

New Poetry from Galen Cunningham: “Winter of Discontent” and “War Games”



OUR PINK FLESH / *image by Amalie Flynn*

Winter of Discontent

When in the winter of discontent, we disenthral the houses entombing our pink flesh; having too long embalmed peace; and make war on the money for the money that is war: when our liveries of weighted disconcert shake off their Judas fears, taking greedily to unholy plots of murder—when these “Sons of Liberty” burst their bombs into air—then will all cower like we were destroyers from the Abyss; then will our gallop into sun be the light’s last remiss.

No delight to pass away the time, unless to sport at people who never ask from right to left; who never look before crossing the roads to meet the devil and weigh their second option as a whirlwind comes down to hiccup debris, leaves, houses, schools, hospitals, monuments, and the places of worship where the holocaust is never taught, dissected, and avoided by those inglorious sons of flammable history:

Nothing to be but apathetic in this clime of ours; nothing too great, too small, too precious for us. War is a necessary casualty; and if said enough, like magic, like hypnotism, the masses soon agree.

Since they cannot love, they will waste the pipes of song on rhetoric, war propaganda, and budgets to pass before parliament, senate; through pentagon corridors; through corporate arms that build the muscle; and then into the hands of friends who need the bells and

whistles to break the enemy's spirit. Since we cannot pass away our time with undisguised deformity, we shall wear the mask of destruction, making all the world our mangled, hideous shadow.

The best way to deform is to conflagrate the area, eradicate the densities, and chemicalize their rivers, their tears, their blood. This is also how you make terrorist: you destroy their homes, their lives, their childhood, their parents, their memories, and bring grief, loud clapping like a thundering army; like democracy obscuring, choosing what to dictate or who. You begin by dashing their infants not with sticks or stones, but words like bombs away, martyrdom, or liberation.

War Games

He wanted to play the game of sizzle, spittle, rump and womp;

a game of catch the snake in the grass before it blows its pesticide—

of sonic missiles from Cape Canaveral; games of marooning ships.

The hide and seek of people and missiles, of the occasional burning hospital.

Fox in the chicken coop, quick game of tag; maybe capture the flag:

capture the people, the sky, the water, and all those ideal steeples—

those idyllic tundra's, ideological tools— like democracy to defend the weak

from the strong, and the strong from the
weak; from all of us from ourselves.

Our modern world replete with modern
religions, those throes of liberty

they wash down the poison with; that
colonizes their capital bundles lined

in island bungalows, chauffeured notes;
pleasure to steal the sting of thinking

the thinking that is crunching, corrupting
numbers; laws, taxes to winnow

all the wrong places. It's a game of fierce
manipulation of rune and language.

A game to see what conscience is or what
of it be consequence, if any.

Cheating, winning; who is counting? If
it be not I, then why not gripe;

but if it be I, let I become a monster fang;
indifferent, with visage ragged—

a mountebank of bust like Rushmore,
fearless because I am powerful—

a begetter of detonation, destruction; of
Palestinian desolation;

like Angels of Kuwait breaking the dry
spell with dessert rending storms:

if pacifism makes little of my destiny, let
the pathos of the great game inform me.