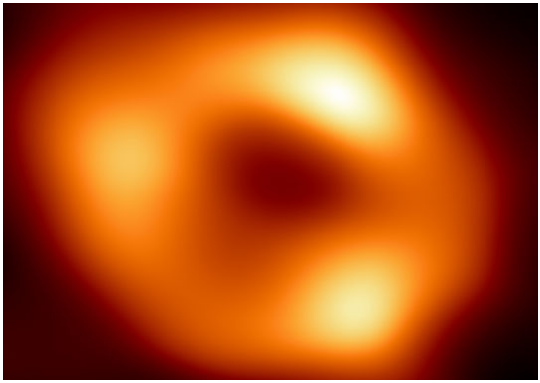
ESTEVE PLANTADA

HORIZON OF HAPPENINGS



Small selection of poems on the space-time intersection

2020-2026

© Esteve Plantada Hermoso
@ Translation: Jacob Rhodes

eplantada@gmail.com
www.esteveplantada.cat
http://www.esteveplantada.cat/poems/english/

HORIZON OF HAPPENINGS

The Promised Land	4
Nostalgia for the Light	6
Halley	7
Rio Grande	7
Accelerated Expansion	8
Fabula Rasa	9
Archetypal Scenario	10
That Kind of Silence	11
Pioneers	12
At the End of These Unknown Streets	15
Rosebud	17
Supernova	19

THE PROMISED LAND

To live is to flee.
To live is to flee and bounce off your hesitance.
To live is to let go of your hesitance.
To live is to name the escapee.
To live is to wait.
To live is to feel the breeze in this moment.
To live is to wait for this moment to come once more.
To live is to deny.
To live is to deny that anything can be once more.
To live is to learn to say this.
To live is to place a face we can no longer recall.
To live is to name them.
To live is to walk.
To live is to set limits.
To live is to sketch walls rather than vaulting them
and to make spreadsheets with predicted errors.
To live is to stop seeing.
To live is to make.
To live is to make the word meet its worth.
To live is to shelter in the word's shade and listen to it.
To live is to dance.
To live is you waiting to dance with me.
To live is to walk into a hall of golden sloughs.
To live is to accept your pressing body.
To live is to get dirty.

To live is to get your hands dirty.
To live is to breathe in dust.
To live is to feel insatiable wanderlust
To live is to clean yourself and head back to the mud.
To live is to cry out while wading in this immenseness of
muck.
To live is to pray.
To live is to have synchronised faith.
To live is to face the fate of once more.
To live is to dare to live.
To live is to write down this silence.
To live is to live tidal waves, certainty, insomnia.
To live is to hesitate once again
and to name the world you perceive.
To live is to laud the small things.
To live is to survive.
To live is to break free of the rail,
to write the blank page,
to sate famine,
to clear your throat,
to grasp the here and now that rocks you.
To live is to jump and never land in the same place.
To live is to cross over the continuous line.
To live is to not win.

NOSTALGIA FOR THE LIGHT

A poem is a comet:
as it combusts
it speeds beyond the sky, unreachable,
its mane facing the wind.

Up close, though, there is only filth.
The closer you get, the more repulsive
its contents become: the mistrustful comma,
its undetachable tail
like an idol it cannot be free of.

And you cannot stop looking at it,
now that it glows with the light of astonishment:
such is its frost, it appears ablaze,
such is its energy, it is wholly inexistent.

Yet you will never see it again.
Such is poetry: the mistake that drifts in the void,
void of rhythm (as if) weather-beaten by lightyears,
void of a place to rest, void of Itaca,
void of you, yet filled with the end
of a today which is everything and nothing at all.

HALLEY

I confess:

I imagined you as fire making the firmament bleed
and it shows me how to be part of the coda
-this shadow you that fades away.

I confess I live
to wait for you once more.

RIO GRANDE

The train reaches the cliff.
It tumbles down the screed slope.

It explodes.

I wrote a poem about it and now I am unsure
what to do about it all, these smithereens. It's you:

scrap metal.

ACCELERATED EXPANSION

I stopped in front of you.
There was
the shadow.

The shadow that dances behind the hips of this now I name,
the shadow of a fist punching for life,
the shadow whose eyes betray its lovers,
the shadow hiding in musty wardrobes,
the shadow between the writhing of maggots playing at divine
hunger,
the shadow under our rafters, in our sinks, between boxes,
the shadow that lives in the soul of every sun-exposed smile,
the shadow who strokes its cats at night, while the shadow melts
into a ray of evicted light.

This shadow
of mine, in this silence.

I stopped in front of ourselves.
Our faces, ablaze.
Us, in the shadows of a fire.

FABULA RASA

Every poem should aim for translucence,
and only as a last resort to entertain,
clear and precise, open-minded to its audience,
god-sent, the face of the world's hidden domain,

like a daisy's pistil regrown and come alive
it may slice open guts, paths, heels and hands,
or take a sniff while the dew drains our life,
and so on, a white lamb treading the way's milky sands,

projecting the mantis' choked prayer,
and regurgitating eternity's chart,
to resolve the enigma of this narrowest affair,
and be the chimney to a chided heart.

ARCHETYPAL SCENARIO

A sterile family in the suburbs
-halfway between the periphery and the hostile –
picks up the poem
and with it fashions the stuff of fiction.

By the end,
the poem is a bucket
and this verse
a complex
chimera from the future.

