

Tell Me You Haven't Changed, A Poem By Annabella Mueller

Why travel, if not to change?

Why merely walk the streets of London, when in the act of walking, of step after step, of step after step, you've changed? Buckingham and Ben, London's Eye and Tower

Why look? Why look when that moment is more than a photo online, is more than a piece of the memory book, is more than a passing glance?

Why, when that picturesque second is gone, only a breath space before a camera clicks, before the moment has even passed, have you only looked?

Why not spin in circles through the Amazon? Why not stop and listen, stop and listen? You're amongst the most biodiversity in the world, take a moment to breathe. Why not stop?

Is there not something to be learned?

In the steamboat turn of New Orleans; in the ocean slip of Samona, the Cook Islands, of New Zealand, Fiji, and Koh Phi Phi Don; in the wood carving of Bosnia; in the mythology of Greece; in the ballet of Russia; in the Flamenco of Spain; in the weaving of Timor-Leste; in the temple ritual and tea of Japan; in the coffee of Ethiopia; in the gateway of Morocco; in the vastness of the world.

Is there not something to be felt in the touch of hands, so far beyond the limitations of tongue?

Is there not something to feel in the act falling from your known grasp?

Tell me you moved, you saw, you heard, you smelt, you touched, you tasted.

That you couldn't sense something in a single breath that can't be described

Tell me you haven't changed

Tell me you checked a box, that in exploring the world, you didn't explore something within yourself,

Tell me that the strangers whose eyes to which you locked, that the ground that held you feet and the skies that held you head, that the same stars were in fact the same

Now please tell me, that you traveled and you hadn't changed.