



English Studies in Latin America

What We Came after

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“What We Came after”

Kate Tempest¹

I tell of him that summoned them storms in vengeance - poisoned by the wrath of his remembrance.
Him that gave language just to impose a sentence. Him known as Prospero - he prospers by what he
knows. Knowledge he keeps for himself and it is used for the bad to enslave and to mystify. Know
the language that fills up your mouth is imposition.
And subject your ambition to a bootless inquisition.

Prospero – wronged, survived and grew wise. Fattened on the books he despised when he should
have dismissed. That to this it’s all relative - Madness for those can’t measure it,
sadness for those who seek sedative but gladness for those who know pleasure is all self-
constructed, who know how to clutch it.

Look - If by your art you have fevered the skies, you need to let the heat within rise and evaporate.
If you’re the type that sees the seas tides as against you, you will never navigate – I know that
language is yours to invest with real meaning. Don’t love the oppressor, or trust the oppressor. But
don’t begrudge the oppressor the oppressors’ oppression – coz each has to learn their own lessons.

If all the people were prophets, we’d profit. We were born with the truth but we lost in logic.

¹ Kate Tempest is a poet, rapper and playwright. Her work is influenced equally by a love of hip hop and a love of great literature; her heroes include William Blake and Gza from the Wu-Tang Clan. She completed her BA in English Literature in 2008. Her dissertation was a study of the similarities between the work and philosophy of rappers and Romantic Poets. She currently plays with her band Sound of Rum, whose first album *Balance* was released in May 2011. (Source: Applesandsnakes.org)

So find it. Remind yourself of the timeless. You are the planet that bred you. You are the knowledge that fed you, you are the language that led you, so own it - make it make sense - make it relevant, and never believe that the words of the wise are not your words to read.

When you hear the quiet voice of vengeance in your ear, that's when you know that Hell is empty and all the devils are here. When your heart is consumed with regret and with fear, that's when you know that hell is empty and all the devils are here. When your tongue can taste shadows and all your friends are shedding tears, that's when you know that hell is empty coz all the devils are here. When the boat sails away and you get left on the pier, that's when you know that hell is empty coz all the devils are here. When you're trying to understand but the text isn't clear, when the demon jumps up, straight rejecting your spear. When the view is so bleak it starts infecting the seer, that's when you know that hell is empty, coz all the devils are here.

So, call me Caliban. They gave me language so I could reign down my curses in verses. I'll take 'em on word for word - I know the worst is I have to watch my good friends getting caught up in circuits. The serpent rehearses his hisses. He makes the valiant vicious. I know now never to waste wishes. So go on then, conjure a storm on the head of your enemy – you will find yourself victim of negative energy.

You should extend your empathy, make yourself sensitive. This island was mine for a home, I was free to make rhyme as I roamed now my mind is alone as I writhe and I moan - I'm the captive of consonants, and I beseech you to be much more confident. We run around nonchalant, dejected and restless, like – oh, we can't change nothing though, so why should we try? But we can change - we can rampage till we stand strange. We got our hands chained, clutching at freedom – you know, the freedom of mean what you say and say it with meaning. You need to change your own mind 'fore you try change the sequence. Live with your energy, not by your reason. This the last day of my discontented season. No more will I tolerate this greed it's demeaning. We're needing a breeze through the stifling heat of elitist descriptions of what we can reach. They want you to fear it, to not get too near it so they can continue pretending they're smarter. Sit still though; receive it from self like Siddhartha. The past is just what we came after.

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