

Anthology of Trenz Pruca



Presented by

My poetic Side 

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Conservation of Reality -- Homage to Sir Terry Pratchett.

Imagine a law exists
governing the Conservation of Reality.

It would state
it would take
the same amount of effort
to do something with magic
as doing it without.

Why bother toying
with the infinite unknown
of the universe
when you can just get up
and do the dishes
yourself?

$$M = R(I \times I)$$

Magic equals Reality times Imagination squared.

Burke Agonistes.

I woke from a bad dream one morning
Like a child believing sunlight
Drove away the shadows
Of my nocturnal fears.
Sending them to scurry
And hide in dark places.
Only to discover those creatures
I could not escape at night
Awaited me in the blossoming day.

An Unfinished Life and Poem

I have reached that place in life
Where the new days excitement
Overwhelms despair leaking
in from the old.

I am a dilettante
I revel in knowing
Obscure facts and fancies
Of human history.

I find life's events
More humorous
In retrospect
Than whenever
They happened.

I arrived at old age,
Without harming others
More than I have
Harmed myself

Under the Battered Cap

Under the battered cap
And more battered mustache.
Slumped against the crooked railing.
Hands wedged in pockets.

A woman with a spear
A bottle, a fish's tail
A smile that said
She'd seen things
You couldn't dream of
On a sign creaking above.

Somewhere he had read,
Enemies are like furniture,
Better chosen for oneself than inherited.

Life terrifies,
No rule books.
None know
What we're doing here.
To stare reality
In the face,
To not utterly
Lose your shit,
To believe
You have control over it.

A creak in the night,
A smile,
more grimace
than smile.

Shame is good.

Shame is right.

Shame works.

Shame the gateway emotion

To self-criticism,

To realization,

To an apology, outrage

To meaningful action.

We remember those

Who decide

How our maps

Should be drawn.

Noone remembers

Who built the roads.

All that happens matters

Only from what you can learn from it.

I revel in obscure facts

I revel in obscure facts
and history's random events.

I am empathy dangerous without sympathy,
blind sympathy lacking empathy.

I am what I tell myself
to keep away the darkness.

I dance on the edge of a volcano

I have been a long time on the road.
I am on the road and coming.

Do you want to know what they would say if you asked?
Or do you want to know why they're really so upset?

If you asked,
they would tell you
people could have
gotten hurt.

They're really worried
They don't know what to do with me.
No one wants the responsibility.
No one wants it to be their fault.

It makes them uncomfortable.
I can't be fixed,
They think they can.

They'll keep trying to pass me off
to someone who can.

My parents to the school,
the school to my parents.

I don't need to be fixed
I just have to be ready
for the moment
they stop trying.

I cannot despise them
without acknowledging
their importance.

Naida's Evening

After two more
Baby Blue Eyes
and hair strokes
in the room,
the door closes
enough to confirm
conscious ears. Whew!
Usually.

You and I

We sing the same songs
you and I.

We prefer the adventure of discovery
to the safety of knowledge;
white lies becoming
black truths;
air as thick as aspic
with a clammy heaviness
and a tang of ozone;
the subtle chill
when the sun is gone.

The world is too complex for most things.
Neither purely right nor wrong.
Words, actions, even intent
depends upon
who does the viewing
and who is being viewed.

The things we mean
to do.
rarely match
our accomplishments.

We have no idea
what we've cost each other
nor the faintest trace
of understanding.

You and I
sing the same songs.

When We Did things Like This,

In the 1970s,
when we did things like this,
I would sometimes travel
to an artist commune
on a mountain
just outside of Hopland,
where we would assemble
in a meadow
halfway up the mountain
get stoned and play music.

Krishna Bhatt would play his sitar;
his girlfriend,
a tiny slip of a girl,
would improvise on
a delightfully ethereal flute;
whatever other musicians
gathered there that day
strumming,
banging
or blowing
on their instruments of choice;
Musical illiterates,
like me,
pounding out
strange rhythmic
on whatever was near at hand.

