

The Dominant City

The heart is the ancient home of the city. It is an old neighborhood, that cools hot tempers, capacious enough to include all sincerity inside it. Nonetheless the heart has chambers, the rich extrude the poor, and ruin them; while the poor stand a body apart, in their own sincerity, and struggle to maintain.

Downtown is a brain that rose from the grave of despair and ambition. It has arisen dead and risen like razed bliss. Ruled by the dead, it exacts life from the living. This trampled city centre, this trodden brain, has crossed to spiritual knowledge. The brain attempts to over-ride by Mars the Venus-war of our hearts.

Now the heart of New York is sick, it is clotted, it is heaving with adrenalin. We are rushing onto this heaving ship in squadrons. We make the city so personal for a moment, as though inviting people for dinner, and then attack them with all our might. What is fashionable today you think it will be here tomorrow? You and I are rendered obsolete by the power of the modern state, because the one who is lost is counted as absconded, and the 99 are witnesses who know too much.

What is war? A process of unmitigated opposition; the close cousin of business. Business has so much of itself to oppose itself, and takes more soldiers to the lines, and so acts the general of this long slow war. Economic revitalization salves the wounds of the slums, which still suffer. Economic promise is bounty and booty for the child at his sacrifice.

If anyone is still alive who understands the slums, it is the young poor, the poets, the anciently religious. They try to make a child of the Icon as it towers high and drunk. When they are beaten again by the peristaltic city, these are the things they say -

“I am the slum. It is the black eye of my girlfriend when I come home with roses and cry. It is the redemptive crime. It’s the garden where my grandfather swears every day. I am the puddle in the street. I am the man who laughs. My slum clothes me in rags but I laugh because we are the only ones who know how to shed these rags. The city is an old teacher and I am the first student to give it new answers. My city is a crime, but a sweet one. Like a cigarette for a man who

is very lonely. My city is happy for me because I have a date, but where is the wife of my city? My city drinks wine on the street while everyone rushes and spills coffee, and my city stretches out for people to walk on his belly while they spill their coffee. I am the last living alchemist and this is my workshop. This city is Tecumseh, and I am his curse.

It's realizing that your Chemistry textbook is full of lies. It means asking her forgiveness for when you were a Republican last year. It means that staring at the trees and the graffiti are like the tolling bells of the clockwork sky but realizable and that conversely George Bush's success rate is incomprehensible. That there is a bomb beneath the Pentagon. That a thousand origami cranes are useless. That spying on people is not.

We live in a country where to be patriotic in time of war means to spend as much money as possible. Therefore we see that faith has been monopolized by the Federal Reserve. The city is the headquarters of planning the new era (of money.) New York is our promised land (but we are still human.)

Nature was a mother who let us love her in every way, but taught us a work ethic so we would be all right when we left. And now we have become as supremely conscious of ourselves as adolescents and we've cut away from her.

Now good ones are trying to find the atom bomb inside themselves before the bad ones do. But evil people are as fast as cancer, and as blind.

I can see my ancestors on Wall Street, they are asking questions. I can see the cancer ignores them, it writes autobiographies, and never biography.

Do you want to know how I came to the 20th century? I ran away on a Greyhound - I listened to black people the whole way - jazz and blues. I was impatient and sad as a sliding womb. I heard the anodyne, I heard the bones and I heard the magic dice. Children of Africa like the sacred rivers infusing verdure into the city, planting ears, watering eyes, who bear the weight of aching hearts, and ease the monsters burdensome chest. This is one more reason why we will not give them good jobs. Everything we exploit must be called sacred. Thus we must even call the city sacred, like baseball. Jewish people are chosen. How can I avoid this?

Someone asked me recently if fried food is sacred. People are pigs. But our swimming pools are sacred because they are everywhere. Thus the city is sacred. My dishonor is sacred. I smile when I remember them saying 'Next year in Jerusalem.' But my cancer is sacred because I fight it with all my strength, with all my heart, and with all my might.”