

## **The Sacrifice**

by Brandon M. Dennis

I sit in my ashes and watch  
the men,  
dressed in animal hairs and paints, made from  
berries and  
roots and  
other dead things.

They come to me with worship in their eyes.  
They strain their voices in  
guttural, gloomy,  
noisy, wretched,  
bass  
utterances, and prance about me sweaty.

Some bang on animal skins, wrapped around hollow wood.  
Some blow on carved sticks, made from hollow wood.  
Some shake fruit skulls filled with small stones and seeds  
and dash their loved ones ashes to  
my very roots.

After they have satisfied their cravings for  
utter  
    silliness,  
the circle of sweaty men break, and a  
maiden  
clothed in white, with hair braided in two lying,  
one over each shoulder, dripping passed her  
elbows,  
just as I like them, comes up and stares at me,  
and I love that stare, I always love their  
stares, for in them I see their fear and  
smell their longing and  
feel their exhilaration and it is oh so wonderful,  
oh so wonderful,  
    so wonderful.

I sing the hem of her garment and she just now  
realizes the implications of what her brothers are about to  
do.  
But it is too late for her, and she knows it,  
and I laugh,  
and upon my laughter they throw her to me, and I grasp her  
with limbs most loving,

and bring her deep within my caress, and we dance,  
oh, we dance

dance...

And my passion is satisfied for another year.

## Why you should accept this late

You should accept this paper late because you are a loving and understanding teacher, who realizes that all students have times when not everything goes their way, and all students have other classes that make their own demands, and beyond that, all students have things outside of classes that make yet even more demands, and no matter how much attention a student may have, he can divide it only amongst so many things, and for every thing which divides his attention his work becomes that much poorer, and his grades begin to slip, and he has to make up work, and he stays up late into the night, where his eyes are filled with weariness and his mind is befuddled, and his limbs ache and his hair is matted and when he finally lays down to rest he cannot sleep, for the numbers and letters and worries and cares of all his many obligations course through his mind.

So he must, in order to remain sane, wrench himself away from worry, away from care, and yes, maybe just a little from responsibility, and focus his attention on one thing this day and another thing that day, so that he can at least come up with one good work, just one, which satisfies his pride and his creativity, and then afterwards he takes a bath, or reads a book, or puts all cares away from his mind and lies down in his poor, neglected bed, and sleeps a sleep which he rarely can sleep, and stays in this hibernation all through the night, and through the following morning, and yes, he may wake up late, and he may realize that he has missed something important, but that peace sticks with him, and he wakes up smiling, and dresses without care, and rides to class with a calmness that few students have, and all because he let go of his fear, his worry, his frustration, and realized that life will go as it goes, and no amount of worrying will change any of it.

So that is why you should accept my late poem. Because I overslept, missed this class, but hey, at least I got an extra hour's worth of sleep!