

Religious Conviction

by Brian Bell

The comfort of conviction,
Is the simplicity of ignorance:

The absurdity of a God who loves unconditionally,
But finds justice in torment.

The polar marriage of Jesus' love
And his father's justice,
Celestial light refracted
Into ochre shadows flickering on stone,
From gas and fire and perpetual pain.

The absurdity of
The foisting of life's gift
Without consent or agreement,
Given with freedom of will,
Yet somehow conditioned on living,
The gift as God wills.

A conceptual obligation,
That will every time,
Repudiate the freedom it offers,
A tethered Dog.

The guilt ridden and repressive
Codification of a devout life,
Borne from fear,
And rank with the flaws of man,
And centuries of festering humanity.

Thousands of religions all convinced,
In the sanctity of their pathway;
And equally steadfast in the waywardness of the others'.

If someone must be wrong,
What chance has any
Of being right?

Such evidence suggests multiple ways;
But threatens;
All those who have yet to concede
That life's certainties are the shadows of hummingbirds.

Certainties built on unquestioned absurdities,
The logical disconnection between a God who made man
But had no creator himself.
Like a firework exploding on the horizon,
Without rocket or powder.

Something from nothing –
Rationalized as reasonable
By a people who know nothing
But lineage, birth, mitosis.

Does this not affirm,
The tenuity of conviction.

As the best we can do,
With the little we have,
The viable wrong answer.

In the purview of eternity,
Human life is the arc of static at finger's tip.
What is death,
What is pain,
What is right and wrong,
But myopic fears
Of a people,
Unable to fathom,
The fathomless;

Content to carve those fears,
With chisel into stone,
With ink into paper,
With claw and knife into flesh,
And insinuate them as God's direction.