New York ’98

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Aidan Lyncaro is a pseudonym for a Canadian Ph.D. candidate specializing in Slavics. Aidan has previously published in the United States and with the web ezine ‘Word Salad.’ Aidan commutes to work on a 198, mint condition, Honda Rebel, 250.

I am a piloteer techno explorer
palm pilot subway map in hand
old enough to remember orienteering with map and compass
internal navigational sense without global positioning satellites
but progressive and wise to embrace technology

distance bridged by satellites and land microwave towers
you at Mont Tremblant Quebec
me in a car coasting past the chemical farms
of Elizabeth New Jersey
more storage tanks
than jersey cows in the Garden State

our long conversation on the mobile lingers
suspended in the haze
each word a breathless syllable

George Washington bridge shines like a jewel
in the misty morning light
rich York poor York
New York of contradictions

Pier 76 on the Hudson wears the faded name United States Line
in 1956 we disembarked the fastest ocean liner
SS United States majestic proud ambassador of hope
immigrant dreams in my father’s pocket
burning a hole with ambition
an American! he was going to be an American!
sweet land of liberty
of thee he sang
as the trunks revealed their meager cargo
mother's china all the way to New York
from France to America
from war's end and poverty to promise
promise and dreams

and the mobile conversation
dangles in the air
me here you there
everywhere
in poor York rich York
New York of contradictions

two newly minted jacksons and an honest abe or two
buy bvlgari at Saks
the animated shop window dressing is free
for passers-by patient enough to wait
one by one

homeless with their possessions, plastic bags not from Saks
praying in the nave of Saint Patrick’s
for redemption and the next meal

I light a candle and pray
a Vivaldi summer
brought promise and transition
from the imagined to the real
the prayer floats on angel wings
within St. Patrick’s walls
lifting my intention to the universe in a trance
a portal fitting of New York
reflecting in Cologne like a digital image

clean streets
once mean streets
scented by the smoke of oversized pretzels grilling on coals
bagels large as transport truck tires
in the child’s recollection cuisine

Times Square incandescent glow gone
light bulbs replaced
hi-tech computerized razzle
past the neon dazzle
getting ready for 99

arrogant cabs armored grills
no fear
heart stopping maneuvers
my car left to jockey
through traffic-choked Broadway and the Avenue of the Americas
heart pounding

beneath the surface
safe within
the subterranean efficiency worming through tunnels
a buck fifty to ride transfer and arrive
without the need for cardio pulmonary resuscitation

subway tokens with their pentagonal centers
brass life savers jingle in my pocket
in time to the tintinnabulation of
rockefeller bells

Rockefeller wire angels all in white
ignore the December twenty-ninth rain
trumpet gabriels herald
peace on earth goodwill
just around the corner from Saks Fifth Avenue
where homeless street angels huddle on the subway grate
in the ozone-tinged rising heat

Grand Central Terminal
constellations trigger memories
of a Ferlinghetti Coney Island of the Mind
‘when Christ climbed down from His bare Tree
and ran away to where
there were no rootless Christmas trees
hung with candy canes and breakable stars'

loose change on the streets
subway stairs
copper pennies
embedded in the hot summer asphalt
pave Broadway and 42nd
enough in the collection for one subway ride to Whitehall
the bullish market wall
two pebbles disappear into my pocket
as a souvenir of the rock foundation
heart and soul create

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like a jewel in the misty night
rich York poor York
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