

2016 42<sup>nd</sup> WESTMORELAND ARTS & HERITAGE FESTIVAL ANNUAL CONTEST

Category: poetry  
50 lines

Winds Bend with Talented Tails from the Elements

The mer'cury climbs and waves of heat salute  
*my town* while tantrums rage in city yards,  
where groups, despite a mob that could pollute,  
retreat to poems read by local bards.  
When wider smiles from sun infuse the sky,  
and passion spills like lava down a hill,  
the crowds complain as sweat invades each eye,  
and readers mount the rostrum poised with skill.  
But fury flickers down with folks on stage  
when Shakespeare sonnets sound throughout the park;  
in rhyme they thumb through lines and scan each page,  
as viewers listen, stay sangfroid till dark.

Then rains began one summer night in May  
'til waters roared; a sea of froth and foam  
as surging torrents thick with deaths bouquet,  
exhaled debris and sludge throughout my home.  
The levy bursts atop the river's face  
and floods immerse the town my roots embarked,  
as bags are piled to help protect my place  
the twisted trees amass where cars once parked.  
Yet, I survive, escape the wet ordeal;  
and know by faith, my bloodline will be fine,  
when time and space allow my heart to heal  
I'll raise a glass or browse a sonnet line.

My footsteps stomp the soil where tremors thrust  
and brand the floor of earth in varied styles;  
my parents tilled the fields through wind and dust,  
beside this town where crops expand for miles.  
The home-place lost appeal for offspring's taste;  
it leans from wind and years of gross neglect;  
then terra firma dries my dreams to waste,  
when Mom and Dad expire, their kids defect.  
Yet youngest son adheres to calls from land.  
He drops to knees and gathers dirt to heart  
while voices murmur, "Finish what we planned  
and cultivate the ground like sonnet's art."

A zephyr blows into the yawning towns  
in gentle stirs when wisps caress the face  
of roses bedded down in scarlet gowns,  
and fragrant scents imbue the plaza's space.  
The hums of western winds sing stanza lines  
like Shakespeare works that voices metric songs  
in sonnet forms then paints the spines as vines  
which whisk the air in words where each belongs.  
Yet, nature chooses days when gusts appear  
and blizzards surge intense soprano blasts;  
then burgs are swept as tunes produce a fear,  
and poems stray; air swallows all our pasts.

Each day the weather vane controls our muse  
while papers publish drafts in breezy news.