Identity - by Julio Noboa Polanco

 Let them be as flowers,  
always watered, fed, guarded, admired,  
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.  
  
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,  
clinging on cliffs, like an eagle  
wind-wavering above high, jagged rocks.  
  
To have broken through the surface of stone,  
to live, to feel exposed to the madness  
of the vast, eternal sky.  
To be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea,  
carrying my soul, my seed,  
beyond the mountains of time or into the abyss of the bizarre.  
  
I'd rather be unseen, and if  
then shunned by everyone,  
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,  
growing in clusters in the fertile valley,  
where they're praised, handled, and plucked  
by greedy, human hands.  
  
I'd rather smell of musty, green stench  
than of sweet, fragrant lilac.  
If I could stand alone, strong and free,  
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

**The Rose That Grew From Concrete**

**Did you hear about the rose that grew**

**from a crack in the concrete?**

**Proving nature's law is wrong it**

**learned to walk with out having feet.**

**Funny it seems, but by keeping it's dreams,**

**it learned to breathe fresh air.**

**Long live the rose that grew from concrete**

**when no one else ever cared.**

**By Tupac Shakur**

**Only Breath**

**By Rumi**

**Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu**

**Buddhist, sufi, or zen. Not any religion**

**or cultural system. I am not from the East**

**or the West, not out of the ocean or up**

**from the ground, not natural or ethereal, not**

**composed of elements at all. I do not exist.**

**am not an entity in this world or in the next.**

**did not descend from Adam and Eve or any**

**origin story. My place is placeless, a trace**

**of the traceless. Neither body or soul.**

**I belong to the beloved, have seen the two**

**worlds as one and that one call to and know,**

**first, last, outer, inner, only that**

**breath breathing human being.**

**Blink Your Eyes**

**By Sekou Sundiata**

**I was on my way to see my woman**

**but the law said I was on my way**

**thru a red light red light red light**

**and if you saw my woman**

**you could understand.**

**I was just being a man.**

**It wasn’t about no light**

**it was about my ride**

**and if you saw my ride**

**you could dig that too, you dig?**

**Sunroof, stereo radio black leather**

**bucket seats sit low you know,**

**the body’s cool, but the tires are worn.**

**Ride when the hard times come, ride**

**when they’re gone, in other words**

**the light was green.**

**I could wake up in the morning**

**without a warning**

**and my world could change:**

**blink your eyes.**

**All depends, all depends on the skin,**

**all depends on the skin you’re living in**

**Up to the window comes the Law**

**with his hand on his gun**

**what’s up? What’s happening?**

**I said I guess**

**that’s when I really broke the law.**

**He said *a routine, step out the car***

***a routine, assume the position.***

***put your hands up in the air***

***you know the routine, like you just don’t care.***

***License and registration.***

**Deep was the night and the light**

**from the North Star on the car door, déjà vu**

**we’ve been through this before.**

**why did you stop me?**

***Somebody had to stop you.***

***I watch the news, you always lose.***

***You’re unreliable, that’s undeniable.***

***This is serious, you could be dangerous.***

**I could wake up in the morning**

**without a warning**

**and my world could change:**

**blink you eyes.**

**All depends, all depends on the skin,**

**all depends on the skin you’re living in**

**New York City, they got laws**

**can’t no bruthas drive outdoors,**

**in certain neighborhoods, on particular streets**

**near and around certain types of people.**

**they got laws.**

**All depends, all depends on the skin**

**all depends on the skin you’re living in.**