

Packet Poems

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LIFE

to be
is
to quest
to wrest
from infinity
present reality
the meaning
in the instance
of a spark
of existence

INFINITY

I know
no beginning
no ending
not knowing
is not negative
it is the fire
of imagination
of creation
not knowing
is
power to create

PARADOX

the human creature
incarcerated
in chaotic collusion
of light and dark
dichotomised
its strength called God
Satan, its weakness
interrogates
the accident of existence
and contrives
meaning for life

DUALITY

essence
immaterial
invisible
manifest
in
material
visible

are we
divisible?

ANT MAN

they say
believe
do not question
and all will be revealed
but man is a child
and ever more shall be so
he preaches blind faith
but opens one eye to look.
his doubts
lead him to proofs
proofs to discoveries
discoveries to more
as he climbs and climbs
ever higher
onward and upward
into the unknown

clouds part
to reveal more clouds
and worlds open
to universes
to suns and quasars
and ant man
dreaming giant dreams
taking giant steps
discovering more
infinitesimally
finding infinity

perhaps he should have faith
and
within a little circle
find contentment
but.
in a little circle
what contentment?

BEING HUMAN

we walk
on a bridge
of faith
into the unknown
and
as we
move forward
it crumbles
behind us
but we
are builders
and it grows
before us

JIGSAW

while others
scuttle about
creating
the pieces
of finite
being
I sit
sorting out
the puzzle –
my life –
to find
the meaning
of my
finiteness
against
endless
infinity

FREEDOM

movement
from
conditioning
to
understanding
restraints
of
tradition
custom
convention
law
and knowing
when to forgo
achieving
the anarchist
dream
self-government

POWER

power
has no power
no independent will
not an entity
simply capacity –
neutral
till put to use:

in the hands of artists
to create
visions of beauty
to free the heart;

in the hands of musicians
to create
heavenly harmonies
to free the spirit;

in the hands of poets
to create
impassioned thought
to free the will;

in the hands
of scientists
to create
understanding of reality
to free the mind;

but

in the politician's hands
a magic wand
power to exploit
power to destroy

FAIRY TALES

not
bed-time stories
and make-believe glories
not witches and dragons
magic spells and potions
princes and princesses
life giving kisses
not wicked stepmothers
and fairy godmothers
not magic carpets
and genies in bottles:

Real
fairy tales
liberty
equality
fraternity--
democracy!
the people shall govern!

LIBERTY

liberty ! freedom!
words to shout and sing
driving the revolution
against oppression.

but freedom is not free.
 tied
 to responsibility,
it is the guarantee
of safety in community.

freedom is in the bond.
I am because we are
without you, I am not
without me, you are not
together we are
 free to be
 individually

and freedom,
from corruption,
from oppression,
is commitment
to the bond

that curbs and controls
to keep us whole,
 free
from all our fears.

but
freedom from fear
the only true liberty,
has no real guarantee.

EQUALITY

Equality! Justice! Fairness!
the eternal cry,
of the eternally
poor and powerless
through all times
in all climes,
beggars ever,
crying endlessly,
'Fairness! Justice! Equality!'
trusting their well-being and their fate
to the constitutional benevolence
of the State,
'One man, one vote,'
they dance and sing
stand in long lines,
waiting eagerly
to give away
their autonomy
for the promises
of democracy.

enslaved to the state
they have no option
but to wait
in giving consent to government,
they set in motion
processes of relegation
to their stagnation.

lowest in hierarchies
lost in bureaucracies
that protect protectors
from the protected –
they band together
to demonstrate
the appalling inequities
of their state,
poor and powerless,
beggars ever,
crying together,
'liberty!
equality!
fraternity!'

FRATERNITY

fraternity:
universality
of common humanity,
brotherhood of man;
united we stand
in Our motherland;
one nation
under Our God.

you of an otherhood –
not of Our nationhood
not of Our religion
Our race and colour
Our tribe and tradition
Our class and condition –
you cannot pass.

Not of Our Brotherhood
stay in your Otherhood
in your separate state
in apart hate.
Get thee
behind me.

