

Poetry Series

**Dejanae Moore**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**  
2008

**Publisher:**  
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Dejanae Moore(1995)

# Another Mystery

The white veil of morning  
creeps around the house  
The birds are black notes  
and their song hang frozen  
in mid-air

We drink coffee in the kitchen  
and I want to tell you something  
but your words erase mine  
and I forget what I wanted to say  
and there is no way you can help me  
and we laugh it off and another mouth  
replaces my mouth with different words  
forming behind the seemingly same teeth  
although they are actually a few seconds  
older

Dejanae Moore

# For The Birds

Something has pried open the body of this hare,  
unpicked a seam from between the stilled hindlegs  
to the middle of the slackened, gray belly.

Now the two sides of the wound part slowly,  
like a mouth widening as it comes on the right word,  
or that neat tear in the half-obscured lower thigh

at the center of the theater in Eakins's *The Gross Clinic*  
where, as I remember it, the owl-eyed surgeon  
seems so unmoved by the thick, scarlet globules

that glisten like cheap lipstick on his thumb  
and the anguish a mother buries in her dress sleeve  
as he explains precisely how he will poke

a scalpel into tendon, muscle, bone, to remove  
the latest clot of gangrene from the left leg of her son  
who might, if all goes well, last out the year.

Two assistants hold the patient down, while  
a third and fourth, with their crude tools, keep open  
the incision and stare deep into the mysteries

of the flesh, as eager for their time with the body  
as the petrels, kittiwakes, black-headed gulls,  
that tend the hare's remains up here in the near-

heaven of the dunes, all neck and beak and skirl  
as they uncoil the intestines turn by turn,  
divide liver from lung, pick out the heart,

squabble over the kidneys. Hauling away whatever  
they can use, they rise through marram grass,  
through shifts of sand, and disappear, leaving me here

to understand a little more what the dead mean  
to the living, why every St. Stephen's Day  
of that decade we lived on the outskirts of town

the same three freckled cousins, wearing straw hats  
and masks, would bring to our front door  
a single wren. One of them played a tin whistle,

his mud-scabbed fingers missing every third note,  
another grinned as he held up their find in a jam jar,  
while the third, his voice not yet broken, sang

a song about that king of birds 'caught in the furze, '  
that ball of roan and gray feathers punished because  
its ancestor had once exposed the patron saint

of stone masons to those who pursued him  
simply by singing from the wall the soon-to-be-martyr  
had crouched behind. Like the saint, the bird

would suffer a harsh end—not stoned and left out  
for the hooded crows, but stolen from its hiding place  
deep in the undergrowth, fated to expire

behind that wall of glass, which must have seemed  
invisible at first, when the boy's cupped hands  
opened and the bird dropped down into its cage.

Half-starved as they stood there in old men's clothes,  
those boys were also part of the cycle, and  
would soon become their fathers so their fathers

could be earth, the oldest one driving a tractor back  
and forth from the church, the one who sang  
hanging dead rooks up in the fields to save the grain,

while the youngest boy, the one who held the bird,  
inherited the title of village drunk and cleared  
his mother's house of possessions to quench

a thirst that would land him face up in the ditch,  
eyes glazed with a thin layer of ice, dead as the hare  
struck down here in the dunes where, cold and prone,

the pistons of its legs proved no more than flesh

and bone, it lies empty as those blue tits Keats shot  
to clear the air a few days after his brother

coughed up phlegm flecked with blood for the last time.  
Keats, who was months away from his nightingale  
and further still from Rome. Yet as he lowered the gun

to watch each ruffle of feathers fall to earth, he felt  
sure the same blackness that had claimed poor Tom  
was sprouting in his lungs and would blossom,

that his remains would mean no more than a dropped  
apple to the worms the graveyard birds would yank out  
of the earth and swallow whole, that he and each

of us would end up as coiled muscle in the wings  
of house sparrows, a dull throb in the robin's fragile  
heart, dissonance in the hoarse throat of a thrush.

Dejanae Moore

# I Think.....Life

Bright light shining in your face  
Seeing what your mother have to go through  
every day, Work day thru night, school every morning  
I think that's life, Been a straight A's student and take care  
other, Girls have sex throw their life away, I think that's life  
Men telling us what to do, Voting every year, Candidates  
tell us they'll give us this and that when they just want to win  
I think that's life

Dejanae Moore

# Just Friends

We enjoy each others company  
but for the most part, we avoid it.  
We pretend there is nothing there.  
We're just friends.  
Every time we meet, it's awkward at first.  
We check our guard and put up the walls.  
We're just friends that's all.  
We call each other on the phone,  
and always have a good excuse for doing so.  
Do friends need an excuse?  
You remind me that 'We must be careful',  
'We can't go there', you say.  
The rules have been set,  
and we live by them.

We sit and talk for hours,  
two sets of blue eyes interlocked  
and neither turns away.  
I hang on your every word.  
Your simple presence in a room,  
gives my life a purpose.  
Add your voice and a smile,  
and I melt away.  
The thought of you touching me  
makes my body scream out with yearning.  
But we're just friends, right?  
Why do I feel it's more?  
Are we in self-inflicted denial?  
Our past hurts have made us so afraid,  
We'd rather be lonely than to take that chance again.

I wish I could tell you how I really feel inside.  
That I'd be willing to take that chance  
To be more than just your friend.  
I know you sense this, as I do,  
but it's easier to pretend.  
Saying it would make it real  
and you'd run away and hide from me.



So I'll try and keep the flood gates closed  
and be content that you let me be,  
Just your friend.

Dejanae Moore

# Valentins

I hid you for a long time  
the way a branch hides its  
slowly ripening fruit among leaves,  
and like a flower crystal of ice  
on a winter window  
you open in my mind.  
In my heart I keep  
the sparkle of your eyes  
the tender warmth of your smile  
the small tilt of your head  
the delicate curves of your soft body  
and I dream  
dream of holding you close  
caring for you, protecting you  
and loving you always.

When I think of love...  
I think of roses and red hearts...  
quiet walks...  
and very soft, tranquil music...  
I envision an eagle taking flight on a crisp fall morn...  
the first snowflake in the winter...  
and the sound of the first robin in the spring  
I envision a glorious sunrise...  
a spectacular rainbow...  
and stars brightly shining on a summer night...  
But most of all, I envision you...  
your eyes radiating warmth, joy and vibrance...  
and the tender feelings in my heart  
from your friendly smile.

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# When I Sleep

When darkness awakens, my body settles gently into bed.  
The events of my day race rapidly in my thoughts as I close my eyes.  
Slowly, I am lulled into a peaceful sleep.

I hear vibrant music - so full of passion.  
I feel the warmth of the sun's rays that grace my presence.  
I see kind, adoring eyes gazing back into mine.

The air is full happiness - so much laughter.  
Soft caresses are exchanged.  
At this moment, life could not be any more wonderful.

I have never felt so beautiful; as I do when I am with you.  
I have finally found the respect and acceptance that I have yearned for.  
I eagerly listen to inspirational dreams and goals  
and know that I want to be the one to be there  
when they are complete.

A thin line of love and friendship is crossed,  
and two single souls find a home to share eternity.

Birds begin to proudly serenade the morning dawn.  
Lonesome roads slowly progress into distinguished passageways.  
Light peeps through my windows and I awaken to a new day.  
I am ready to endure what the day has in store for me,  
because I know that I am a queen,  
and I know extraordinary love when I sleep.

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