



Nocturnal Omissions

A Tale of Two Poets

poems by Gavin Geoffrey Dillard
and Eric Norris

 Sibling Rivalry Press

www.siblingrivalrypress.com



Prologue

In the summer of twenty-ten I met a young lad on Facebook named Eric Norris. He was a poet and had responded to some comment about one of my books, *A Day for a Lay*. Eric was cute, of course, seemed to regard my work highly, and so I introduced myself.

I lived on Maui at the time, and Eric in the Big Grapple. With a click we became “friends” and began chatting. It was a matter of a day or two before he sent me a poem. I responded in kind, Eric retaliated, and so it began. We wrote every day.

Merely a handful of poems into this, and I suggested the possibility of a book. Eric agreed immediately, and Bryan Borland of Sibling Rivalry Press, who had been watching our play, agreed immediately to publish the thing. Our working title was *The Courtship of Passion*.

Now, I was slated to, six weeks down the road or so, read at the big NCA media conference in San Francisco. I was the featured author within the gay contingent, and a couple of scholars were doing presentations about me as “The Naked Poet”—a moniker once bestowed by the LA Times. Given the theme, then, it seemed essential that I once again read in-the-buff.

I am in my fifties—tho remain reasonably fit—and it has been years since I’ve exposed my wobbly bits to the literati. So I figured it might be nice to have some fresh wobblies to back me up, and so asked Eric—who immediately agreed. And thus the presence of a publisher and the eventuality of a fixed meet-up became themes within the “letters.”

One other thing I want to mention is that we also kept up a practically air-tight vigil of emails. We sent hundreds. We had discussed including portions of our mailings as a part of the collection, as certain points in certain poems allude to themes, photographs, even video exchanged in cyberspace.

But there is only so much a book can do. In the end, we thought it best to trust the imagination of the reader and let the poetry speak for itself. We hope that you’ll agree.

In joy!
Gavin Dillard
Black Mountain, NC

La Fin des Temps

It is now the End of Days—why mince parables or
morality? all that we have will be lost,
all that we are shall be found;
have I made myself perfectly clear? have I wrestled your
heart from its stronghold of thorns and
trampled that horny copse with my befevered hooves?
Let me be frank: time is short, and before the
spacepeople come with their mighty galactic ways, and
Jesus arrives to *tseb-tseb* our ineptitudes ...
before the tides have abolished coastal cities and the
nether-sections swept up in vast cacophonies of
devil winds ...
before the Ark sets afloat and the Tardis
touches down ...
I want to supplant your blood with my sperm and
plant a garden of teeth upon island and crest;
I want to consume all your rivers and plunder dank
forests.
Until all that has been found be lost again,
and where we end
is the beginning of something Terrible and Profound.

The Day of Apocalypse

It's hard to see my future as a land
rising from magma deposits, orange
rivers of lava, pyroclastic clouds,
volcanic vomitus boiling from blue
waves. I must have some sort of blind spot.

I creep forward like the Earl of Gloucester
in *King Lear*, smelling my way to Dover.
I shower. When I pull a washcloth between
my legs, after my morning dump, things
in Dover can look pretty bad. I hang

the soiled cloth on a steel rail to dry,
then I soap up my hands. I pluck my peach
cleft aside, rinsing off an asterisk—
the Southern star I have so often used
to orient myself at night, sliding

through the sea in search of spices. I
survey my world through a tiny vent,
a window cracked to let the steam escape.
I can see Queens: a tall oak tree, and three
old ladies with Ziplocs full of cooked rice.

The Fates! A Buddhist with a bowl accepts
their offerings with a bow of thanks.
I'm thankful, too—for what I can perceive:
green leaves and gratitude. Tomorrow might
erupt like a volcano, I suppose,

blowing me sky-high. I'll cope. Maybe
I will land in your arms, if it does.

Petit Déjeuner au Lit

Tonight I made a lovely, creamy garlic and white asparagus bisque: I browned my garlic, onion, parsnip, asparagus and a potato, puréed them with cream and beaucoup butter, added salt and pepper, a dash of cayenne, and finally stirred in a flood of fresh goat milk; it was heaven, darling, and I wish you could have partaken.

