

THE WRITER'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEASONS

By Sophia Kouidou-Giles

First Published in The Writers and Readers Magazine, February 13, 2021 Issue

When fields appear fallow, we trust that winter will follow. Enter winter's hibernation, sleepy days of isolation. Then we yearn for more vibrations and release into yet another time, sublime spring. It arrives with exuberance and greets us with flourishes and messages of life resurrected. The cycle rounds off with summer, a time to harvest what has been sown. That is what a writer's pen experiences in the course of a writing life, all seasons.

The undertow of winter months marks what often seems like inactivity; it may feel like an unproductive time, a time of hovering without delivering, a time of incubation. This year, it has been particularly challenging. We have been walking through the very dark coronavirus days, impacted by constant messages about the pandemic. Reinforced from family, friends, the news media, they come laced with protective guidelines and hopes for a vaccine-free-living tomorrow. We stumble along with words and shapes that overlap and intersect and interrupt one another, as the writer's pen receives, absorbs and reflects the inner and outer world.

We watch new mothers bring to life the future, newborns suckling on their breasts. We hone into the young who trust in life eternal, tricked by the folly of their years. We write about the gravediggers that have dug more graves, covered more coffins with wreaths and purple flowers. We drive to nearby forests in the snow, and return to city parks thinking about frozen nights, haunting the homeless with crystal fingers, and we yearn for days that bring us closer to the end of the pandemic. We sit indoors, over laptops and move to patios and balconies with paper and pen, keeping six feet apart, breathing fresh air, and recording what we perceive. Always awake, often reflecting messages that call upon us from the universal pool.

Daylight loses the battle to the longer white nights of cold weather and snow, signaling nature's slowdown. Demeter is still searching for her daughter in the shadows of Hades, and the earth is storing energy for the effervescent season of spring and the fullness of summer. Ideas percolate, inspiration drives us to record them, and we count the pitter patter of time that steps us closer to longer days, as we prepare to satisfy our longing for more light.

Looking for company, I open new windows through borrowed and purchased books by authors from all over the globe who keep me company. They have filled pages with new tales awakening expectations, foolish illusions, and mischievous liaisons. I delve into their works consuming books, suspending reality to travel to new worlds, waking up to the Lilliputs and Alice's company during hours of escape.

Dreams come alive and the night brings new visions, like waking over the waters, flying over a continent, dreaming of resting at a park bench of my childhood neighborhood, kicking my legs in the lake, hugging an old friend. There is release, in the lightness of being a dreamer. In daylight, spring announces the shift of seasons with leafing trees and the brighter palette of colors in yards where pregnant bulbs deliver their crop, displaying early crocus and daffodils, tulips and imposing irises. Early flower buds wave in the breeze their friendly greetings and I watch my feathered friends drink their essence. On sunny days, words stream effortlessly down the brook filling pages, that conjure up plots, and channel spring.

Summer's blond buoyancy permeates over wheat, and corn stocks that set another mood. No more dithering. Awake we rush to capture what muses have hinted at, now clearly formed. We dance along relishing the pleasures of a pen that scribbles drafts and rewrites for it is the fullness of time. With an ear to the ground, we bring darkness to light, swimming in the waves and the mystery of seasons, noticing arrivals and departures. There is no order, no fixed length to each season. Like accordion players, we release new tunes about days bygone and future, stretching and stitching punctuation to the dictates and coquetry of our mistress craft.

Undaunted, seasons shift again, starting each day with the whispers of gray and rosy dawns. And as we write the spring and summer, we march cheering the warm rays of the sun and drink ambrosia in high temples, while at night, we, aspiring mystics, join the priests of Dionysus who guide us in sacred rites revealing the secrets of death and rebirth in life and nature.

Blood rushes in our veins, and we salute new challenges, riddles of the word, moving through them with nimble feet in the high spirits of summer. On those days I rejoice leaving the droopy winter behind to rest until next time when the cycle starts again... Thus, we yearn for more vibration and release of inspiration...

