

POEM OF THE WEEK

A TIME TO CHANGE FROM POEMS ABOUT TIME
HERE'S ONE FROM MY PAST

I WAS SO MUCH YOUNGER THEN

"I am a student of life", he said;

"the world is my university,

books are my tickets to the lecture halls of wisdom;

paintings portals to the universe of the senses.

My goal is to gain wisdom, an insight into life."

He pauses, and thinks; there is silence: not stillness,

just silence; I watch him, aware of a great tension.

"Have you been successful?", I ask

He smiles, a soft sad smile.

"How is one to know?", he replies.

"Wisdom is more than a collection

of facts, more than a recitation of theories".

The evasion is not missed. The silence hangs, heavy.

There is a nakedness about him as if something has been violated.

"Well, have you succeeded?", I demanded:

discomfort transformed into anger.

"I don't know.", he replied.

"There are times when all seems clear;
others when my perception is shrouded
in darkness and a creeping mist of despair;
times when the accumulated wealth
of humanity's wisdom and knowledge
seems bankrupt, futile."

He paused, searching my eyes for a response.
I lit my pipe, obscuring the interrogating gaze
by a cloud of smoke. "So, it is the intellect you believe
to be of prime importance?" "Yes", he said; "What else is there?"

"What of Love?" "Love?", he enquired, after a pause.

"Yes, Love!". "Define it.", he challenged me.

It was my turn to pause for a moment, before saying

"Love is an awareness, a perception,
that beyond the intellect there is another dimension
that bestows meaning upon experience.

Love is something one tries to escape,
while at the same time feeling compelled to seek it.

With it one feels apprehension; without it, one feels terror."

"Nonsense!", he replied.

"Is it?", I said.

He did not respond.

He stood up.

"Do you believe that?"

"Yes", I said.

"Maybe", was his parting comment.

"Maybe!", the word hung suspended

in the space he had once filled.

"Maybe!", the word hovered in my mind.

"Maybe not", I thought after a while;

but one has to believe in something.

Months later, I saw him again.

He looked at me, said nothing and quickly walked on.

"Try it", I said softly, "it could be true".

YEARS PASS BY

Things change; things do not.

“Love is something one tries to escape,

while at the same time feeling compelled to seek it.

With it one feels apprehension; without it, one feels terror.”

Terror, yes I have known that

I have known love to be soft and sensuous,

smooth as a fine red wine;

mallow as a finely matured whisky,

and as jagged as a bed of glass.

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