

PSALM

for Northrop Frye

1. God, for ages I did not know you – I never believed the pious gossip about you – I never listened to the childish fairy tales – and I was right, for now I know you.

2. You are the rosy smile of my child – and that which preceded it – and that which remains after it has disappeared.

3. You are the feverish fusing of bodies – the desire before and the satisfaction after – you are what changed into lust into love into pain – and you still remain what you always have been.

4. You are the hatred in my heart – against those who cut through my circles – and that which was before this hatred – and that which remains untouched by its flames.

5. You are this pair of scissors on my desk – and the cigarette I am smoking – and the paper and the pen and even this poem – you allowed all of these to spring forth from you – and yet you are not diminished.

6. You are the totality of galaxies that keeps a zillion solar systems hurtling within them – you are the prime nebula, their source – you are void itself which condensed into that prime nebula – and you, the idea of that void – you are the specks of dust drifting into my nostrils – you, the world without me and the worlds within me – but you are also beyond.

7. You are space and time – this cosmos is perhaps the vaguest of your thoughts – but while you metamorphose into something else – space and time remain – and you are both what they were and what they become – and also something more.

8. You are entropy which goes from hot to cold – from movement to stillness – from smoothness to roughness – from brightness to darkness – and while advancing, you are adventurous – leaving nothing to chance in your numberless changes – you are youthfulness which is aging – but as you are born and living and dying – you remain ever-young, ever-old – for all the ages are like changing cells – in your ageless body which remains unchanged.

9. You are the number One – which becomes two and three and ten – and a hundred and a million and all the fractions and all the waves – you are also the One made up of millions – the nothing as well as infinity – the mother as well as the children of One – you are the twig and the branch and the bough – the leaf and the bud and the flower – the seed and the trunk – and you are the tree.

10. Now I know you, God: – you are possibility itself – the main theme followed by endless variations – sighing lovers, thunderstorms, wandering clouds, expanding universes, whining puppies, flickering moonlight, giggling babies, exploding volcanoes, grains of sand, alternating sunspots – you are the possibility with a thousand faces – all that exists are your grimaces – but your face is one.

11. Oh, how many words I have spoken and written so far – throughout the minute eternity which I call my life – how many loves I have stormed through – how many nights I have spent with heated discussions – how many thoughts have dashed through my brain – how much laughter I provoked and how many games I invented – how many letters I wrote to how many friends – how many blades of grass I trampled upon – how many paintings and stars I saw with my eyes – how many voices and melodies I heard with my ears!

12. Has everything fallen into the stream of the past? – will even the future fall into it? – will everything fall through the sieve of time and be swept away tracelessly by the storm of your change? – will even I fall through the sieve of time and not be saved even as a memory or a fossil?

13. Answer me, God, will even I – who was and is a god unto himself – a predetermined unfolding of endless possibilities through chains of coincidences – my poems like grimaces – my words and sentences like twigs and branches – my deeds like so many changes in colour – will even I be swept away by the wind of your law – and freeze into nothingness, nowhere, neverness?

14. I am hearing the swell of a great organ – your voice rising out of the ground – resounding from the far corners of the world:

15. “Divine mote of dust, do not fear! – Spark on a sea of fire, do not worry! – You will forget everything and wake in me! – I will remember everything and you shall be me – I who was – I who am – I who will be – from time immemorial – through the eternity-long instances – until the end of time – everywhere, every beginning and every amen!”

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