

Midsummer Memorial

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I went to a funeral today
A young mother, 36 years old,
Frozen in her body by scleroderma,
Leaves behind a 4 year-old girl.
Even to the last breath.
The embers of memory,
Traces of a cloud's path
Burnish the sultry sky.

Would somebody tell me
What the hell is going on,
When the good should muster a smile,
Though sinews and tendons settle into stone
And suppleness seep from rigid bone.
There are children who starve,
Women seared in conflagrant fires,
Tyrants who drain nectars,
Malignant plagues that waste and fester.

Death is the greatest teacher,
Shunryu Suzuki once intoned.
But Nietzsche riled against the metaphysical wound
Gashing at the heart of the universe.
And so we lurch against mortality.
Dangling from the precipice of mystery,
Careening from one height to another,
Hysteria and sobriety at our backs,
We search the inscrutable darkness,
Lost under the impervious starlight.
And there is nothing to be found,
For all is silent and gone.

I don't know what resilience is,
Only the spiritless spin of the celestial sphere.
Blood that runs despite our call,
Air that uncoils shriveled knots,
Ravages that stoke incessant labour.
Against the protestation of will,
We continue to sleep and wake,
Until our muscles no longer bend,

And rhythm drains from heartbeat.
Bereft of words,
We gaze into oblivion
And see that all is silent and gone.

Except for maybe love. . .
Love that attends kindness and crime,
enfolds from without,
And fills from within.
Love that does not dispel the pain,
That is pain itself,
Soaking through marrow and bone,
Leaving us translucent,
Coruscating with the water's light,
Set ablaze with a brush of desert fire,
Sent afield with the summer zephyr
Love that rides on the swallow's wing,
Ascending into the unsearchable blue
And dissolves into the white sun.