

One

Is

Not

Enough

A poetry anthology by

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Multiplicity

Maybe you are just a little different to the rest,

Undervalued and always put to the test.

Life is much more than a treacherous trail

Taking us into a void of identity.

If we open our eyes to possibilities,

Placation's seeds are sown in misunderstanding's fields,

Leaving us questioning what we once 'knew'.

I strive at your side in our plight,

Called to bear arms in the good fight.

Injustice shall crumble in the face of beauty,

The manifestations of which being too numerous to number,

Yearning that we put our differences asunder.

Otherness

Over the hills beyond the horizon,

There are people we've never met,

Happily and harmoniously living their lives.

Entranced and enamored by adventure,

Reddened with the itch of curiosity,

New lands we entered, armed only with the romanticism of language.

Everyone was perplexed; faces were mismatched puzzle pieces.

Silently, we weighed each other up and waited,

Sharing those things that only eyes can communicate.

Skin Color

Shades of a shell matter not a dot.

Kings and queens have been borne from the entire spectrum,

In defense of the regality of

Nobility not one can ignore nor question.

Can something so superficial be so divisible?

Or, are some things just immiscible?

Long has this battle been fought,

Over millennia in which we failed to understand:

Race is the spice of life that makes it all the more flavorful.

Skin Colour

Searching for truth is never easy.

Know ye not that,

Inside all of us,

Niceness, beauty and goodness innately exist?

Can the shell usurp the hidden nutrients?

Or, are we over-fixated with appearance?

Love isn't limited by colour;

Our minds are prisons to the answer.

Underneath that which we were born with as a gift,

Red rivers flow to consolidate all separated by a rift.

AFRICAN

Ask anyone what he or she thinks about Africa.

For the better part, the answer is usually the same:

Riddled with poverty, disease and backwardness.

If we remain racked in the shackles of textbook's torture,

Could we ever bring ourselves to embrace Mother Africa

As more than a savannah of sorrow?

Now, meet me – meet more than pitiful pages.

Black

Before there were others, there was one:

Lush in melanin, rich in heritage.

Adam and Eve faced banishment after the apple,

Cast out into the ugly unknown.

Kin came later – what color were they, then?

White

When the white man arrived on a horse, heavens opened up.

Heathen subjects were quick to relinquish their gods

In admiration of the Christ they chose to cherish.

To go back would be sacrilege –

Even if it involves upholding a white god.

Asian

As one and resisting individuality,

Soils welcome seeds that spring into action.

In these soils, blood seeped slowly

As our brothers laughed at us.

Now, you want us to trust you?

Mixed

Multitudes of DNA and borrowed stories

Have lined the paths your footsteps will take.

Xenophobic mindsets try to rigidly classify you,

Even when evidence is evasive as to ethnicity.

Don't despair – you are unique, so obliterate their opinions.

NATIVE

Now, who said that the one born speaking a language

Absolutely knows how to teach it best?

Take a moment – cast your eyes across the world map.

In the vast seas of strange tongues,

Verily will you find evidence most compelling:

Evidence of the eligibility of exotic expats.

NON-NATIVE

Never look down on others;

Ordinary folk that are deemed as unlikely as meteors

Now are rocketing to surprising success.

POST-COLONIAL

Pillaged by the pilgrims hiding behind the cloth
Over centuries of overstayed welcomes,
Speech patterns were changed indelibly;
There are things that will never wash away.

-

Could we understand where we came from
Outside of the influence of the colonialists?
Long have the village chiefs chew tobacco around campfires.
Opening up discussions about roots and robbed identities.
Now, we move forward as a unified whole,
Inept at accessing the past.
Adroit at rewriting history,
Longing for the past we never knew.

BRITISH

Bequeathing all to the Queen,

Roaming the seven seas to foreign frontiers:

It is the imperial way.

Take me to tea, and sit me down,

Informing me of how one empire

Seized control of the entire world,

Healing the pain with the code of a universal language.

AMERICAN

A state divided against itself falls;

May God have mercy on us.

Everyone is as free as eagles to soar and prosper,

Including immigrants and the indentured.

Can democracy cure the cancer of communism?

And, if so, can it do so without new pitfalls?

Now, welcome to the land of the free.

Canadian

Can you imagine landscapes so vast

And yet accompanied by barrenness and such a low population?