We would play music,
often non-stop,
for hours
until night fell.
Then we'd take

the jam session inside
one of the cottages
on that mountain.
Now and then,
one of us would
drop out of the performance
take a toke,
drink of wine, or
just lay back on the grass,
bath in the sounds,
stare at the sky.

For several years,
I spent my summers
on that mountain
with my friend,
living in a teepee
by a little stream
where we would bath
in the mornings.

She, a well-known
civil-rights lawyer,.
She left me for a musician.
That was a common experience
in my life
? not living in a teepee on a mountainside,
but girlfriends leaving me for musicians.

I played the accordion for a while
as a teenager.
I wonder if I kept it up,
it would have made
a difference
in my love life.

Naida -The love of my waning years.

You are the bright light
hiding dark shadows,
the moon that reveals
silent hidden paths.

With your arms around me
fear stalls and fails away
and fortune fills my dreams.

No yesterday's memories
nor tomorrow's dreams remain,
only your breath on my neck

To be old

To be old is not
to be
a repository of wisdom.
but
an example;
a folly
of misplaced ambitions

Life's a river of memory and yearning.

Life's a river
of memory
and yearning.

I remember things.
Write them down
in my journal.
Reread them
now and then
confirming
my existence.

Forgetting
one's past
is a form of death.

We, the old,
fear senility,
the shocking
realization
that we're simply
the sum of
our memories.

We fear losing
our memories
more than
dwindling
of desire.

Couplets

It took me with its mouth and tongue.

It took me as though I were young.

It took me in the night.

It took me in my fright.

It took me till dawn was spread.

It took me till I was dead.

For Kira and Charles.

Life is a Game.

I am born

by chance,

my name,

my race,

my social class

randomly determined.

I spawn, was spawned,

in arbitrary places

and moments in history.

I am surrounded

by random people

who play the game

with me.

I survive

as long as I can

easy or hard

as it may be.

I only get

one life.

It may be fun

at times.

I only get

one life.

When I die

or become

too thirsty

to play

the game
or too hungry
or sick
or injured
or old
my game
ends.

Will I have
won or lost
this game
I am forced to play
now nearing its end?

How do I
win a game
I only play
once?

I must
love the game,
and all the players,
laugh with joy
at every move
I make,
cry when others
stumble,
make the game
fun for all
those
forced to play it

Then I win.

We win.

Boredom and Depression Are Not the Same.

Boredom and depression
are not the same.
they both leave
you starring
aimlessly
at nothing
for a long time.

The bored are
not unhappy.
Annoyed perhaps
not unhappy.
We have pills
for depression,
not boredom.

I am not
depressed
I am bored,
I tell myself.
Half the world
tells itself that,
I think.
What the other half
thinks
is a mystery
to me.

My time is short.
I watch more
television now,
read more books,

write more,
stare at the yellow sky.

My time is short.
These are troubling times.
who will be left?
what will be left?
What can I do
for those who follow?

Some have
jobs to do.
Others run
from fires.

You Probably Wonder.

You probably wonder
if this morning I got up
on the wrong side of the bed
or there are hints of
trouble in paradise.

Alas, slight cold,
a rampant allergic reaction
to air pollution
dims
my normal
sunny disposition.

After all,
paradise is just
absence of
the annoying
minutiae of existence. "

SADLY

Sadly,
I have never
discovered
a poem
or legend
glorifying
growing
great zucchinis
or inventing
vibrators.

one day while walking on the beach

one day
while walking
on the beach,
i saw
an old woman
and a gleaner-man
arguing
over possession
of the carcass
of a two-foot-long
squid
they found
floating in the surf.

in between
competing claims
of ownership,
they also shared
recipes
on how best
to prepare it
for eating.

i decided
it better
to just
walk on by.

Mid-February 2021

In the Enchanted Forest
spring fell
like a crack-crazed
Roman goddess
careening through
its paths and by-ways.

Blooming camellias
casting their petals
on the ground
leave
technicolor
detritus
painted by
a drunken Van Gough.

Ornamental fruit trees
blossoming
pink and white
like the cheeks
of Norwegian
eight-year-olds
in mid-winter
overdosing
on candy canes.

Questions

What is freedom,
to those without
wealth,
income,
or power?

