

On the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme

by Ernie McCray

Act I - Humming on the Corner

There's a corner
unlike any other corner you could ever conceive in your mind.
The Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme. And it's just that, rhythm and rhyme, big time,
cuz, when your feet step on the concrete
on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme, in no time
you find
yourself dissolving into a bright sunny mellow groove of an attitude
that makes you want to bust a jazzy move,
like a man
who ain't got nothing to lose
and you high step on down the line,
like a drum major of the Grambling State University Tiger Marching Band
taking the field on the 50 yard line at half time,
not the least bit uneasy
with respect to getting where you're going anywhere near on time.
It's just that when you're tipping and tapping and patting and feeling mighty
silky slidly and glidy
and all hi-de-ho-hi-de-hi spry-ty, in a "top-hat-dancing-shoes" frame of mind,
the world's stories unfold and unwind in your imagination
like a clip in the twilight zone, touching your soul
and oiling your bones -
when you look up and see the street sign on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme.

You as much as stop in for a latte
at the Rhythm and Rhyme Bistro & Cafe and life on the corner comes into play:
Faceless, slumped shouldered folks drop in from here and there
with their hands in the air like they just don't care
because they just don't care, and you flash them a smile
across the room
as a barrier against their gloom; and soon
a woman with a broken heart appears in tears
and a man walks in looking as hopeless and hapless
as looking forlorn can be
and you find two more smiles to send
because you're still in your dancer's stance
like lovers, holding hands,
their hearts bubbling with romance, set on tripping the light fantastic
on the little ballroom floor
on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme.

Act II - Drumming on the Corner

On this piece of real estate
called the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme, there is No such actuality or notion known as time
other than right here right now time. And there are other "No's."
No cares. No woes.
No stepping on toes.
No not stopping to smell every single rose. Oh, now,
the real world neither evaporates dissipates migrates hibernates vacates or terminates where these two streets meet.
To imply such
would be a natural downright deceit.
It's just that reality
on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme appears to the mind

to be of a gentler more caring
and loving kind –
One where children love to pass the time, hiding and seeking
and jumping through hoops and skimming skateboards on townhouse stoops
and skipping and hopping
and doing elaborate Pat-a-cakes
with their hands a jiving and a popping to beat the band
and you dream a world without arms,
worthy of their beauty and their charm
and you dance on to the beat
of a song,
a love song,
that's played in your heart since the children came along and whatever apathy there was that makes us prone
to not make our world
the world of love and harmony it was born to be -
is gone. Gone.

Act III – Hum Drumming on the Corner

If you were to, on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme ask anyone, be they hardworking
and getting along day to day, earning their pay,
or faceless or nameless and down on their luck, struggling to survive
with hardly a penny or buck in their pockets, at any time -
ask them about where they feel as one with all of humankind
and they will surely say
On the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme.

So just sit back in your seat and feel the beat
as you look at
and listen to all the tap dancing feet and visualize yourself
and everybody else around you
ball changing and hop brushing and stepping, and the like,
in kind. In time.
That's all good, fully understood
as part of cutting the rug and getting down
and funky
in the neighborhood.
That's the kind of spirit that's welcomed any old time on the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme.

Epilogue

Now, was that not fun, a gas,
wherein and whereas you had to resist the urge to jump out of your seat and Ball Tap
and Buck and Wing up on your happy feet with a little step/slide
and a smooth sexy hippy grind?
Well, that's just the way it goes
when you're caught up in Rhythm and Rhyme. And, goodness knows,
you had: No cares. No woes.
You stepped on no toes. You stopped and smelled every single rose.
But remember, though:
the real world did not go away while we were at play
and that's to say that it's as insane
and inane and profane
and un-tamed and unrestrained and ungainly and zany
as it was yesterday
and up until now today - however
we're most magnificent when we've had a good time,
when our lives are like a nursery rhyme, aren't we? Do we agree?

Okay. So, what you're to do
when you leave this place is take that better self
out into the world
and make it a better place for the whole human race.
Make it refined sublime
kind genuine,
where the people cooperate and reconcile and appreciate
and never deviate
from the love that resides in their hearts for their fellow man, woman,
boy and girl
and all the creatures
and nature's rich and bountiful gifts throughout their world.

With the children in mind,
knowing that they're watching us all the time, wouldn't it be fine
to model this new world after
the Corner of Rhythm and Rhyme? Every time.