

Frank Jamison – Two Poems

Riverside Cemetery, Jackson, Tennessee

What once was a river is now a dry bed
wrapping this cemetery in shadowy arms
of willow and trumpet vine.
Paddle wheel boats once plied toward
the town before canals were dug to drain
the wetlands, taking river and soil away.
I know not a soul resting in graves
mostly marked in statuary and stone,
named and numbered with dates inscribed.
A few mere swales in the earth hint
of children beside mothers, mothers beside
masons and tillers of soil.
The known and unknown all come,
one imagines, wondering what happens
to souls with no river to cross?

Lightning Strike

There was the blinding instant and the crack
that split the ash tree to its root, and like
a wounded animal half opened it stood
trembling in the last breeze as if to say,
“Here are my coursing veins, my bleeding heart.”
But this story doesn't end here...
Season after season the tree stumbled on,
its great broken heart over time scarring
until if it could only speak would say
how deep the wound had been, and having done
like any broken heart in its final season,
one by one let go its leaves.

Frank Jamison received the Robert Burns Award of Excellence from the Knoxville Writer's Guild and won the 2005 Libba Moore Gray Poetry Award. He was nominated in 2006 for a Pushcart prize. He writes poetry and fiction in Roane County Tennessee. His work has appeared in *Appalachian Heritage*, *Atlanta Review*, *Carquinez Poetry Review*, *Chrysalis Reader*, *Confluence*, *California Quarterly*, *Edison Literary Review*, *Fox Cry*, *Fulcrum*, *Illuminations*, *Iodine*, *Karamu*, *Meridian Anthology*, *Nimrod*, *Paper Street*, *Poem*, *Poet Lore*, *Quercus*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, *River Oak*, *Riversedge*, *Sanskrit*, *South Carolina Review*, *Spillway*, *Tennessee English Journal*, *Xanadu*.