



Perceptions

Poems for a Time of Terror

by D.N. Sutton



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ISBN: 978-0-940361-25-6

Sherwood-Spencer Publishing

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Poems for a Time of Terror

For Paul
whose unfailing love
made this book happen...

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Poems for a Time of Terror

"...Surely it must be grievous human error
To be lured into the heresy
Of fomenting terror..."

Into Sweeter Dream (911)

Like Trojan women
Weeping on the shore
For their men dead
Their Troy, beloved Troy
Lost in flame and ash
Like them we mourn
Dazed in disbelief
Like them we sit
Moaning in our grief.

Is this then the era
Of the second Trojan horse
Catastrophe confusing us
As hatred burns its bitter course?

Does still more anguish lie ahead
Not only murder thrust from planes
But poisons, paralyzing will
Bringing a nation to standstill?

Will viral assaults on persons
And communication lines
Fulfill even more diabolical designs
Until stars in heaven shaken
Bring this evil to a halt?

O Architect Supreme
Turn our terrifying nightmare
Into sweeter dream!

Sweet Ceremony

Sweet ceremony, come purge us of our grief
Obviate our sorrow with high words
Music and honor help us
When loss overwhelms
In pageantry mourning finds relief
What other way is open?

When night shakes down its sorrows
With the finality of autumn leaves
The tree is still seen standing
Though its torn heart grieves.

Abandon Hate

O terrorists

You of firm fear

Afraid of the fall into the pit of nothingness

Your dignity diminished on mission merciless

If there is meanness in the heart, in the hand

Condemnation of anyone, anywhere, then halt

Wait, listen, lest you be lost.

Feel the wind of the breath that cleanses the world

Hold the hand to the hurt of the heart

That sweet hand that heals, that is healing

The strong hand that holds

The broken pieces of your inborn nobility

The firm hand leading you back to your own heritage

You, who need not be less, who were born to be more.

Abandon hate lest you abandon life and perish

Damning the very values that you cherish.

The Cry Is Out

The cry is out----
Hold back the blow.
How dare you, I, anyone
Strike out against the universe?
This flesh we torment,
This human being cringing in the body
Against the foul stench of our evil strength
This benighted lump stamped on
As beneath concern
Stop now
Lest we kick the face of God,
And make bloody what is beyond us.

No, we have no right, none whatsoever
To hurt, to undermine even with consent
The dignity of another human being.
Even when we despise.
Each flicker of hate, rejection, each bit of anger
Hurled at defenseless persons
Victimizes us.

If we have the advantage take it
By using it for good.
Gentleness rescues us
From the murderer within.

Cruelty is the noose by which we hang ourselves...

Nothing Is Cast In Stone

We did not know
We did not know
That there is mercy
Even in the pit
That even
In the core of hate
Love exists, resists.

Small green shoots
Grow out of hard rock
Gallant gestures
Bring glint of reason, hope...
Hope that even dark may be illusion
That light can penetrate,
Resolve confusion.

No, nothing is cast in stone.
Beyond flesh and bone
Is God.

When The Day Dawns

When the day dawns
Are you free?
Does the deep breath
From the pit of your loins
Wakening you
Kicking your awareness
Into now
Make your heart sing...
Is it a joyous thing
When your day takes wing?

Or are you prisoner
Bent by your own mind
Or the intent of others
To spit on your own soul...
Victim of your own treatment,
Or others mistreating you?

When the day dawns
Are you free...
If you breathe, still breathe
You are.

The you
Can stand
Against
The them.

For Who Are We?

Enough of hate!
The world has had its fill
Of basic dishonesty
Of blood vengeance.

We have bowed down to dogmas
Decimated truth to please human masters
Have been used cruelly and have cruelly used
Denied identity
Trampled on blessings given
Made little children to suffer
Women to grieve.

O no more enslavement by our evil spirit!
Blind faith
Is like blind blame
Evokes heresy
Because it is heresy.
True faith is true love
And bears no yoke only that from God...
Each soul a sword drawn
That no human suffer wantonly
Nor be less than God-given
Each one priceless
In his image
Divinely made
Fulfilled divinely.

Enough of hate
For who are we
To be thieves of our own joy?

New Era

God of the Galaxies

Parent Universal

Leading us into your new era of commitment...

No more can narrow valleys of dogma

Contain the torrents of your commandments

Earthquakes of change

Catapult us from mean huts of habit

Into the palace of the encompassing Spirit.

We have outrun our old wisdom

Now newborn in fresh context of your closeness

Rich veins of your divinity deep within ourselves

Make your presence known within and without.

God of the Galaxies

Wiping away ancient hates with new awareness

Entrusting us with your Springtime

O transform us, bewildered Earth children

Cousins all

Into loving instruments of your takeover.

Pray For Paradise

Pray for the hunted
And the hunter
Pray the hunt cease
Swift, swift come release.

Pray no blood spills
No life be lost
Pray there be peace
Death too high a cost.

Pray the hunt be brief
No more senseless grief
Pray for war's demise
Pray for its despise.

Pray hate be blunted
Pray rage be stunted
Pray God not be affronted
Pray love suffice
Pray, pray for paradise.

Disaster

Answer come
We are at the end
What doors of healing have we closed
What stumbling blocks
Have we imposed?
We need a friend.

