

Cyril Dabydeen

At Lord's Cricket Ground

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The ball bowled, the game played
at this neck of the woods—
the Lord's Cricket Ground
in London, don't you know?
Doosra in cold weather; oh,
a wrong 'un next, come on.

Kookaburra ball bounced back,
but who takes a special catch?
Century-makers Kohli, Smith,
and Root are best, but not before
eating biryani I've heard—
in a Mumbai *maidan*.

The sun shines brightest as
Kapil Dev or Botham tells it;
Tendulkar and Dhoni, also—
a keeper, batter or bowler. Now
Boult, Bumrah, or McGrath—
who's quicker? But Ambrose,

Holding, Roberts, and Marshall
are with pace like fire! Steyn, Lee,
Rabada too. Ah, Gayle, Richards,
Lara, or Chanderpaul's at the crease--
a long innings played out with
Warne or Murali spinning it.

Bedi's and Kumble's wizardry, also,
if Lock and Laker only, as Aussie
Benaud nods. Lloyd and Greenidge,
come on; but let Sobers be, or Kanhai
score. O'Neill and Harvey are again

at the crease, or Chappell truly.

Amla and de Villiers are in, too;
but it's the IPL with the white ball
in the short-form game, though Boycott
prefers only the red ball, but not
Ponting, or famed cricket titan—
Don Bradman most of all!

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CLR James' *What do they know of cricket
who only cricket know*: Constantine, see;
and Wes Hall's long run-up; but in come
Trueman and Statham. Let Crowe, Hadlee,
and Williamson bat on, not unlike—
Gower, Hutton or Cowdrey.

Alastair Cook's again at the crease; but
Anderson runs in at Lord's hallowed
ground where Miandad's celebrated,
and Sangakkara heralded. But it's
in-swing from Akram and Younis, as
Imran Khan's embroiled in politics.

Davidson and Lillee rear up from
down-under, with Kallicharran facing
his stiffest test. But I know Ram
and Val, pals of mine: calypso, see.
Weekes, Worrell and Walcott are
best, though Gavaskar plays on.

Rainy it is, the weather-man's call,
as Stokes will be Stokes at Headingley,
though I will remain only at Lord's
Cricket Ground in London with
more stroke-play to come—
Empire's legacy undone!

(August 2019)

History Lesson
(student essay)
– for Mark Abley

Christian civilization
is a predator, he writes

Halkomelem people
eaten by their prey

History being powerful,
the indigenous tribe

gone far away

Dark Wood

The journey began with
Homer and a tempest,

I swear, knowing no other
place or forest with

the wind, or a cyclone
I don't want to know

more about, but will
only acknowledge

in a dark wood
coming home again

Ithaca far away