

POEM OF THE WEEK

IF IT AIN'T A ROSE
[Is it a nightmare?]

1

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet"
Romeo and Juliet Act II Scene II

Had a way with words
Did William, no internet needed
It's so sad, the story of two people in love
Who push, rebel, connive and shove

To find their happy ending
Only to have it ripped from them
By such hate, such a cruel fate.
Shakespeare's no slouch

When it comes to the Stouch
Star-crossed young love is pitted against implacable animosity
And downright hate is bred into each generation
Not to be questioned

'Tis a bittersweet ending. The two young lovers die unrequited
The discord between the two families has ended

2

December 31, 1899
(about midnight)

The seconds tick, turning into minutes
That clock gives no indication
No comfort to shield the shock
Of the 20th Century.

The century started
Drenched in colonialism,
conquest and blood
And ended mute, captive to its
Unending conflict and hatred

Where there was once hope
There is distrust

Where there was communication
The very words we use are held in contempt

This is a manipulated situation, is it not? Pardon!
A manipulated tragedy for humanity
I mean. So bloated and obscene
Wallowing in their profanity

Will Romeo and Juliet ever find true love?
Will you, will I; will we; can we?

3

Let's start with what it's not
It ain't a rose
There are many words to describe
The events and nature of the time

"Rose" is not one of them

Words, I said; many words, I said
The dark mystery of which I speak
Challenging language defies human belief
If one person dies, one could grieve for them

Yes?

History, it is said, is written by the victors
The powers of darkness held sway
over the 20th century
The First World War was a precursor

To the Second, a continuation of the First
And every war after that was a continuation of WWII
The conflict has not only darkened our lives
It has infiltrated our vocabulary

The words, the words
That streams into our conversation
Nuclear weapons, Nagasaki, Hiroshima
Who else has nuclear weapons?

[We can name names, can't we?]

Who are we?
We are the survivors
Of a battered, broken empire
Broken, battered and bereft systems
Broken philosophies

4

The words, the words

That streams into our conversation
Nuclear weapons, Nagasaki, Hiroshima
Who else has nuclear weapons?

Nearly a century after WWII
Will Russia cause nuclear war?
Consider this: If one person dies,
One could grieve for them

Yes?

5

If a thousand people are killed
10 thousand, 100 thousand
A million; what then
Could one grieve for them?
Or just be numbed by the number?

Auschwitz is a word
It's the name of a place
A memory. A place of death
A place of Horror

Leslie D. Bush
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