

to die against each other
screaming with glee awash in
blue and black light eternally
pitched between sound and
whatever comes before fire
or after fury at being alive
with night inside our bones

we rise eyes aflame / masks
battling whatever dares
slow us down / whatever dread
chord punctuates darkness
whatever dies so we may live //
a grim compromise others
drag us toward like fuel

unlike swarming asteroids
pounding the earth / unlike
relentless words rattling
sentences / unlike agonistic
struggles to relate abject similes
to absence / unlike an effect making
darkness shine / unlike letters against
a white page stacked neatly
barely containing an urge to
erupt / unlike words from within to
rend language mid-utterance
with a low guttural growl gut full
connoting nothing as vast and
thorough as silence / unlike silence

alone thundering through icy
landscapes atmospheric foot-
steps cracking permafrost / echoes
back descendants wailing cries
through time reaching back for
heavy words / falling crystalline

fossilized nonsense aliens won't
care to recognize or decipher as
language from sentient beings //
our poems frozen in space mean
nothing at long enough time scales

devoid as we are of innocent charms

unknown others meet in our heart

sleep and destabilize our chest

we cling to that sense of self /
inflating lungs and moving limbs
against a wash of reason / against bleak
daylight beaming empathy into
our angry online righteousness /
metal around our most precious
ideas that we matter as we siphon
sugar water / struggle to digest corn /
belch and fart our way into oblivion /
life is what happens when we are busy
decomposing our skin and organs / our
faces and bones our fingers and eyeballs //

life is the lie we tell ourselves to withstand
the truth that we are alone / all of us
alone on a rock in space destined to flicker
and burn out against eternal cold //

what do we know of survival that
we haven't learned from our skin /
our cells / our blood / our breath //
against reason / every heartbeat
makes no sense / to persist when
everything around us says die //

irrational fraught human epoch
weighted to lose and actively
making it harder for each other
daring the world to end then begin

I flail into the night fearing it
when humans are the most fearsome
predator known in all the universe /
accidentally eradicating entire
trajectories of life while clumsily
voting for the least offensive party
out of the two offensive parties in power

we can't believe it's not a butter substitute
telling ourselves and our friends and family
we tried / others tried / we gave
such great Instagram stories
at the office and others didn't / so we
deserve the money and the fame

unlike a tree stalking a giraffe
and we get all the profit for leisure
unlike a note piercing a tuba
and blatting schedules to the stars
unlike no quarter for weakness
and a dollar back for marketing
unlike love against corn syrup
and high-fructose blood transfusions
unlike a tidy bagel-shaped reality
and life inside an origami swan
unlike another movie full of shit
and another sequel to follow it
unlike a snow in your boots vocal torus
and we live and die in this simulacrum
unlike a list battering ears and eyes
and disordered bullets flying by
unlike a litany of reasons we dyed roses
and affixed them to every door frame
unlike music at the heart and sinking
and a shiny new poetry collection
unlike an undynamic representation

and the phosphor lights dying brightly
unlike geospatial anything over matter
and a hunk of metal and rock in orbit
unlike science or math or reason failing
and dedicating more time to self-sabotage
unlike the respect due to authority
and I drop myself into the flow state
unlike me writing this poem over years
and pretending it all happened at once
unlike a save the date card for the end of time
and an automated thank you card queued up
unlike a page of easy aphorisms
and then a book of easy aphorisms
unlike the sun exploding to obliterate our planet
and we're still arguing about flavours of Doritos

and to die against each other screaming
with glee at the end I won't care about
words in the right order or spelling
or a poet named Jason Christie
or a poem called HEAVY METAL LITANY

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