We intended to be honest
Have we been false
We acted in love
Or was it selfishness
We are intelligent
But have we been wilful
In the face of truth
When we thought we were sensible
Were we blind to reality?

Answer come
We care
Not to be right
Not to be wise
But to act in the true cause
To give in the deepest sense.
We care, but
Help eludes us everywhere!

Now, we will brave blame
Take abuse, assault
Assume responsibility
Putting aside all sense of self
No longer our ego or our need
Answer come
We will follow if you lead!

What difference now
Praise or blame?
We are numb with too long grief,
Answer come,
Answer come,
Bring relief.

Victims

Why, in this quivering moment
When you hold the gun on me
Do you tremble?
Do you know, as I know
That you stand on the precipice...
That your grave is deeper and darker
Than any you dig for me
Why, when you wince in your own flesh,
Do I not cringe in mine?

I know, friend, how transitory it is
How we fool ourselves
Get swept away in crazy rivers of illogic
Become another brutal rivulet
Of the insane tide!

I am a small twig thrust on the same flood
But I know there is a larger truth, a stronger current
Beyond any concocted nonsense you serve up
As your just cause to kill me . . .

So I can be the spectator at my own death
Knowing yours will be no better and likely worse.

Transgression

Transgression,
Who would believe
There is no forgetting!
Every sound heard
In the brain
Every seam felt
Every sin stamped
Incredible!

Who would believe
The body is history recorded
Beauty, joy and sadness
Sweetness and the madness
In each cell,
Indelible.

Who would have known
There are wells of pity in a stone
Steely strength in fragile bone?

No one would know
Or stop to think
Until one stands
Upon the brink
Until one waits
Beside the stream
Seeing the ending
Of the dream.

Alas, who would believe
There is no forgetting
That transgression
Is so unremitting!

I Lie Down With My Sins

I lie down with my sins
My sins around me
I know they are there.
Sands of sin surround me
Everywhere is foam, debris,
Detritus on life's ragged shore.
Only far away is
Perfection.
Close in
The pebble cuts,
Broken seashell
Defines its ended dream.

I lie down in my guilt
Pulling the quilt
Of my sorrows closer
Despairing in their familiar number
Seeking solace that is not there.

Oh God, I would
Have had it otherwise
What can I do
Undo?
I would if I could
Transform the raw edge of my stupidities
Into someone else's comfort zone.

I would heal whatever I hurt
And accept
Your will
Knowing there is no going back
Being human twice
Too much to bear!

God Of The Millenium

God of our biochemistries
Of our predetermined DNA
We pray you to save us from ourselves
Our unthinking impulses
Unblinking stupidities
Torrents of emotion
That flood reason out of mind
That leave us tremulous and stranded
On less than high ground.

God of our idiosyncracies
We helpless, hapless humans
Victims of millennial forces
We cannot comprehend
We pray for help,
To undermine our angers
Moderate our greed
That we may cast away
Insatiable selfishness
And ascend from basic beast
To You.

Heresy

Al Qaeda

Who needs your harshness?

Is not Allah the God of all persons

Are we not made in his image?

Everyone has a right to think and feel

But to act, any action, inaction

Must not all be tempered in his mercy?

Who needs your harshness

Extremism, fury...

Who needs human-created pain

Human-crafted misery?

There is anguish enough

In this world to go around,

For who has not known

Suffering and loss!

So let it not be on our limited minds

Our tormented consciences

The terrible curse of

Crossing the satanic line into cruelty!

Surely it must be grievous human error

To be lured into the heresy

Of fomenting terror.

Lament, Europa

Do not tell me
Of Romulus and Remus,
I know them well.
Are they not my sons, my grandsons
Bonded as though by blood and bone?

I was the one, the old she-wolf
Who nursed them, cursed them
Tumbling around the den
Lords of the smallest arena
And the largest!

Born in the groin of the continent,
They emerged on fire,
Heedless, heartless,
Loathing, loving
Merriment spilling out
Of narrowing eyes,
Spitting, spatting
Nipping, splatting
Dangerous as lightning strikes
Tricky as river gorges!

Do not tell me of those storied twins,
Those foundling cubs,
I who love them
Know too well their passions
Lust and languor.
The conflagration of their sins
Burn in my gut, my heart!

It is destiny, Europa
That they catapult
Beyond the hills of Rome
Their forgotten fangs
Still shaping
Your gorgeous, ugly
Twisted, urgent world.

But don't blame me,
I am only the catalyst
Eldest female in the pack.

No Currency To Stand

Coins of the earth
Are beautiful things
Copper, gold, silver, alloy
Designed, struck, hammered, minted
Then in time worn thin.

Coins, discs of metal, mankind's toy
Translated onto paper printed, circulated
Stocks, notes, bonds, bills
Wispy things made substantial
By sleight of mind.

Curious alchemy,
Coins transmuted into paper
Paper, alleviating hunger.

Is not hunger mankind's curse,
What more ancient, urgent
Tragically eternal?

The first coin came
Centuries after
The first human faltered
In an icy cave
Stomach empty
No currency to stand against the pain.

What now stands between one and hunger?
Hunger of the mouth for food
Tongue for drink
Hunger of the heart for love
Hunger for one more coin?

