

Here are some of the submissions from our fifth Invite to Write inspired by the following Egyptian image of sunrise painted on the wall of the sacrophagus hall - the House of Gold - of Ramses VI:



## **Artist Proof**

A papyrus scroll is unearthed from ancient Egypt,  
tissue thin remnant of yellow papyrus  
color hues are peeled throughout the scene,  
catalytic energy vibrates across the page  
from a century in time  
when an Egyptian scribe had recorded a holy moment.

I can see him sitting in the dark night  
legs are crossed and knees slightly bent,  
holds a new papyrus sheet  
between his knees.

He moves a reed pen across the plant surface  
revealing small miracles of the day,  
miracles of black Egypt and the flowing Nile,  
that blackness where everything begins  
and returns once more.

He waits at the banks of his imagination  
draws two beetles moving up the left side of the page,  
ceremoniously pushing seeded dung into  
a round mass, like a ball  
rolling towards the black horizon.

The scribe lifts a young maiden towards the sky,  
central placement below the sun,

her feet balance on the head  
of Nut,  
Goddess of the Sky who labors  
through the night,  
protecting the Sun God's journey  
to rebirth.

The old scribe, in deep prayer and meditation  
draws all the figures with their  
arms raised high  
In surrender and homage  
to the coming light.

He prays,

*O holy RA giver of life and warmth*

*We welcome you into this eternal moment*

*Light conquering darkness*

*Heat up the desert sands and our hearts.*

A bright disc of the Sun God's  
fiery ascent appears  
lightening the wall  
in the Sarcophagus Hall.

- Joyce Brady

## Seeking Shems

With every clay-hardened cell of my nature,  
I awaken to sing.  
I awaken to sing forth Shems,  
the oxblood orb  
that urges the unraveling night  
of dark brilliance  
into one more day.

To tell the truth,  
Shems renews the ceaseless cycles  
of our land and life.  
To tell the truth  
that arrives with presence,  
I must open to seeing,  
and seeking Shems--  
forever.

- Karen D. Benson

## scarab

take a lump of fresh dung from the meadows  
and roll it up the hill to give it all  
the weight and perfectly round shape  
of your square face.  
be, and let  $\pi$   
handle the excess.  
the queen of *putrefactio* is capricious and mad but  
underneath her mantle we grow glad and  
in between her horns the hour rolls  
and from the hour grows the hum  
of spring,  
the wedding ring of Nefertiti and her living soul.  
out of idiot winds, far from home,  
a crack in the clouds and a clear ring  
of hell's labyrinth's exit bells. marvels unravel, lovers abound,  
rivers of shivers in oceans of sound  
high in the sky and deep underground  
pulsing like heart beat and swirling around  
with the bass and the drum and  
the chords and the codes and the ripples of song  
of Ulysses' sirens and Cybele's cymbals and Dawn on the gong!  
we wave with the crowd and

gather around  
the moon the earth the sun the dust  
of stars, the many  
and the one.  
the queen of pentacles, amongst  
the petals, particles, a ghost  
and Gulliver struck dumb:  
*the beauty has come*

- Sergiu Vasilov

### **Rays of Harvest Sun**

Ancient symbols new life merging  
Your hubris ways is not my way  
I reach for the sun  
Not like you  
I look at the sun not like you  
I stand with my feet on the ground  
Not like you  
Sifting through in the harvest sun  
Symbols appearing I differentiate  
Not like you  
Masculine feminine arms waking up with the sun  
But not like you  
Standing together  
Moving the physical pushing for the spiritual  
In the harvest sun  
But not like you  
Harvest sun bring the newness I need  
As I shed the old leaves  
In the rays of the harvest sun  
I clear the hauntings as I count the blessings Realizations manifesting  
But not like you.

- Lera Welch

### **House of Gold**

The clacking racket of locusts  
as we swing flint sickles across the tasseled tops of grain

and swipe the flight of wings from sweating faces,  
the rhythm of limbs,  
the forward tread as we level  
the hissing field before us,  
the sun, Shem, blazing above, purveyor, benefactor,  
god of light, god of bread, god of man and all daylight creatures,  
maker of shadow, maker of fire, maker of golden fields of barley, spelt, and  
emmer wheat,  
I am your son, I am nothing without your steadfast burning,  
I willingly bind my arms to this rhythm, my feet to this threshing floor,  
my sister to the gathering behind me,  
we sing our reverence,  
we sing for our small share of this golden light-filled acre,  
our daily bread, our only worth, our only light, Amen.

- Jennifer Molton

## **The Bravura Flourish: On an Image from the Sarcophagus Hall of Ramses VI**

for Gisela always

*Incompleteness of explanation just has to be lived with sometimes. What we have to  
avoid doing  
is filling in the missing details with wild speculation or making the mistake of supposing  
that an incomplete explanation is a fundamentally wrong explanation.*

- Julian Biaggini

1.  
Mythologists can tell us what this image means:  
the story of the sun's chthonic journey  
through the labyrinthine byways of the night  
until its diurnal resurrection

when the scarabs assume their duty:  
rolling the sun – now an unglamorous ball of dung –  
along its prodigious arc  
towards the easy slide to darkness.

2.  
And those hieroglyphs have been deciphered,  
their meaning known, long ago.

3.  
But what are we to make of those elongated arms  
shaping the bold outlines of an animal skull,  
its nasal cavity a decapitated head?

Our animal being perhaps where our repressed stuff lodges  
like a dung ball before erupting from the netherworld  
of the unconscious screaming for attention?  
Two horn-like mini-minions fail to countermand  
the dung ball's inexorable trajectory.  
Outside the skull, three conscious beings stand,  
armless, (harmless?), waiting, wondering how  
they will cope when the time comes ....

4.  
Just three layers below this image, there is an ornate frieze  
of beheaded torsos, arms trussed behind their backs:  
in some parts of the world not much has changed.

The busyness and vigour of obscene violence is everywhere  
on the sarcophagus walls in tableaux of ubiquitous emblems:

day and night, earth and the underworld,  
life and death, power and subjugation,  
the mythology of human travail and the sun's.

Violence has always loved the bravura flourish.

- Tony Ulyatt

## **Sun**

Come up, Sun.  
Touch me.  
You with such old power.  
You whose light we lust for,

baring parts not yet touched  
by our selves.

Who makes the cold, dead moon  
an instrument of your fire.

Come up, sun.

Kick me in the head:  
golden.

- Judith Capurso