

## **Do You See Me**

### **Do You See Me**

Do you see me  
When I walk into the room  
Do you lose me  
When I move to the side  
Not necessarily to hide  
Do I become the art  
Hanging on the wall  
Or the furniture beside  
You trip over as  
You step aside  
I am an introvert by nature  
Stealth is in my blood  
Handed down the generations  
From my mother's grandmother  
A Lakota warrior by birth  
Do I blend into the surroundings  
Like the tapestry  
By the door  
My invisible woman trick  
An Ellisonian illusion  
Taught through the family lore  
From my fathers mothers  
Great grandmother who was  
The child of human bondage  
Freed? Lo those many years before

Do you see me  
I am standing right beside you  
Do you lose me  
When I raise my head in pride  
For all that I have accomplished  
Secretary of the Interior  
Diplomat to other lands  
Astronaut aloft aflight  
Vice President to all  
Keeper of my faith in righteousness  
My writings stir the blood  
Attempting to raise  
Collective consciousness  
Inspiring hope and innovation  
My protests embolden others

## **Do You See Me**

To go further than before  
Non-white lives do matter  
Crying for my children, brothers  
Sisters to us all  
Destroyed by flying bullets  
Spewing from an AR-15  
My rights to my own body  
Mind to make my choices freely  
Live my life free  
As my ancestors thought theirs would be

Do you see me  
I am all around you  
Do you lose me  
When I stand my ground and speak  
Of matters near and far  
Of hopes and aspirations  
Concern for the earth we  
Steward for future generations  
Concern for justice unequally  
Processed for the poor  
Benefitting the powerful and rich  
Filling prisons with persons  
Predominately of color  
Who have a dearth of daily bread  
Like their downtrodden  
Rust belt brethren  
Lacking a way up and out  
Turning to substances that allow them  
In their heads to dream or just pass out  
Our precious rights and freedoms  
Being stripped done to the core  
Now is the time for action  
With so much left to do  
Do you hear me  
Do you see me?

## Do You See Me

### Theatre of Life

Sleep was hard to come by  
So I took a little toke  
Played my quiet scene  
Through my nodding head  
With the smoke  
I drifted into Xanadu  
As the curtain rose  
In that theatre strange and old  
The moonfish floated  
Gently down  
Landing on the stage  
Where the antlered  
Crowned Elven King  
Back to the audience  
Addressing the wheel of life  
Began his soliloquy  
In that very ancient tongue  
At first  
I could not understand  
The singsong notes  
Rising high then trilling  
Down a lower range  
As I keened to hear  
With mindfulness and meditation  
I experienced an Aha  
Moment of enlightenment  
The translation becoming clear  
Reminding me of the teachings  
Of the exiled Buddhist monk  
Thich Nhat Hanh  
As the message traveled on  
The wheel began to move  
In a counterclockwise rotation  
Imperceptibly at first  
Infinitesimally gaining momentum  
With each revolution  
Until it reached warp speed  
Beckoned by a regal nod  
The moonfish rose up gracefully  
Turned headfirst towards the wheel  
Drawn into the center

## Do You See Me

Of that spinning maelstrom  
Disappearing without a sound  
In a flash of inspiration  
I leapt up from my seat  
Felt the levitation  
The strident pull of gravity  
Generated by the black hole  
In the center of the spiraling  
Dervish light whirling  
Before me  
There was a jolt  
To my corpus as I passed  
The Elven King  
Dipped his crown of antlers  
Giving me permission to  
Pass through the gaping maw  
Into a vast quietude  
Inner peace and exaltation  
Wonderment, calm, awe  
Now existing only in the moment  
No time before or after  
No fear or apprehension  
Utter darkness pierced  
By myriad points of light  
Are these gazillion stars  
Or like me  
Other souls in flight

Startled awake by Schrödinger's cat  
Walking and purring  
On the pillow by my head  
If I had kept on astral travelling  
Would I have reached Nirvana  
Or spent eternity  
Transcendentally  
Drifting with the planets and the stars

## **Do You See Me**

### **Sea of Troubles** (an aleatory)

We are born into  
This tempest of life  
No X marks the spot  
Of the beginning or end  
Waves sometimes gentle  
Sometimes violent and immense  
Nudging us forward as if  
Propelled by a machine  
Lifting us in swells  
Up to new heights  
Or plunging us downward  
To the troughs and depths  
Toddling along in our early days  
Amazed at all new things  
Placed in our path  
Entering grade school  
Learn to communicate,  
Read, write, calculate  
With numbers, symbols, signs  
Beginning to learn  
There are others with whom  
We will compete or be aligned  
Becoming a tween  
Having hormones imbalance us  
We contemplate our bodies and mindset  
How to move forward  
When will it be time  
To understand chaotic forces  
At play that buffet about us  
That shape our future  
Who, what, where we'll be  
Is this all there is  
Should I even be