But dust can claim the gold
Alloyed coins will rust.
Who on the judgment line will stand
With bank books, bag of coins in hand?

Peer Out

Peer out
At the bare bark of winter
Trees standing in their roots
Undefended
As wild winds
Whip a sea of cold about them
Brittle boughs splinter.
For them, for us
The long wait seems unending,
Unended.

Peer out
At the bare bark
And know, you and I
In our souls alone
Are not facing an unknown.
Moons swirl
Stars darken
Shrill sounds like raucous birds
Bound and echo on us.
Words whirl in twisted truths
Positing alarm
Assail the inner fortress of our calm,
Invoking nightmares of impending harm
We wonder
Will darkness never lapse
Cruel ones never blunder?

But even as we suffer this unknowing
Even as some stand, some fall
Peer out,
See again Spring's benediction flowing
Sweet mouth of life,
Healing the hurting essence of us all.

Peer out
As tyrannies of pain and cold collapse
Ordeal erasing
Warm rain embracing
Frozen earth.
All things, selves, beings
Interlacing
In renewal and rebirth.

Peer out
Sing out
Proclaim your priceless presence
Affirm your share
As blossom bursts forth everywhere!

Comes Then The Springtime

How beautiful the world
And how ugly
A jagged jewel, its splendor hidden
Under the rough refuse of its beginnings
Waiting for us, mastercrafts people
To cut away its blemishes
Reveal its glistening heart
Presenting to God
His perfect gift
Flawless gem of his creation.

The world, the earth, the human home
Why desert, shambles
When there can be garden
Why gloom
When there can be joy
Why war
When there can be peace
Why anguish
When there can be surcease?

When the thirst for blood is gone
When bloodlust for lynching is done with
When blame, hate, cruelty, arrogance are seen clearly
In the white light that shines from the blackness of guilt
When vengeance indeed is the Lord's and not our own
What next?

Comes then the Springtime!

Purposes/Cross Purposes
Poems About & For Women & Mothers...

"...Out of my maternity stretch
immutable ties to eternity"

Constraint

Captive spirit, I
Or am I
Butterfly
On wing
To farthest star..
Gossamer thing
Glimmering afar...
Or must I remain
Captured specimen
In pretty glass jar?

What inhibits me...
What constraint
Keeps me from flying free
Inner need unmet?

When does one retrain,
Emerge in new mindset
Rebel against restraint...
Transform into braver breed
When, when be truly freed?

One voice says, now
Another, never
But secret words
Keep whispering...
Do not wait forever!

Woman Born

I am woman born
That is my sin
And the world's sin
Against me.
Formed feminine
Fragility real
Frail, pale
Small-boned
Small-breasted
Inevitably,
Small-brained
Classic stereotype
Of woman,
Ingrained.

Yet I am not small
But vast
Torrents roar
From the rock of my being.
Out of my maternity
Stretch immutable ties
To eternity.
Wisdom, all seeing
Thought-stream
Blood-stream
Life-stream
All being.

Yes, I am woman born
As the world can plainly see
When I triumph
The world triumphs
In me.

No outcast,
I outlast
Enemies
Astound
Friends
Pin down
The rainbow
To my ends

I am woman born
No apologies
No amends.

Motherhood

Mothers

We are all the same
Once caught in the maternal web
There is no escape, no release.

This is our destiny
To care, to love, to hurt
Pain inexplicable
Rivers at flood
Oceans in storm
Heavens crashing down
Fear cold as the arctic
Ice piercing one's soul.

How, how is survival possible
When disaster seems everywhere?

To be helpless is the ultimate anguish...
Definition of motherhood.

Magnificent Mother

Mother, Mother
Magnificent Mother
Let your song out to fill the skies
Your spawn out to fill the rivers
Let your offspring heed
The lure of oceans
Seek destiny in open seas
Then leaping in joy
Return to you.

Mother, Mother
Magnificent Mother
Mother womb
You are the source
Mother heart
You are the surge
Mother mind
You are the sluice.

Be you the floodgates
Magnificent Mother
In reverent wonderment
Spilling your elemental essence
Consecrated progeny
Into the ever-thirsting
Life stream.

Magnificent Woman

Mother
Magnificent
Heroic
Selfless with love unlimited
Giving without stint
Caring lives entwining.

Mother
Magnificent
Who are you?
Tigress
Fiercely guarding the cub of your life
Wary, loving, unremittingly taut
Spitting at danger
At peace
Only in oneness with your child.
Your own frightened young one
Helpless in defense of self?

Magnificent Mother
When do you transform
Into Magnificent Woman...
When do you release your hold
Deny your tongue
Stem your bias...
When do you soften
Where once you were stern
Where do you strengthen
Where once you were weak?

Magnificent Mother
Magnificent Woman
Choose your role!

Generation Gap

What do generations
Know of each other?
Hidden needs, never spoken
Love inarticulated
Words held tight
Or too freely given
Points made too softly
Or too hard, driven!

What in our hearts
Do we want?
One gentle talk
One quiet exchange
A summing up of all the elements
Respect, appreciation, love?
A moment of closeness
So long withheld
Emotional morphine
For the pain of living?

