

RENEWAL

Page 43 in *We Are Climbers, All* by Tom Blaisse (www.TomBlaisse.com)

I feel as if I've been renewed.
I had lost the taste of innocence;
Had walled my thoughts upon themselves,
Into a hollow tube of dullness.

But a spark of passion lived there still;
I found the fuel to fondle warmth.
With air to breathe, a fire stirred,
And now burns brightly, lightly, there.

Some thoughts are cheerful when the stage is dark,
To ponder answers upon which to perch.
But thoughts grow sullen on a bleaker set,
'Til doubt and fear inhibit life.

Thoughts and feelings can survive;
A balance, then, for which to strive,
Allowing both to stay alive,
So Body, Mind, and Soul can thrive.

What pried me open? The new career?
Yes, and joy of family life.
I found renewal in Form and Substance,
The shock of folly finding Truth.

A life once lost where longing had lain,
Express I now a reborn spirit
That smiles as if the world is new.
I hear the meaning in what is here.

How long may I live? I cannot say.
I'll share each moment, day by day.
And with myself, I'll no longer feud.
I feel as if I've been renewed.



RENEWAL Commentary

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STRUCTURE

With seven verses of four lines each, written in iambic tetrameter, this poem reveals a personal story, beginning and ending with the same thought, as the verses unfold from past to present to future. Verse 1 sets up what had happened, with Verse 2 jumping to the present. Verses 3 and 4 then reflect on how it can happen, while Verse 5 brings the reader back to the present. Verse 6 stays in the present except for the first line, which quickly reflects back to the past. Verse 7 then wraps up the story and looks into the future. Examples of alliteration and other word plays include: found...fuel...fondle; burns brightly, lightly; life...lost...longing...lain. Although most of the poem does not rhyme, Verse 4 contains an unexpected AAAA rhyme scheme, with verse 7 holding an AABB rhyme.

IMAGERY

Various types of images add flavor to the story this poem tells:

Visual: walled; hollow tube; found the fuel; fire stirred...burns brightly; stage is dark; upon...perch; bleaker set; pried me open; form and substance; finding Truth; life...lost...longing...lain; smiles...newly lit.

Auditory: express I now; hear the meaning; share each moment; no longer feud.

Kinesthetic: taste of innocence; dullness; spark of passion; fondle warmth; air to breathe; cheerful; ponder answers; sullen; doubt and fear...inhibit life; balance...strive; thrive; joy; shock of folly; been renewed.

THEMES

As the title implies, renewal is the key message throughout the poem. Without knowing it, we can easily shut down "into a hollow tube of dullness" until some event in our lives wakes us up (spark of passion; new career; family life). Thinking is good unless it is negative ("sullen on a bleaker set"), so our "thought and feelings [need to be in] balance" in order to find the "Truth," which can "shock" us from our "folly" and help us express a "reborn spirit." We need to accept ourselves for who we are ("no longer feud") so we can each day feel renewed.

PERSONAL COMMENT

This poem reveals the feeling I developed over a long period of time, after I had "settled down" into family life; felt secure in my career (with FranklinCovey Co., at that time); and began to finally enjoy life on life's terms. When I wrote this poem (many years ago), I did not fully realize the relevance of the last verse. These days, I understand how important it is to rekindle the renewal process one day at a time.