

A Study in Human

i

The streets are not bustling,
Nor are they suffering,
On a chill autumn day.

Here and there a rapping
As feet are tip-tapping
Upon the cobblestone so gray.

The feet carry chatter,
Often even laughter
Not so much a world away.

Hand in hand stroll a hunched old pair
When a withered leaf falls,
leaving its branch so bare -
A tragedy suffered by all.

There appears a cheery trio –
Man,
Wife,
Toddler –
No concern for the World,
The Leaf,
Nor its Fall.

Secure smiles so content
In their momentary being,
Swinging the Toddler between them
A build up of
One,
Two,
Three -
Whee!
The giggling provides all the reason.

Such happiness emits a bubble,
A blind,
To the tell-tale crawl
From the hunched old pair down the street.

While weathered old man -
Once so young,
So certain,
So strong -
Ponders the withered yellow leaf
And its graceful, fluid Fall,
He whispers nostalgia to a welcome ear.

ii

Moon alight this starless night
Set against wooded hills of Óbuda;
The black tear in the lavender clouds
Speckled so scarce are the humans' light.

Thin smoke scatters from an embered end
That which the withered lips softly suck.

Inhale; breathe it in full.
Exhale, ponder the life lived not dull.

A box in a shaky hand
So small. Push it smoothly to reveal wooden stick ends like straw.
Tiny red head runs its course across a red patterned pad.

Scratch.
Scratch.
Phew – a flame bursts into existence.

Inhale.
Exhale.
Inhale.
Exhale – Life has come to a crawl.

Far the old man traveled,
Wide was the world he saw,
Mysteries of existence he sought to unravel
But every mystery brought about another flaw.

Some learned folk have said it's all silly,
He sat there and considered.
While others be damned with pious will-nilly,
Such a way so littered.

Slowly he gazed again upon the moon,
That white prompt in the sky,
Whose shifting shapes clouded the night's eye.

What an absurd game to play,
Here we are, the old man thought,
Blind –
Deaf –
Dumb –
Some would say.
Here we are, the old man knew,
With but the day.

iii

Shall we talk about the Moon?
Shall we talk about the Sun?
Perhaps the topsy-turvy,
Or something swervy-curvy?
How about a spoon?

The things we say,
The things we do,
Purpose is a self-administered remedy.
Shan't we have a clue?

Money –
Clothes –
Cars –
Homes –
Reproductive tools.

Schools are but an ebb and flow,
An exchange of cash and know-
How the power pyramid of rambling monkeys
Are the euphemisms of

Business and Politics,
Networking and Hedged Investments,
Collateral Damage and
Bad PR.

Relationships, sold as a mirage of a model's silhouette.
Truth, an isolating instance
Which will cause a cast stone.

Science is a laborious load,
A steeply uphill hike
On log laid long.
Religion is a Towering Temple,
Whose gold star façade
Flakes glittering flecks
Upon stopped shoulders.

"What shall we do?" asks one son.
"What is the problem?" responds the other.
"Carry on. We must carry on," determines the Father.

iv

Faint flecks are floating
In the deep, deep blue.

Fluttering fairies are hovering
In the darkest, blackest wood.

Frozen figures are climbing,
Gaia's green lungs are trying,
Bearded creatures of nature are fighting,
Are dying –
Their sand-blasted heads
Full of old wise tales –
All of them are striving
Just to be among them.

Ancient men were watching,
Ancient men were reading,
Ancient men were fearing
The stories they would say.

A riddle in bespeckled black,
The tiniest thread sticking out,
Tempting those tugging fingertips,
A glowing ember
Eternally,
Emphatically,
Refusing to catch flame –

Are those faint flecks floating
In the deep, deep blue.

v

There is no care
but care itself.
“Life’s not fair,” cries
the unadulterated youth.
“Fair? Proclamations uncouth
against Mind, against God,
Against Being, such sod
spews from novice tongues!”
Dictates the biological sponge.

Manipulated imaginations
rattle the chains of
Enslavement –
the young boy uncultivated asks “Why?”
The tenured teacher –
shirt, tie, baggy eyes – automatically replies “Because.”

What happens to us
along the way?
Is it simply the day to day?

Some say we emerge into human life
as a blank canvas –
The duty to paint our own way;
an untruth clear as day.

We begin as a Leonardo.
We begin as a Dali.
We begin as a Monet –
a miraculously infinite array

Of colors
 and shapes.
Not time,
 but people –
Unknown faces, even familiar graces,
 worse are the trusted spaces
Who and which slowly chip it all away
 until we are wrinkled,
Painful fossils reeking of
 rot and decay;
A blank white canvas with faint stains from
 the colors that used to be.

We do it to ourselves,
 I say.
We do it ourselves.