

Poetry

The Poetry of Evolution

Robert Campbell *

ABSTRACT

The universe is ready, the pulse is strong and steady, the stage is set, a sigh is let, then quietly the first crude forms of man appear. His life was earned through what was learned by multitudes in suffering. This struggle has been won, but another's just begun to shape itself from apely origin. The first great chore, to re-explore the limits to experience, proceeds with bulges in the brain, but little other variance. This spans a vast expanse of time, to spare man's mind the rasp of time, to form a firm and finished base on which to build with quicker pace.

Key Words: poetry, evolution, cosmic order.

Imagine, if you can, the stupendous stellar conflagration
Through which the universe is born.
To the puny mind of man
Its vastness is a mystery that seeks to be explored.
To the mastermind that made it,
No speck has been ignored.
In what may seem to us a primal burst of being,
Another kind of seeing sustains a stream of worlds.
Countless suns, each in its turn,
Is given space in which to burn,
To cast its light upon the plight
Of planets orbiting in flight.
Moons and meteors have their place,
While comets try to win a race,
As rhythmic movements set a pace,
To harmony.
Energy—cascading through the cosmos—
Works its wonders in the night,
To bring to light a life that's right,
In harmony.
A theater has been constructed
Without a place for view obstructed,
That all participants might know the show
To which they come,

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Note: This poetry is based on the last chapter of my book *Fisherman's Guide to the Cosmic Order* published in 1985.

In harmony.

Our earth is there among the rest.
It's not the worst; its not the best.
It's birth is bleak—its pulse is weak.
Within a shroud of cloud
It starts to taste the breath of wind.
Companion moon is there as well,
And starts to tell the tempo for a tune.
Unshaded from the sun,
It knows the story's just begun.
It beats its restless, wreathing rhythm
Deep in a dank and dreary sea
Of dreadful mighty mystery.
Great oceans in convulsion,
Revolving in revulsion,
Have only wind to make it worse,
Compounding this horrendous curse.
What is this beating in the depths
That seems to tell of other steps?
Then just when things are at their worst
The tremors start; it's going to burst!
Eruption spawns eruption
With uncontrollable seduction
Till all seems ended in corruption
To quench a primal thirst.

But something's new!
These were not here before!
The oceans have been parted,
Whole continents have started
To show their face in place of misery.
Mountains grown like fountains
Spread their red hot running rock
In shock proportions.
Now ash spews into wind,
Now rain is known.
The ocean's roar is thwarted by a shore.
That marvels such as these
Should lie beneath the seas
To tease a tested memory,
That's harmony.
But still the moon
Beats out the tempo for a tune.

The continents are born in scorn.
They shout bald faces to an acrid sky
To question, why?
They shift and tilt to find a place
Without the guilt of being there.
Stark shape stuck in gloom.
Frightening lightning
Ripping through a wretched rage of rain.
Ceaseless driving drench,
Eroding, eating, etching out
The elements of life.
Wind and torrent winning over rock
To prepare a stock of soil
Flooding onwards into valleys,
While at the shore there's more
From the pounding of the surf.
But the continents are restless.
They squirm to get more firm,
As if to cry,
"Is there a place for me to be?"
Then one first fine day
A ray of sun is seen to penetrate the sky.
It glistens in a puddle
To play its part in now another
Start to life.
A cell is born.
A microscopic cell!
But what is that amidst the hell?
What kind of answer to a yell?
Be still and listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo for a tune.

Alone in anonymity
With only mud in its proximity,
What can it do?
In a muddle, in a puddle
It cannot know the chore in store.
But divide it can and does—
So do its parts—
To make from one a multitude of starts
In mud.
Lifted on the rising tide,

It moves to ride the ocean's glide,
Just to divide and thus provide
Some company.
Other versions, just begun,
Join in the fun
To catch the fleeting glimpses
Of the sun across the surf.
They move and jostle near the surface,
Then they toss upon the earth as
If a wave has bid them
Stay there on the shore.
The ones that dive there
Cannot thrive there,
So they die
To lie in muted memory.
From this selection, time's collection
Gathers for a new election
On the land.
They will have a resurrection.
So the past that didn't last
Is started new with just a few
Developments.
These clutch on shores
To mock the rock
And spew their spores
Upon the wind.
The oceans now are teeming full,
The land is covered with a wool
That mildly mitigates the scene
And wildly instigates an atmosphere of life.
A tiny note was sounded—
An endless cord resounded—
To the tempo of a tune
That's beat out by the moon.

