

## Transformation

She left the life of a roughed-up stripper  
Tried her luck and hitch hiked to Denver  
She dreaded her hair, became wild and free  
and found herself a part of this community.  
We meet where the rivers meet,  
We dance to their flow.  
Learning from each other is simply how we grow.

But for her,  
It was a violent transformation:  
A wildfire sweeping through her life,  
she shivered with agitation  
The cold water under the bridge where she slept,  
gently swept away the tears that she wept.  
She woke to the sound of primal celebration;  
she crawled down the shore to her initiation.  
Bewildered. Curious. Inspired.  
Drawn as we all were, by the allure of fire.  
All of her past regrets burned away  
Leaving room for the sprouts of a brand-new day.

Like a phoenix rising up, born again and shedding ashes  
of past limitations, the lost times and frustrations.  
She forgot she was covered with bruises and scratches,  
and who knows what else: her memory was full of patches.  
But she still recalled the first time she had played with matches.  
and besides, she dug the vibe so  
learning from members of the tribe,  
she began to practice the moves and the dance  
until one wild summer night, she fell into a trance.

Her skin had been coated in ice  
but tonight it was lady luck who rolled the dice:  
because even though at first she hesitated,  
she slowly became infatuated:  
the sound of our wild drums resonated  
within her veins. and slowly, mesmerized,  
she began to tame the flames.

Moving impulsively,  
reflecting patterns that were meant to be.  
She began to line up her breath to the beat  
as her last inhibition gave in to the heat;  
initial to creation, give in to the sensation.

The flame chased her fear through the door  
and she felt liberated like she never had before.

-Checkers Marshall