

THE FIELDS OF HOPE

An anthology by Matthew Petrucci



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NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Inspired and empowered by the original opportunities for self-expression presented to me in my earlier anthologies, *The Seven Dales of Vale* and *Enlightenment of The Rose*, I began the writing of *The Fields of Hope* as a chronicle of the liberating and oftentimes daunting experience of coming to terms with one's emerging selfhood and the challenge of adapting to a changing worldview.

This body of poetry and vignette is, upon other things, a culmination of memories and emotions from the final years of high school: the lasting yield of a good friendship, the harrowing experience of a grave sickness, the fear of final examinations and a deep, reflective affection for the natural world.

The Fields of Hope spans many months of experimentation upon a variety of styles of writing that differ in their depth and complexity, pattern and length. In essence, the product of passion and practice and persistence guided by the encouragement of teachers and friends brought a further chance to store and to showcase my creative progress.

Without the wise words of friends pertaining to the boundlessness of the imagination, this concept could have never lent itself to the naming of this anthology and remain a personal hallmark in more testing times.

With this in mind, I hope you enjoy the embedded meticulous detail and profound emotion forged by the mind of the apprentice wordsmith, slowly but steadily learning the way of truly meaningful writing.

Vale!

Matthew

Learn from yesterday, live for today,
hope for tomorrow. The important
thing is to not stop questioning.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

WINDS OF CHANGE

I watch the sunset rays illuminate the darkness
Dissipated through my room,
Embrace the sandstone buildings, kissing the closing rosebuds,
Raising crestfallen spirits.

I watch the children afar dancing and playing
All but while they watch the Mother disappear.
Frantically trying to grasp the dynamic clouds
Within their innocent hands.

A gentle breeze of warmth catches me off guard
Admiring nature's beauty as another day sets sail.
I watch the sky converge in many colours
And clouds turn from white to pink.

Welcome night time light, your stay is always longing.
Before long the blanket from above is stained as blue
With patches of black and white, stirring as a hue.
Curtains wave calmly in that warm, alluring breeze
A monarch of the winds.

The wispy veil of incense floats around me
A scent as sweet as an ocean breeze
As I close my eyes to sleep,
I remember the sunset in all her glorious ways.

I will not forget her true and utter beauty
To turn darkness into shades of orange, blue, pink.
Her warm and comforting breezes from afar
Whispering the promise of a defiant return.

Until that day arrives, around my finger
I will twirl the clouds of incense
And silhouette of light through my curtains
In hope she will return to me once more,
To emblazon darkness with light.

FAITHFUL AFFIRMATION

Shivering in fright, clothes sodden in sweat
Palms saturated in tears, blood and shattered glory.
Gasping for air in a confined space,
Stretching my limbs through the dense air
My heart pounding, my comrades shaking, nervousness prevails.
The tunnel of salvation is sealed.

The lights circle the audience, screaming loud
Hues of olive, crimson, lilac, joining as one
Amplifiers buzz incessantly with energy excess
Darkness clings to one's back like a second shadow
Merely dispelled by a glimpse of courage and determination
Flashing through our eyes.

Something shifted, something changed
The lights begin to fade, the floor becomes a platform
of those fallen, of those who fought
Compelling us onward, a curious audience watches
Sliding my fingers over those gold strings, smooth fretboard
Telling myself fussiness won't help me this time.

My comrades pass me glances of faded children
Innocent and pure,
All grown up now ready to face a challenge of life.
The audience watches expectantly, patiently,
Coughing and laughter can be heard
Dissipated by the trembling notes of my guitar
And unfaltering voice.

Something moves onward,
Comes crashing down and reforms once more
Our eyes are closed, we face those inner demons
We play as we do but not of the instruments
Our hearts sing higher than the laughter
Higher than the snide comments from the crowd
Higher than the clouds in the sky...

The end approaches and we stare upon each other again
The audience applauds, we bow, we are seated, we leave.
We wave farewell and carry our burdens,
That second shadow clinging
laden in sorrow and lacking in sleep
Something happens that changes it all;

A voice calls from afar,
a public woman, unknown until now,
Warm demeanor takes my hand and praises me
Words of truthful appreciation.
Perhaps a fluke, we think to ourselves.
A second woman approaches, with many children around
Congratulating us, commiserating for the future
And a final third.

No, it was not the lights now that made us visible,
opaque, courageous or confident
No, it was not the high beams of cars that dispelled that shadow
But something far greater...
Love and confidence in ourselves,
But also in each other.

DIVINE MUTUALITY

Her stare is one of peace, like an obsidian feather gliding peacefully from the sky to a comfortable position atop a carpet bed of damp leaves and silt; a feather that is then taken through a serene river over many purifying rocks and past a marine world beneath it. With the warm embrace of her cuddles, passionate outlet of her kiss and cheeks alit as a crimson sunset, she wipes away your woes and pain. Days and nights would pass me by, I would gaze each day through my window, feeling the flyscreen to be a vertical and horizontal prison mesh that would hold back the love of my dreams, and help me glide through time with ease.

The curtains that waved quietly and gently would make me feel as though corrugated clouds were all around me, brushing against my neck, my dark hands and face as soft as tender cherry blossoms preparing for the transition between flower and fruit. In many ways, this is how I saw my life. I was a flower – symbol and embodiment of purity and innocence, though growing with age as each day would pass and longing to be treated as so. From my young age now, I feel that grasp of adulthood bittersweet and jaded as it creeps upon me; yet I am torn between two worlds. It feels like the tower being struck by that bolt of lightning from above, crashing down, ready for a new set of ideas and understanding. I wish I could tell the world, please accredit me for the maturity I have shown for so long and respect me as I do to you.

Change has come about, as my eyes wander through ten glass windows in a door – change is inevitable. Yet, the most remarkable thing about this change is the indescribable nature of it. Where would I start? Would I begin at the myriad of painful questions I ask myself, probing my way of thinking, comparing myself to those obviously more fortunate than I? Perhaps I would start at colours associated with each experience... I would have a limitless rainbow if I had held onto these ideas, but soon would it have become tainted with the grasp of age – adulthood was not known for leniency and purity is easily defiled.

To whom did I owe the burden of this conundrum? Myself. No, I did not place these painful questions upon the love of my life, though she was aware of them. She stood there during my battles with salves and bandages, but never fought my demons for me. They were my challenge and mine alone, and the significance of her true love was to stay by my side despite what the demons had in store for me. Her beautiful brown eyes, inquiring and truthful, with a heart of gold built upon the stable foundations of dedication and perseverance. Each strand of hair represented uniqueness in her personality, though I would hang to each one with every morsel of strength within me as an emblem of my true and vivacious love for her. And I would sleep each night and live each day in the knowledge, she felt the same way but in many different words; a divine paradox. As the obsidian feather reaches the end of its journey through the lake of purity and innocence, so a facet is brought to its conclusion of enlightenment. But this is far from the end indefinitely – as the obsidian feather may have conquered one obstacle, but faces many more to come within the pure river – though is now guided by the optimism of a completed facet and sustained by its true love.

This is an excerpted version of the anthology, *The Fields of Hope*. If you wish to view the full version, please contact me via the contact form at <http://sevendales.net/contact> or email me at matt@sevendales.net.