

# POEM OF THE WEEK

## OPTIMISM IN OR AT A TIME OF DYING

“Grief is a natural response to losing someone or something important to you. You may feel a variety of emotions, like sadness or loneliness. And you might experience it for several different reasons. Maybe a loved one died, a relationship ended, or you lost your job. Other life changes, like chronic illness or a move to a new home, can also lead to grief.”

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You all know the feeling.  
It happens in our lives.  
Things go wrong.  
Plans turn to dust.

“Dying” is used here as an umbrella term;  
Being anywhere from despair, loss, and depression to the actual loss  
Of someone dying. The response is similar: grief,  
Grieving; is a process of accepting and creating a lifestyle

That does not have that person in it; remembering  
(and forgetting); learning the importance of breathing,  
Of reaching out and holding back; “dying” is an adjective,  
To express the experience of the loss of the event or person,

the physical pain, lassitude, lethargy and fatigue.  
Move? Why? What for? What’s the point?  
I have a weakness, an unfortunate sense of self-importance,  
A tendency to become verbose. I’m not showing off,

I am brutally aware of my short-comings, as a poet,  
And as a human being. The questions I ask are not minor,  
They are complex, multi-faceted, multi-dimensional; demand exploration,  
Discussion and analysis. Answers? Another discussion, perhaps;

On the bounds and limits of the expression of ideas, and their equivalency  
In the experience, of experience being able to be expressed in words.  
We begin! A question. Can there be  
“Optimism In A Time Of Dying?” or

“And Optimism At A Time Of Dying?”

An interesting clash of prepositions, n'est-ce pas?

Dying? Rather self-important, you might say, rather extreme.

That would be to neglect to see the oxymoronic intent of the question.

Am I calling you a moron? No. Well, if the shoe fits, so be it.

The question is a contradiction of terms, an exploration.

I will proceed with the first proposition,  
the preposition “in”; has a nice fluidity

To it, mais, non? It suggests time to be like a river;

Constantly flowing; a living, evolving ecosystem;

With a focus on vitality, no room or need for deceit.

“At” has a suggestion of immediacy, demanding, compelling

Action, with action - an emotional reaction, response!

Action that would be at variance with our detached analysis.

This is a personal perspective and analysis.

I introduce myself, I was born in 1952,

plus or minus two years from being able

to describe me as a mid-twentieth-century child,

Or more colloquially, a boomer” (“generally defined

as people born from 1946 to 1964,

during the post–World War II baby boom.)

Yes, I’ve seen it all, and have experienced my version

Of events. My conclusion? The world has been struggling

To die, to be re-born; now with the ravages

For climate change, the struggle is more basic;

The struggle to survive as long as possible,

While nations continue to pillage and rape the earth

While mouthing inanities, insanities and lies!

Leslie D. Bush

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