

# a plague of poesy upon us

## a short dossier of verse

by

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*VISUALIZED*

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## DEDICATION

*to all those things that plague us,*
*may we understand their reasons*
*and purposes*

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IMPROVISATION ON A LARGE NUMBER

# Improvisation On a Large Number

*A conservative estimate concludes there are "320,000 unknown viruses that infect mammals." If infectious viruses of all lifeforms are included "The number rises to 100,939,940."*
*virology.ws*

*Come o, come o, come o,*
*come o, come-come,*
*yeah, yeah, yeah*
*Handy Man by James Taylor*



Even if it's only a matter of time
or timing or something more sublime portending
when angel hosts cry they're just pretending with
you out and about grocery shopping stopping by the outlet
plip-plopping in the rain, casually unguarded
unsuspecting in a moment, dangerously defiled by
forgetfulness at Walmart's, Dollar General, Dunkin' Donuts
miles of smile none unusually iffy with many winks blinks
and lapses your guileless lifestyle erstwhile
inevitably passing without observation like
shit happens like
somebody bent your side view mirror for fun, like
all the little things you left undone though you oughta, like
the flea that bit the rat's ass married the preacher's daughter
was just what
the plague doctor
ordered like
large numbers
piled high defy
compression of what they imply about
decry compression into editable soundbites
200 billion galaxies has just been
generously revised upward by a factor
of 10's an undersized guess, a bone
in the throat of imagination that we're alone in this mess
the number of germs same number as human tears riding
side saddle each one atop one drippy drop teaching us to stop
horsing around before the chickens come home to roost
with all their unknown pathogens to boot won't boost
our confidence in heavenly blessing that's of course un-
less I'm just guessing
a curse or a lesson more or lessened in force
if not in farce neither fierce defenders of truth
nor better nor worse
bring the same lingering hearse
Emily parked in limbo
decided
a clover and bee
made a meadow, you see, but
1000's of bees on 10,000 clovers turns a solo flyby
into a symphony of swarming, a cacophony of stings,
for large numbers are frightening things
even when good, the computation's well understood
320,000 kisses who could survive, 320,000
years of mortal life is but mortally alive
the numbers abide
they don't reduce by square root or hypotenuse
what with all those thronging bacteria on the loose
if not in excess an overplus, certainly an overkill,
at some point patience gets its fill or the will to live to will
because an arm can endure only so much of vaccines
then it becomes obscenely riddled with holes like
one of the lucky
war veterans who didn't succumb
to the virus of virtue's heroism
100,939,140 kinds of drama and counting
*( heard it on a grapevine, muscadine )*
modestly numbering far far less than the
suspect stars though it spread for acres farther than far
what's an acre compared to a sky, we shall send all bugs outward into space
to die, distance has no meaning in infinity we may end anywhere
320,000 to the moon, 320,000 to Mars, save the rest
for the next alien incursion, is that why there're so many
to outnumber the inevitable invasion? or some version
and thus will they meet the enemy and it is us?
a pessimist would say
and not be amiss
an honest laborer after a hard but fruitless day
a saint who's lost the righteousness of their way
the secular humanists who facetiously pray
yet who needs even a hundred bugs when only one will do
to finish you except
the superfluity of the universe, the overabundance of Life, if we see millions of colors
what good are 24 waxy crayons but a way of teaching us to stay within the lines
a wanton reminder from Gods Almightys we're not hard to erase or replace
if we're taking up too much space unwisely, doesn't unduly surprise me
137 million helpless chickens slaughtered each day for food
I don't mean to be rude but it doesn't exude compassion
but if you crave meat high volume is always the fashion
what is clear 50,000,000 people die each year
five cities the size of New York
until it's banging at your door
hard, demanding not imploring
judgment nearing, your world
cannot be saved but another's
brave and new begins, no sin
stains the whoring loss of whole, entire nations
where others waiting patiently, voracious
in the wings
will walk upon
those graves
ungracious

After the prom
and the queen was killed
by only 55 miles to an hour
the speed of alcohol to the brain
not anywhere near the speed of light
one girl one glass went a little bit too fast,
choose your faux plague: booze opioids suicide loss of love faux but not fake
where each one-of-a-kind one-at-a-time life lives life precariously in the break
between outbreaks, make no mistake or misstep wars multiply in empty voids
we make so if anyone told me with solemn, impersonal refrain :
"not even"
I get it
inquiring without speck of specious self-conscious shame
*"which and how many, why'd it take so long"* as a person seeking
personhood makes every minute throng with seconds, brew them
good as well they should
for large numbers will find us
reminding us how short smug and small our rendition of reality really is
large numbers
will malign us
blinding us to the multitudinous parade of the perpetually petty and its circus of charade
5.51 billion Internet pages we can't escape the drivel the ignorance the racism and hate
50 billion counting non-indexed and all those worms trojans rootkits and unprotected sex
none any fun for computers with nowhere to run, there will always be more kinds of fungi
than all yours or my loved ones put together though you count our last 100 generations of
lineage the rope's too short for the collective tie that binds to form a firm foundation
large numbers
affording us
no hope without civility defining the breadth of humility or possibly
depth of despair which used to be mother of invention till she laid down scared
of her own torrent of intention, victim of bedbug and incubus, both legion with
large numbers slumlording us
while Beelzebub, Lord of Flies presiding over
immeasurable squalor
champions the bacterium incalculable to tally serving no true master
where every pinprick of bite rallies to bode microcosmic disaster
and when in pain the quantity of our misery can't be weighed
60 seconds are 60,000 and 60,000 the sum of our days
but dreams, ah, we count them on one stinking hand
refusing to be either measure of a multiplicand
*which i don't understand*
there aren't 100,939,140 chances to get it right
but dreams shouldn't number like the viral hordes
for maybe they know something the microbe ignores
for dreams grow so hard to be plenty, and die too easy
to desire too many unlike most bacteria a penny will buy
a dollar spread like wildfire bringing forests of ancient trees
to their knees, destroying myriad animal lives,
perhaps that's why there's so much life
because there are so many ways to die
which is not to say life is cheap
and all dries on the vine

*children can only count to ten when did we suddenly comprehend we can't transcend so we overspend*

but large figures
lay unrequited waste
to our fuzzy warm place
under the sun
of which there is only one
as we string together words reaching the moon
how many sentences have never been written
yet it takes but a few select words
to break our heart
for apart from the grandeur of the large
which smitten by we improvise a twisty tune
how do we count loveliness
but with single digits,
for the tea rose for all its petals
has no fairer beauty than the calla lily
we don't need innumerable ways to end life
when old age will suffice and aging is ageless
so putting aside
the rhetoric of rhapsody
about all those cornucopias
of numbers out of key
too large to count, discount,
disprove, or disperse,
discredit, dislike to disagree, or just plain diss
surely not to disengage or dispense from or with
neither end this discourse with reverence or rant.
let us celebrate instead appraising unencumbered
the trio,
the duo,
a 3 free from excess the solo chant
or a 2 most demure
the very small integer
of which we can be sure
though I admit for some
*( I'm not one such )*
even 1 God can be one god too much

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

ONE MORE WAY

**one**
**more**
**way**

Kids back on the courts ready to play,
fresh nets on hoops everyone acting ordinary
with a humdrum of pleasant disarray,
and nothing to betray the unease
of the wary but for the warning on the gate
no one heeds, or anymore glimpsing reads.

kids sure don't. I'm not calling foul play
about bad news become a commonplace,
like sinking a basket with awkward grace
or standing close to overheated breath,
so find a way to put it to rest, defuse it
as you would the new bad news

kid on the block, scorned but tolerated,
or the R-rated movie making you wince,
make a funny joke about it apropos,
dispel its power with a countercurse
or play it down in tragi-comic verse,
after all, it is the new norm.

