Every Poem

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College of DuPage

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Every Poem
By Jason Ahlenius

every poem is a scar
where the painful pen strokes serve to cover
each cut to our dignity
and on shelves like bubbling, wretched jars of acid
they wait on the page to be rediscovered
reopening the laceration and seething in pure pain
given time it will heal and the words will fade
but the scar still remains

every poem is a light
and frankly mine is a 5-watt bulb
while I watch searchlights sweeping the streets
uncovering the decay and corruption within the city
and I seat myself in a play
and watch the stage lights shed new meaning on life and beauty
outside around the bonfire the poets dance
with their luridly glowing forms celebrating new life in the song
while a field of millions of lights is cast across the city
reflecting the sea of burning stars of the black sky
forming eternal constellations that guide the explorer by night
from the dimly lit corner of a forgotten room shines my nightlight

every poem is a comma
a pause in the life of the poet
wherein he stops and looks about
takes in a breath
as he observes the atrophy we are speeding towards
his car comes to a halt in his backyard
to notice a flower
or maybe a child who has never been there before
or perhaps he has been hidden away in his secret tree house
beneath the very nose of the poet
in midstride while retreating from a torrent
of raging rhinoceroses
he stops
pulls out a golden quill
and finds it a safety valve
to quench the fires of tension that redden behind his eyes
or maybe he even hesitates
for the snap of the boss' finger
to notice that yes
there are still storm clouds in the evening sky