

INTRODUCTION from New Poems

The poems to come are for you and for me and are not for mostpeople-- it's no use trying to pretend that mostpeople and ourselves are alike. Mostpeople have less in common with ourselves than the squarerootofminusone. You and I are human beings;mostpeople are snobs. Take the matter of being born. What does being born mean to mostpeople? Catastrophe unmitigated. Socialrevolution. The cultured aristocrat yanked out of his hyperexclusively ultravoluptuous superpalazzo,and dumped into an incredibly vulgar detentioncamp swarming with every conceivable species of undesirable organism. Mostpeople fancy a guaranteed birthproof safetysuit of nondestructible selflessness. If mostpeople were to be born twice they'd improbably call it dying--

you and I are not snobs. We can never be born enough. We are human beings;for whom birth is a supremely welcome mystery,the mystery of growing;which happens only and whenever we are faithful to ourselves. You and I wear the dangerous looseness of doom and find it becoming. Life,for eternal us,is now'and now is much to busy being a little more than everything to seem anything,catastrophic included.

Life,for mostpeople, simply isn't. Take the socalled standardofliving. What do mostpeople mean by "living"? They don't mean living. They mean the latest and closest plural approximation to singular prenatal passivity which science,in its finite but unbounded wisdom,has succeeded in selling their wives. If science could fail,a mountain's a mammal. Mostpeople's wives could spot a genuine delusion of embryonic omnipotence immediately and will accept no substitutes.

-luckily for us,a mountain is a mammal. The plusorminus movie to end moving,the strictly scientific parlourgame of real unreality,the tyranny conceived in misconception and dedicated to the proposition that every man is a woman and any woman is a king,hasn't a wheel to stand on. What their synthetic not to mention transparent majesty, mrsandmr collective foetus,would improbably call a ghost is walking. He isn't a undream of anaesthetized impersons, or a cosmic comfortstation,or a transcendently sterilized lookiesoundiefelietastiesmellie. He is a healthily complex,a naturally homogenous,citizen of immorality. The now of his each pitying free imperfect gesture,his any birth of breathing,insults perfected inframortally milleniums of slavishness. He is a little more than everything,he is democracy;he is alive:he is ourselves.

Miracles are to come. With you I leave a remembrance of miracles: they are somebody who can love and who shall be continually reborn,a human being;somebody who said to those near him,when his fingers would not hold a brush "tie it to my hand"--

nothing proving or sick or partial. Nothing false,nothing difficult or easy or small or colossal. Nothing ordinary or extraordinary,nothing emptied or filled,real or unreal;nothing feeble and known or clumsy and guessed. Everywhere tints childrening,innocent spontaneous,true. Nowhere possibly what flesh and impossibly such a garden,but actually flowers which breasts are among the very mouths of light. Nothing believed or doubted;brain over heart, surface:nowhere hating or to fear;shadow,mind without soul. Only how measureless cool flames of making;only each other building always distinct selves of mutual entirely opening;only alive. Never the murdered finalities of wherewhen and yesno,impotent nongames of wrongright and rightwrong;never to gain or pause,never the soft adventure of undoom,greedy anguishes and cringing ecstasies of inexistence;never to rest and never to have;only to grow.

Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question

About the Author

Edward Estlin Cummings (October 14, 1894 – September 3, 1962) was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to liberal, indulgent parents who from early on encouraged him to develop his creative gifts. While at Harvard, where his father had taught before becoming a Unitarian...

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