Why would one feel
morally bound
or wish to be
morally bound
to a civil
society
that does not share
the goal that its
citizens deserve
a fair distribution
of wealth,
of income,
of power?

If the civil
society
is not dedicated
to that end
what else could it
possibly be
dedicated to?

What is freedom,
to those without
wealth,
income

or power?

On worried wings

On worried wings,
he softly sings
of dreams of fire
and ghostly things
with deep desire.

He cries in vain,
though woes remain
beneath the sun.
He feels the pain.

Without desire
for those things,
he banks his fire.
Burned wood sings
through smoky wings

Without such pain.
beneath the sun
the coals remain.
He cries in vain.

Self-quarantine

Self-quarantine
an amusing novelty,
drifts into
annoying boredom,
becomes a way of life.

Normality means
sitting in the dark
by the telly
slowly slipping
into senescence
scarfing down
fast food

Last night
I saw three
Charlie Chaplin movies

Some say.

Some say
we are
a river
of memory
and imagination.

Like most old men,
I worry more
about
memory loss
than dwindling
imagination.

Remembering things
prolongs
our life,
confirms
our existence.

Forgetting
the past
is a form of death

We are
the sum
of our memories.

Once gone,
we are but
children
without

a future

I get to choose only the best.

Every day
the old man
spends the hours
rummaging through
garbage cans
for food and
other things.
especially
bits of wire.

In the evenings,
well past midnight,
he melts down
the wire bits
found that day.

Every month,
he produces
a kilogram
of copper
he sells for
twenty-dollars.

,
He worked hard
every day
and survived.
He was content
He said:

"I have no worries.
People throw-away
more than I can use,
I get to choose

only the best."

Be Proud of Being Called Old.

Be proud of
being called old.
Nothing has killed you yet.

On the other hand,
when you creak while you walk,
your plumbing's amiss,
your skin puckers
like a dried out pickle
or a year-old prune,
it is not much
of a compliment either.

Everyone needs someone to look down upon.

*Everyone needs someone
to look down upon.
There's comfort in it.*

*It's not mental illness
to be poor
and destitute.
It's money.*

*Getting money,
they are poor.
Getting money
anyway they can,
they are destitute.*

*They are a nuisance,
the destitute poor.*

*We who are not
poor and destitute
hate the destitute poor.
If truth be known,
the destitute poor
hates us.*

*Some of us
not among
the destitute poor
help out,
wonder why
others do not.*

*To most of us.
the destitute poor,
those we see living
in tents at the side of the road,
abandoned buildings,
rooms without heat,
adequate plumbing,
run-down trailer parks,
poverty-stricken,
sick, lame, mentally disturbed,
those who sell
their bodies
to stay alive,
or destroy
their bodies
and minds
to shield themselves
from the pain
and degradation,
are not really alive.
They do not matter.*

*Do not say you do not think
them less than human,
these destitute poor,
because
of the nature
of their lives
or what they must do
to stay alive.
You click your tongue
as you walk by them.
You say to yourself,
I wish someone
would do something
about them.*

*Would you take them
into your home,
give them half your money?
You would for a relative
perhaps
a dear friend
fallen on hard times.*

*Helping the destitute poor
is a collective necessity,
an individual mandate.
We are family.*

I pluck the sun from my pocket

In the morning,
I pluck the sun from my
pocket
I Watch the moon
run free
at night
trailing a tail
of stars.
I am unique
in the world.
I house-sit
life.
I nourish
my garden.
My heart is full.

Homage to Yin, Yang, and Qui. (The moon, sun and all else)

You don't have to be a snowman
to stand in the snow
patiently
listening
to the howling wind,
endlessly
losing yourself
in the view
while hungry
crows peck
at your carrot nose.

We sang the same songs

We sang the same songs
when we were young,
you and I.

Now, we've grown old.
and sing them still,
you and I.

Will they still be sung
when we are gone,
you and I?

Or soon be forgotten
as we will be,
you and I?

It is Autumn now

It is Autumn now.
A clammy heaviness
lingers in the air.

