

We Were the Love Generation

All you need is love
- John Lennon

We were the love generation in that century
of war and atrocities our lives spent chasing our tails
from bedroom trade deals to boardgame currencies
in cultural and intellectual capital
antique mating rituals in modern undress

driven out of the cities — out of our minds, with luck,
afraid they too had been made, had, by the killing machine —
not knowing if we'd gone mad or were the few still sane
in an insane bankrupt out-of-date defunct civilization
unsure where how or if to draw lines

between fascination imagination and hallucination
or how to conceive a reality unadulterated
by such stuff as the mindsets and memes we were born into
cookie cutter refills for entry level positions
accessory to the crimes that sickened us *ab ovo*

Impelled by sex-crazed genes to perpetuate our kind
in a shrinking already-overpopulated world,
exercise our lunatic notions of liberty
within the maze of dead ends and vicious cycles
prescribed by nature and enlightened self-interest

refugees from free-market evolution
trying to find a way out from in under,
to get behind the sense of loss at the outset —
the skipped first beat — the zero constitutive of the sequence
but still empty — the heart's desire to overcome

the problem blind monads have communicating,
the slim chance of recognizing who or what
besides reproductions of our own alienation
(cunning configurations of puritan prohibitions)
we keep bumping into on our shortcuts toward death

War Incorporated in us: innocence lost
at an early age down on our knees hands clasped

at the back of our necks breathing in the fallout
unable not to see nightmare mutants
taking over the plutonium forever earth

Street smart before puberty about things
then still nameless to us — racism,
sexism, ecocide, genocide,
gross national products, fundamentalist
religion in bed with fundamentalist economics

ladders of knives in each others' backs legs spread
face to the wall hearts on our sleeves stars in our eyes
individualist egos on the one hand utter
schizophrenia on the other — dog eat dog
business class anarchy in a race to the bottom

Running naked from the killing fields, bombed-out dreams,
deflated passions and kindred abuses left to us
by age after age of progress, one pyramid scheme
after another built on scooped-out hearts of the captured,
then crumbling in time from a waste of natural resources

looking for a place outside the solitary confinement
of an atomistic society in thrall to a mythic
autonomous maybe even eternal self,
a verdant fruitful place copacetic with the vision
looping behind our newly opened eyes:

a body politic of expanded consciousness,
an unselfish sense of self as loving, caring,
a symbiotic process and integral synergy
inhabited like our bodies and minds, flesh and blood
by multitudes of indispensable fellow travelers

Knowing as if by instinct to try to keep tight rein
on the military and constabulary, to update their orders
so they stand at temple door and civic gate
as guardian demons, occult presences
to avert war, blood sacrifice and corruption

Knowing as if by genetic compulsion to try to keep
pulpitry and bigotry far removed
from affairs of state and heart, yet believing

governments should be consecrated to our own
in-group's principles and tenets of faith

Knowing despite ourselves, in our guts and spine,
the need to counter *prejudice hate injustice and greed*
with *beauty grace compassion and love* core values
having nothing to do with theft exploitation
competition ownership or power games

Learning that diversity requires community;
that ideas are a dime a dozen only actions count;
that we seem to be not only intransitive verbs
looking for nouns but cognitive fields made up
of memory imagination will and fear

driven by genetic desire to be continued;
that every life is a cosmos every death a cosmic
loss every consciousness a communal treasury;
that what we leave behind is a smidgen of what we were
before recycling into merely binary information;

that our essential obligation is not to ourselves
but to this relationship we've let go to hell —
soil smothered waters poisoned air choked
family ties and animal spirits broken —
this mortal world this home we share with each other.