Now in adulthood  
Education is done  
Hopefully engaging  
In meaningful pursuits  
Enhancing enriching  
Zeitgeist of humankind  
Whilst making ends meet

## Do You See Me

So as to not be a burden  
On societal reserves  
I know who I am  
And what I will be  
Location is not so  
Important to me  
Maybe choose a life partner  
Have children of my own  
Teach them to swim  
Ride with the waves  
Stay calm in the tempest  
Impart to them knowledge  
That in the depths  
Thar be monsters  
Whose tentacles pursue  
And try to latch on to us  
In the goobledeegoo  
They push and they pull  
Trying to drown and devour  
Endeavoring to steer us  
Away from the truth  
Tempting and teasing  
It is hard to ignore them  
Fight for your life  
Move buoyantly upward  
Towards the surface and light  
In some niggling corner  
Of our cranial construct  
Mostly(thankfully) just  
Out of reach  
Is the knowledge  
Of the fate we all share  
Maybe with prolonged forewarning  
Maybe out-of-the-blue  
But someday we will all  
Return to the primordial stew

## **Do You See Me**

### **Draft Lottery**

I was nearly drafted  
Back in 1969  
When on December first  
The first draft lottery  
Changed the lives of  
All American males born  
From 1944 to 1950  
Family and friends  
Citizens and patriots  
Forced to participate,  
My number (which I  
Have repressed or forgotten)  
Was 10 above the last  
Number called to “serve”  
In the year 1970.  
The numbers that were  
10 or less than mine  
Led to the conscription  
Of tens of thousands  
Of young men just like me  
Sent to Vietnam to preserve  
The interests of the  
“Industrial-Military Complex”  
That globally controlling entity  
President Eisenhower had presciently  
Forewarned the world about  
A decade before.

The lottery occurred 134  
Days after earthlings initially  
Walked the surface of the moon  
Four months after Woodstock  
Less than a month  
After I endured  
A mandated army physical  
In downtown LA  
My most vivid memory  
Of that degrading  
Humiliating experience  
Was helping the  
Young man next to me  
In the cattle call line

## **Do You See Me**

Who  
Could neither read nor write  
Could not understand  
The forms to be filled out  
Or where to sign  
Barely understood the verbal  
Instructions to move from  
Station to station  
The final part of this  
Ordeal was a primitive  
Psychological test that  
I was certain he would fail  
But at the exit table  
I saw that his ticket,  
As was mine,  
Was emblazoned 1-A PRIME  
Years later I still think  
Back to that horrid  
Draft lottery day  
And wonder what  
Became of him  
What was the number  
That was drawn for him?

## Do You See Me

### Old Man

Old man sits alone in his chair  
He recently revived his thousand-yard stare  
His wife just died from covid unvaccinated  
Dogs going blind but still cuddles and doesn't whine  
News of the world both distant and close  
By the day grows worse  
Evoking his memories of Vietnam and citizens slain  
Images sent home by journalists'  
Voyeurs of the game  
Threat of nuclear annihilation that clouded his childhood  
With bomb drills in school--no real place to hide  
That had lain dormant has resurfaced

Old man sits alone in his chair  
Staring out his picture window  
Across the way he sees the husk of his business  
That he owned and toiled over for 40 years  
Building an establishment inviting and fulfilling needs  
Providing a service to the community and transients  
What's left is barren and decomposing after the tornado  
Blasted through two springs ago  
Now only tumbleweeds stop at the pumps  
Critters and dopers inhabit the skeletal remains  
Business began faltering when the interstate  
Offramp was eliminated, diverting traffic  
From the once busy artery that leads to downtown  
But when the towns manufacturing plant  
(Its largest employer) moved production  
To a country offshore and closed down  
No hope of sustainability left for him or the town

Old man sits alone in his chair  
Staring blankly into his yard  
There was the garden that he and his spouse  
Planted and tended for all their married years  
Now dried and barren a small dust bowl  
Because of the warming planet and worsening drought  
No water available to irrigate  
This garden had provided and produced  
Food for their sustenance in the lean years  
Sharing its bounty with the food pantry

## **Do You See Me**

Dereliction in front of him  
Nearly brings back the tears

Old man sits alone in his chair  
No child from the partnership  
No one to care  
With no source of income  
All savings used up  
He has descended into his own private hell  
He fondles the shotgun  
He had placed on the table  
Just within reach  
Like the desolate scene before him  
He'll leave only an empty shell