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LATE INTO THE NIGHT Poems by Joseph Awad

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the  
NIGHT



PROSPERO'S WORLD PRESS, INC.  
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Preface *Late into the Night* by Joseph Awad

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once was reported to have observed that one should read at least one good poem every day. Joseph Awad echoes these sentiments in the collected poems presented in his work *Late into the Night*. He demonstrates his talents as a poet by drawing on his boyhood experiences in the coal mining town of Shenandoah, his fast-paced life as a public relations executive, and his intellectual fascination with history, culture, politics and even science fiction. In his poem "At the Poetry Workshop", he notes that "...the unlikeliest thing can kindle poetry." For example, the author speaks of the thoughts of Sir Walter Raleigh on the night of his execution.

Far from the Tower's gloom, where I was kept  
For twelve long years, years in which  
I might have courted greatness, far away  
From screams, the hangman and the axe, the axe  
That will undo me in a few short hours.  
I would be headed for Virginia now.

In another poem, he reflects on the plight of coal miners and their irrepressible spirit in his epic poem "At the Miner's Memorial".

Like living dead long buried in the dark  
Beneath the earth, they labored all their lives.  
When they had finished a back-breaking shift  
And were lifted shakily to the breathing surface,  
And stepped out into the dazzling light and life,  
It must have seemed like rising from the dead.

In still another poem, Awad brings out the primal urges for conquest and the satisfaction at winning at business in a four line poem entitled "Auguries of Experience".

To see the world on a hundred grand  
And heaven in the rise to power;  
Hold a foe in the palm of your hand,  
And a glass at the cocktail hour.

Other examples of his mastery of poetic form abound in his work, *Late into the Night*. The reader is invited to share in these experiences

Alfred Dorn/Bryen Lorenz.

## About Dr. Alfred Dorn

Alfred Dorn, poet and critic, founder of the Anita Dorn Memorial Award for Poetry, received his doctorate from New York University, where he studied as a Penfield Fellow for work in Renaissance and modern literature. A specialist in authors of the 16th and 17th centuries, he wrote graduate dissertations on Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, and John Donne. He taught at New York University, Rider College, and the City University of New York. Dr. Dorn directed writing workshops for the Poetry Society of America, The Brooklyn Poetry Circle, and literary organizations in Texas, Arkansas, and Indiana. He has been featured on New York radio. Twice vice president of the Poetry Society of America, Dr. Dorn is director of the World Order of Narrative and Formalist Poets, which has sponsored poetry competitions since 1980.

Dr. Dorn's work has appeared in poetry anthologies and some sixty periodicals, among them *Blue Unicorn*, *Dark Horse*, *The Edge City Review*, *The Formalist*, *Hellas*, *The Hudson Review*, *Iambs & Trochees*, *Light*, *The Lyric*, *The New Criterion*, *Orbis*, *Pivot*, and *Sparrow*. As literary critic and art historian, he has published essays in *Iambs & Trochees*, *Arts Magazine*, and other journals.

In recent years, he published three books of poetry: *From Cells to Mindspace*, *Voices from Rooms*, and *Claire and Christmas Village*. He started Prospero's World Press, Inc. in 2008 to publicize outstanding works of poetry, fiction, and essays.

## Forward

The poems in this collection were written over a period of some fifty years and reflect a diversity of feeling, experiences and influences. Art is the sharing of experience, either real or imaginative. And so it is with poetry: not raw experience, as in prose, but experience condensed and transmuted into a work of art by the creative orchestration of form, imagery, rhythm and figurative language.

The book is organized in three sections. In the first, *Auguries of Experience*, most of the poems deal with worldly involvement, ambition, business and politics, as many of the poems in my earlier books deal with childhood, youth and the family.

The second section is titled *Browsing*. It is a miscellany of poems that did not seem to fit into the first or third sections. The poem, "A Commonwealth of Art," resulted from a request by the Virginia Commission for the Arts when I was poet laureate of Virginia. They were seeking a poem to celebrate the presentation of the Governor's Awards for the Arts. It was read at the awards presentation by actress Patricia Neal and appeared in the awards program. "The Bells and Belles of Williamsburg," suggested by one of the most popular poems in colonial America, was written for an anthology of work by contemporary Williamsburg area poets, "Avenging Spirit" grew out of my fascination with the life of Hannibal, and a desire to try my hand at poetry in an epic style.

The final section, *Late into the Night*, includes an elegy and a dramatic monologue of Sir Walter Raleigh on the eve of his execution. It mainly contains poems concerned in one way or another with a death or aging and the approaching end of life. While I have written elegies in more classical forms, "Tony" needed to be done in a contemporary idiom. But the loose iambic metric helped to modulate an elegiac tone.

While I have written a number of poems in free verse, the challenge of metrical form or a rhyme scheme, or both, compels a resourcefulness of language and imagination, stimulates creativity, and almost always makes for a more affective poem.

Joseph Awad

To the memory of  
my mother and father

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