The Deconstructionist’s Lament

this is a poem

it is a poem about the demise of poetry

as noted before

(sue me if you don’t like it)

there are seven fundamental arts:

cooking

music

dance

2d visual

3d visual

acting

and

the spoken word

of these

only two are not a luxury:

cooking

and

the spoken word

all the others

are done only for purposes

beyond the needs of the belly

for this reason

cooking and the spoken word

are not pure

they are one with the science of survival

go ahead poets, choke on it if you must

your art is not the virginal white of music

cooking is even less pure than speech art

it is a long road from burning your meat

to the saffron bliss

take heart poets

specifically:

speech allows:

hunting

gathering

defence

war

history

cohesion

safety

and

whispers of love

these are the stones

upon which are laid the foundations

of humanity’s humanity

upon these are stood

the pillars of society:

magic, science, politics and art

and none of these

can be divorced from speech

it is only through the trick of speech

that there is room for the luxury of dance

speech is therefore the most fundamental

of the fundamental arts

you may speak of the dance

it is hard to dance of the speech

when speech became advanced enough

to allow the luxuries of the pure arts

it also allowed the luxury of the spoken art

storytelling was the first

the TV of the prehistoric world

the bridge between entertainment and the spiritual

with the development of vocabulary

came the beginnings of poetry

the creation of speech

with aesthetics in mind

and history began

10 000 years later

and we are all as dependent on speech

as ever our species was

those of us who do not speak

are pitied

speech is the norm, in a thousand thousand variants

so why is poetry dying?

the answer will surprise you:

freedom

early poetry

was full of rules

this had to be this way

that had to be that way

so many lines

so many alliterations

one rhyme here

another there

while great poetry was written

following these rules

poets gradually came to dislike them

even while venerating their proponents

the necessity of rhyme

dictated what could be said

gradually the rules were weakened

sometime around 1900

some poets finally decided

to throw all the rules out the window

even the use of real words

was no longer necessary

it didn’t last long

when poetry is indistinguishable

from speaking in tongues

the audiences farts and leaves

but even when poets chose to apply rules

there were no rules that said they had to

the art of speech was purified

each word, each line, each verse

was dictated by need

(that is the

theory, any

way)

i use no rhymes, most of the times

i change my line lengths

i change my verse lengths

i do what my inner voice demands

in order to become my outer voice

my only rule is that things must flow like water

except when they don’t

paradoxically, all this freedom

has led to an obsession with form

at the expense of meaning

when poets are free to experiment

the experiment becomes more important

than the reader

freedom from rules

has lead to freedom from an audience

everyone speaks

when poetry follows too closely

the conversational tone

then everyone is a poet

in order to distinguish oneself from everyone

poets play games, indulge their egos

congratulate themselves on their cleverness

because no one else will

poetry is not meant

to be a ghetto

it is meant

to be the most fundamental

of the seven fundamental arts

it is meant to be of import

to all who speak

the greatest sadness of all

is that it is poets

who have written

the death of poetry

finally, i must point out

that this poem is conversational in tone

that it follows no rules

that it is aimed at the ghetto

and that i wish to be seen as clever

in short, it is guilty

and i am guilty

of all that i bemoan

in my own defence

i will say only

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