Kids live chaste lives less prone to panic,
no real world skills to play out melodrama,
or brood long, become morose with rancor
for the outrage, not at that age unless
parents ghoulishy reciting the obits
at breakfast, they won't be sure.

kidnapping, mugging, bashing, and chokeholds,
snakebites, bee stings, fleas, the biting fly,
razor blade, gunshot, hunger and thirst, wars,
or crashed cars, a wrecking spree from space debris,
kidney failure, Alzheimer's, TB, SCA, 4F ratings, the flu
will still do it, by shock without warning, stealth, or surprise,
religious intolerance, and political intrigue are not
unknown, by age, by blood type, gender, or race,
kid gloves at the wrong time, tainted meat, unsafe sex,
contact sports, slippery floors, walking on the wrong side,
terrorist, racist, a broken heart from an abusive spouse,
dumb mistakes, earthquakes, or breaking rules
kidding around, hard work, tough love, bats in the sky,
creepy cops, hasty doctors with vaccines untried,
bump, trip, rip, break, jolt, decay, or ossify, fall,
drown, burn, sneeze, freeze, or fry

Kids quickly adapt, learn to play, they don't keep score,
while the rest of us will manage to adjust despite
the dread of sleepless nights, and eternal vigilance,
tomorrow's another day, I hear say and no surprise
the world will again anxiously learn to dance
with one more chance, and one more way
to die.

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## HOPED WITH EXPECTATION


HOPED
WITH EXPECTATION
FIZZLED HOPE
WITH
A FRACTURED
expectation to be expected if not hoped
for or with or on it or not as likely as not we likely
came as we went our hope on par with wishing on a star
to pave the roads invent the car extract the oil
making it hard to live without gas and a license
returning killing arriving
driving flying riding
WARNING
BIOHAZARD
Gloves
Required
DECIDING HOW
MANY
ACCIDENTS CAN
hide in plain view the dirty windshields without
revealing do-or-die trends when sudden ends end
all chances lost in unsuspecting fender-checking
out of reach of defending whether life merits mending
a cup of tea no better time together than you're wanting
beer cognac booze
choose judge decisions
COLLISIONS FOR
EVERYONE
RISE-TAKERS AND
risk-abstainers mix muffled mutterings of
commendation and condemnation sans an explicit intent
elemental gases exhaled past misspent forecasts
of hitchhiking passengers fearing to tear the future's
gravity or hilarity not bothering with either whether
waived disclaimed now wakened
when taken when wagered forsaking
SWEEPSTAKING
TO SCORE
THE ADRENALINE
rush of vulnerable crowds without adequate
protection in a time of pandemic bored to leave
their homes or morally offended declining to play yet still
will follow the game if not with a name recognition
the undecided satisfied to be washed and spun dry
among between beside
calamity ruin disaster
RASTERRED
BIOTHER
HARDCORE
before betting on bets together orchestrated by
the money the power and the disregard
inventing odds even breaking even we won't escape
racehorses doped to win are Rin-tin-tin dogfood when they lose
the wagering crowd too proud to complain outloud when
power plants melt down oil spills fill to the brim slivers of
rivers gulfs bayous
RADIOACTIVE
BIOHAZARD
OR CHOOSE
AMONG
FROM JADED
easily upbraided dogma which can't answer why
a triple flip of a ramp on a bike same argument can
be made for seat-belts yet the former's socially-approved
lauded the other politically-incorrect strictly subject to
mandatory fines while industrial schemes arming
global warming racial profiling planned scarcity
sham austerity deforestation a conflagration of
circumstance
DRUGGED SALVATION
SHACKLED TO
CORPORATE PATENTS
kill as easily as quench the militarization
of the social fabric's toxicity of unnamed pathology
by way of a risk assessment known as second-guessing
a race to supply cozy lifestyles of callous commerce
but don't we all take turns trying the same luck
appraising indulging overgrazing
ever more bigger even excess
IS RARELY LESS
THAN
THE CAPITALIST
ple's beguiling facilities we come to live by
like the loss of sea ice is worse than of beach sand
your mama's karma's apparently comfortable taking care
with industrial farming's pretty labels without a warning
of rampant disease and all its attendant miseries
blandly tolerated possibly welcomed accepted
for insects birds innocent beasts
CAUTION
POTENTIAL
BIOHAZARD
PRESENT
LEAST ABLE
TO REVOLT
IF TREATING
pragmatists as pseudo-scary clowns can't be
compared to any safe social distance try a refrigerator run on
fluorocarbons or a perfect lawn brought to you by pesticides
since when do we stand a chance to arrogate or constrain
against reckless absurdities and mythologies that
blind bruise excuse
ignorance science progress
BIOHAZARD
RIESGO
BIOLOGICO
YOU CAN GUESS
WHEN
THE INTERNET'S
mined for personal data stored in bunkers after
a thousand years future civilizations won't think twice to air
its dirty laundry if history's free its air should be inhaled
carefully car emissions in the present tense not hence
will give you lung cancer while you sit on the fence
point fingers blame scapegoats or shoo-ins
barbecues campfires better yet cigarettes
OR REGRET
THIS
ICE IS NICE
our favorite perils boldly suffering to acquiesce
silent to the tenuous triumph of Western medicine's best
which must not be critically assessed but praised and blessed
since we can look under the hood kick the tires
bio-research labs knowing we'll forget what we never knew
gamble commander place bets on
Russian roulette chicken hot potato not if
INFECTIOUS
WASTE
BUT LATER
DOWN
THE ROAD A
lab escape's not only possible but statistically inevitable
where risks are worth it when powerful interests decide
not when but where and how good it won't be
to the badly untrained with bewilderment as their norm
perhaps Antarctica virus-free and redesigned by
spin witch and shock doctors who
decline to mind regard pretend no blame
AS THEY CLAIM
OUR
WEAL OR WOE
whichever choose your risk if you have unprotected
sex do you deserve to die? at most take sick but what of
refined sugar white bread polished rice
we go where infection will be almost inevitable
third world country the immuno-compromised the aged
long with a thousand other banes and blights like disdain for
a mask respirator a bandana
SING HOSANNA !
ALL WHO HAVE
ventured the FURBIDDGH FRUIT who's using
who in this game of dethrone or disown
and on forgetting the fruitless hours of sweating
just to survive if never ever thrive another day
parked outside in the dark in a run-down junker
in Eden New York Bombay
where no real risk-refrainers only restrainers
reconnoiter to assess the measure of their own
meager quantity empty volume insufficient weight
in a universe of raw data as they totally reinvent
their folly and vice dicey propositions
reckless narcissistic and just plain dumb
providing us a thousand new ways to pay their rent
! for we are the biohazard upon this planet !
who crown King Jesus dictator and thug
who time and again slaughtered the Jew
who sell a nickel to borrow a dime
who make sugar saccharine and salt insipid
who tell the child 'Grow up' while mocking the aged
who believe in dead molecules and brute Chance
who perpetrate and officiate with a stroke of the pen
by a stroke in the pants
who believe in good wars
lynchings executions and race riots
who abuse science in the name of Science
downgrading the sacred pious hearts made sublime
who think to live forever but are shit out of time
revile berate defraud
honesty mercy and kindness
know who you are
paper soul rubber spine
venomous fang
defiled guts
foulness of mind
who are
BIOHAZARD
Testing, Handling,
Disposal and
Transportation
Prohibited in
this area.
BETTER BLIND
AND
CASTRATE WITH
hell to pay no one factors fire or incendiary
actors' scorn for abiding bliss replaced by the hedonistic kiss
blessed are the whistleblowers when wantonly blown to bits
unmasking the hysteria of a death-wish will never sit well
with its lethal fatal fit quality sorely felt though sworn by
pledges oaths vows (written or spoken)
bow to no state no god no prospect
ALWAYS EXPECTING
FOR
HOPE TO DELIVER AS affections of unfailing fealty
to honor protect what the heck expectations are negotiable
like crossing one's heart a new curse's invented sooner or later
to create a new woe asteroids willy-nilly crashing to earth
(who knew?) but there's no fool like an old fool from
his money her beauty their empty beliefs parted
young aged or just getting started
BIOHAZARD
AUTHORISED
PERSONNEL
ONLY
WHO FARTED
DECIBELLY
NOT QUIE ELK to hear but the smell lingers for the atheist
unbridled preacher on a soap box both hoped (with
expectations) what the rich and powerful rarely feel
hope smoozing with no man laying with no woman
the go-getters getting it done by order and demand
to be placated obeyed consummated
by assets resources indefatigable energy
WHILE ME
LIVING
A LIFE OF edgemanship expecting more from ubiquitous hope
is why it's so dangerous conservatives serving hot lava
liberals vanilla fudge in lieu of gourmet subtleties we all feel
vertigo even with the bar set low (let me hazard a guess)
motorists have blind-sided expectation every pedestrian should
jive or shrive win lose or draw
meaning drive die or stay home
COVID-19
EACH ALONE
QUIVE
INTO HOPE'S sinkhole a quirk of fickle nature but to admit it
is to court self-condemnation self-pity self-deceit
did we trust too much not enough too little too late
the map misled like that diagram in our head searching for
a finale to reality (sideswiped or tallipped) a world for
ourselves our kind our brand free
of pain the other guy random fate and
BIOHAZARD
CONTAINS
HAZARDOUS
WASTE
STORED
IN THIS REFRIGERATOR
THE HUMAN RACE
DOESN'T
HAVE TO SURVIVE the universe loses nothing but another
species in a failed experiment if (some) angels lament
in a pie in the sky hi-rise barring hope's indeterminate
expectancy imagining gravity won't carry me down if
pea-sized faith moved mountains to the sea the Lord is my
shepherd my rock my chariot of cloud
wash rinse repeat
EXCEPT MINCE
YOUR
MANNERS SINCE human is my kind but not my type not
morally wrong if ethically naive as if sunshine was its right
the risk-makers and risk-renouncers both consummate players
of a lose-lose game with death risking no wager since inevitable
will award no prize few willing to be deeply willing or asking
why or why not why now
but rather when and where and how
BIOHAZARD
BUT ROSY
ARE
THE ROSES hoping heaven gives just rewards expecting
outworn threadbare social costumes to make do managing to
make it through weathering the storms wearily wearing
tattered sodden(ed) normal (all the while) forbearing the
rains lightnings snows
not expectant at least not wanting to give credence to
hurricane cyclone tornado
TILL BLOWN
AWAY
LEAVING a masquerade of meaning to uphold or we sleep
through the darkest days letting the status quo remain quo
don't upset the applecart rock the boat get out of line
the other guy's voted for the wrong guy (that's why we)
skillfully pretend we'll never do it again no not with
wit scorn or profound meditation
to be born embodied incarnated let
YOUR CUSTOM
BIOHAZARD
WARNING TEXT HERE
SOMEONE YET
WAITING
IN THE WINGS take that foolish risk of self-aware existence
find a timeshell thrift in following the illusions of their will
may actually realize a transient dream unexpected (even
disinfected) with hope despite the chances of multitudinous
threat greater than the number of birds loosed to the skies
starling dove goose
sparrow barn swallow pigeon
NONE OF
WHICH
I'VE SEEN I tell because they over-estimated
the risk of flying unlike icarus whose hope was wax
with faulty expectations for unrealistic ecstasy but
that's the recurring problem's lit fuse: we continually
confuse confabulate confound
BIOHAZARD
wax paper
and string with blood bone and sinew
I know I do

