

# 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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