

# **Neurology & Pain Management**

JULIAN UNGAR-SARGON, M.D., Ph.D.  
123 McKinley Avenue  
Renssalaer, IN 47978

## **La Stella Luna.....7.28.07**

The natural satellite of Earth, visible by reflection of sunlight and having a slightly elliptical orbit, approximately 356,000 kilometers (221,600 miles) distant at perigee and 406,997 kilometers (252,950 miles) at apogee. Its mean diameter is 3,475 kilometers (2,160 miles), its mass approximately one eightieth that of Earth, and its average period of revolution around Earth 29 days 12 hours 44 minutes calculated with respect to the sun.

*As salt resolved in the ocean  
I was swallowed in God's sea,  
Past faith, past unbelieving,  
Past doubt, past certainty.*

*Suddenly in my bosom  
A star shone clear and bright;  
All the suns of heaven  
Vanished in that star's light.*

*The Rubaiyat of Jalal Al-Din Rumi*<sup>1</sup>

### **This gorgeous moon has finally appeared**

Still covered by a misty cloud  
But in its full glory  
It is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month  
And we have not blessed it as yet  
We waited for Tisha B'av to pass  
But it was so cloudy since  
Now it revealed itself to us on this last opportunity to bless  
Before it descends  
Representing the waning of our fortunes and the cycle begins again.

I love this evening moon  
I cannot leave it  
I watch it ever so slowly mend its way across my front door  
Tracing its celestial path yet so close to me tonight.  
La Stella Luna he told her in Moonstruck, "when the moon hits your eye

---

<sup>1</sup> *Select translations into English Verse' by A.J. Arberry, 1949.*

Like a big Pizza Pie...its amore!" we sang with the kids so often when things went well and we were on top of the world. Usually driving somewhere.  
Nothing could defeat our family  
We were the best we could be.

It does have a face, really!  
And it has moved so many men to rhyme and poetry  
Its grace and ivory quality  
In the darkness of the cold universe, so close to us, beckoning its wisdom.  
I wait each month for these few moments when it is full, so round you could draw a circle with it  
No blemishes, no shadows, no fault lines, no reflections of my own failures  
Rather fullness and mad dogs and craziness,

Even Shakespeare referred to the moon as "*governess of the floods.*" Those crazy tides  
In his dreamy midsummer night play,  
But elsewhere in Othello she is blamed for making men mad by coming too close to earth.  
Lunar madness, lunatics, we all go crazy in the fullness of her mid-cycle presence.  
I see why, it is truly hypnotic.

In the liturgy the ecclesia of Israel is also compared to the moon whose fortunes rise and fall in history.  
Ancient midrashim point to a moment of creation when the sun and moon were equal  
And the moon complained only to be lessened in stature.

She is so silent this one  
I hear no music of the spheres! What was Holtz on!  
But I prefer the solitude  
She too is so lonely and we two are together this night  
I am sure she sees me watching her.

In her face so many have written  
In her presence so many have cried  
Her topography is truly marked by the landscape of human memory  
Etched with the tears of loving hearts and yearning souls.

We too pray for her return to her former glory  
Equal to the burning mighty sun  
For I am sure she will remember all those who prayed for her monthly  
Who cried for her diminishment, her waning half the time  
Her disappearing and absence before resurfacing  
What was she doing?  
What abuse did she suffer while gone from our gaze?

Maybe we loaded her with too much baggage  
For after all Jews and Muslims use and abuse her for calendric purposes  
She is weary now with all the battles over who was right and who was wrong  
Who was closer to God  
Who had the sacred text that was divine and who had the heretical text.  
Tired from all man's fighting over hegemony  
Missing the importance of loving rather than being right.

She needs rehabilitation as well!  
A re-birth of a different sort  
A renewal of spirit  
Not the pagan wicker stuff mind you  
Rather a re-imagining of cycle and womanhood, fecundity and birthing

The monthly cycles that woman understands as to the tides  
The truth of the ebb and flow we have all seemed to have lost in the hustle for security  
The bleeding and fatigue  
the pain and the bloating  
the mood swings and the relief  
She understands all this well.

Our future needs her now  
Needs to integrate her methods and cycles not for mastering some ancient text or race  
Not for controlling other's behavior when to daven or not, when to light or not,  
Rather to succumb and surrender like she does  
To meld and wane  
To accept this fully in silence  
To endure  
To hold all opposites tightly without letting go  
Appreciating all there is however disparate

This is her secret  
We need it badly!