

Tyrannosaurus Rex

By Dawn Morais

*In homage to Thomas Merton's "Ode to the Present Century"
and Robinson Jeffers' "Shine, Perishing Republic"*

Lumbering, he moves to lay low
Enemies from afar. A future
Of fear drives this graceless show
Of might. The present is not clear.

The danger is a past that can only serve
Up fear. You'd think he'd have learned
By now to unclench the whited nerve
Of his rapacity. But forever burned

Into that small brain is empire.
The thickening mass of its vulgarity
Lifts one hind leg, then another,
Tail steering its progress aimlessly,

As it looks to strike, but misses
The point of its greatness: To fire
Up the world by example, not curses.
To lead, not spark the funeral pyre

That may consume the quarry,
But will surely also draw
The hunter and all of history
Into its burning craw.

Dawn Morais, who received her undergraduate degree at the University of Malaya and her master's in American Literature at UCLA, runs her own communications consulting business, started after a career in advertising and with IBM. A Malaysian now resident in Hawaii, she is associated with her husband, Dr. John Webster, with Chaminade University in Honolulu. She sees her poetry as a way of examining aspects of culture, family, and the challenge of defining one's identity in the face of a colonial past, an increasingly Americanized present and the uncertain status of being a minority within a minority – Catholic and Indian – in largely Muslim Malaysia.



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