

*"Poet, Breathe Now," by Adam Gottlieb*

Everybody's got something to say about poetry  
because rhymes peak in meaning shedding light on our unspeakables.

For an ample example,  
take the other day when I sat not knowing how to write a poem  
and assuming I was fruitlessly booming the thin air,  
I yelled and spat my frustration:

"How do I start?"

And my dog looks up from her water dish and says,  
"I hate to encroach on your 'artistic space'  
'cuz I know you're like 'in-the-zone' or whatever,  
but if you really want my advice, here it is,"  
and then my dog says,

"Poet, breathe now –  
because it's the last thing you'll ever do for yourself.

Poet, breathe now because there's a fire inside you that needs oxygen to burn,  
and if you don't run out of breath, you're gonna run out of time.

Poet, breathe now because once the spot gets packed  
you gotta save that air for screamin, your --  
inhalation takes saviorisms to sky-highs  
you gotta go with the flowin' of your own voice.

Poet, breathe now because once you spit, you won't even need air,  
you'll be rockin' rhymes respiratory,  
you'll breathe poetry, baby.

You breathe now, and you'll never forget that breath.

You got --

pulsasive passages passing the mic  
and hot hallelujahs when verses you write  
and your sin is your savior your song is your life  
and your words are like wonders to wandering fifes pipin' ceremony:  
poets, you're man, words your wife  
and your honeymoon orbits around your love like metronomic metros  
keepin' time to the heartbeat of your heavenly drums –

Poet, breathe now because you might have something to say  
because peace might depend on your piece  
because you breathe  
and that air might help your brain tell your heart to keep pumping  
one more cycle and that blood might help your lips form one last word  
that hits the audience hard –  
because we are all made from the same elements  
and we all breathe the same air  
so celebrate our mutual recipes of existence  
by persisting to stay alive  
ducking sageless luckless ages  
like intellectual hippies!

When you take a breath  
the universe rings out like circular beats –  
landing planets are seraphim  
storms are spit –  
stars are soulcandles!  
and you breathe like chest rebounds  
even when all hope seems lost  
our sounds pound mics  
like hope-stars  
like “we’re still here” hollas!  
we make angels of our nightclubs,  
bards of our bums,  
outlooks of our outcasts  
and infinity of our sums,  
we are the children of empathy,  
the pathos of slums,  
we heal like helios  
like cyclical drums  
we enlist life from listless  
and sometimes  
even get things done

Poet, breathe now  
because once you start your piece  
you can die behind that microphone  
and  
death may be breathless  
but poetry’s deathless  
so breath be  
our savior  
eternal.

Poets, breathe once with me now.  
That’s one poem we all wrote.