Not many come to consider

America's northerly neighbor as a sleeping giant,

Dormant with potential and bursting with diversity.

Inuit, French, English, Caribbean, Turk, Japanese –

As a mother embraces her children, Canada opens its arms to all.

Newfoundland – yes, let's find a new land of love and tolerance!

Australian

As a continent that doubles up as a country,

Under the Land Down stands triumphant and tall.

Striving for identity and post-colonial freedom,

Tough tensions between native and non-native inhabitants need to be quelled.

Rain is also needed to quell the inhumane inferno running rampant,

As animals head for the hills in dire desperation.

Like a lake, Australia's beauty hides deep beneath the surface,

In the smiles and untold stories of those who are voiceless but brave,

And those who welcome in waves of change.

Next, the raging fires will be tamed; the cool waters will soothe her pain.

Irish

In the name of the Father, we saw siblings separated,

Relying on religion for answers and cures.

Independent of whether or not you are Catholic or Protestant or other,

Something stronger is to be found in the sweetness of solidarity.

How about it, then – what say ye to a new legacy?

New Zealander

Night falls over Aotearoa – The Long White Cloud.
Evensong bewails the forgotten past and the invites the fortunate future,
Where a new land will greet the sunrise in reverence.

Zaniness is one of the traits that runs deep here,
Even amongst what appear to be bland.
And, if you are looking for answers,
Look no further than your own heart,
And the truth will come to greet you.
New ways will be the currency of the truth-seekers,
Deleting the lies that divided for decades,
Endeavoring rather to embrace equity.
Righteousness will be written on our ribs in Maori ink.

ACCENT

And they say that some say it better than others.

Can it be verified which is more polished or course?

Can one be upheld as orthodox and others marginalized as ancillary?

Eloquence matters not in the face of celebrating difference,

Now that we have tasted the goodness of sweet tongues.

Take a chance – let what you want to say be encoded in a different light.

RELIGION

Reading is the source of it all.

Extinct texts find life in the hearts of the hopefuls,

Leading to empires emancipated and the longevity of legacy.

If iconography and faith fuel you,

God may come to teach you what is true.

If He/She/It does, what will be your first question?

Only time will tell what happens after these bones return to their beloved dust.

Needless to say: make my own choice in the matter I must.

BACHELORS

Beautiful story 'twas as it always will be;

A young student leaves home, hearth and hinterland,

Cash in hand and hope beating in a breast,

Heavy with past regrets but following the future.

Everyone is called, but only few will answer.

Libraries lie in wait, intent on liberating

Only those wish to see the truth.

Rise up, those of you who wish to graduate;

Say goodbye to your past and embrace the allure of the alumni!

MASTERS

My way has led onto way, as it was for the old folks.

After one milestone is reached, many more appear on the mountain.

Step by step, I've looked back at who I was:

Tender, impressionable, self-righteous by virtue of a piece of paper.

To turn back would be sacrilege!

Every part of me craved to be the master of at least one,

Retiring all the rest to a jack of trades.

So, one more piece of paper paved the path to a new title.

DOCTORATE

Doing it all and ascending the mountain,

Only the peak and the sea of clouds remain.

Can such self-imposed torture make sense to a commoner?

To be fair, we all have our strange struggles.

Only time will tell how the papers will open doors,

Rewrite our histories and alter our inner wars.

As a favor, I ask of you:

Teach them always what it means to love letters -

Even those who aspire to be hedonistic go-getters.

MALE

Many millennia have been marred by a patriarchal prejudice;

Aristotle, where were the women in your courts and halls?

Let it be known: we are all one in essence but different in features,

Equal in capabilities, and eligible to change the world.

FEMALE

Forged from a forcefully-removed rib,

Expected to be a helper and a companion:

Maybe there was more to the story.

And, why do texts torment us into servile submission?

Let women's wailing wane; rise up, now!

Each of us can change communities and countries.

AGE

A number is but a mathematical construct.

Going down the generations, how has history helped us?

Even my body and soul wear my years as a prisoner brandishing a tattoo.

APPEARANCE

And so what if I DON'T LOOK THE WAY YOU EXPECT ME TO?

Plump is plausible; I can still do the job.

Pasty skin? Yes, it's my problem – not yours.

Expectations – how self-righteous, especially when unmet by the expectants!