But if it is not to be, so be it.
Even if the gap is still unbridged
Good is understood.

Maternal Vines

How long your daughter's keeper
Maternal vines
Choking the young stem
Of her life?

How long the lie
Of love
When she droops
While you cling?

How long
Self-deception
As, wringing your hands
At her pain
You weep real tears
Cutting the last vein
Of her independence.

Testament

No more am I confined
In the tight channels of your will.
You are your own person
I, mine,
Bound only to requirement
Of the Spirit.

Friend always
I stand by
Pass no judgment
Will not desert you
But will not bend to blandishment
Wasting strength
Down the drain of neurosis.

Because the Spirit floods me
I am no longer anxious
Feel less guilt
Reject fears
Resist harms.

For the sweet Maker who loves us all
Sings comforting night songs in our ears
Holding us in holy, everlasting arms.

So with this testament
I am free.
So are you
So sing with me
Sing with me.

Moon Circles

And so
In the full of the moon
Your girl child rises up
And says
No more I must follow him
He is my love
I must go....

Moon beckons
Moon glows
Moon wanes
But grieving
Keening
Goes on
Accusing
Confusing....

Mother love supplanted
Suspended
Closeness
Inevitably, ended...

While the moon
Circles centuries
Embraces continents
Peers into young hearts....
And blesses!!!!

Graduation Lesson

"She will learn"
Her mother says
Teeth clenched
Anger undisguised.
"She will learn."

"Look what she is giving up
For that pimply kid
For so-called love.
Her good grades
Her own car
Her horse
Her horsemanship
Her allowance.
She is throwing it all away
Her beautiful life
Choosing him over me.
Pushing me aside
As though I am no one
Nothing, forgetting
The mother who gave her
Seventeen years of utter devotion
Giving her everything...
Oh, she will learn what hardship is
She will learn."

And the mournful litany
Flows on, on, on.
Indeed, her daughter learned
Learns
She looks into her mother's heart
And sees a black hole.

Over The Mantel

The local story goes
That the druggist lady
Once had a man whom she wanted
To marry, and he wanted to marry her.

But her mother said
"No. heavens no! Look at him,
All those younger brothers and sisters...
You will spend your life helping them.
No, get your education
Be sensible or you will end up
With nothing."

So the druggist lady listened to her mother.
She did not marry him or anyone else.
She ended up with a three-bedroom house,
Owned free and clear, furnished well ...
Her diploma, handsomely framed,
Hanging bravely over the mantel.

Transformation

Why did you become her enemy
You who loved her once, your child?
Why did you lay siege to her tent
Fire the grass,
Hurl rocks
Shout invectives?
What deformity of spirit
Impelled you to inversion of love
To self- seduction?
Why was ego more important
Than your spawn...

In the enormity
Of human error
Is strange
Conformity.
Even the noble can be vile
Even the decent miss the mark.
Out of the friction of their fall
A spark
Ignites other truths
Instruments of growth
Expanders of awareness
All part
Of the patterned whole
Fated dart,
Opening up the imperfect heart.

Enlightening, analysis
Yet still
A piercing sense of loss persists!

Divestiture

She thinks she could divest herself
Of husband, lovers, children
Abandon friends and forgive enemies
Without revile.

But you, you
How can she tear out of her heart
The pain
Of maternal betrayal
How to forget
There is no relationship
On all this desert earth
That can compare
With the one
That begins with birth?

But now she sees it all
No longer in denial
Sees life as trial
Saintliness and sin
Mix within..

Daughter's smaller grievance
Pales beside Mother's larger deviance.

One Could Only Watch From Shore

Why in the sleepless hours of the night
In the tremulous time between dark and dawn
So etched in her semi-wakeful mind
That she hears your complaining cadences
Over and over, ever without sweetness.

It is not that she hasn't forgiven you, mother
She has. She knows how flawed the human heart
How distorted emotional responses can become
Between parents and their children...
Yet---she hears you still---
Urging her again and again
To pan the riverbeds once more
In search of other gems, other gold.
The diamond in her hand
Despite its beauty
Its clear-cut value
Not enough
So insatiable your need to fulfill
Your own desires
You were blind to see
That hers were met.

And so there was no preventing
Your painful passage down the rapids
To the deepest abyss of disappointment.
Sadly, one could only watch from shore.

Forgive

The self cries out— —am I forgiven?
Forgive, human being, forgive
For we are all in error
All frail, lost, limited.

Even when the heart is honest
The hand kind
Even with God's impulse in the mind
We fail
We fail ourselves, and one another.

Even with vast love and strong intention
Fate's intervention can
Bring us to our knees.
It is not always slated that we please.

We cannot always claim a star.
Our failures are our blessings
Our hurts will find their healing balms
If we give each other alms.

In order that we all may live
Forgive, human being, forgive.

The Rose

Love the rose, the rose
Ignore the thorn.
Cut it away, away
Let the rose adorn
Your perfect day.

The day is brief
The night is swift
Accept the rose
That is your gift
Lest your joy
Turn into grief.

Love the rose, the rose
Love its leaf
Let its beauty
Find a voice.
The rose, the rose
And not the thorn,
Your choice.

Poems About & For Children...

"...God's wisdom willed
That you live a splendid life, fulfilled!"

