

THE FOLLY OF FEAR

1

While ambling about in autumn,
I came upon a certain house
with a peculiar sign on its door.
It read:

‘The world’s folly
is not allowed
in this home.’

Stopping to ponder its meaning,
I felt an immense inclination to meet the author.

What was this ‘folly’ in reference to?

As anyone can attest
the implications of the word -
on this planet -
are aplenty.

Might this folly be
humanity’s obsession with acquisition;
mindless masses,
entrenched in an absurd addiction
to possessing green, rectangular pieces of paper?

Or could this folly be
the impermeable veil of selfishness
that seems to engender my fellow man?

My contemplation was suddenly interrupted:
A brash unlatching
and the front door swung open.

A jarring, aged man appeared,
and with an interrogative stare,
sought an explanation for my being there
without uttering a word.

I chose to meet his hostile curiosity
with a nonverbal cue of my own -
a subtle smile and a nod.

But his expression was unrelenting.
I was held in a frozen gaze -
an icy stare so stringent it was binding.

In the haste of defensive confusion
I had forgotten everything I wanted to ask this man.
Fear had replaced any and all thoughts of intrigue.

I took a retreating step backward,
then another.. and another.
And turned away from the man
defeated, in a daze.

Seconds later I heard the door slam shut.

Only once did I summon the courage to look back,
and in my periphery, I noticed
the sign on the door
had been removed.

Solemn and silent
I staggered back home,
loathing the pathetic nature
of my childish predicament.

How could I have let fear steal away yet another potential interaction??
And one that may have even led
to the making of a like-minded friend.

How could I have let fear win, again?

By the time I arrived home
I had convinced myself
that I was, in fact, the folly the sign referred to.

I was the folly the man disdained.

In the end, one might say,
the sign that was meant to fend off folly
was, ironically, the object of its attraction.

I was, I am
the fatal folly of fear.

THE PAINTER'S PROSE

4

Each word, a color
to be meticulously placed
upon the read canvas,

So that the brazen arrangement
of verse and hue
evokes forth the rug-swept emotions of man,
buried far beneath
his battered soul.

A CONUNDRUM

5

I must confess,
the pointlessness of life astounds me
as ghastly egocentric folks surround me.
Their wanton yearn to bind me,
then a failed attempt to find me.

And I entreat:
If the soul be indeed forever pure -
the song of sinlessness its inevitable fate -
why, then, must the soul remain
in a place such as this?

WRITHING

6

In spite of the fight, I shall battle no more.
I possess no obsession to settle the score,
for there is no release from a life lived through war;
because of this, I shall battle no more.

My fatuous fear of a knock at the door;
fetal wails from a ball on the floor;
the knowing that no one could fathom the horror;
for all of these reasons, I shall battle no more.