

# *To Don of La Mancha, I Understand*

Darren Michael

I trudged off to Queensland  
With those oh so familiar preconceptions  
From my meat-and-potato days,  
Untouched for all these years, not by grace,  
But nonetheless maturing  
For the mere sake of maturing.

With landings and arrivals came questions from my  
innards.

No dragons? No fair maidens?

No knights.

That gallant griffin led by Sir Toby himself,

Are they not to be found?

I'm sorry. No...

Though Harvington is haunted.

The priest hides no longer sought kept one man  
monkishly busy.

That delightful soul who watched those halls

Trapped in his own fascination—

intoxicated.

Warmed by a steady refreshment—

intoxicated.

Probing volumes from that Lutheran age—

intoxicated.

Transcribing the persecution of yesterday's man—

intoxicated.

By the inventiveness from Inquisition to intolerance.

**For familiarity, his verse sang sweetest of all.  
He robbed the past for present's sake  
And reveled in the ancient booty.  
What an impossible dream.**

**The facts finally conquered by his quixotic flair  
And dually, his thoughts betrayed by the ticking clocks  
Outside those brown brittle gates,  
His seclusion was rewarded for the job undertaken.  
Within those sheet-like walls,  
Even the darkness knew not his name  
For he froze in moving moments  
And I envied him.**