First Born

God made you flawless.

He gave you hair the color
Of the sun

He gave you eyes the color
Of the sea

He gives me tremors when
I look at you

That you are born of me.

God made you flawless
In my eyes

O God is wise, God is wise!

Astral Net

New-born child
From Him sent
Out of the firmament
A moment's blink on the stellar clock
Silver streak on the hidden sea
And you, my love, my sweet
Were born of me.

From mother-star you come
To mother-earth
That I a mother be.

Tiny person lowered on the astral net
Cooing language from afar
Wondrous mystery!

New Creature Born

New creature born
Bursting like blossom on the naked tree
Substance out of nowhere
Clear cry out of silence.
O sweet perfumed blooming
Where all was still and stark!

New human being
Alighting in our hearts
Strange sounds of other planets
Soft gurgling on your lips.
Awareness in your eyes
Closer to the Source
Than we suspect
Still linked, still knowing
But more, every moment
Becoming one of us.

Small human seedling
Grow to greatness
Watered in our love
Nurtured in soft winds
Of gentle handling.
Come into your own earthling self
One with Him,
Programmed in wiser ways than ours
Undeified by our uneasiness,
Corrective of our cruelty.
Brush off on us the pollen of your trust
From your faithful flight
Into the wonder workings of His world.

Winter Cobweb

Little puzzle of humanness
Baby born
Miraculously crafted
Unbelievably its own being.

Distinctive minority of one
Unlike any other
Who ever was or will be
In all the universe, unique.
Genes, chemistry
Interlacing expectations
Creating a
Winter cobweb of individuality
Snow-flake self.

Baby born
Masterpiece in miniature
Art-work
Sent from galaxy
To gallery earth
For specific reason.
Bring us, with your birth
Beauty, purity of purpose
Perfection in this season.

Bring us
In your fervent flowering
A springtime of the spirit
Helping to create heaven,
Or something near it!

More Joy Than Trial

God's gift of child
O miracle of giving
Infant, his creation
Parents blind instruments
In mysterious transfer of life
Explicit depository of divine intent!

Guard well this priceless human being
Small creature needed on this earth
Snowflake person propelled
Into our predestined care.

This child is His.
True parents discipline themselves in love
Taking the yoke of self-control
Upon themselves
Early love moves the child to later greatness.

O blessed faith in goodness
Patience with slow change
Warm with approval
Honest and gentle in denial.
When lines must be drawn, kindly drawn.
These blessings of the fair
And generous parent
Bring more joy than trial
Peace to the house of the holy.

Let Perish Small Children

Will we be forgiven
That we stand by
Adult, sane, aware
And let perish
Small children?

See shattered
The small goblets of their beings
Their crystal selves
Designed to hold the shining liquid of their lives
Broken to bits
Spilled into the spoiled gutters of ourselves?

Can some barbarous adult
In God's defiance
Take boards and belts to tender flesh
And we stay silent?
Permit by our involuntary shudders
Turn-away eyes
The slow, anguished murder of innocents?
Does broken bone, burned flesh
Disgust enough to discover conscience
To love a little where love is not?

Alas
When will we
Burst through barriers of indifference and inaction
Lay out the red carpet of caring
Of acceptance and succor
Bring rescue from the unthinkable abyss
Of mindless cruelty
Of pain and poverty of spirit?
When, at pitiable last,
Will we reclaim our own near lost-salvation?

When will it be
When will it be?

Lullaby

Where is the lost lamb
The cuddly little sheep
Where does the young thing sleep
Where did the small one go
No more in the fold
Will the young one live to be old?

Who will guard
Who will care
Who will warm the frosted air
Who will wipe away the tears?
God will!
Put aside nameless fears
God is near
God is here.

Thank You, Andy

Today I talked on the telephone
With my mother and father
My grandson dialed Heaven
So we could connect.

It was an important moment
The first direct communication
We have had since their death.

It was lovely
Thank you, Andy.

Ordained Part

Walled into silence
My born-deaf child
What will you know of sound
Music or birdsong?
What will you never hear
In the empty chambers of your ear?

Your longing brain
Ever cut-off from
The soft patter of the rain...
Will words forever ricochet down
Irrisponsive pathways
Seeking meaning
All in vain?

Oh my child,
Tender little one
Your plight disturbs
My dreams for you
And sends me into paroxysms
Of pain and guilt.

But when I look into your
Wondrous, expressive eyes
See your facile fingers
Responsive smile
I know you shall not be deprived.

Your world will be as complete
As love and knowing can devise
So you can meet your fate
Find it full, immeasurably sweet.
Not cursed by loss
But blessed by benefice unknown
God's wisdom, willed
That you live a splendid life, fulfilled!

And so I bow my head
And hear incessantly my heart
Beating in thanksgiving
For your being born,
My maternal, ordained part.

My Grandmother's Children

My grandmother's children walk in the rose garden
Old and bent in the late afternoon.
The wan sun lies like a shawl on their shoulders
Reflecting soft light into their round, lined faces
Pale eyes alert with pleasure.

My grandmother's children are playing in the rose garden.
Muscles stiff
They hold onto each other carefully, gingerly
But their tongues, uninhibited, dart merrily, mischievously
Thoughts billow, elbow.
Words probe, push.

