

THEATER OF THE DRAB WORD

C.B. Anderson

The times before I'd smelled the rose
in bright oases rife with palms,
my rhymes were even worse than those
I'd later write despite my qualms.

The poems wrung from vested masters
on pain of death or much, much worse
made mine seem like inept disasters
best suited to a horse-drawn hearse.

My long, half-baked soliloquies
were offered free for all to taste,
but sadly not a one of these
was more than just a total waste.

At last I found my own true voice,
or something like it that would pass,
though if I'd had another choice
I might have bested *Leaves of Grass*.

Disdaining ink, I grip my pencils
and strive to capture common speech,
though doing so corrupts my entrails
and makes me out a glomming leech.

Enough of pain and fussy morals,
of hours when I strain and slave,
for in the end my finest laurels
are flowers on a musty grave.

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