

Time and Time Again

Tenneson Woolf
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Time and time again
I wish I could be outside of time.
I forget how refreshing it is
to be free of cramming
accomplishment
or obligation
or muting an insecurity
into five minute increments.

It's impressive to do so, I suppose.
It's also oppressive.
When did this moving train that is time
become runaway?
Oh yah, I guess I have a little to do with that.

Sometimes, some times,
I give myself permission
to be outside of time.
I know it's a perceptual trick
but it has tremendous value
and feels really cool.
I don't look at the clocks.

I don't look at my phone.
When I do this,
outside of time,
I remember, only then,
how much I needed it,
and wonder, again,
how could I ever have forgotten this.
Like quiet, spring sun
warming and relaxing every cell in my face.

I crave challenging myself
into not just five minutes of this
and not just a morning,
but a day, or a week —
to return to what I know inside of me as
a different clock (the paradigm is pervasive isn't it)
and rhythm.

To be fair, my tether to being outside of time,
often, is to set an alarm.
I have a commitment at 9:00.

Setting an alarm for 8:45 is important.
Yet it is very different — this one time alarm,
and me not tracking when it will ring —
than checking my watch, phone,
my computer or microwave oven
to reassure me of not misusing time.

I am for being on time.
Definitely.
Good system.

I am not for having the timeless part of me
enslaved and confined.
I am not for this in any of us.
Chronos, yes respect it.
Kairos, equally so.
Practice it.
And periodically insist upon it.

I don't want my life, our lives, to become
a production line in which
the parts keep coming incessantly
and I fear them overflowing onto the floor
if I turn away for even a moment
to feel the sun.

Time and time again
I yearn to be timeless.
To take off my clothes and adornments,
that dress up the cultural pattern
of speed and efficiency.
I yearn to return to a more naked state of being
the watch put aside
the calendar tucked away
the forethought and planning suspended
to instead, hear the sparrow's chirp
outside my window
that goes largely unheard because
I'm so committed to time.

Time and time again,
I hunger to remember timeless.
It too, is who I am,
and who we are.

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