

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

the Aurorean

Spring/Summer 2014

Publisher/Editor: Cynthia Brackett-Vincent

Assistant Editor: Devin McGuire

62 pages, \$11, softbound

Review by Zvi A. Sesling

Two quick disclosures to open this review of the Spring/Summer 2014 issue of one of the best New England based magazines: *the Aurorean*. Disclosure number one: I do not particularly care for rhyming poetry. Disclosure number 2, poet Dennis Daly is in a wonderful group of people of which I am also part: The Bagel Bards (which meet every Saturday morning 9 a.m. to noon at the Au Bon Pain, Davis Sq., Somerville, MA.



Well with that behind me, I was genuinely pleased to discover Dennis is in the current issue. Despite the rhyming, of which he is an excellent practitioner, the two poems are quite readable and enjoyable. Dennis a fine poet and at readings his baritone voice rings out with the lines of his poetry. In the current issue of *the Aurorean* he is one of the Showcase Poets with two offerings, "Little Misery Island" and "Great Misery Island," two real islands near Salem, MA where the poet resides.

In "Little Misery Island" the opening stanza sets the tone: Some say you can walk across/From its larger kin. A gloss/I think on a darker fact:/ All men are islands, compact.

Here he has summoned John Donne (no man is an island) and bravely states that "All men are islands, compact." This seeming disagreement with Donne is really not a divergence for what Donne is saying is that man cannot function alone and Daly simply states that men may seem like islands but there is interaction with other men and nature.

the Aurorean has always pumped out good poetry and the current issue certainly matches its reputation and always offers poems that catch the eye.

Ryan Bayless's offer is:

*My garden's first fruit,
a ripe tomato,
offers its skin to
the beak of a bird.*

Sharon Anderson's *Wash Day* addresses the woman of another day – the unliberated:

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

*Monday morning, without fail
on a clothesline stretched between
two elms, hung Grandmother's
flour sack aprons—freer than
Grandmother ever was.*

For those with a penchant for the longer poem Jack Galmitz's "The Rigings" provides a take on relationships that crosses time and space from infinity to birth to marriage and back.

*I went down
as water goes down
to seek my level
to stop staring at the sky
as if moons and stars were mighty
and the shrubs and rocks were wrong.*

*I went down
to find her
her eyes so blue
I fell in and began
to swim with fins and gills
and wouldn't come out
until she pushed me out
in time and I was hung
upside down and slapped
on the bottom and cried*

*When we married
and I was told I could kiss the bride,
we were already wrapped in one another's arms,
for we had known each other since the beginning
of time that comes to pick you up
when you fall down.*

Another poet whose work I have enjoyed in the past is Alan Catlin. In a previous book of his work which I reviewed he dealt with people who suffer one way or another. In the two poems which appear in this issue of *the Aureorean* Catlin sounds a hopeful note but somehow leaves off with not-so-hopeful endings such as tarnish sails or unlike Robert Frost, "... paths that lead us/nowhere"

There is plenty of fine poetry in this issue of the magazine from the opening Featured Poet David Stankiewicz to the closing Feature Marilyn Dorf. *the Aureorean* usually delivers poems worthy of their publication and this current issue is no exception.