

Homage To Young Men

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I want to talk to all the young men out there
It's for the women too, but especially the men,
'cos it's tough to be a young man in this world
You have to face so much heartbreak and loss
In love and career and life
It's easy to forget the meaning and give up
To burn up or sell out to addictions, despair or greed
Easy to forget that life's a journey
with a beginning, a middle and an end
It's about navigating the future, your future
It's about learning to become a man who's real,
and able to love

Are you waiting for me?
Are your hands down in the dirt?
We belong together
I've been longing since my birth
To be arms around you
To be true to who we are
To let all our pain out
To be playing in your heart

So let's talk about the first stage of life
The departure, when your boat is pushed out on the river
Most of who you are is still your small self
The you your family has made you,
your schooling and your friends
You've still not found your deep self, your Great Self,
'cos that's what the journey's for
So you set out, full of hope, but with a heavy load
All the baggage of your upbringing
All the love, yes, but the fuckedupness too
Maybe the absent father, or the smothering mother,
or the cold indifference of those around you
It's no wonder you've a rough ride coming
It's gonna get tough and it's got to
So you can find yourself
So you can become, a real man

And that's when you hit the second stage of life
The initiation in the rapids and the storms
That's when you find the pain of brokenheartedness
Love affairs that fail, failures in career
and all your hopes for what the world might have been
Plenty young men founder grazed on such jagged rocks as these
Bruised and angry in a storm of violence towards self and others
But it doesn't have to stay like that
No, my friends, not if you push on and open to the inner grace
that will bring you courage
The courage to face reality as it is,
without lies
The courage to know your wound but to outgrow it,
and insist on beauty
The courage to open your heart,
to hold fast to truth,
and to stand each step in dignity

And that's the courage that brings your boat to the third stage of life
To see how your small self is held in a greater Self
And that you're fit to be an elder in your community,
able to share the gifts and the blessings
Able to support and inspire what gives life among your people
And to love your beloved,
to love and be loved by the Beloved no less, my friends
Because we're talking here of love in all its meanings
And you can only love with a deepening heart
And that is why you had to grow courage on this journey to the ocean
That's what your battle wounds on the field of life were all about
That, my dear friends,
is what qualifies you
to be a man in your community
Capable of loving and able to be loved...
Capable of loving
and able to be loved...
Capable of loving
and able
to be
loved