My grandmother's children
She, he
Bathe in the warm aura of relationship
Their white hair framing identical beauty--
White hair, once with the hint of gold coming,
Now white with the hint of blue.

I see my grandmother
Standing behind them
Tall, tall--
Her hair in a full Gibson
Her young figure, hourglass.
I look into her deep sad violet eyes.
She is holding her other white-haired children,
Her first born who died at nine months
Her last born who died at four.

My grandmother's children
Her second, her third
In their late eighties
Are sitting in the rose garden
Laughing and talking
Loveable as puppies.

I watch them and smile.
My grandmother smiles with me
Seeing her pretty children
Playing on a bench.

Morgan's Rose

I laid a prayer for Morgan on a rose
The only rose, the only one
Blooming in the burning summer sun
Beauty blazing, hopeful talisman.

I laid a prayer for Morgan on that rose
That vivid, pristine rose, so new, so bright
But then torrential rains poured down in the night
Leaving a broken shred of color on the ground
Few slivered petals to be found.

Sad omen that it rained on Morgan's rose
Poor kidnapped child, alive or dead
It was for you Morgan that the prayer was said
It was your rose Morgan, a lovely, lively red!

Portraits
Poems About People

"...In some measure
all your friends are your work of art"

Panoply Of Blessing

I have come to your memorial, my love
Bringing my many tangented crazy-quilted self
Old bones, inlaid teeth, and brightest hair.
We Aries, you and I, mix our pain with joy
Put parrot plumage on our grief
And ride the stormy passage to its end
To find calm and quiet and a last relief.

Who stands before you in memoriam now,
My love, before your ivory image
Soft carved beauty
Is more than Kipling's rag and rage.
The outer structure
Hides an inner self, a friend
In part, a person of your making.
I cry out to you from bedrock memory
A slip of a girl, young woman anguished,
An evolving entity
Until I broke through confusion into sunlight
And found myself, my life, my splendid love.

You were there for me through all of that
More than you knew, more than I knew.
In some measure all your friends are your work of art
All here today are your monument`
Testament to how you touched us all
Provided insight, clarity, wit and the certainty
Of your persistent presence
Priceless panoply of blessing.

Cloud Girl

Cloud girl, I always was, I am, remain
Living in the snowfields of a high-aloft terrain
Lower than the galaxies, higher than earth
In-between person, by destiny, by birth.

Floating, feeling-- too far out of the fray-- I'm told.
But I have prevailed, to see my poems unfold
And fill my cloud-gowns with wondrous luminous light
Claim my soul, soul-loves, in the ever-darkening night.

I Am Dance

There has never been
A leap, a lift
A lilting turn
That I have not been
In it, with it
In body, and in spirit
That I have not been
Its flight
Its incandescent light.

From spring-green surf
Emerging, or
In autumn leaves diverging
In any place,
On any turf
All dance is mine
All dance divine.

Once I was snowflake
Wisp on air
Drifting, misting
Utterly free
Resisting gravity
Ephemeral in silent fall.

But now, I am crystallized
Fixed, transfixed
Prism'd beauty
Diamond strength
Dance, gem of elements
Airiness and strength condensed.

I am dance eternal
Touchable, tangible
Come to me
For I am you,
I am dance.

Old Doctor

Old man
You shed your skin
Did you?
Died?
Left the coils
Bristling no longer
In a quiet heap on the floor!
Took off
Leaving your house
Untended
Your bed
Messy
And a warm aura of
Love and conviction
Crackling from the door hinges!
The house reeks of you
The house vibrates with you
The house will ever be
Your house.

And you
You scold me
In the dark of my mind
Tall pine tree
You.
The rough stubble of your thoughts
Flicks my conscience
Your steely blue eyes
At once doubting and believing.

Your mix of diamond and sand
Make sharp delineations of good and evil
Your rasp
Had its place
In this lukewarm world
Your love
Still rubs like pumice
Hurting but healing wounds.

So old man
You've gone
And you're back
Of course!
More vivid
Than ever.
Could it be otherwise?

Golden Girl

You of the golden heart
Golden mane
Sweet cat's eyes
Gleaming
From your sun-warmed soul
Radiant against deepening skies.

Golden heart
I love you
Sister being
For spilling liquid words
From your golden cup.

Young Officer

It is memory, infused with love
That is immortal.

I can see you still
Young officer resplendent in dress whites
Buttons gleaming
Striding up Park Avenue
All heads turning at this wondrous vision
Of Adonis in the flesh
Shining in his manhood, unaware.

Hair light as corn-silk
Eyes blue as corn flowers
Skin, Ionian marble.
You were perfection then
Masculine beauty at its crest.
I was impressed.

Now you are seventy,
But my heart responds as always
Still tall, strong
In full shock of hair golden cast remains
But there is difference.
More lines in the pink-toned skin
More mellowness in the gentle smile
More twinkle in the amused blue eyes
An aura now, unmistakable
Deeper than retained handsomeness
Something splendid, understood by all
Intelligence and calm, quietly suffusing
Unaffected kindness,
Eloquent reserve of a truly good man.