When the sun
is gone
a subtle chill
slips
through muscle
and skin
like a knife.

I am never
very cold
this time of year,
only anxious
and uneasy.

After Giordano

I wanted to ...
avoid doing anything stupid,
be a good boy.
The only trouble was,
I simply wasn't
made that way.
There were few stupidities
I haven't committed
in my life.
I'd always had my secrets,
I'd never wanted to
be a good boy.

Short stories light our lives

Short stories light our lives,
not novels.
nor dramas
on stage or screen.

Perhaps, at times
rhyme-less
poems
in the mornings
or at dusk.

One story ends
another begins.
So goes
the anthology
of our life
until we reach
never-ending night

I AM

**I am
more than you think me to be.
I am
more than you see before you.**

**I am
my past and my future
my dreams and nightmares
my hopes and my fears
my loves and my hates.
My thoughts and my doubts.**

**I am
the air I breath
the water I drink
the food I eat
my piss,
my shit,
my tears.**

**I am
the sun caressing my skin
the breeze, the grit
the hot, the cold.**

**I am
the books I read,
the music I hear
the songs I sing
the whispers and the shouts,
the noise and the silence.**

But I am more

much more.

**I am my organs, my cells,
molecules, and protons,
electrons, bosons, and quarks
within me.**

**I am here there, everywhere,
and nowhere.**

**I am a mote in time
a speck in the biosphere.**

I am energy

I am information.

I am a concept

**I am a universe
unto myself.**

I am.

Moses was a strange man

Moses was a strange man.

He lost his way

in the desert

for forty years.

He told his people

they were better off

in the desert

for forty years

than in Egypt

where they had running

water and food.

There was no food

in the desert.

Moses did not

know how to farm

so, God had to

feed his people.

Moses told his people,

he would lead them

out of the desert

to a land where

people had milk

and honey.

He said they should

kill those people,

take their land,

drink their milk

eat their honey.

When some of his people thought

another God
might get them out
of the desert
sooner,
he killed them.

Moses brought God's law
to his people.
One law said
"Thou shalt not kill."

Let me

Let me:

Bring Peace to Strife

Be Gentle and Courteous.

Grieve for the Misfortunes of Others

Be Compassionate and Charitable.

Be Patient.

Do no Harm.

Ask Forgiveness of those I have Harmed.

Forgive those who have Harmed me.

Avoid Damage to the Circle of Life.

Restore where I can what has been Damaged.

Help those who need it

Not Disparage Others.

Be Steadfast in the Face of Criticism for Doing Right.

Be Kind to those who Disagree with me.

Be Humble when Exalted.

My Memoir in honor of Taliesin

I have been many things
before becoming who I am.
I have been a youth callow and yearning.
I have been a worker eager and hopeful.
I have been a leader forceful and dynamic.
I have been a lover gentle and callous.
I have been a father caring and failing.
I have become old and wrapped in my memories.

I have assumed a multitude of shapes
before becoming wrinkled and huddled beside the fire.
I have been strong and nimble like a young deer.
I have been blackened by sweat and toil.
I have been dressed in the finest clothing
my belly full of the best foods and drink..
I have been deranged by passion and drained in despair.
I have been covered in a child's tears and puke.
I have been all these and many others but soon I will
become just a memory and then no more.

The Great Debate.

No President stood upon that stage
nor someone of an adult's age
but a loathsome and petulant child.
with mouth not pants defiled.

Biden then boxed his ear,
and said "I'm not here
to call him a liar."

"Everyone already knows
he is a liar".

And with that, I happily close.

I used to measure life in years.

I used to measure
life in years.

Now I measure it
in months.

it changed not
what I do.

It only changed
what it means.

Grab the Day

Grab the day
with hot hands.
Hold tight to life.
Let trouble wash
away like dust
from a voyage.
Grab the day.
It will not
come again.

Homage to Halas

*In the blink of an eye
my love left
like a bauble
dangled
into my world.
I reached out.
It was gone,*

Love is not splendid

Love is not splendid
At best
it is
a blister on your foot
or an empty room.

Spinoza's God

Do not blame or praise me for
your life.