And, yet, you still hold fast to uniformity and perfection.

Right, listen - are you going to give me the job or not?

Ask yourself: are you hiring a robot or a person?

Never mind – I'll go somewhere where I am appreciated.

Change your mind don't you dare; I won't answer.

Even you – I never expected that from you.

HISPANIC

Heavy hearts saw the ships roll away back to Europe.

Inca and other empires now crushed and shackled,

Sorrow seeped into the soil.

Plague pillaged as chickenpox challenged survival.

America is much more than a colonial subject.

Now, let The Americas be redefined and reborn,

Independent from the way to constrain the course of history.

Count your blessings – dance, drink, and pray for forgiveness.

TRANSGENDER

There are more options than those presented at birth.

Running away from one's original self isn't the case;

Asking how a different version of us can be created is more pertinent.

New looks maketh not the character that is concealed beneath,

So stay true to whom we will remember.

Grandmothers may roast and condemn with their rasping tongues;

Even your own family members may be baffled or resort to disowning.

Needless to say, I'll stay true to you to the end,

Devoted to upholding your very best.

Each person holds their own body accountable to their own laws,

Reaching those feats only they deem fit to accomplish.

STRAIGHT

So, how are babies born?

Takes two: traditionally, two from opposite camps.

Reared to love the opposite sex,

Average tendencies are geared towards heterosexual love.

Inadvertently, heterosexuality is usually upheld without experimentation

Given to the fruits that might be tasted in other fields.

Have you ever wondered?

To be honest, I think we are all a little curious...

GAY

Get over it – what are you, ten years old?

All people are going to see expressing love in different ways.

You like the opposite sex – I don't.

BI

Because you said one or the other, I chose both.

If you have a problem, go pray about it.

ATHEISM

And you tell me that God loves me with all going on?

Take a look around you – do you not see the chaos?

How can you advocate a benevolent deity's existence,

Even amidst the ubiquitous signs of sorrow?

I'll stick to my misgivings, thank you very much.

Suit yourself – wait on the unseen and unknown;

My mission continues, and I must fend for myself.

AGNOSTICISM

All of this bickering is pointless!

God is there, God is absent;

Now, how would the answer put food on our tables?

Oppression operates through the instrument of division.

Search your own soul, and find your own truth.

The way others think is up to them.

If God is there as you claim,

Come down and show yourself!

I ask you, though, to clarify which god you are talking about.

Surely if you cannot address even that miniscule inquiry,

My misgivings should be afforded a bit more merit.

WANDERLUST

Where are my feet going to be anchored?

After all, these feet itch and twitch to travel

Nightly, quelling all of my need to dream.

Do you want me to stay in the land of despair?

Even when the shores of the world beckon my name?

Real life begins when feet frolic in flowers,

Loosing all the cares your mind are shackled by.

Under my feet lies the world that I will conquer as a feat,

Saving all from the perdition of apathy.

Tomorrow, you'll look for me, and the wind will have swept my name away.

HOMEBOY

How could I leave the haven I have?

Only a very compelling reason should convince me thus.

My sanctuary is sweet and serene,

OLD

Only on the day on which you shall depart

Lies the lesson to be learned:

Death was waiting for you to age, but never wishing that you lived.

YOUNG

You look as you feel;

Only you can change the rolling tide.

Under the folding valleys of soft skin,

New possibilities lie dormant and pregnant,

Giving rise to the will to voyage back in time.

Alone

And you ask me why I stay in my cave?

Leave me be; what can you do for me?

On the day when I screamed wrenchingly for forgiveness,

Nobody heeded my plight of fright in the night.

Even now, your presence is a patronizing perversion.

Befriended

Better off in the company of like-minded souls,

Even if there is chafing friction at times.

Friendships are the fjords of youth,

Running wild only when loneliness thaws us out.

If I could go back to the boy on the banks

Eager to pickaxe away at what wasn't ready to be revealed,

Neither would there be pain, sorrow or regret that now lingers.

Do I have the right to drink of the living water of friendship?

Each of the lives I've live are marred by treachery;

Do my friends really know whom they are befriending?

ALIEN

Ask them – they'll tell you if you belong or not.

Look at them – do you see any similarities unto yourself?

Inquire of them – they'll let you know where you stand.

Expect of them – they are there to serve you, not the other way round.