THAT KIND OF SILENCE

And then, there was silence.
Like when pain comes to its end
and you stand at the vigil's edge
before dream, sleep and death.

A silence like one found in a chamber
like the moment you lay the table
for an unshareable intimacy,
a noise that echoes
in the nothing found in so much solitude,
in the extasy of love,
in the way nature holds itself.

The silence that never ends.
For an instant, home.

A silence that touches itself,
in that nook of drawn-out pleasure,
like the hand that tickles reason
in the din of existence.

The silence of knowing yourself:

blessed is the fern
that survives all this cement.

PIONEERS

Music blares,
and the smoke is so thick it no longer fits into
this constellation of epileptic urbanism.

The men
drink.
The women,
on the sly.

There is a knife among this machine gun
chatter
the ambulances blare out while they step into
the greasy weight
of a bar drawing out the agony of daring to have.

So I have come downstairs,
because the music is blaring and because
the hunter is chasing two children,

downstream
into the thick of night,

a man converted into the extreme stone-facedness of a world
that does not look
that does not stare

that forgets its children
and leaves them, like this,
wrung out within the dazzling speed
of everything that is heading nowhere.

You call this progress.
Or notebook, lock-in, bottle, klaxon, weight.

You strike the piano
as if it were a convict's skin on his honeymoon,
a mud-smeared imperfection
that knows he's a show-off,
so slick and dapper,
self-reliant and infallible. You call this a path.

Alarms blare
and your heart travels through the shadow-guised
slicing of a knife,
one made of amber, as if carrying a rushed memory.

You call this optimism. The skill
of being alive and not realising it,
moving through the gloominess
of a factory-born blare that sets the pace, rhythm, fear
and the horror inherent to a city
where you were and are and die and relive every toot
on Ory's Creole Trombone.

You call this life.
Or home.
Or undergrowth.

AT THE END OF THESE UNKNOWN STREETS

Let's get lost,
you and I.

Let's go to the street that will lead us to the unknown.
Let's cross the pain threshold,
born from the seed of the world that has stopped looking our way.

As if together we could cease to think about the rip
in our silly, paused and lively
breath,
frugal like those we could not become,
so you, whole, baked like good bread,
so afflicted you could not stop laughing,
so you,
the coin that cannot clink
so outraged are your pockets.

Such it is, life, love, place,
the heartbeats where I cannot find you,
the streets sewn together by silence, from watching each other,
from dying.

Such is the weight of all your days,
they gallop forth like the sea coming to shelter a bed,

a bar, or a slipping memory.

Let's get lost, with all our goodbyes,
with everything that might ever bother us from the coffee table,
with eyes open to looking at what is hidden,
like that righteous howl that won't be beaten,
like the conquest of the Eden we feel, from afar,
may well exist, gets shaken and won't back away from anything

that is found
at the end of the streets that will lead us to the unknown.

Like a fatherland.
Like us standing in the daze.
Like everything we won't give up wanting.

ROSEBUD

Everything comes full circle:
the horse's mane and the lamb,
the snow-steeped greenhouse,
that other me from a parallel cosmos,
bananas and hominoids,
pests, miracles
and the light of every dawn.

Noone understands the reason why,
but everything comes full circle
and this starting anew feels strange
when it refrains from staunching the wound,
like the cyclops whose home he watched defiled
and the lover who coils up
in ivory towers,
the invisible rubble of erratic
stars in Saint Lawrence's heart
or the unruly air come the final farewell.

Everything comes full circle:
the meteorite and fireflies,
tacit love and disagreements,
the interval in a bad concert,
the chill of a Northern winter,
pelicans and bubbles.

Everything comes full circle:
the scattered mess of our bounty,
gangrene stemming from what we could not be,
the livid footprint found
repeated in a body count.
The faith found in answers.

Everything comes full circle,
but we will no longer be here.

SUPERNOVA

I am Nobody
-and that's how I want it

a man who searches for stakes, crushes grapes,
distracts the monster and tenderizes trickery

always cluded in the fit of laughter,
in their parched flight.
Nobody, in the tedium of insult,
synthesised in Prometheus' flames
while you all raise your hands into the air:
be quiet and do not name me

to be Nobody
is to be Everybody.

Esteve Plantada (Granollers, Barcelona, 1979) is a poet, cultural journalist and professor of literary journalism (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona - Autonomous University of Barcelona) and literary creation and poetry (Escola Bloom, Barcelona). He collaborates in various media and is the film critic of the magazine "El Temps", dean of the press in the Catalan language.

As a poet, he made his debut at the age of seventeen with "A l'ombra dels violins" (1997), becoming the youngest winner of Amadeu Oller Prize, one of the historic ones in Catalan literature. He has published nine books of poetry and has won literary prizes (such as Best Poetry Book 2015; Pare Colom Mediterranean Poetry Award 2016; Rosa Leveroni Award 2021).

Plantada has been included in ten national and international anthologies, and has been translated into Spanish, French, English, Italian, Basque and Serbian. He has participated in international literary festivals such as Marché de la Poésie (Paris, 2010), Festival of European poetry "Snap up! Poetry!"(Belgrade, 2023), "Jocs Florals" Revival (Cambridge, 2014), Festival International de la poésie de Trois-Rivières (Quebec, 2018), or Mediterranean Poetry Festival (Mallorca, 2015).