Sing and enjoy
what I made for you.

How can I blame you
for what I made you?

This is your only chance
to enjoy

love,
to exist.

Rejoice,
you are here,
you are alive,

the world is full of wonders.

Song of a poor scavenger.

*I have no worries
People throw away
More than I
Can ever use.*

*I get to choose
Only the best.
I am happy.
Leave me be.*

Homage to Stephen Crane

I announced to the universe one day:

"I am."

To which the universe replied:

"That means no more to me
then thou art not."

Before I fall asleep

*Before I fall asleep,
And after I awake.
The existential malaise,
Is difficult to fake.
To those that never felt,
The night that does not end
Bearing fast down on them
Like an angry train
It is hard to explain
That fear is not a friend.*

Steamboat Willie

I saw Mickey Mouse
As Steamboat Willie
On the telly
Last night
We both have skinny arms
But I can't whistle.

From the Old Sailor on the Death of his Friend Sylvie.

to be part of her journey has been an adventure...
to be part of her life has been a priceless gift...
there is no perfect life...
but we fill in with perfect moments...
death leaves a heartache
no one can heal;
love leaves a memory
no one can steal.
saying goodbye to a loved one is
surely one of life's most difficult
tasks. there are no words powerful
enough, no music soothing enough,
to ease the pain at a time like this.
I shall miss my dear friend Sylvie, from whom I've learned so much. But I
know her life could not have been fuller
and I draw comfort knowing she died on her
own terms with courage, grace, and dignity.
None of us could ask for more.
Good life, good death through control and choice.
I loved Sylvie not because of who she was, but because of who I was when I was with
her...to the world she may be only one person, but to me, she was the world...
maybe God wants us to meet a few wrong people before meeting the right one so that when we
finally meet the person, we will know how to be grateful.
I don't want to cry because it is over, let me smile because it happened...

Virago

I am Wo-Man.

I break stallions to harness.

They ride me for my pleasure.

They tend my flocks.

And in the end,

I paste their memories

in my scrapbook.

The Avatar

*On worried wings,
he softly sings
of dreams of fire
and ghostly things
with deep desire.*

Endless daze, sweaty nights

It's a long night till morning,
Dream breasted, shadow stalked.
Arid lips salt sweated.
Laughter, dreams, and horror
Dawn faded long.
Dreamless sleep's dark nightmare
Now haunts my withered days.

Three Haiku

The Indomitable Oak

*Of all the trees here,
the indomitable oak
Is my favorite.*

Sadness at Leaving

*Sadness at leaving
The ones who brighten our days
Makes journeys longer.*

Birthdays for the Old

*Birthdays for the old
Like flowers in the springtime
Vibrant but too brief.*

Ennui

Watching blue mold on bread grow,
Spring rains, Summer's glow,
Autumn leaves go floating by,
How many days before I die?

Some reap and others sow,
Some the whole world's knowledge know,
I instead just sit and sigh.
How many days before I die?

I live on borrowed things

I live on borrowed things
On stories and songs
On breath and brawn
Borrowed then left
When I move on.

Wanderer

*The wanderer travels not by hook
But sprawled upon the empty tides
Of fairy world and real
And the sham cult darkness lie that was
Yet will not be
Marks its passage on nothing
But cognition.*

(This is part of a longer poem now lost. That poem began in the evening at Fountain of the Naiads in Rome and ends with Tristain and Isolde and red sails returning.)

THE BIG STORM

They say,
it is coming,
THE BIG STORM.

They say,
it will knock down bridges,
with its howling wind,
flood valleys,
scrape the earth from the hills
and end the drought.

They say,
it will do all of that and more.

I stare
through the window
at the grey-black sky
and wonder
will I be disappointed?

Lamplight

Lamplight

Suddenly
awareness spread
in the corner by the bed.
Cascading
from
the dressers lip
it falls
silently
upon the carpet
consigning
all
to naked rage
that had not fled
beyond its
gaze.

Trenz Pruca

Baba Giufa - Ruminations I

When we were young,
with our peers about us,
we dreamed and hoped
for that which we
had not yet
experienced.

