poem is a light
 and frankly mine is a 5-watt bulb
 while I watch searchlights sweeping the streets
 uncovering the decay and corruption within the city
 and I seat myself in a play
 and watch the stage lights shed new meaning on life and beauty
 outside around the bonfire the poets dance
 with their luridly glowing forms celebrating new life in the song
 while a field of millions of lights is cast across the city
 reflecting the sea of burning stars of the black sky
 forming eternal constellations that guide the explorer by night
 from the dimly lit corner of a forgotten room shines my nightlight

every poem is a comma
 a pause in the life of the poet
 wherein he stops and looks about
 takes in a breath
 as he observes the atrophy we are speeding towards
 his car comes to a halt in his backyard
 to notice a flower
 or maybe a child who has never been there before
 or perhaps he has been hidden away in his secret tree house
 beneath the very nose of the poet
 in midstride while retreating from a torrent
 of raging rhinoceroses
 he stops
 pulls out a golden quill
 and finds it a safety valve
 to quench the fires of tension that redden behind his eyes
 or maybe he even hesitates
 for the snap of the boss' finger
 to notice that yes
 there are still storm clouds in the evening sky