



CONNECTS 2012

'On Birds, Caves and Blind Hope'

Kris Demeanor

"He who stands with an untrammelled foot is quick to counsel and exhort a friend in trouble."

Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound

Okay, I don't know if I'm qualified to spin a winning testament to Optimism /
Once, in response to the challenge 'Write something light!' I penned the song 'It's
Almost Like There's Nothing Wrong' /
Bred on a steady diet of Doomsday clocks, extinction watches, Cold War anxiety, trying
to keep the only orange sign in the riding on election time from being swiped or toppled,
every headline, unnecessarily idling engine and basic human temptation highlighting
the divide between sides /
What sides? /
Well, alright, I don't want to narrow the broad commercial appeal of this diatribe by
focusing on loaded and worn ideology-defining words, so pick a bird: Ostrich or Crow /
The Ostrich, as we know doesn't actually bury its head in the sand but imagines when it
has it thrust into a bush, that the whole of its body is concealed /
The ostrich chooses ignorance to perceived harm, and is easily farmed / The Crow
whittles sticks for specific jobs and has been known to adopt the orphans of dead
competitors, seemingly against the laws of Nature, unless one recognizes in nature the
compassion and selfless action inherent to self-preservation /
So, I simplify, but if we're going to contemplate the cave where Prometheus brought fire
and blind hope to the darkness dwelling human we'll need a reason to leave, and why
not begin with the notion that comfort demands responsibility /
This is no plea for a Watchtower cover post Rapture paradise where all races mix in
Sanctimony Garden and carnivores snuggle with ungulates /
Nor the sweet illusion of springtime muskeg flowers erupting off a hasty reclamation /
I don't suspect I'll make the jet-setter speculator savour their last blast of Chilean sea
bass and go locavore /
Cajole the fully indoctrinated and isolated into vetting their default setting /
Teach the Humanites grad to understand the satisfaction in a perfect drywall edge /
Get the gambler to back away from the betting hedge /
Reprogram the bitter /

Take that path of least resistance and re-route it /
Tell Zeus that power can overwhelm thought but can't exist indefinitely without it /
While Zeus vanquishes enemies and chains friends toward dubious ends /
Indulges in random punishments /
Blind hope offers relief that even the most stagnant dogmatic belief can expose itself to
the elements and bend /
Optimism as uncharted possibility meets latest trend /
But there will be no meeting of minds, no means to engage, and the demons of suspicion
will continue to hound us unless we leave the cave where Prometheus first found us! /
We dwell in un-sunned burrows, with no fixed sign of winter's cold, of summer's heat
with melted fruits, of the spring when she comes decked in flowers /
Cave-garage-car-garage-cage-car-garage-cave /
Sure, in the uncertainties of the Stone Age the cave allayed fear and offered protection
from the spectre of the unknown, lightning strikes and howls of beasts, suspicions
planted so deep we imagined the humans in hovels across the valley horned and
ravenous, or at the very least, disagreeable /
But the physics of cave logistics means while you are shielded by the risks of exposure
you are also more likely to be cornered /
Really, I know we're all tired, but on warm sunny Sundays in my neighbourhood it's like
a neutron bomb explosion's transpired /
Prometheus bestowed the gift of fire, the light of knowledge and industry, and whether
it's a candle wick in the congealed fat of an animal or the warm glow of a freshly booted
hard drive, illuminations are mere illusions if they don't inspire the confidence to
venture and adventure outside /
Stagger on to your virgin verandas and squint into the day, wheel the barbecue out from
around back and send saliva inspiring signals into the paths of unsuspecting leaf
blowers! /
Fear not, it is silence that's alarming, stop ostrich farming and like the wily crow attach a
hook to a string and pull some shiny thing from a discarded bottle and hang it on your
neighbour's fence with a note saying For Your Amusement /
There is every reason for Optimism /
Zeus, in his lonely hubris, was so enrapt by the allure of the fully formed human, that
from this fascination there sprung a union with offspring more powerful than he /
A mix of fierce resolve to not merely exist, but be present and celebrate the connection
we crave, down from the throne, and beyond the mouth of the cave

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