Aflutter-1994

In the cool of the evening
Sea breeze in his hair
He called out as he whizzed by
On his bike--

"I love you Grammy
I'll love you forever--"

In the morning
When I woke him
To go to school
He wrote a note
"I wil hafta kil you"

His six-year-old heart
Valves aflutter
Has trouble
Settling down.

HRH-Henry The Eighth

Henry the Eighth
What a king was he!
Big as Britannia
Turtle's back
Under the land.

When he heaved
Earthquakes of change
Catapulted his realm
Out of the clutch of Popes
Kept the Tower
Filled with stubborn souls
And forevermore
Fed playwrights, actors and poets
All they would ever need to know
About the politics of lust and power.

Henry the Eighth
What a man was he--
Current scandals merely whimsy!!!

Flipside

Britain's Queen...
Hand-bag heart
Suited, hatted
Bepearled, bemused
Stands in isolation
In her many palaces
Behind gilded gates.

Yet, in horsey times
Tweedy like any country woman
Scarf on head
She goes to the track
Lays her bets
Heart warm with excitement
To be touching turf
Smelling horse manure...
In tune
For a few sweet human moments
With pulse of earth.

Elegy For A Dead President

The prince
He is no more
He has left the shore
Of living light
Sailed into the night.

Dark envelops him
Who once stood at the helm
Beacon lights are dim
A nation mourns for him.

His young life star-crossed
His death, Camelot lost.
The pained world grieves
In the cold crunch of autumn leaves.

Inventor

Will you be exalted
Before you go into the tomb
Or will silence lie
Thick as the mists of night
Heavy on the heart?

Will silence hold
Until you are gone?
Then one careless day
Some young mind
Will stumble on your clay
And see it gold.

Then you will be immortalized
With wide attention
Affection
Of foe and friend
Climbing the bandwagon
Of your fame.

Only you will not be here to celebrate
Only your work
Your monumental work
Will stand.

Philosophies
Poems Of Love, Dream & Song

"...No small thing
Beauty beyond dimension"

In Holy Rite

When mountainous walls of water
Thunder in
Creaming dark beaches with white sea-foam
I know you are with me
You, who are my tide, my sea.

When sun dapples the pine forest
Or strong rains wet the branches
I sense your presence
In the beauty of the moment
Knowing you are in me, with me
So it is and ever will be.

Our love is not happenstance
Sleight of mind
A one time fling.
We come to one another knowing
Our life streams,
Tiny as they are, are flowing
Into the mighty whirlpool heart
Of our oceanic planet
And we, ourselves, our lives
A priceless part of it.

By sun gilded
Stars silvered
In holy rite
Made diamond in God's frosted night.

Blown Destiny

By what divine design
Blown destiny
Did you and I create this marvelous match
Crafting our fragile skiff
Of dream and attraction
Into a sturdy vessel of proven merit
Seaworthy in storm
Beautiful under sail
A song in the wind?

How in the name of all that
Is mighty and golden
Did such splendor come to us---
An ordinary pair
Trapped between drabness and desire
Compressed by circumstances
And like all others
Skewered by unrelenting reality?

Was it special dispensation,
A toss of the waves
A gift of the sea-god?
If so, thank you, Poseidon!

Preamble

We have been faithful, love
To ourselves, to one another.
We have been honest, generous, openhanded.
Our dawn-dream was never abandoned
And it took hold.

Now we exult
In the partnership of our lives, fiesta!
Dual performances, imprudent leaps
Airy arabesques
Irrepressible in the sunny afternoons.

Closing in for the music's final beat
We marvel again at love's
Expanding universe
And the fierce and fiery stars
That glitter on in munificent preamble.

If love is not eternal, what is?

In Unity

So you have found each other
Separate streams joining to make
One river
Widening ultimately
To meet destined seas.

Two, conjoined
Are more powerful than alone
Drab lives turned into sunburst
Flickering turned into flame.

In unity
The coming together
Of two souls
Attuned to God
Is infinity.

Union

To love madly
Or not at all
Are almost
Equivalent
Of self-delusion.
True love is balanced
Transcends confusion.

Honest love is quiet, discerning
Emptiness filled
Restlessness stilled.

Love is not less but more
Not a game,
Though it can have the excitement of the hunt.
Its deep commitment bears the brunt
Of all need.
Love's change
Can go the entire range
From serious to light
Sheltering seed
Reliving old delight.

Love goes deeper than passion
Beyond calm control
Or no restraint at all
As in current fashion.
Marriage, the meaningful union
Of two scattered selves
In one cosmic whole.

Love's Mating Dance

What does anyone know of love
Its alchemies,
Its strange and marvelous chemistries?
How does
The dreamed and undreamed
Transform the ordinary into bursts of splendor
Clothing reality in truer colors ?

The clue must lie in the senses
Knowing that beauty is created within
From raw materials of the without.

And so by instinctive resonance propelled
Love's mating dance commences.

Who Dream Without Denying

To those who have never eaten
The wild fruits of love
Purpled their mouths with their sweet pain
Played like squirrels in the grasses
Take heed
When the sun at noon makes a white heat
And the wind cools
And the heart bends like a reed in rushing water
The gods are near, present
The gods of Olympus
Still come down to those
Who dream without denying.
Come down to enfold you
In their limpid spell
Draw you to their wishing well.

