



As Above, So Below

Fahad Bouzubar

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As Above, So Below is a vibrant collection of poems, full of striking lines and encouraging notions.

In Fahad Bouzubar's emotive poetry collection *As Above, So Below*, verses concentrate on pain, longing, love, and healing.

The poems in this collection are passionate, revealing intense emotions like love and lust. They capture the sudden impact of emotional experiences and the turmoil and pain when relationships break. Some poems recount the brokenness of the world we live in; some are more personal, recalling past conversations and thoughts.

The collection is held together by heartfelt statements and evocative scenes. In many of its poems, feelings of despondency and frustration, even amid the thrilling nature of love, are a theme. One, "Fascinating," works through human pretension and false humility that cover up chaos within.

Striking language choices command attention, arousing intense emotions that accentuate the poems, making them even more impactful. Lines appeal to multiple senses with their powerful imagery. In "Dragon," a woman's voice is a freezing waterfall pouring viciously on top of another person's head.

Elsewhere, in poems like "Insane" and "Balance," encouraging lines exemplify the idea that even painful events can be beneficial when taken as learning opportunities. "Fruit" does similar work, musing:

*And as I looked past the thorns
And branches of my past
I realized that every odd had always been in my favour
And the fruit that was reaped was
Sweeter than I could have hoped for.*

Even the collection's shorter poems are powerful, getting their meanings across in compressed spaces, as with the seven-line "What Goes Around Comes Around," in which the impact of spoken words, and their ability to influence future events, is the subject. In the same vein, "Losing Faith" is two short stanzas, and "Beyond the Mirror" runs ten lines. In both cases, the poems' brevity allows for different interpretations, with lines that are not restricted to single explanations.

Often poems end without end punctuation, but some end in questions, as with "Power," which ends by asking "why else do we pray / Other than to keep these rusty chains / Rosely painted and polished?" Such conclusions are thought-provoking opportunities to play with meanings that simultaneously emphasize the collection's themes.

The strongest poems focus on the book's dominant theme: love. Divergent subjects impede its flow somewhat. The poems' uncomplicated rhyme schemes and strong, striking word pairings are engaging.

As Above, So Below is a vibrant collection of poems focusing on sensational love and healing.

EDITH WAIRIMU (April 18, 2019)

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