

IF NOT NOW... AND OTHER POEMS

By Scott Thomas Outlar

I seek to shine in spite of my darkness.
In fact, it was a kiss of death
that forced me to fully embrace the light.

At the end of a rope
there is but one question
that truly matters:
how strong is your grip?

I burn because my blood and bones are kerosene.
After the fire, it was a barren field of ash
that showed me where to plant new seeds of life.

When surfacing for air
there is a certain thought
that takes precedence over all others:
are you still breathing?

I always try to fight my wars from a firm footing of peace.
Within the schism, it was a mirror of nature
that birthed the bite of our dualistic tongue.

As the sun sets below
that horizon in the distance
there remains only this to ask:
will we rise again tomorrow?

A BIT OF BOTH

If I'm hanging on every word
that might drip
from your tongue,

does that mean
I love you endlessly/madly

or that I'm soon to slip
off the ledge of false promises?

CARRIED AWAY BY THE WIND

And then the air
left both my lungs
as I gasped
for the breath
that no longer cared
to be held
so close,
but wanted release
toward a freedom
I couldn't fathom
beyond broken spaces
in my chest
where the organ
played its final song

called collapse.

Bio

Scott Thomas Outlar hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, and books can be found. His work has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. Scott serves as an editor for The Peregrine Muse, Novelmasters, and Happy Hour Hallelujah. His most recent book, *Poison in Paradise*, is available through Alien Buddha Press.

EPISTEME