San Antonio Review

A Love Poem to Money

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Published on: Mar 26, 2018

Updated on: Aug 22, 2020

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Yes, roses are red, violets are blue...but I'd rather cultivate pennies and watch big bucks accrue.

"Anyone who lives within their means suffers from a lack of imagination," said Oscar Wilde. And while, yes, I have been a fan of Wilde since I played Lady Bracknell in a drama camp production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, I must confess that I am the exception to Wilde's rule. For decades I have lived well outside my means, so why does my imagination persistently fail me? Why is it so difficult for me to take my life coach [Lamisha's](#) advice and envision myself awash in abundance?

"Our thoughts manifest our reality," Lamisha assures me. "The universe is a mirror; it reflects back to us what we project."

Uh oh. This kind of negates "shit happens," doesn't it? It hands the responsibility right back to whoever's hovering over the commode.

So what, exactly, am I projecting?

Often it depends upon the mood-lighting I provide. Sometimes reflected in the mirror is a woman I'd like to hug or at least send a thumbs-up to – a steadfast seeker whose inner beauty is emerging as her youth recedes. Other days, I'll see Dorian Gray in drag.

"I am tired of myself tonight," Wilde's anti-hero in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* sighs. "I should like to be somebody else."

So how about it, Universe? Make me a luminous poet like Mary Oliver. Make me a TED Talk sensation who leaves the audience laughing but inspired like Brene Brown. But, most of all, MAKE ME AN OPTIMIST!

If Lamisha's right, just imagine the manna that would then rain down on me.

Meanwhile, it's no mystery why my manna-storm's a drizzle. I hail from generations of pessimists. Cups are half empty; the boogey man is under the bed; the grass is greener; and people suck. I even emerged from the womb as "difficult," according to family lore. I screamed nonstop from colic and only quieted down when my family played recordings of Frankie Lane's *Mule Train*, cracking whip and all. *Get along, mule, get along!*

As I grew older, I balked like my buddies the mules. I threw tantrums as a child and rebelled as a teen. "If they could see me now," I'd chortle between puffs of pot. My mother still describes me as "strange," and I haven't inhaled anything stronger than a gardenia blossom in ages.

And yet...that same little girl loved fanciful thinking. I loved fairy tales. I loved dressing up in my mother's nightgowns and starring as a princess in my own productions. I lived for drama class. I yearned to major in theatre, envisioning myself becoming Meryl Streep except Meryl Streep beat me to it and my parents refused to take on roles as underwriters.

"We Are Not Paying Tuition For You To Study *Drama*," I was informed.

Did rebellious I rebel? Did I wait tables to pay my own way? No, I succumbed – ultimately majoring in Business Administration to be "practical."

This tale has much to do, I suspect, with my ambivalence toward abundance. Why get my hopes up? Some force of disdain will quash them.

However, here's the good news. Typing that last sentence, I found my fingers heading toward the 'delete' key. Like parmesan cheese sprinkled atop tomato sauce, Lamisha's star dust is settling into my soul. Let's not put any more negative out there.

"Life's full of lots of dream-stealers always telling you (that) you need to do something more sensible," adventurer Bear Grylls points out. "I think it doesn't matter what your dream is, just fight the dream-stealers and hold onto it."

In other words, what have I got to lose, listening to Lamisha? I'm damn near the age of my second childhood anyway. Why not believe in fairy tales and give myself a starring role of – oh, say, Cinderella? Who says pumpkins can't be coaches forever? The clock need never strike 12 and the ball will go on because I SAY SO. Do you hear this, magic mirror?

"Your own words are the bricks and mortar of the dreams you want to realize," spiritual teacher Sonia Choquette assures us. "Your words are the greatest power you have."

During our last session, Lamisha gave me homework. I was to write a "love poem to money." Now, usually, my poems are celebrations or exorcisms. This poem, however, is an incantation.

It is also my prayer and my promise. If this universe-mirror stuff works, I am not merely in it for me. I'm in it for you. *Abracadabra* and *amen*.

A love poem to money *The universe is a mirror of consciousness.* Deepak Chopra

Money may be the root of all evil, but I've always been attracted to bad boys, so please take my hand. Fill my hands with gold coins.

No, not my pockets – my hands! Hoarders lose all humanity. They reap what they sow, and that's fool's gold. Let's invest instead in the mutual fund called love. Let's seed forests of beanstalks rising like bar

graphs in a bull market to 24-karat nest eggs in the Cloud. We'll crack them open, yes, to feather our nests but also our neighbors'. Remember, rainbows are rooted in pots of gold like multi-hued scallions from onions. Pots we can divvy up like onions, too – except no one will cry. As Einstein said, the universe is expanding. My gain is not your loss. It's time to make a trade and turn the tap. To lift our arms and faces and slow dance in the shower of dividends from our reflection above.

Jenine Baines is an author, poet, and former Texan now living in Los Angeles who views the River Walk as Wonderland, a place that is “curiouser and curiouser.” Actually, all places are curious wonderlands – an epiphany “j” attempts to convey in her essays and poetry. She is at work editing her first book of essays, You Don't Have to Tell Everybody Everything: Confessions of a Chatty Cathy and Late Bloomer.