

Un-Sublimated / March 2021

by Michael Patrick Rutter

The cloud lives under the ocean.
The hulking, heaven sent cables, the bones of fallen angels,
ossified and slightly akimbo, carry the weights of the world---
that, all in and all told, weigh nothing.

During this pandemic year, this year of inner pieces,
we learned how not to run out of space,
even as the smart ships raced to blanch the blue-black border
of our planet, burning and sighing;
even as we turned kitchens and crawlspaces into
office-, workout-, and romper- rooms.

While we've been shielded from each other
the content of hallway conversations,
cash register banter,
hellos and hugs in the hallway,
'round the table intros and outros,
un-sublimated.

Ergo, the air is all ice, veined and violent,
bestilled by what we would have said.
What remains fluid, we won't watch:
The decades of Zoom recordings,
laid out like an endless outdoor laundry line,
all hemmed by the same haphazard
waved goodbyes, the boxed faces
eroding into blanks.

Here's where you wonder about the alien archeologists
(or more likely, the future humanities grad students)
discovering our shards of pottery in the volcanic muck
or disconnected bones in the ugly oil pits.
What remains, remains non-corporeal
yet not as delicious or daring as a ghost story
traded over a bonfire.

For this trash masquerading as future treasure,
there's no need of a shelf, a glass box, a security guard,
as the medium, like the message, doesn't exist.

No waterlogged pages.
No hiss, rattle, and hum.
No weird disk drive music.

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Oh what they wouldn't give for a good old fashioned Rosetta Stone.
Oh what we wouldn't give to be discovered.
For someone to take away
the lost, limp year:

'The Andromedans hear your voice like distant amusement park music
converged on by ambulance sirens
and they understand everything.
They're on your side. They forgive you.'

Alas, the visitors are not coming to listen.
The shouted out signals never connected,
or were lapped up by black holes.

My advice:
For all of us to create our own break out rooms,
all alone in our own darkness,
and to scream until the vibrations
shake something loose,
like a star, a planetoid, or a wayward satellite
that would have burned up otherwise
on its journey
down and out.

Let the objet d'art
fall until its velocity
can pierce time and tides
burrowing into the unreachable core
like a stopped bullet
only we know is there.