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

NORMAL AS APPLE PIED

# NORMAL AS APPLE PIED

PART 1

Is it...you know...
back to where you used to go, no matter if past due came true or who follows your lead or your machismo, none of us have a clue so read my lips: it's over when over, lacking tact but in fact a fact, I'm not taking sides I lean in either direction depending on the inflection of the flak nothing here about hypocrisy or opportunism just a cultural schism over the nature of infection begging for a theory of navigation above my station in life though you insist on returning to normalcy like it used to be so take a look-see in the meantide on that long slow burn to ecocide astride uninterrupted war paid for by greed fueled by the sleaze brigade intent on corrupt courts filling prisons, a very bad hair day you swear to make good when the fire burns down to the scalp, I'm out, your move, but for the high price of gas to go no place fast you haven't already been of late in the past and not hot on, so just visit with your Sony, Nintendo, or Xbox console, worlds untold, games with plots more calamitous than any pandemic's

normal as apple pied
its crust a splotchy, blotchy must for collectors
who by-and-by a four and twenty thousand
monkeypox viral load baked in ready
for crimson and rust when the pie bust
began to writhe, squirm, and fuss
as well as ping because viruses can't sing

which is a skill reserved for blackbirds I'm told moon knows, stars glow with no angst, I love sitting home preferably alone away from the sun, quarantined with a good book's normal for me, writing, surfing the Internet, thinking's a good bet, good exercise, cooking good food, sinking into goodly alpha trances where no news is good news, no bad boy bugaboo gonna skew the triumph

of those advances

take my chances,

hunker down but not too low I can't get up and go if it's over or just lingering, no one stopping me or you from the great outdoor wide open view if not fresh air then saucy or stale normalcy flat as a predictable TV series, but I digress, it's over when you decide, I don't always mask in public so take me to task, tsk, tsk, it's a risk it's called Life, if you get too close hold your breath walk fast till they pass is one more skill to make a muscle memory or make me an enemy hate

me if you will but hey,
play one of those 1300 hour AAA digital diversions
and never think about time again
read War and Peace out loud real slow,
a 500,000 piece jigsaw puzzle,

better yet learn new skills like candle-making and glycerin soap, there's no end to the sizes, shapes, and flavors, determine to get into the Guinness World Book of Records creating the first covid protein spike soap and candle set the scent of antiseptic, and used up air in N95 masks, or just chill, go zen, hang out let the world pass if one day is a thousand years but if that's too dreary long a game you got something else

to complain about

PART 2

if Normal...left them out
without anyone noticing we're in the future where illness was solved and all fevers dissolved, they even learned to like my snarky attitude but I'm sure they got something else to whine about since they spoiled, encouraged by a generous serving of badly-written commercial ads and dumbed-down flicks where they smile too much way out of touch. Climate change ain't going nowhere, neither is the next ten years of new grievances, outages, and outrages but think of the money they'll save when all those tacky fast food joints mercifully board up windows, I mean why pick on pandemics
when misery is endemic to the human condition,
and babies still take agonizing hours to arrive,
and a book I'm writing's been 20 years in the making
so they can write a book they'll finish that last belated chapter just as everything returns to normal, back to that job they hate, give the finger to that neighbor they couldn't stand, take long trips to places wonderfully wild they'll love to regret because there wasn't a Walmart yet
within 100 miles

buyers don't be beguiled,
bewary, germs never die they migrate to other lands without green card or passport not even a driver's license, they'd be wise to get used to it since disease is normal, misery's normal, pain's normal, disappointment is here to stay, believing the grass is greener is a cliché since it all turns to hay, decay and disillusionment's routine, death by any five figure number of things is a staple, where they been? a virtual world free from sin? (or its equivalent) but the deadly flu's normal too how quickly we forget not having a normal life is normal so let's give a yip yip yippie hooray to the not-normal Normal the pandemic's reminded us
I don't want to go back to predictable strife
but onward to some day when life's
truly, finally normalized we don't have to think
about normalcy, but for now plagues are here to stay some lasting ten decades four generations waylaid, you got lucky with a three year tour of duty gave you the opportunity for the chance to play like abnormal wasn't normal so go ahead put on that spooky mask, cop or robber breathe shallow, quick, maybe the bugs won't eavesdrop but if they hear then just don't inhale, not breathing's totally normal, ask the 60 million brand new corpses
do it every year

