The Poetry Page / Alessio Zaneli

Who Cares?

Anyone who believes exponential growth
can go forever in a finite world
is either a madman or an economist.

—KENNETH E. BOULDING

Scientists hold

the age of the Earth

is about 4.5 billion years.

Human civilization

hasn’t yet entered its tenth millennium

but has already fucked up the whole of it.

Who cares

the generations to come,

the preservation of life,

the health of the planet?

To put it bluntly:

who cares about the future?

All that occupies our mind is today,

tomorrow morning at most.

Who bloody cares

the species reduced to extinction,

the savage deforestation,

the toxic air we breathe,

the sea reduced to a dump?

All we want to be concerned about

is the latest in next-generation mobiles.

To hell with all the rest!

Why should *we* care?

Why us and why now?

It’s *our* turn to spoil the world!

All in all the Earth is only a fleck of dust

revolving around a gigantic furnace

and liable to incineration any moment.

Who fucking cares

this doggone solar fart we inhabit?

previously unpublished

A Dispute On Modern Physics

Fairy hands at work—

unwavering realm of perfection

claiming room, bliss is what it brings.

Blank night, after the journey, the price

to be paid. And the trivial stands as high

as the peaks of thought. The yardstick’s

different, as is what’s sought, restyled,

displayed on stage. The mundane.

Invisible divide. Cosmology.

The key to cognizance,

to all that out of darkness

can’t be accessed. Light appeared

over one life ago and you’re still blind,

no … deprived of eyes! More snow collecting

on glacial basins, new ice forming, but you don’t

belong to ecstasy. The realm has plenty of time, if

not enough to rescue you from the platitudes of

certainty. So—Boltzmann, Maxwell, Planck,

Einstein, Dirac. Their true identity and

what their blood was really about

I strive to grasp, wasting ink

and hours away. I won’t

succeed and—I believe—neither

will fairies ever speak to me. Yet what

about your grounds? Is there a point of yours

or anything consistent beyond what little I can see?

Indeed, anything you trust in or your erratic soul is after?

previously unpublished

Abscent

She has fled.

Gone like morning breeze

suddenly dying out

at the rising of the disk

above the horizon.

All she has left

are fragrant silences,

a speckled looking glass

and a vintage bottle of champagne

forgotten in the fridge.

What is taking her place

is faint light,

soaked in mugginess,

barely filtering

through the shutters ajar.

And heavy air,

smelling of heated water

exhaling from the scorching tar.

Her killing scent

killed by the miasmas

of the mushy streets,

and by sugary forgetfulness.

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Fall

After one has walked in the sky

higher than the highest clouds

glorified in the purest light,

it’s hard to find oneself squashed on the ground,

floundering about through soggy black earth,

groping in the dark in search of a way,

whatever way away from shame.

Now that such glare has been your undoing,

you clumsy beastie puffed up with pride,

don’t swear at the soil you’re worming on!

That which is sticking to your hair,

lodging under your nails,

slipping into your eyes,

well—that’s no filth at all,

but your only possible salvation.

So don’t despise what may appear the direst place,

indeed the nastiest one for you to fall onto,

as from such empty height

there’s nowhere else where you could stop.

And from the earthworms you touch

feeling around enshrouded in blackness,

from the tacky grains teeming with secret life

that cover your body throughout

have yourself obtain your nourishment.

Now you have to place your trust

in your most pristine senses and basest instincts.

And be sure,

once you and this mold are one,

you’ll no longer wish to bask in that infinite light.

Nevermore—in the misleading purity of heady altitude.

Here you landed, here you belong.

So weak, so blind, so lost,

and yet—you still don’t know—

so unprecedentedly strong.

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