

## **I Met the Missionary at Midnight**

(In *NOVA Bards 2019 Poetry Anthology*, Local Gems Press, 2019)

I met the missionary at midnight  
She offered two alabaster orbs so bright  
And drew me close with whispers of worship  
Her tantalizing temptations at the temple  
Brought me to new heights  
Her gentlest caress upon my body  
Opened my eyes to new sights  
She wrapped me with her passions  
Her sweet sermons seemed so sincere  
As I lay there drained of all my desire  
Her offerings still flowed through the night  
She offered my soul salvation  
If I stayed and sung psalms without cessation  
And I did without deviation  
I succumbed to her alabaster orbs and her whispers of worship  
I was her dedicated disciple of desire  
And when she beckoned me to recite the oath of commitment  
I committed freely and fully  
But as soon as I uttered the last syllable  
Her transgressions were revealed to me  
No longer did she offer the alabaster orbs nor whisper the words of worship  
Betrothed to the temptress  
All I hear is her cackling during the night  
And her taunts of tantalizing tribulations  
As I lie in my bed, cold and alone

## Great Beyond

(In *NOVA Bards 2021 Poetry Anthology*, Local Gems Press, 2021)

Just what is out there?  
Beyond the stars and planets.  
Past the UFOs and James T. Kirk.  
Hidden in the Great Beyond.  
No one really knows.  
Time will tell.

**Bliss**

(In 2021 Poetry Marathon Anthology, Authors Publish Press, 2021)

During the midnight hour,  
after the world has gone to sleep,  
just be still and listen.  
Listen to your heart.  
Let your mind run.  
Pick up that pencil.  
Let it chase the paper.  
Savor each word written.  
Feel the euphoria.  
One poem finished,  
another begins.

## Scrivener's Paradise

(In *Poets Anonymous 30th Anniversary Anthology*, Local Gems Press, 2022)

There's a hidden valley just over yonder  
where the scribblers and scribes often wander  
with pen and paper weighing down their packs.  
They are anxious to write both fiction and facts.

The valley is filled with fountains flowing with verbs,  
old orchards of adjectives, and, have you heard,  
there's chattering conjunctions hiding in tall chestnut trees,  
while indigenous interjections snap at the buzzing bees.

Placid prepositions rest without making a sound.  
Petulant pronouns roam around the grounds.  
Antsy articles meander searching for crumbs,  
as weathered writers scrawl witty phrases, one by one.

This valley of wonderment created by God  
who whispered, then waving, gave a slight nod  
releasing rushing rivers and a mountainous range.  
Then, miraculously, He brought forth seasons of change.

Ask any proud poet to show you the way.  
You'll be quietly invited and later asked to stay.  
Gladly deciphering verses of dribble and drool,  
you'll soon be writing in this valley, well-schooled.

## Baseball is a Surrogate Father

(In *Poets Anonymous 30th Anniversary Anthology*, Local Gems Press, 2022)

Baseball is a surrogate father.  
Every piece of advice  
which I expound to my children -  
that goes in one ear and out the other –  
gets reinforced  
every Saturday  
for three hours  
on the baseball diamond  
after the umpire calls,  
“PLAY BALL!”

The coaches,  
the parents,  
and the umpire  
all know the rules.

However,  
the ballplayers  
learn life lessons:  
Know the count!  
Keep your head in the game.  
Focus on the next play, not the last.  
FUNdamentals.  
There is no “I” in team.  
Always run to first base.  
6 plus 4 plus 3 always equals 2.  
Together Everyone Achieves More.  
Watch and learn.  
Know the score.  
It ain’t over until the final out is made.

As I stand at the fence and shovel peanuts into my mouth,  
I can hear Terrance Mann whisper, “The movie got it wrong, you know.”  
I nod my head in agreement and reply to no one,  
“Don’t need to build it, kids will play anywhere.”  
Together we blurt out,  
“And the parents will drive them there! Fools!”

After the fat lady finally sings,  
we stop at 7-Eleven for a Slurpee  
before making our way home.

After replaying the game

for mom,  
I have a date  
washing the kid's uniforms  
knowing I'm never, ever  
getting those grass stains  
out of the knees.

I just hope my children  
remember  
both  
the joy and frustration  
this game has taught them  
about life  
as they grow old.

**Teaching After the Pandemic: The New Normal**

(In *Poets Anonymous 30th Anniversary Anthology*, Local Gems Press, 2022)

Day One of the 21-22 School Year  
In a Hybrid Model Classroom  
Where Virtual and In-Person students are taught as one.

I address the Virtual students,  
Also known as The Zoomers.  
Everyone gazes at a screen  
While I attempt to engage, but  
Nothing but black boxes stare at me.  
Silence.  
I type a question in chat.  
No one responds.

I turn to the In-Person students.  
“Class, today we will...  
Thomas, stay in your square.  
Now class...  
Jan, stop twirling your mask and put it back on.  
Okay class...  
Alice and Kate, you can’t sit next to one another  
and, no, you cannot share crayons.  
Class...  
Johnny, you cannot use the restroom until your assigned time.  
Class...  
BRRRING!  
Um, class dismissed.”