

Looking Forward

I stand, surrounded by forest, aware
of the river flowing nearby,
in a spot where,
ten thousand years from today,
you will sit in your car cursing
a 30-minute delay
at the toll booth for the great bridge.

My people are fewer than yours.
But, precisely for this reason,
we are known—each to all of the others.

I love as you do, only more, since
every one of these known to me
is like your sister or brother is to you,
or else, being one of my sibling's children,
as dear as my own.

Take a new-born from my world,
raise her in yours, and she
would surely feel at ease—at least
as much as a child of your century.
The same would be true in reverse,
of course, for we are of the same flesh.

A linguist will tell you
that there is nothing “primitive”
about my language. I have
all of the syntax, all of the grammar
anyone might need to discuss the details
of jet engines, or cosmetic surgery.
The only thing lacking is vocabulary.

I share all of your human appetites
(except those related to power,
and money—which no one
has invented yet). Like you,
I have an urge to explore,
and to express myself.
Of course, in these things, too, I lack
most of your vocabulary. Still
I cannot miss a world
that is beyond my imagining.
And so I feel content.

You, who have discovered
so much vocabulary,
but still do not feel content:
Have you ever stopped to wonder
what worlds might exist
that are beyond your imagining?

Steve Bloom
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