

## **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 slidy 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, slump 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.