Now in our old age,
we dream and hope
for one last chance
at that which
we will soon
no longer have.

Symmetry is
a beautiful
thing.

Under a High Stamped Tin Ceiling.

Under, the high
Nineteenth-century
Stamped-tin ceiling
Sits the fool.

When as a child
He was asked
What will you be
When you grow up?
He replied,
"A bum"
"A clown".

He got his wish
He became
A bum
A clown,
An Emmet Kelly
Chasing that ever
Diminishing light.

He loves life
He says
"It's always something".
Everyday something new"
Usually worse but new.
He might as well hang around
To see what it is.

He assimilates
Other peoples
Experiences
And opinions now.
Maybe he always has.
His knowledge of things
Seems to be
Less a product
Of effort
Then an ongoing
Process of
Epistemological osmosis.

Happiness
He believes
Is waiting to see
What will happen next.
"Tomorrow is
Another day"
He sighs.

"Consciousness"
He whispers
"Is only what I tell myself
To keep away the darkness."

One Of My Teeth Fell Out Yesterday.

One of my teeth
Fell out.
Yesterday,
A gold one
Full of rot

I thought
Loss of ones teeth
Was simply
An example
Of the God of Aging's
Determination
To degrade us
Into our graves.

When we were young
Our minds flew about us
As though untethered
From our bodies.

Now, in our dotage
Our minds observe
Our bodies
Escape us
Piece by piece
Neuron by neuron.

I have little talent for friendship

I have little talent for friendship,
Few resources to combat oblivion,
Depression or loneliness.

Perhaps we are not alone in the end.

As long as we can
Join family and friends
At meals,
Laugh and argue
Or, sit silently in a room
With a sad friend,
Or, as long as someone
Invites me along
Or, says
"Glad you're back"
As long as we're welcome
Somewhere,
For all our whims and frailties,

There's still hope.

Where white lies become black truths

Where white lies become black truths,
Awareness justification
For keeping away the darkness.
I reveled in the adventure of discovery.

You have no idea what it's cost me.

Like a starving corpse-vulture
Drifting on a warm current,
Hot eyes lined with blood
About to let out a scream of despair.

I feel dark descend.

Where were the little beacons
of pure joy and contentment
That lasted for a few seconds?

Passed into memory.

Without confirmation,
hope lingers long beyond
The point of being useful.

The world is complex.

Right and wrong depend
On who is viewing
And who is viewed.

I have meaning.

Deaf, dumb, blind, and
Crawling face down
Through a sea of mud
I strike something else,

I am not alone.

Lying to Oneself

*Lying to oneself seems
Necessary for survival.
It's nature's compensation
To those she has cursed
With consciousness.
How else could anyone
Make it through puberty?*

Three AM.

I live at the next level of generalization.
My thoughts are as broad as the ocean
And as deep as the early morning dew
Upon a leaf.
I walk through the damp dawn forests of my mind.
See deep Atlantis
Within a drop of moisture
Shimmering on the edge
Of a flower.
I wrestle sharks and whales
And the terrors of the deep
In the moist earth beneath my feet.
My clothing as wet as I walk
Through the morning damp
As if I have plunged to the bottom
Of the sea.
I revel in all that I know and see
And think and feel.
I am alive.
I am me.

Let Us Walk Holding Hands

Let us walk
Holding hands
Along the
Winding paths
By the lake
You and I

Let us walk
Beneath the
Warming sun
The night stars
Blinking like
Distant beacons

Let us walk
Watch birds fly
Through the trees
Leaves shaking
In the breeze
As we tread
The pied paths
Of our lives
You and I

Let us walk
Holding hands
Sauntering
Along the
Lush byways
Of our lives
You and I

Let us walk

Holding hands

Until we

Can no more

You and I

In the Desert I Saw a Beacon.

I have grown adverse
To changing things
That worked.

In the desert
I saw a beacon
Flashing
Lines of fire
In the sky
Making structures
Across the firmament.

I looked to the moon for light,
Made a house of stone,
Dug a well for my life,
Planted green vines and melons,
Laid down in my bed,
Slept the long sleep,
Dreamed the long dream.