Perhaps “landscape” is too grandiose a term: I’m thinking more diminutive and immediate—a garden—my own personal row of *Phaseolus vulgaris*; let’s take for instance the puckered corolla of your sphincter, if I plant my seed in that fecund bunching, how long before it will bear me fruit, how rich the harvest, and for how long do you suppose it might feed me?

Not that I am not happy with soup, you understand: I am a simple monk making my way up the Mountain, I do not require large quantities of meat, nor are sweets and superfluities of indulgence of any particular interest.

But a proper Brussels sprout or roasted yam can make my heart skip a pace, the nectar of a ripe Georgia peach percolating through the hairs of my chest is cause for braying;

if I kiss your face half the night and sleep the rest with a thigh wedged against your groin, will I awake to breakfast-in-bed: will a hot stream of piss be mine and a fleshy scone of rubicund jam? may I sink my teeth into the roan nape of your neck and relish the savory spice of your pain?

You bring out the chef in me; I want to eat you by the spoonful, wear the peelings like brocade

Crossing Legs

Help me hold it. If I wake tonight,
will you place your thigh against my crotch?
I'll pillow you in pubic hair so light,
so curly and so warm. Let me watch

your silver chest descending as you sleep,
illuminated by a square of moon.
Shift your weight slightly, should I creep
up with an erection. It's too soon.

Move again and bring your leg to rest
a little higher. Close to tears, un-
able to dissolve, I will confess—
I've got to go, to piss, I'm dying. None

could endure such torture. "Hold it in,
babe. This is love," whisper with your shin.

Out of the Fire, Into the Pan

I like that you're smarter than me,
I like that you're naiver than me;
I don't mind that you're younger than me (though I have
traditionally preferred older dudes);
I love that we haven't met and yet
feel so deeply as though we had.

I like that you're shorter than me (not that there's
anything wrong with tall—but I can imagine bouncing
you upon my lap like a tittering tot),
I love that you've loved in seven languages (for I have
so many yet to go);
I love that you have yet to find "home" (so that
I can offer you mine).

I am an old goat enjoying my pasture; you are a kid on the
streets of uncertainty:
I fall into the tradition of such ancient beasts as Dionysius and
Aegipan, Cernunnos and Siva, hornéd gods of
forest and field;
you a wandering pixie of a delusional dell.

It may take time to get used to your shrill laugh (which
sounds more cathartic than ecstatic—still riddled with
childhood's unreckoned angst); it will
take no time getting used to your hot, moist colon, which
even across six thousand miles of ocean and
desert, fits me like a
 kid glove.



About the Poets

Gavin Geoffrey Dillard has published ten collections of verse, two anthologies, and his infamous Hollywood tell-all, *IN THE FLESH: Undressing for Success*. Also known as “The Naked Poet,” his poems have been recorded by James Earl Jones, Don Adams, and published in anthologies and periodicals worldwide. The author of dozens of songs and three musicals, Gavin has written lyrics with and for such luminaries as Sam Harris, Jake Heggie, Peter Allen, Chanticleer and Disney Studios. His classical art songs have been featured at Lincoln Center by mezzo Jennifer Larmore. He has written comedy with and for Dolly Parton, Joan Rivers, Peggy Lee, Vincent Price and Lily Tomlin. Two new musicals, *OMFG!!!* and *The Naked Poet* premiere in 2011 in San Francisco and Los Angeles, respectively.



Eric Norris was born in Buffalo, New York, in 1968. He dabbled in astrophysics, archaeology, and classics as a student at Boston University, before he settled down to study English. His work appears in many online journals and e-zines as well the anthology, *This New Breed: Gents, Badboys & Barbarians*. Eric is the author of the epic poem *Takaaki* and a slender novella called *Terence*, a comic translation of A.E. Housman’s *A Shropshire Lad*. Both are available on Lulu.com from Square Circle Press.

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