

POEM OF THE WEEK

OPTIMISM IN OR AT A TIME OF DYING

“Grief is a natural response to losing someone or something important to you. You may experience a range of emotions, such as sadness or loneliness. You may experience it for several different reasons. Maybe a loved one died, a relationship ended, or you lost your job. Other life changes, like chronic illness or a move to a new home, can also lead to grief.”

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You all know the feeling.
It happens in our lives.
Things go wrong.
Plans turn to dust.

“Dying” is used here as an umbrella term;
Being anywhere from despair, loss, and depression to the actual loss
Of someone dying. The response is similar: grief,
Grieving is a process of accepting and creating a lifestyle

That does not have that person in it; remembering
(and forgetting); learning the importance of breathing,
Of reaching out and holding back; “dying” is an adjective,
To express the experience of the loss of the event or person,

the physical pain, lassitude, lethargy and fatigue.
Move? Why? What for? What’s the point?
I have a weakness, an unfortunate sense of self-importance,
A tendency to become verbose. I’m not showing off,

I am brutally aware of my shortcomings as a poet,
And as a human being. The questions I ask are not minor,
They are complex, multi-faceted, multi-dimensional; they demand exploration,
Discussion and analysis. Answers? Another discussion, perhaps;

On the bounds and limits of the expression of ideas, and their equivalence
In the experience of experience being able to be expressed in words.
We begin! A question. Can there be
“Optimism In A Time Of Dying?” or

“And Optimism At A Time Of Dying?”

An interesting clash of prepositions, n'est-ce pas?

Dying? Rather self-important, you might say, rather extreme.

That would be to neglect to see the oxymoronic intent of the question.

Am I calling you a moron? No. Well, if the shoe fits, so be it.

The question is a contradiction of terms, an exploration.

I will proceed with the first proposition,

the preposition “in”; has a nice fluidity

To it, mais, non? It suggests that Time is like a river;

Constantly flowing; a living, evolving ecosystem;

With a focus on vitality, no room or need for deceit.

“At” has a suggestion of immediacy, demanding, compelling

Action, with action - an emotional reaction, response!

An action that would be at variance with our detached analysis.

This is a personal perspective and analysis.

I introduce myself. I was born in 1952,

plus or minus two years from being able

to describe me as a mid-twentieth-century child,

Or more colloquially, a boomer” (“generally defined

as people born from 1946 to 1964,

during the post–World War II baby boom.)

Yes, I’ve seen it all, and have experienced my version

Of events. My conclusion? The world has been struggling

To die, to be re-born; now with the ravages

For climate change, the struggle is more basic;

The struggle to survive as long as possible,

While nations continue to pillage and rape the earth

While mouthing inanities, insanities and lies!

OPTIMISM IN OR AT A TIME OF DYING

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Donc il va! So it goes! The Earth has been dying for decades,

As humanity’s empires have. Taking interminably longer to die

Is the cacophony of empire-centric concepts that refuse to

Accept defeat. Choosing to morph into new shapes of old ideas.

New shapes for old ideas? Are we fooled? Surely, once experienced,
We should be wary and suspicious. Like an old tune, a fond memory,
We hum it, cherish it, and get fooled once again! Yes, once more
We dance to the tired tune, hoping for a happy ending it cannot give us!

Then we shake ourselves, stand up and say, "That was silly, wasn't it?
When will we ever learn? (I still remember the tune to that!)", and stumble
to the next crisis. Do we mourn our situation? We dress it in philosophical
Robes, measure it in technological advances (is the wheel still circular,

Does it go round and round?) "The Human Condition" is the phrase.
Human condition? Nothing!. Is there a working brain among the billions of us?
The image that imposes itself on my brain is of ants, in equal numbers!
Newsflash!! We are of the species homo sapiens sapiens (Latin for "wise man").

We are, by definition, "wise". [Do I hear laughter?], not ants, rats or mice,
Giraffes or kangaroos, budgies or funky canaries. We have inhabited this planet
For the last 300,000 years, and the last 10,000 years established our superiority
(I say that word under advice!) What are you good at? "good"

meaning skilled/experienced/practised at? Waging war, building civilisations,
to be destroyed by more war; rebuilding for another conflict.
Donc il va. So it goes. So what goes? Gives you pause for thought, mais, oui.
We have a choice, a purposeful effort to face challenges head-on and resolve them;

Regardless of success or failure, that which does not kill you makes you stronger.
Brave words. Should the mind and body not respond, what then? Faith?
Faith requires a belief system. Everybody has one. The systems might or might not
Be shared. Reason! That's what we need. Emotional turmoil has no room for reason.

The reason might reassert itself later when emotions have exhausted themselves.
We are human, not superhuman; we attach ourselves to others,
and they attach themselves to us; when we can't see them, touch them,
or talk to them, we experience a sense of loss for whatever reason,

they are no longer there; we feel the pain,
We grieve. Grief is not eternal;
it runs its course. We grieve.
We live life. We Love.

We Love. We Love.

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