

from Auguries of Innocence

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

William Blake (1757-1827)

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from In Memoriam

There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
There where the long street roars, hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go...

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-92)

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In the microscope

Here too are dreaming landscapes,
lunar, derelict.

Here too are the masses,
tillers of the soil.

And cells, fighters
who lay down their lives
for a song.

Here too are cemeteries,
fame and snow.
And I hear murmuring,
the revolt of immense estates.

Miroslav Holub (1923-98) Translated by Ian Milner
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Out There

If space begins at an indefinite zone
where the chance of two gas molecules colliding
is rarer than a green dog or a blue moon
then that's as near as we can get to nothing.

Nostalgia for the earth and its atmosphere
weakens the flesh and bones of cosmonauts.
One woke to find his crewmate in a space suit
and asked where he was going. For a walk.

He had to sleep between him and the air-lock.
Another heard a dog bark and a child cry
halfway to the moon. What once had been

where heaven was, is barren beyond imagining,
and never so keenly as from out there can
the lost feel earth's the only paradise.

Jamie McKendrick (b. 1955)

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It looks so simple from a distance...

The way lives touch,
touch and spring apart,
the pulse synaptic,
local, but its stretch
electric – as when cities

lose themselves in velvet
under winking planes,
binding black hostilities
with gold chains.

Anne Stevenson (b. 1933)

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Fulcrum/Writing a World

‘While I talk and the flies buzz,
a seagull catches a fish at the mouth of the Amazon,
a tree falls in the Adirondack wilderness,
a man sneezes in Germany,
a horse dies in Tattany,
and twins are born in France.

What does that mean? Does the contemporaneity
of these events with one another,
and with a million others as disjointed,
form a rational bond between them,
and write them into anything
that resembles for us a world?’

David Morley (b. 1964)

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