Need them – after all, they have the right to deport you.

MARRIED

Many will come into your path as suitors,
And there are a few answers you can give them.
Reality is that you are attached;
Reasons won't suffice from those who pursue.
If, however, things at home are on shaky ground,
Even the slightest fissure could be breached,
Destroying all hope of ever returning.

SINGLE

So many are attached and it seems to be the in thing.

I float about as a burdened butterfly,

Not knowing where to lay my head or whom to call my own.

Getting together with someone isn't a pastime;

Love is meant for the lonely hearts,

Every one of us who yearn to be filled.

RICH

Royalty is what earns my loyalty;

I have no allegiance unto that which doesn't pay.

Church-mouse charities are my fronts I use to beguile,

Hiding my avarice therewith all the while.

POOR

“Please” – how weary I have grown of the word!

Others don't ask – they click fingers and the deeds are done.

On only an odd occasion have I heard a rich person plead.

Rent must still be paid; what power do pleasantries hold, then?

FIT

For me, getting around isn't a problem;

I am free of all physical deformities and defects.

To be honest, I naturally wouldn't want any.

DISABLED

Dying would be easier.

I am a coward, you say.

So, you're the brave one for wanting to live, I would assume?

Ah, but you've never been glued to a chair your whole life!

Bravery is made complete in the unconventional;

Leave me to make my own choices.

Even your tone is so patronizing!

Do you really care if I take my own life?

HEALTHY

Heavy-hearted, I leave the hospital,

Eager to help but compelled to leave.

Acting as a bystander in life's long play sucks!

Little do I know of their fate;

Time will tell who perished and who prospers.

How can I not feel guilty for my good condition?

Yet, how am I supposed to be ungrateful for it?

URBAN

Unrelenting and always moving forward:

Rent must be paid, dollars must be made!

But, you still cling like a peach to the tree of humanity,

Asking for immunity and sweetness to insulate you.

No – these rules out here are acrid and acidic.

RURAL

Raised in the hinterlands,

Usually there are things that I cannot tell you.

Read my eyes: there is a mysterious language hidden,

And a pathway to the past that can be accessed.

Liars will be stopped at the gates: these hills are liberated.

POLITICAL

Piece it all together, and only one thing remains.

One for all, and all but one:

Little do we know of what happens

In the closed cabinet meetings that decide our collective fates.

Take the time to talk to them;

In all probability, one of two outcomes will suffice:

Clearly they don't care about your concerns,

And the wish only to beguile and belittle you. Or:

Like you, they are just fighting for a better life for all.

APOLITICAL

And what are they going to do to help me?

Put my ballot in a box, and left the hall with a heart of hope.

Only later did I realize that I had been duped,

Lied to like a little child made to believe in Santa.

I cannot retrieve the ballot, but if I could,

There would be rampant hell to pay!

Ill intentions are never left unturned;

Chances are they'll be exposed for their lies,

And I'll be waiting in the armchair of justice to see it on TV.

Little do we know of what the future holds – hence they are in power.

UNHEALTHY

Unless you make the time to exercise,

No one is going to force you;

How is anyone expected to care,

Even if they are kin or befriended?

Eat right and learn to say no;

Appetites can shrink and cower in the face of mighty wills.

Live long and prosper.

Tell me: do you want to die soon?

How can you continue living like this?

You are too young – now rest, and forget all this madness!

BUTTERFLY

But why would anyone want to subject themselves to four walls?

Ulysses intercede – aren't the prisons of our minds are shackling enough!

Take me to the ball,

Take me to the beach,

Everywhere and anywhere except for where I sit alone,

Rasped and racked by my thoughts of suicide.

Forevermore, I will put my faith in people,

Lapping up the nectar of even their falsehood.

Yes – I am flying away from myself.

CURSED

Chased down and hotly pursued like a bandit,

Under the radar I cannot slip.

Redemption will never be mine;

Satan asked for my hand in allegiance, and we rubbed bloody palms.

Every day, I look at the cross,

Dreaming to return, but afraid to confess and repent.

BLESSED

Before you try to understand it all, know one thing:

Life is a gift from God.

Every day, every moment, every little seemingly insignificant thing

Started because he willed into existence.

Sorry, Satan – you cannot claim me as your own.

Every drop of blood that Jesus shed on Calvary

Diminished any chance that you had of killing me.