

Neurology & Pain Management

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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*¹

This gorgeous moon has finally appeared

Still covered by a misty cloud
But in its full glory
It is the 15th 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

¹ *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!