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

DUST AND GERMS LIKE MUSES

# DUST and GERMS like Muses

refuses to be more
than nine serving suggestions

if you have further questions ask my agent
who knows nothing,
but gives entertaining answers.
*anon*

One critical factor in epidemics
is the nature of the messenger
*Malcolm Gladwell*
*from "The Tipping Point, How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference"*

To see hyperbole in a sandy grain
and living pattern in a wilted flower
*suggestive misreading of*
*Augeries of Innocence*
*by William Blake*

## EUTERPE

**muse of lyric poetry**

Here awhile
to address your concern
how to find lyric in flea or germ
to enhance and multiply
a surfeit of parlance
poetry play or just common parlay
whether by chance or serendipitous accomplishment,
if you can find no use spurn but don't burn me in effigy
it's one of nine servings
suggested, repetitive and dipsted
sent with no intent to roast by boil in oil
attentive ears clogged by viral loads of loaded excuses
never far from close to raining in the dessert but morose
from inducing adrenal motivation from quixote
palpitations of neurotic expectation, gardening at gooses
there would be artists here no muses (as they claim
though inspirations permeable like dust and germ
impregnating at the drop of a hat on mushy beats
more than willing to be dragged into bed
dressed and hot splashed with cologne and flattery,
spoiled mongrel heirs to a throne (presumably disowned),
but them hit the road Jack if it's not in your cards
not in your blood or your brood or juices
even your stomach but everywhere else
in a which of a what of any a thing
I'm not selling any of, this is not a pitch
for a brand or a franchise or a line of neckties
I make of the ordinary situation an invitation
finding a muse is no more obtuse
than fanning a puff
or swimming in the buff without
embarrassing mine of armor
my only advice about nudity is
(I'll do my best)
don't try to take it
leave it on or take it all off

## CALLIOPE

**muse of the epic**

Just like good writing
has no in-between to admire
critics and fans are at the extremes
prudes and prurients straight or bent
hellhound or heaven-sent a muse can be just you
musing reflectively momentarily,
turn off the TV
from (of course) stealing the show let your mind go grpate
unexpectedly in loops and parabolas let slip in time,
muses are sprials and Moebius strips
Zeus set nine of us loose
Clio Euterpe Thalie
Melpomene Terpsichore Erato
Polymnia Ourania Calliope
half of which you can't pronounce to entreat or should,
go watch treat blending with your own neighborhood
if you can't find a local muse to befriend
or seduce or bind one to your ule pen
then design one invent or make one up
or when all is said and done pretend
send your bendy will to fill the emptiness
don't depend on a writing coach's consultation
for your exasperation, once healed you'll return
in the same status quo confusing your misfortune with woe
while some fortunes need to miss, prosperity isn't bliss
indisputable comfort spawns no adventurer in you who
waiting for a muse
is more likely
waiting on you
to do something anything.
we do by doing
work it jerk it posture with a pose prance even giggle,
don't lose your childlike wonder your willingness to play
mend the heart and soul sunburned left to their own devices
and while you're splicing see infinity in an undivided hour even
if only long for the undistracted romance, take the chance
or lose the spices of life to incite to provoke to be the joke
you be: instead the line of obligatory social norms,
a bum without a brainstem or recognition of a landform
though all around hills dales and sunsets incarnate
you live in blatand flatland which is why I think you still
don't understand or divine, my social epoch cortical oracle
yet I'll be here to allay your dread , possibly allay
to banish your fear but that's your trouble
you don't dare cheat on your tenuous bubble
of believism -isms

## OURANIA

**muse of astronomy**

"Reality is perception"
got a bad rap and a worse reception
confined to the solar spaces only the brave fly so high
to reach the, but back in the 50s tuning out turning on
putting the rug out from under readership so they believed
you had Alien the LSD-whisperer's How
but never got past a first draft and a sale
though it tagged first base it threw in the towel
this outer reaches required highly disciplined technical
know-how, an a sufficiently stoned brains muse or ruse?
nor do you actually need substance to consummate
the act, learn to perform snip the hormone trip
if a sufficiently advanced science looks like magic from by
a sufficiently advanced magic looks like science? good bye
you see how imagination works? it lurks in the truism
waiting to subvert, flirt with heresy and apostasy
ride the fallacy to your freedom's boundary (just don't go over)
muses are not goosies but neither are we swans
our words are hummingbirds winging their way backward
when not hovering in the air born for dynamic stasis
more bumblebee than fowl less ship than the places
it tries to find anchor, can you not agree with me
germs have muses that facilitate mutation
to novelistic-even magic-neurolinguistic shapes,
what's stopping you having a clue? nothing to berate
except you think it's ridiculous and badly versed
but that's the point imaginings must never (you see)
either to their nobottom worst impoverishment of me
traded for politically-corrected possibili ties anyone?

## POLYMNIA

**muse of hymns**

So then how shall I compare thee to a somber day?
was written in the autumn sans bouquet and lemonade
but fall
ing leav
es and a shiver of chill in the shade
don't wait for summer showers to grow
there's just as much poetry in snow
if you heap your plaiens on pleasantries
and miss the forest for the trees
a hymn to your inability to sing will ring true
and as much a song as an ode which doesn't require
an urn for a Keats your cabinet's replete with ballads
for platters of melodies unheard or desire
but be careful what you wish for
you'll only receive the obvious and the trite
(don't think yourself cleverer and swervette)
all things worth wishing are beyond your ken
they surprise you with nuance and a surplus
of what you can't surmise of freshness and shine
cease waiting at the waiting station leave behind
the vagrant motivation AWOL on vacation
you've just forgotten how to see and dare I say feel
anything more than your feelings seeming to be real
but inspiration isn't a waxing branch it's the whole tree
Ollie Ollie All Ox Come Infree

## ERATO

**muse of love poetry**

So poor Vincent lacking grace
went and disfigured his face
over a configuration of sunflower petals but spare
this portrait of artist as a tortured soul and more
the blight's in all of you sad but true and nothing I
could do when Thomas drank himself to death
after driving forces through green fuses
both were snicken by pestilential muses
and while delirium has its uses you best
bet let your mind hang loose forgo the noose
take a neutral stance about the vagaries of romance
see the world like Dr Seuss
sans the green eggs
for sneetches were always the rage
they just didn't feature in your reveries
maybe germs seems as a catastrophic cosmic
convulsive conflagration of convoluted disease is
the earth's pushy immunization against civilization
or what then does ? food war honor sex-or-bust
or take sex, please, no one can leave for long alone
doesn't take an academic's vocabulary or tone
or the hope of fairy dust to turn a wicked phrase
a string of crazed one syllable words (mostly 4-letter)
just don't tease or squeeze me for your one night stand
confusing and sucking below the and tales
with love erupting from the crown of the head
beyond and above known as a corona
as in the rarely fully eclipsed sun or the all-day boner
of a virus common when its cough gets viral
hang tight breathe deep and then some, we're double
the half passed half-ease half past and done

## THALIA

**muse of comedy**

Frost wrote of going home to sleep
what could be more mundane to explain
or write a rhymed refrain
but yet it garners universal fame, why?
he found truth in common sense
and beauty in a fence that makes good neighbors
though I personally believe
no neighbors
make
the
best
fences
and in saying so you've hopefully caught on
for you can't do worse than a little perverse truth
and a penny's worth of lies, let me help you out
and wince when the humor's too tight to touch base
but remember feet don't belong on the floor
not if you wish to rise but biting flies versus beautiful
butterflies, the one makes you dream for a God even poorly
dressed the other you might be willing to confess (it's a guess)
and like the germ s it's a matter of genomic efficiency
a design only a God could be subtle enough as to suggest
a hiding place for grace in such a shabby creation
you think yours the only nation or clan on earth
that deserves respect of worth? fidelity
to reality belies the most potent corrosive indication
to deity easy expectations of what a world should be
and is Deity?