Roundelay

And dawn came up on the round of the world
An orange crimson roundelay
An orange purple song.
Dawn came up
And we were there
To see the darkness close it eyes
Enraptured by the brilliant skies
Light struck air.

Try to sleep in the faery night
When dreams scatter mordant thoughts of day
Then wake to dawn, wake to life, wake to play!

Yours, My Antonia

Old lace from a far country, fine spun...
into its delicate pattern
the intricacies of mosaic
over-shadowing its ivory cast
beauty.

Ah, how exotic in its foreignness
and fragile.
how very wan, very slender... and oh
so melancholy!

Strong plaids in reds and browns
smell of the earth
old lace perishes
the soul of Mr. Shimerdas forsakes Nebraska

And the red plaids in earth-brown
and the strong plaids
O Antonia!
The plains deep-sunned and blurred in grasses
the high wind, the rich soil
yours, my Antonia!

Old lace in a back drawer
red plaid in the sun.

No Small Thing

East gilded
Dawn brilliant
As lordly the sun
Extending fingers of fire
Wakens a moist and sleeping land.

West silvered
Pearl of the universe
Queen of night
Full moon gemstone
High small and white
Caught in conflicting
Spheres of light.

No small thing, this
Inherent drama of
Day dismissing night
Playing it out
In the awesome theater
Of the skies
Before our dim
Unwitting eyes.

No small thing
Beauty beyond dimension
No small thing
Love beyond comprehension
In quest for connection
Communion,
Convoluting interplay
Defines the parameters
Of any given day.

Then night closes
The tired soul reposes.

Our Own Voyaging

If moored
Not even the swiftest ship can sail.
If barnacled
From old trips, old seas
Even a sleek craft
Cannot cut a clean path
Through new waters.

Aren't we a strange lot
Letting ourselves be mossed in,
Tied to old pilings
Unable to lift anchor
Even with the course right?

It is in the out-worn charts,
Maps of the night sky,
Patterning distorted images
That we struggle for and against
Our own voyaging.
Mind, emotion resisting
The insistent heartbeat
Of the ocean.

Change

Change,
Inexorable pulse of this
Our universe
Metronome of existence
In constant beat
Furious or fine
Tuning tumult or nuances undetectable
Swift, slow
In ever-moving lockstep
With the ordered precision
Of the central clock.

Change,
Heartbeat of the worlds
Of all things in them
Change,
Whose currents gently swirl
Or storm
Dwarfing human concept
Change, giving and removing
Channeling, overflowing channels
Cherishing, destroying
Blessing, cursing
Embodying, disembodying .

Change,
Sweeping us on our way
To outer banks of being
To inner burrows of self.
To global unity
Kingdom come.

Change,
Servant and master
Of us, and all else
Change is the law no thing defies.
In the longest run
Change is victor.
Embracing it
We are in symbiosis
With the universal.



D.N. SUTTON, age 98, in 2018

About The Author

D.N. SUTTON (Doris Nichols Sutton) is the author of 4 poetry books and 3 novels. Printed books and audio recordings of her poetry books are available on SoulSite.com, iTunes, Amazon.com and CDBaby.

In 2013, at the age of 93, D.N. Sutton inspired us all with her first novel: "Romantic Tales From Old Mulvedania". Her second novel, "The Carolinian Chronicles" was published in 2014, and in 2017, at the age of 97, her third novel, "AT THE BEND OF THE ROAD" was published. All three novels include love stories that are "fantasies for grown-ups" - pleasurable reading for anyone who longs for love everlasting!

D.N. Sutton's four poetry books include "Love Poems for the Romantic Heart", "Death Poems for the Grieving Heart", "Psalms For Life Living", and now, published in August 2018, at the age of 98, this new poetry collection "**Perceptions, Poems for a Time of Terror**".

D.N. Sutton's poetry is stirring, deep, profound and intense. Originally scheduled for publication in 2004, "**Perceptions, Poems for a Time of Terror**" was inspired by the terror attacks of 911 in 2001. The first chapter in the book are poems about terror, but other chapters about Women, Mothers, Children, Love, Dreams and human relationships were added later, making this a significant, meaningful and wide-ranging poetry collection.

Visit **www.SoulSite.com**, to listen to audio recordings of each poem, read outloud by the author, and to download D.N. Sutton's books and audio recordings.

Visit D.N. Sutton's Amazon.com Author's Page:
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P erceptions

Poems for a Time of Terror
by D.N. Sutton

D.N. SUTTON has been writing poetry since age seven, published first at age eleven in the Miami Herald and in numerous newspapers and magazines since.

As her books of poetry attest, she is a person who believes in the romantic dream-- that all dreams can in some measure be fulfilled. On this theme, the course she created *Presenta-tion of Self* taught in colleges and universities, has inspired her students to bring the beauty and joy they wish for into their lives.

Trained for the theater, she was a professional photographer's model, a poetry editor, active in radio publicity and public relations. She continues to write poems, plays and letters-to-the editor, which she considers a privilege Americans can enjoy.

To read a collection of D.N. Sutton's poetry on the web, visit the SoulSite: www.SoulSite.com

Sherwood-Spencer Publishing

ISBN 978-0-940361-25-6



9 780940 361256

PERCEPTIONS POEMS BOOK