The starkness of the stage has been subdued.
The darkness of the stage has been imbued
With filtered hues of light.
The gloom is still receding,
While life is still proceeding
In a regular succeeding
Leading pleadingly for more.
Plants have grown in classes,
While weeds have gown to masses

That multiply to magnify the plight.
Once food has been provided,
A cell that once divided
Is given to another kind of life.
Now its division makes provision
For a kind of vast revision
That proceeds from an incision
At its core.
It grows a skin to be within,
One it can wiggle like a fin,
To move about, and so to scout
For food along the shore.
Thus cells that once divided
Are given to a life provided
With new miracles of mystic form
And novel modes of motion.
Microbes are turned to monsters
That feed like fiends on former fellow friends!
What new sudden shock is this?
Have things been snatched from one abyss
To turn and once more go amiss?
Be still and listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo for the tune.

An atmosphere has been transformed.
The acrid murk has been reformed
To furrowed clouds on wings of wind.
Exposed and shy within their folds,
There often holds
The truest bluest hues of sky,
And through them fly
Some streaming beaming bands of light
That march in flight across the lands.
Crawling creatures now are many,
Though you'd hardly notice any.
Some have shells and suck on sand;
Some have wings yet crawl on land.
Some have left their humble croft
To look up and leap aloft
In ethereal celebration of an aerial liberation.
Exceedingly incited by exhilarated insects,
Certain seedlings strain to shed
Their shackles with the ground.
Plants take their ponderous plunge

But can't even turn around.
They soar to heights of dizzy sights
But cannot get unbound.
In consummate grandiloquence,
With magniloquent munificence,
Luxuriant splendiference abounds.
Some critters crawl and cuddle,
While others sneak and snuggle,
In great forests as all struggle
Goes unwound.
The strife of life has been subdued
In huge and horrid magnitude,
And given to the work
Of many mannered minds to manage.
Let's rest awhile
And watch their style.
Tiny partners pertly prance,
Shifting shadows suavely dance—
Flowing movements to enhance
Melodious magnificence.
Hush, and listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo to the tune.

Just when things were settling into place,
A new disgrace has been concocted in the sea.
Gigantic apparitions
Without externalized partitions
Have a bony structure housed within a hulk.
The first configurations
Of such a floppy form were few,
But new ones grew
Of even greater size,
Complete with flippers, fins, and eyes.
It wasn't long before a breed
Had found a need
To nudge their noses at the shore,
Then, as before,
A miracle of intervention
Transformed a watery convention
To the land.
Horri-fying creatures now have terrify-ing features
That they use to bring abuse
To others of their kind.
Gnashing teeth and slashing tails,

They tear at flesh with screeching wails,
To gorge their full on slivered meat,
Lap the blood for added treat,
Then leave the carcass in retreat
For grubs that find the sinews sweet.
Even grubs have turned carnivorous,
Why has life turned so vociferous?
What was a garden of revival
Has turned into a trial of torture for survival.
Disrupted by the rummages
Of bungling trundling tonnages,
The earth is trembling,
Life's reassembling
To maintain some sane resembling.
How could all of this be caused
In answer to the bliss that was?
May we expect things to get worse?
Will there be some bigger curse?
Are things reverting now to ruin?
Is an answer coming soon?
Be still and listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo for a tune.

