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Selected Poems

Danny Dover

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Dipika’s Walk

for Dipika B.K. and the People’s Revolution
Nepal, April 2006

Eight years since this moth
flew too close to a cooking fire
melting her baby feet into candle stubs,
a finer flame burns in her hot fierce face
each new morning as Dipika walks,
scrapped and bruised, stiff and clumsy,
with a perilous gait across a gravel yard.

And if this were night,
Dipika would glow her bright-blinking
breakfast-anytime neon smile.

Step inside now under that smile,
as if settling in a warm booth
with fresh coffee
and home-made pie.

You might never see her again,
might never again visit this city,
might even miss
down-street an entire nation
stumbling out of fire onto its feet
this morning,
as Dipika walks.

But also watch the warm
beam of her hazel eyes
dance a gleaming leaping stride,
bouncing beyond rooftops
this morning,
as Dipika walks.
On the Immigrant Train, NYC

The Queens-bound subway known as Number Seven boards deep in a dusty cave below Manhattan’s glossy mountains gathering speed on screeching rails submerged beneath a tidal river bursting out into brilliant sunlight like a well-kept secret boldly revealed as you ride and ride hardly noticed for your pale dull skin amid a pressing mass of faces gleaming every shade of black or brown like polished driftwood saved from shores of a hundred nations

This is their ship of gambled dreams a pack of pilgrims swaying over shifting ground a lurching vessel laden with all we’ve been or shall become twisting on an ancient track across the swirl and sprawl of flim-flam streets and asphalt rooftops they now call home

Fernando Cinquegrani, Potan. Ink and watercolor on paper, 2012. Permission for use granted through Creative Commons.
Another Country

When living
in another country, listen
for the murmur of child monks
running late for lessons
with their song
of slapping sandals
by an early morning window

Follow the weathered gaze
of the old woman walking
deep in prayer around
a white-washed temple
Wander in the dawn-lit
trails of her canyon’d face

Spread this mountain village
through your fingers
braiding its lustrous strands
into a thick cloak
of cedar smoke  wet slate
and mustard oil

Soak in every moment
Let your skin of paper
dissolve
in a steady warm
drizzle of attention
to the ten thousand
sensations

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Danny Dover’s first full-length book of poetry, Tasting Precious Metal, was published by Antrim House Books in 2014 <http://antrimhousebooks.com/dover.html>. He also has a chapbook, Kindness Soup, Thankful Tea (Dhotarap Press, 2006). Dover was a 2013 Pushcart nominee. His poems have appeared in Oberon, Blueline, and numerous issues of Bloodroot. Dover received a B.A. from Antioch College in 1971. He was the piano technician at Dartmouth College for seventeen years and continues servicing pianos part-time. Previously he worked as a folk singer, contradance musician, dulcimer maker, pattern maker, and surveyor. He also serves on the board of Hands in Outreach Inc., a small non-profit coordinating educational sponsorships for children in Nepal <http://www.handsinoutreach.org/>, where he has traveled frequently since 1995. Danny lives with his wife, Mary Swartz, in a remodeled schoolhouse in Bethel, Vermont.

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