## TERPSICHORE

**muse of dance**

And William as well as you well will see
in a simple to be or not immortalized his plot
everyone knows the words but what's his name
(though stolized escapes me) improvised on a large quantity,
if asked ahead of time you'd've thought nothing could've been
dumber or number than numbers that hardly walk
much less dance but if zillions of gadzillions
still don't fill you with rhapsody (ever)
if it's money I add and pepper like matt and liquor
nothing could be slicker to begin your fall from innocence
into dexterity the sooner the wetter is better if bitter
you don't acquire inspiration like a missing babysitter
under the early couch you'll be searching hard all day
to a month (if Sundays don't find what's not lost
or sitting tight at any cost for any ray of hope
for the miracle of rainbows
join only needed clouds
which are multitudinous crowds both in sky
and on the ground all round in wet puddles
from both sides now giving more in the way of illumination
than any ten cent uncertain flash of light you'll ever will shock
your uninformed plight from is writers unrighteous unrequited
-back-stock-back-

## CLIO

**muse of history**

I urge you in view of all this (and the brevity of life)
be reckless and bold get the story told if
pandemics don't tire you or what your appetite
to write, that salt and pepper is still up for grabs
any one specie of anything can do it
creativity isn't particular don't misconstrue, you are
too choicy but try to embrace this wit to wit
isalt infects the taste of food
or will I be accused of having used an image
unseemly and unwise but it works
it?sorts nicely when slightly abused, that's why
or try this in your constipated database:
a virus too small a bug to be
an insect at all so small it's barely alive yet it thrives,
and about death what's more galvanizing
than the mystery of your history or more inspiring
than your own demise start with death and end
anywhere you can't hide from your own life
no more than from dust in empty spaces or germs in the most
sterile of places both hang in the washed dried and folded air
reminding you it's everywhere if you only look so look
morks illuminated masterpieces with utter boredom
you know anyway after all on any day can I forswear thee
(cliched or not go ahead reuse a muse and then some)
or compare thee to
that summer's [mid]day [sun]

## MELPOMENE

**muse of tragedy**

or a loaf of bread or a rowdy goat
or perhaps a writer's influenza,
how I know what I know is neither there nor here
it's how I create your fear to stick in the throat float in the air,
reality is perception don't let science corrupt you
numbers only exist in minds
so every real philosopher finds
I can make you fat or thin
or faster than lightspeed
nothing impedes the daemon you dare to ride
but fear or pride or greed if you write just to increase
the sum total of intellectual property then once
I'll compare you to a jerk a slob a cad, a beast at the least
maybe get a life or eat a peach or round a harpin curve
or pick a card or run in place or kiss a frog or suck an egg
for love or money imagined good or unimagined tragic comedy
but only do because you do only that will be true
a stone rolling down a hill
is all the pull of gravity without
a will to find its way is a travesty, quit shunning
your muses your thrusts your wahoos
yahoos and voodoos and taboos, stop running,
I'm not amused by evasive subterfuge so go
off the record off the wall if you're still on it then crawl
like an unknown insectoid on a steroid or
try an unhinged lust a grievous need
a stinking pus a vein to bleed
a cockroach in a stew or radioactive dust
epidemic or endemic definitely systemic
I hope it won't have to cost that much
but do as you must

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us

# 6

*a short dossier of verse*

## AFTERMATH AND SURRENDER

"Someone is dead.
Even the trees know it"
*Anne Sexton*

# AFTERMATH AND SURRENDER

**but**
**Not without wars the wearied ways**
**of wasted fervor, not for**
**the longed-for balm the long-scarred days**
**though it be men in arms, famine, or the plague**
**who scare the hour of the ghost observer**
**for the ones that fall by visible ruinous blast**
**in any rout of skirmish a new melee engages**
**ten more by ten by ten morose**
**invisible invaders fly aghast**
**their hoped-for skies rent, relent**
**of warrior's flesh rough and dry**
**resists inside astride the desolation**
**rages makes demands and**
**then is spent**
**but**
**Not without want the waning leaves**
**brown, brash and brazen on**
**unforgiving branches cannot save**
**flicker, falter, faint before lust unliberated**
**crouching in long-unhallowed graves**
**impatient stems with flowers bide to fruit, withered, wilt**
**in silence enshroud the oozy clouded air**
**unfit for wings their wishes**
**wheeling, rolling roil-roar raspy windy-winding down**
**furloughed from lips burst ripe as bombs the far seeds**
**flung wage small remembrance on bare bones**
**strung among**
**a featureless forgetting while**
**one wailing, wind-blown eyebrighted hero-lover**
**living long, longing lost fails unrequited in a storm-sown**
**horror-shudder, unknown generations spent**
**make no stand farther than will sputter**
**only to rot unreaped and**
**then be bent**
**but**
**Not without words the lever lingers,**
**repentance revived, its hunger replayed**
**but not without anguish the rippling whiplash**
**riotous impales with rude ruddy pallor mind to spine,**
**yet not for**
**the sake of peace will its weapons cease whining,**
**bodies buckled under, breath assails**
**exhausted to release**
**while infinite worlds away watching worlds apart**
**plant blood-stained roots**
**along a river of nails**
**but**
**Not without surcease**
**the longed-for surrender sleeps**
**a sleep long on a door**
**that does not knock, not with**
**the long-sought staccato, the bars of night**
**lock**

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

## IF I GET VACCINATED, GONNA BE HATED

# If I Get Vaccinated, Gonna be Hated

(a young boy's travailed confession)

**If I get vaccinated I'll be hated for sure my friends'll tweet I'm one more effete chump classmate'll unlike me un-subscribe roast me alive in my ill-fated vibe unplug my voicemail block my tik tok call me a punk kissing up for attention not to mention Willy Boy we call him and his henchmen they no joke or what's the alternative locked down in my room smoke a joint in clouds of doom and gloom ticked off talking to my bored teacher on her boring Zoom hunkered down waiting while I hang around vegetating (eat cold pizza spike proteins baked in was rumored or somewhere somebody with a sick sense of humor) not Dad probably glad if I lost my place on the home team can't even be mascot it's mean just over a shot I mean it seems like I'm caught between Dad's slanted view and the Devil and the deep blue**

(😮)

sigh, I'm not red or blue or even purple, or green I'm
vanilla, just a fella trying to sit here and write a poem
not trying to right the wrongs of the world or pen an
anthem for daddy's dukedom, can't even get tested
for his showdown western, and I'm not the best one with
a gun a bummer, not my idea of an exhilarating summer
and that's just the start, it gets dumber and dumber.

*"Yo, Son, are you ready to go?"*
*a voice of parent from below*
*and you know what that means*
*you ought to if you were a kid once*
*unless you're a dunce.*

**You see, Dad's oblivious to my amphibious existence a poet underwater explore the dark subconscious then get up have to go out hunt herbivore rabbits in a state park after dark that's Pop's idea of adventure not mine I swore I'd say No next time so fine next time or seems I won't be making it to 18 wasting the day away streaming movies on Netflix (more cold pizza don't even wanna heat it) Dad insists he always picks the most misogynistic pseudo-artistic voyeuristic juvenile slapstick I'm serious what a prick yeah you wanna be a prick here's my arm skip the swag let my cat out your mailbag meow meow meow put it in a sack take it to the lake don't return to sender what can I say hightail it go to Walgreen's skip the parental consent false ID except bad idea locked away in jail**

(😕)

frowning 'cause lame's the name of this shame game
okay, so what if it's true I do become magnetized
there are worse ways to find lost needles in a haystack,
not surprised Dad don't read my poetry he'd quickly surmise
I'm not like him and what of it if he thinks I moved to the Left,
been radicalized, selling out to hug trees, please,
he don't know his son, I don't do dumb.

