

Ways of Learning

Now that all human life is on the line
Just how long is too little time?
We try, try again, even when
Failing is not an option
We can observe and listen, it's not always so simple
We may not be open or willing to learn

Have you read about the Germans and British
On the battlefield in WWI
On Christmas Eve they took a break to sing
Put the war on hold, and then hug

Have you heard about those aging elders
No longer able to chew their own food
So their children chew for them
And then pass it along
Already chewed

We can copy to learn
Other animals do
But only humans
Can copy ideas
And decide to think it all through

Educe. To draw out from within
Finding what resonates and where one has been
“When the student is ready, the teacher appears”
So long ago it's been said
Experience. Firsthand
Encounter the world
Perceive the dangers ahead

Through interactions, and social constructions
Concepts, deceptions, and modes of deduction
While fears are building nothing but walls
And banning of books and stifling ideas
What we know in our guts may be wrong.
They tried to teach us paradigms
To guide us for the rest of time
Until they just weren't apt anymore

Learning for a future of dignity
Must be something someone conceived
In a moment of powerful clarity
For any future at all to be seen
For people and the planet, as though these are one
Habitability. Or life is undone.

So where can we look, where *did* we come from
Meaning-makers are we

Stumbling along in a universe born
Of a very Big Bang and stars cooling
Elements dispersed, planets forming
Through chemical reaction.
Then simple cells, then humans appear
In tragic dissatisfaction
In groups and tribes and tangled webs
and so-called civilization

It's ok if in death our decomposition
Becomes the nutrition for all else to live
And even if it's not ok
We find ourselves here in the great food chain
Exploitation just might seal our fate
In dignity we recognize
Biology, not ecocide
We're humbled, the future won't wait

Collectively we might find we agree
And then find we still got it all wrong
What we learn we accumulate
Right or wrong we anticipate
With careless mistakes and acts of waste
Of air and soil and seas and sand and
Little babies

Human motives, intentions, emotions
Have yet to be accounted for
In ways that bring the future in focus
At present in all that we do
As relationships wither
We're flailing we're failing
But, hey... we can learn from that too

And some of us have already been taught
Immunized against new thought
We have some *unlearning* to do
New ways of seeing, of knowing and being
Cultures collapse, yes they do.
 And species do go extinct
 Evidence though so compelling
 Ricochets and can't gain entry
 And who's to say who knows how to think

Pretend if we have to
Performing is learning
Embodied knowledge
Enables transcending
To learn is to grow and then to make it so

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