

Ethan Goffman

Now is the Far Future

When I was small
the smallest of all
—so small I can't remember how tiny I was,
perhaps not even a fetus, perhaps—
I figured out how old I'd be
in the year 2000.

Horrifying!
An ancient, a wizened figure with an endless white beard
curved and boomeranging
thin and pointing in uncountable directions
twisted spaghetti
a garden of forking paths
Jackson Pollack on my face
in multiple dimensions.

It's 2019 and I am a citizen of the far future
clutching not a magical staff but a small tablet
of infinite wisdom
and infinite foolishness
more omnipresent than a wizard's familiar.

I'm no ancient figure nasty with knowledge
I know only how much I know I don't know.
I am endlessly young
a fetus perhaps
casting and scattering words
in intricate mazes of ignorance
disguised as knowledge.

The Earth Is the Center of the Universe

Some say the Earth is the
womb of the universe
The seething center, mother
of myriad forms
Oozing with vitality, soft with soil, pregnant with being
The sticky womb of everything
birthing its own self

The Earth, the Earth, the Earth
Not the sun
not the milky way
Not some mega-cluster of galaxies too vast
to be conceived
by us infinitesimal earthlings
the true titans
that created the universe

But the Earth, the Earth, the Earth, the Earth
the swirling center
around which the sun, the moon, the stars, the galaxies
Revolve

Nothing exists, not primordial mists, not emptiness
till we earthlings perceive it

Yet we, ourselves, our contemplating selves
do not exist, did not exist
Till certain chemical process
spun out of god knows what hell
or heaven
created us from nothing
allowing us to create
the Earth, the Earth, the Earth, the Earth, the Earth

Emptiness is not empty
Just as fullness is not full
The glass is always already
half full, half empty, all of both

Optimism is pessimism
air rises above water
water drips down from air
earth sinks into water
water ascends from air

Air is emptiness
the nothingness without which there is nothing
an empty universe
a blank page waiting
to draw itself upon

To birth
itself

Where else would self arise?
since nothing comes from nothing
Nothing must be something must be nothing must be something
Air must be water must be fire must be earth
the whole god-damned table of the elements
the whole blessed periodic table that gives us

life

is water is life is water

earth comes from water comes from air comes from fire comes from potassium comes from chloride comes
from uranium comes from uranus comes from something comes from nothing comes from something comes
from everything comes from nothing