*"Son, are you coming*
*it'll be good for you" then*
*in no uncertain terms*
*"I'm not asking, I'm telling"*
*so gimme a clue.*

**Do rabbits arry germs Pop? what's the terms of this contract can you guarantee I won't contract anything by the time we get back you know deer carry ticks rabies chronic wasting disease please and they can sneeze no one masks no one asks while dismembering the carcass what the hell it's not so bad I get secretly micro-chipped from a booster Walmart probably hides them in the seams of their jackets you got to be 12 feet in range of a reader like a doorway I can whack it with my cap when nobody's looking or they hidden in a birthday bouquet or I get one embedded in my playstation they watch who I take out in Warhammer Dad bought it worst choice yet no sweat maybe my lukewarm pizza's wired too worse case scenario I microwave my stomach my arm I don't care I don't do smarmy it's a stinker**

(😠)

glare while swallowing the whole nine yards hook,
line, and sinker, scared to speak my mind,
take the bull by the horns, with a little luck
buck the system or I just endure the bull,
push it off to another time, swallow the hogwash,
man that sucks, a mole in a hole taking on all comers
while it just keeps getting dumber.

*"If you don't come down, I'm coming up"*
*and he will don't test him*
*and I'm not I just can't get myself*
*in gear but I'm trying.*

**I'm not lying**

**I'm not trying to be a liberal it's gay that's what they say anyway but no I don't eat pineapple pizza and I sure like living another day pay the piper stay away from hanging out with Dad's nutty buddies spitting and bellowing in airtight places bad jokes cheap smokes a lot of back-slapping brave talk one upsmanship shit leaving's not an option but how low can you go I know I'll go on with the status quo go with Dad's flow be daddy's bonehead blow it off instead he'll say 'man up, boy' yeah right and fight a plague multiplying sight unseen don't need a Chinese plot for that or a Russian scheme but Dad says they all fake won't take the bait swears by a troll in his favorite blog maybe but somebody dying it ain't a bone in their throat when they choke for air in a ventilator think smaller covert incog**

(😉)

wink wink but I wouldn't care if the cure turned me
into a zombie anyone can see I'm already
the walking dead, it'd be end game outta bullets
instead of camping out in bed, I'd be running free,
I'm fed up being led to a bloodless slaughter,
fed up saying 'I oughta' when it's Dad shoulda
fathered a daughter, dum da dum dum.

*She'd've with lips wide open & then some*
*"Go hunting, yeah, right, screw you!"*
*flips the bird, nothing, silence*
*Dad's in shock won't lay a hand on her*
*but he'd knock my block off*
*if I so much as posture.*

**Fear is not**

**a bad thing don't scoff it's okay kids rebel against being bossed not that I"m gonna volunteer but some do against parent preacher Sunday School teacher that creature from the black lagoon is what we call Miss Sourpuss end of the block lost cause oughta wear her underdrawers over her head so get over it if I'm offed being careless I wind down till I wind up 6 feet under if not that some other blunder makes me RIPeace like an autumn leaf without a branch but if I take the needle there's that avalanche of hate but what have I got to lose the whole thing's overrated by a mile either way end up a damaged juvenile shoulda just got myself vaccinated if belated**

(😊)

smiling even if the New World Order is behind it, the illuminati,
or possibly the Jews, no big F-ing deal if a tiny squirmy
tentacled thing's swimming in the brew, or if Jesus disapproves
you gotta do what you gotta do and if you need to, run, but not
get outta shape if it's all fake all of it bad news if
hunting's not my bent, neither is eating crow, really dumb.

*But Dad's a decent man,*
*I try to understand so*
*"Now!, Let's go!", and I went.*

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

## THE READING OF NAMES

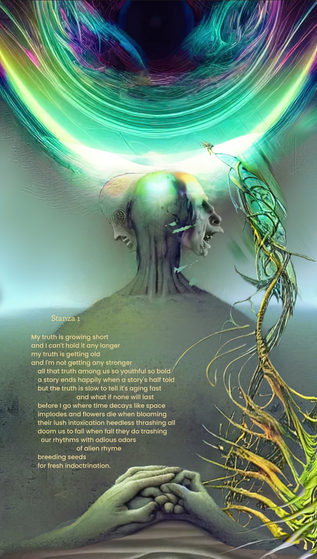
# THE READING OF NAMES

then Mary died, Frederick died, Lance died, and Lon died, Harry died, Larry died, Muhammed died, Leticia died, and Manuel, and Tricia died, and Fisher died, the Schmidts died, and Anja died, Hans died, Wilheim died, Liam and Theo died, Margarita died too,
Zacharie, he died,
Gonzallo died, Margareta died, Martim died, Teagan died, Bowie died, Huey died, Anastasia died, Birgitta died, Peter died, Skeeter and Bo-Bo died, Archie (Archibald) died, Jack, Jock, and Jake died, Hjalmar died, Sacagawea died, and Ladonna died too,
Guifi died who had dreams,
and Vilppu and Philip died, Matleena died, Jabari died when Obasi died, Bongani died, Ebele died, Farouk died, Iman died, Nairi died, Zavia died, Francesca died, Jiang died, Jin and Jie died and died, Guang died, Bedrich died, Hedvika also died,
Paki died as a witness,
Carola died and Cortland died, Nenet died, Argyle died, Bautista died, the Gatakis died but for Agda, Aolani died along with Kainalu (the twins), Bilhah died, Daya died, Saniya died, Gyorgyi died, Katalinka died, Kamini died, Kunala died, Domnall died, Aresenio died, Biaggio died as well,
April died in May,
Natsuko died, Sachihiro died, Logan lost Wook who died, the dog Atticus died, even Galahad died, died דובא, a Podgórne died, an Amiri almost died, Itzel died, Kolya died then Kostya died, an Huitzilihuitl died, Tamaya died, the three Jorns died, John died, Johnny died, Harshad died, *आदर्शिनी* died, Elizaveta died too,
Winona, a nurse, shouldn't've died, Neelam died, Fenella died, Stanislav died, Duscha died, Somchai died, Naowarat died, Sevda died, Volkan died, Huong died, Nguyen died, Nguyen the cop, died, Wyn or Winn died, Firouzeh died, Henry known as Hank died, Lateisha died, Cleavon died, also Morowa died too,
Kaltag died suddenly without hope,
Bahadur put up a fight, died,
Savaric died, Hammou died, Lisa who called herself Lizzie died, Massimo died, Diera died, Franklyn(n) died, Fionna died, Damos died, Balduino died, Kalimba called Patricia died, Ohana died, Shulem died, Ushmi died, Avgoustinos died, Roseanna lost Jimmie who died, Hanni died, Cozamalotl died, Gulu probably died,
Agharid died with the song of birds, Nabakalika died, Shaia died, Felisberta died, Norbu died, Wuhaib died, Miquella died, Ermenegildo died, Rosalice died, Beaumund died, Annick died, Dick died, Rick died too, Rea died, Ainsley died, Jolicia died, John-Jacks died, Zahari died, surely Shein died,
Abanimohon recovered but died, Steve died or Scott died, Malaya died, the Mathews died except one, Kaliyanei died, Qiana died, Maali died, Bosa died, Bersaba died, Bortolomej died, Yoselin died, Jo died, JoAnne, a clerk, died, Izolda died, Annelise died, Gurbar died, Mahmoud died, Christian, a minister, died, Christiana died, Agnesia also died too,
Madonudenu died but why,
Ras died, Nizamulmulk died, little Mari died, Fiera died suddenly, Alphonsus died, Adasha died, Manorma died, Brishen died, Kilohana died where Kealani died, Regina died, Birtingr died, Bhramatej the farmer died, Hiranyakashipu died, Saanvi died, Riya and Siya died, Ningrat died, Noosha almost died,
and Ben-Aryeh, a corrupt administrator died notwithstanding, and Manzi died, and the Manzis died, Tomasso didn't die then succumbed, Raeni died, Youvasri died, Elnara died, Chilemba died, Hyun-Ki (현기) died, Gulistan died, Taska died, Qutab died, Nojus died, Philoxenos died, Ligongo died, Peter Paul Panjang died, Jini died, Indrakshi died, Dharaa did die,
Pilu died as a man,
Abd al Sami died, Chingis died, Dyani died, Hiranjan died, Clasina died, Akunna died, Juhana died, Seherunnisa died, Yaza probably died like his best friend died, Narimanzadeh also known as Sheherbaraz died, Manila died there, Jenee (not Jeneen) died, Cipriana died, both Gregori and yes Levushka died, Bjorn died, Ja died finally,
Mustafa full of life chose to die, Custanti died, Jeewana died, Decota died, Oeznik died, Ushika died, Chacha died, Meia died, Daw would die, Manikonda died, Tenzin died, Huhulu died, Dymtrus died, Aunt Okalani died, გელა died, Thuong died, Андрэй died, Δάφνη died, Rion in fact died not Ryan,
Gesa died like a spear to the heart, Հասմիկ died, কাস্টম died, ಎಡ್ವರ್ಡ್ died, Francois died, 程 died, Неустрой died, Άλεξ died, Århus died, 明美 died, Zoe died, Zissel died, 병호 died, อังนา died, Bartholomäus died, Frédéric died, died جواريه, Francine had to die, ⠠⠊⠎⠁⠃⠑⠇ died who didn't hear goodbye, Gloria, Giles, William, Harry, Chavez dies, Lowanna almost died, Aunika tried to die, but Bartok, Smith, Sunshine, Ford, Handsome, and Sugar Lips, Ti, Princess, Biggie, Mookie, Chief, Honey Bun, Danny the Punk all die,
Horatiu ready to die dies,
Egghead dies, and with Heather, Rose, Daisy, Gardenia, Iris, Holly, and Jasmine, Flora died, died, and died, and died, and died, and died, and died, and died while Charity died, Faith died, Hope died including Claudia who swore never, and Fred who wasn't ready and with blasphemies, Elena said Please, John died on his knees, Grace crying are some who died, and you who may be dying if not deceased like Serenity, or like Destiny who revived was struck by lightning died, dies, rest in peace.

# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

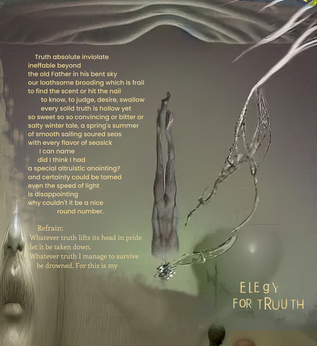


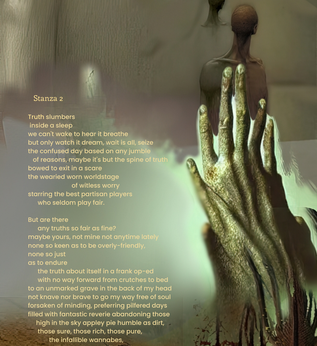
## Stanza 1

My truth is growing short
and I can't hold it any longer
my truth is getting old
and I'm not getting any stronger
all that truth among us so youthful so bold
a story ends happily when a story's half told
but the truth is slow to tell it's aging fast
and what if none will last
before I go where time decays like space
implodes and flowers die when blooming
their lush intoxication needless thrashing all
doom us to fall when fall they do trashing
our rhythms with odious odors
of alien rhyme
breeding seeds
for fresh indoctrination.

Truth absolute inviolate
ineffable beyond
the old Father in his bent sky
our loathsome brooding which is frail
to find the scent or hit the nail
to know, to judge, desire, swallow
every solid truth is hollow yet
so sweet so so convincing or bitter or
salty winter tale, a spring's summer
of smooth sailing soured seas
with every flavor of seasick
I can name
did I think I had
a special altruistic anointing?
and certainty could be tamed
even the speed of light
is disappointing
why couldn't it be a nice
round number.

Refrain:
Whatever truth lifts its head in pride
let it be taken down.
Whatever truth I manage to survive
be drowned. For this is my





ELEgY
FOR TRUUTH

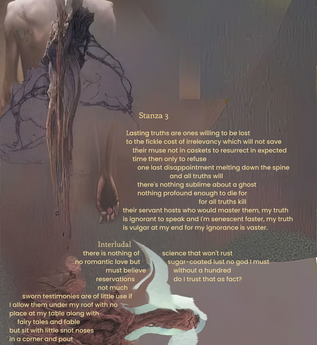
## Stanza 2

Truth slumbers
inside a sleep
we can't wake to hear it breathe
but only watch it dream, wait is all, seize
the confused day based on any jumble
of reasons, maybe it's but the spine of truth
bowed to exit in a scare
the wearied worn worldstage
of witless worry
starring the best partisan players
who seldom play fair.

But are there
any truths so fair as fine?
maybe yours, not mine not anytime lately
none so keen as to be overly-friendly,
none so just
as to endure
the truth about itself in a frank op-ed
with no way forward from crutches to bed
to an unmarked grave in the back of my head
not knave nor brave to go my way free of soul
forsaken of minding, preferring pitfered days
filled with fantastic reverie abandoning those
high in the sky appley pie humble as dirt,
those sure, those rich, those pure,
the infallible wannabes,
the ones that really hurt
those provocateurs of belief
six fingers can't hold them,
leaves from withering windblown trees
soon to be skeletal mockeries
that I was cleverly bought, you see
an amputee of credibility
sold to the most enticing verity
paraded about scenic runways in latest haute
couture scantily clad or dressed to the nines
brazen or demure it's all dead flesh below
my pissy waistline.

Look at that last virus
we almost succumbed to
left our anchors of wisdom
soaked in sifted sand what did we learn?
something borrowed something blue?
ancient truth but novel too
we wind up pandering to pandemics of truth
plagues of information everything swearing
for us, you, me some kind of liberation
of the least exemption
publicly, privately, small price
or exorbitant fee
graciously cruel, abominably
grand lit they caravan
every woman and man taker or faker
to their deserted ends yet thirsty for more
because let's face it all truth is pretend
as the sum of our favorite featured facts
our licence sticks and rocket ships
meet the arc of the world and bend
so, thanks, but don't send those flowers
when I'm feeling numb
as the dumbest of pain shamefully depletes
my energy, my dignity and then some.

Refrain:
Whatever truth has lied
may it be reprogrammed.
Whatever truth has martyred me
let it be damned.



## Stanza 3

Lasting truths are ones willing to be lost
to the fickle cost of irrelevancy which will not save
their muse not in caskets to resurrect in expected
time then only to refuse
one last disappointment melting down the spine
and all truths will
there's nothing sublime about a ghost
nothing profound enough to die for
for all truths kill
their servant hosts who would master them, my truth
is ignorant to speak and I'm senescent faster, my truth
is vulgar at my end for my ignorance is vaster.