WAR

ultimate expression
of human depravity
murder
hidden in duplicity
in conscripted loyalty
in delusions of bravery
embodying the ambition
of the politician
the abuse of power
ethos of corruption
and debauchery

SALMAN

Solomon the bold
bullets
knives
arrowheads of anger
unleashed by unreasoning
blind fanaticism
spawned in the bowel
for eons after the fall
speed
on the frequency
of your heartbeat
to annihilate you
towering over Satan
of the satanic verses

in a white beard
and a tall hat
Rumpelstiltskin,
stamps his little foot
against a Man
who boldly stands
where Lucifer once stood
in the light of truth.

THE CONTRACT

Motho ke Motho
ka Batho
I am
because we are
and
because we are
you are.
I am
responsible for you;
keeper
of your happiness
your well-being
your Rights.
and you are
responsible for me;
keeper
of my happiness
my well-being
my rights in your hands
your rights in my hands
held in Trust
because we are,
I am and you are,
Human.

The Bond

persistent
pursuit
of freedom
from
ignorance?
for instance?
No
from
bondage
in the bond
to licence
abandon
freedom
from ubuntu
from being
human

PRAYER

let us pray
for we were set
on the planet
to prey
on those beneath
who pray
to those above
that they
will not prey
on them

RECOGNITION

happiness
is
acceptance
of self
as is
freedom
to be
and
to see
to hear
other
the many faces
of life
the flame
that goes on
and on...

CONTROL

to be or not to be
is not the question
but how to be
amidst
man-made
slings and arrows
in a web of
thou shalt nots
that confine
and control
shackling wings
of free flight

CONDITIONING

systems
economic
autocratic
democratic
governors
officials
managers
teachers
parents
friends
lovers
enemies

impose
control

FICTION

seeds of fact
sown in fantasy
flower in faction
regeneration
in imagination
creating
the meaning
of life's reality

STORIES

though
fiction not fact;
stories are keys
to truths,
we impose
to reduce
the randomness
of the random

but imposition
is denial
and our truth
a story,
a tale
of
order,
consistency,
logic –
fiction

HEROES

from Samson
to 007 –
beauteous
courageous
ingenious
considerate
compassionate
resourceful
powerful
exceptional
beings –
perceiving
the gap
between
law and justice
dive through
to redeem us
and return us
to duty
and conformity

MYTH MAKER

myth-making man,
since time began
telling stories
of trials and glories,
around the fire-place
and now in cyber space;
projecting human living
its struggles and its striving
in metaphors of other worlds –
the light of heaven
the darkness of hell;
creating the Creator
to absolve himself
and place all blame
beyond himself
beyond
the gory glories
of blood and state –
made shadows
in his lust
for life
everlasting

GRAND ILLUSION

from days of antiquity
quest for immortality
mathematical equation
endlessly seeking solution
so we postulate
as we incinerate
a soul incarnate
that we deliver
into life forever
in the hereafter
transmigration
to another plane
in the belief
that in death
we waken
to eternity

UBUNTU

in you
I see myself
and
a myriad others
I am
and
you are
the complex
of all those
you know
and we
live on
in all
whom we know
who know us

REINCARNATION

a person
is
a person
through
other persons
you change me
I change you
and we are
born again
in each other
and every other
whom we know
who knows us
in whose memory
in whose understanding
we are
reincarnate

DEFINITION

identity
in ever changing
modality
floats
like a ghost
over the physical
particle in wave
indefinable

definition
metaphor
ballast for
unbearable
lightness
of being

PASSION

passion
breaking through
human bondage
in the bond
to union
of self
in other.
Ecstasy!
in the moment

LET'S DO IT

birds do it
bees do it
even educated fleas do it
and it is done
but for poets
it is never done
they laud it
applaud it
obsess us with it
making it
the be all
the end all
of life

Fact or fantasy?
romance or reality?

Simply
survival strategy

birds know it
bees know it
even educated fleas know it.

UNLIBERATED

man is free
woman is not
tied to her genes
she cannot be
proof of paternity
binds her to fidelity;
and maternity
deprives her
of liberty

MARRIAGE

love in a cage
straightjacketed
sentenced to fidelity
to have and to hold
till death us do part
life imprisonment
dictate of civilization
contractual obligation
breeding dissipation

LIBERATED WOMAN

out of the tomb
of the womb
liberated
from home
not wife
or mother –
Other!
released
from the prison
of the oldest
profession
into the world
of power
free at last
to be at last