In the face of this insane affliction
New conviction
Flouts ferocious fangs with fragrances of flowers.
These smaller shoots have turned to beauty
With a bloom for double duty.
They show a place to trade sweet fare
For pollen brought on insect hair;
Then they bob upon the breeze
To give their thanks in special silent prayer.
They stretch their stalks toward the sky,
To turn the purity of their eye
Toward the sun—then linger some—
Before they bow their tired heads
To once more fertilize their beds.
Brilliant colors unforeseen,
Caress the meadow's former green,
And infatuate the air
With rare aromas for a queen.
Very flattering indeed,
As they spread from sprinkled seed,
But can such fragrant fragile friends

Make those monsters make amends?
Hush and listen to the moon—
It beats the tempo to the tune.

The dinosaurs are dying off
As if their bulk was prying off
A lid to life of lesser size
But great diversity.
Was their massive size and suffering
To provide a psychic buffering,
To break the ground for newly found
Forms of fantasy?
Is there through it all a plan,
That's going to culminate in man,
And guide him to some final destiny?
It seems a door has been flung open
To a flood of forms in legions,
Marching through remotest regions
In research of mystery.
With new scales and skins and feathers,
They fight and flock together,
To measure every movement
In their history.
Into every nook and cranny
Through every kind of weather,
They suffer every spectacle of change.
For each one the scene is different
As they hunger, thirst, bleed, or burst,
Burn or sneeze, or wheeze and freeze.
They adjust and make some changes,
Modify their ranges,
And learn to bring some harmony to strife.
But when finally all these things have been explored,
Will there then be something more?
Will there be another door?
Is something better now in store?
Be still, and listen to the moon—
It beats the tempo for the tune.

The universe is ready,
The pulse is strong and steady,
The stage is set, a sigh is let,
Then quietly
The first crude forms of man appear.

His life was earned through what was learned
By multitudes in suffering.
This struggle has been won,
But another's just begun
To shape itself from apely origin.
The first great chore, to reexplore
The limits to experience,
Proceeds with bulges in the brain,
But little other variance.
This spans a vast expanse of time,
To spare man's mind the rasp of time,
To form a firm and finished base
On which to build with quicker pace.
He learns to cultivate the soil,
To use the animals for toil,
Then as his tools unlock his mind,
He starts to find another kind of world.
It's a world of his construction,
Which often brings destruction,
Through wars or insurrections,
With periodical corrections
In spasmodical erections
Requiring collections of society.
By this alternation of creation,
With hostile confrontation,
The range of man expanded
Till finally he landed round the globe.
He's now begun to probe
Into some superficial secrets,
With a science of compliance
To special rules of sorcery.
He's making motorized contraptions
With industrial adaptations.
His taste has turned to waste
In willful ways and wanton wars,
He's utilizing brutalizing bombs,
While stocking more,
In case some need should intercede
To eliminate it all.
Overpopulating cannibals are killing off the animals,
Destroying all the greenery, mutilating scenery,
And poisoning the skin of soil and sea.
Is this the purpose of the plight
From out the darkest night

Into the dawning of the light of life
In myriads of form?
Has all the sacrifice and care
Been there throughout the ages,
To end now in the rages
Of a maniacal tear?
Be still and listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo for the tune.

Long shadows reach toward the darkness,
Blending streaks of cool relief on blushing cheeks,
Beckoning the earth bride to her lover's bed.
Her negligee of sky, transparent to the eye,
Transforms its fluffy trim to crimson red.
Her husband in the heaven
Sinks his hallowed head into her bosom,
Joyful at her answer to his light.
Soft whispered breezes settle into slumber
Under pandemonium of color,
As a silent hand draws the shade of night.
Sweet songs of day have left a last lament
To a symphony of stars
Swarming far into the firmament.
Tired limbs are soothing in a pool of rest,
Assimilating chords from distant humming hoards,
Swirling in an unseen nest.
The profound procession passes.
A crowning halo, rousing in the east,
Repeats its offer of a feast
In harmony with heaven.
The air's infused with angels, singing in the dawn
To spawn anew the wonder of a world.
Will they help us tend the garden,
Learn its needs, distinguish weeds,
Give it room, watch it bloom?
Will we learn the answer soon?
If we listen to the moon.
It beats the tempo for the tune.