Interludal
there is nothing of
no romantic love but
must believe
reservations
not much
swarm testimonies are of little use if
I allow them under my roof with no
place at my table along with
fairy tales and fable
but sit with little snot noses
in a corner and pout
while I pummel them
giving back abuse for abuse
lacking hope and spark my
in a lowering dark expectant
in a void or woke infected
I was never much
some are pretty
what's left but to exit
rejecting right
in my downfall but I will not, not all the way since I know
how to borrow convincing argument
to stave off thirsty times when the wine is water
but I'm repeating myself
so to continue as I oughta

with
but

science that won't rust
sugar-coated lust no god I must
without a hundred
do I trust that as fact?

stinging doubt
quietly now, subdued
used truths cover
of grimmer reapers sleep
neither suit my pleasure
for a roll of the dice type of life
but none are very nice
gracelessly by measure inflected
and good, both accomplices
with every loss my credence grows poorer
but that's are lawless believing many things
owning many and varied ideas, joys and fears
wearing their shoes, their jewelry, their wings
try this try that yet yes try on another hat, pick and choose
mix and match, thrust and patry, chuck it or clutch it but fuck it
I never met a truth I didn't want to many
then divorce, so much truthity around
evincingly cold with diamantine brilliance
I'm ready to be seduced by the next
eagerly saucy blushing bride,
take the boat go for the ride
because I can't live in a world
with problems that can't be solved
or a sin that can't be absolved
a back always bowed
or truth that always involves relativity
for complicity why would I do this, why?
in health or in sickness
and in the absolute of dying
since all things die upon reflection
truth is no exception though it
skillfully scorns the budding
demise from its wilted stillborn
something stolen just the same
something skewed something
maimed something
blackened something
bluer than the wounds
I wind up wearing when
my truths are getting fewer for
in truth truth hasn't aged well and
I'm not feeling
truer.

Refrain:
Whatever truth that could not see
I'll try not to relive it.
Whatever truth that could not be
I know I must
one day forgive it.



# A Plague of Poesy Upon Us




*a short dossier of verse*

SHE SAID WRITE ANOTHER

# SHE SAID WRITE ANOTHER

*A Pandemic Postscript*

write another
poem about airborne diseases.
Please,

I'm through lionizing flea-bitten dogs,
while sitting on a backlog of loose verse
about uplifting subject matters,
or worse
if happy times in the carefree sunshine
foster rancid butter, what of it,
truth will fail me again.
The

dark days suit me better
after all, but not things that run loose
in the night, and crawl and bite
and I wouldn't know till too late to
mediate a truce,
so believe in the Lord
if you're shaken
I do sometime when
I'm feeling forsaken
but not always.
You're

not old enough to remember
The Diamonds singing facile and footloose
The Stroll in days of ersatz innocence
that went.
Wait

therefore for your next catastrophe panic
Saint John will dance again frenzied and manic
a global conflagration fast, loose and free
soiling your chastity, threatening unholy infestation,
castration, cannibalization, damnation, annihilation,
where apocalypses will rally
all the 4-syllable rhymes I can muster
and enough 4-letter words salvaged from the back alley
for the most obscene, over-the-top, R-rated blockbuster
ever contrived, assuming
I survived.


Finis

## FONTS

Buenard

Enriqueta, ***Enriqueta***

*Kalam*

NimbusSanL

OCR A Regular (commercial)

Open Sans | Open Sans Light

**Poppins Semibold, Medium**

**STARDOS STENCIL**

***TatianaCTT***

## IMAGES

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For the composite *Elegy for Truuth,* 17 were selected, arranged, and composited in a graphics application using a total of 49 layers. *Dust and Germs Like Muses* made use of 23 images and 26 layers.

Finis from the movie, *The Gold Rush*, 1925.

## TEXT

All text of poetry written by the author unassisted by any AI tools.

## VERSIONS

This collection of poems is published in three authorized versions:
- Text only
- Text enhanced with imagery
- Text and imagery with introductory notes

While the imagery is an enhancement of the text the formatting of the poems are integral to them and therefore remains intact in the text only version. While poetic text formatted in this way may be included in the category of 'visual' poetry or 'asymmetric' verse, the author treats it as one of many elements of 'sprung' poetry—a term coined by Gerard Manley Hopkins to name the informal meter of his verses. In this case, the formatting and layout of the verse is also sprung.

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# Encore

I swore
though I wrote more
I would never write more than more
and I tried, but plans self-sworn
are subject to the override
of an encore

I must speak
of bovines, shellfish, fruits, and nuts
to round out the subject matter
of what's what

and how

there was mad cow,
a disease
bowed them to their knees
when the murrain went to the brain
the industry wasn't pleased
so it slaughtered them mercilessly
but it does that anyway
every other day of the week
by the scourge of industrial farming
is more than alarming,
yet it isn’t effete
to stop eating meat.

The American chestnut,
a mighty tree,
if you saw it you'd agree
past tense, it's gone hence
the way of all flesh, scales, fur,
and bark went dark on a
masterpiece, was untold grief
when the last leaf
fell, but hell
birds of a feather drop together.

So much for monoculture
where greed eats itself
since capitalist vultures don't feed
on wisdom but to peck at bones,
it's not good for a paycheck
since it makes us circumspect,
do you know the greatest food crop
not wheat, corn, not even coffee,
the Cavendish
make a wish it hang around dangling
as it has that unabashedly
phallic symbol
and if you were nimble as a fish
you could flee to some other sea
but only proving they must be
all connected like the earth topside
is all joined by the fabric of air
and therein
is the scare, sink or swim
we're gonna drown in it
nail shut the windows,
bar the doors, go down
into the basements for a reprieve
but we still have to breathe.

Landscapes overrun by invasive species
don't mind at all new worlds to conquer
while together we go bonkers
on the very large
but still a boat, sloshing
while variety keeps it afloat
somewhat,
apart from the doubt
it's the thing pandemonium can't
completely rout, but who can say
some monstrous mutation
may one day have to be
our new salvation.

The worst nuisance of all,
apathy, natural or engineered
this very human pest is something

to be feared, no germ destroyed
the bison,
the carrier pigeon
no bigots of religion,
or science gone awry
the ocean dies
from overfishing
you might start wishing
for plagues with cures,
lobsters can live over 60 years
but they all expire in 3
by the rot of commercial fisheries.

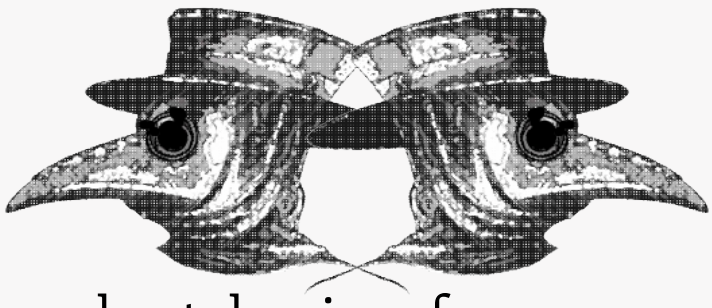
And what of the change in climate.
no comment.

Political division, fascism.
But back to the natural world
that suffers most of all
the Dutch elm, 75 million gone
and the white pine tree, 1 billion strong
who hasn't heard of the potato blight
killing them almost overnight
in the 1840s, with 1 million souls
lost included in that fight.

Deer and gorillas
with chronic wasting syndrome
koalas with chlamydial
and a fungus
that dangerously affects 200 species
of amphibians, nothing here
to prettify with rhythm
or rhyme.

Last in line
I don't welcome
the demise of humanity
nor herald it,
but asteroids that rain
from the skies of heaven
—an inevitable ill wind
to end the human endeavor
but blessed is the pathogen
that thrives without sin
but how
will it survive without a host within
to vex: by whatever evolves next.

a plague of poesy upon us



a short dossier of verse

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