

Life and Death in Australia

by darcy *Tuesday, Jun 13 2017, 11:01am*

international / poetry / post

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atop my trusty EH wagon
in the red centre
turning a full 360 degrees
binoculars grabbing immediacy
yet space draws everything
into and away from its endlessness
it's only a matter of perspective

the centre of Oz offers red and blue horizons
and the dangers of immediacy,
Australia crawls with all manner of venomous serpents and
spiders yet locals know them and refer to them fondly
enjoying bush songs of redbacks on toilet seats
ready to bite unwary arses

this land makes short work of foreigners that show no respect
for the smallest and largest,
each having its particular character
yet the largest is the most dangerous
tho few appreciate what it is,
it is the desert itself wherein all desert Life
dwells

the indigenous had few problems in any part
of the land, each group/tribe completely integrated
into the environment in which they lived/moved --
from the insect and crocodile ridden tropics to the driest deserts
it was and remains a simple matter of integration
yet European invaders only manage to live comfortably
in cities built around the coast

these giant sprawls give the illusion of strength
and safety yet a cyclone flattened the capital of the north in 24
hours and if government, at huge expense, had not intervened
the entire local population would have been faced with basic survival;
from a thriving metropolis, a capital city became completely dependent
like an infant, overnight
and what is a cyclone but strong wind and rain?

living through it and its aftermath was sobering
so now i seek the harshest environs

with the knowledge i have learned from the indigenous
and it is almost impossible not to find what is necessary for
survival

keep your fragile, polluted cities which are
nothing more than cancerous testaments to the tenuous
and transitory, the world is replete with ruins of
ancient urban civilisations which disappeared
leaving no trace of why, except that cities
are the last place to live as they are toppled easily
by the slightest natural occurrence

it is 40C plus in this desert yet my body
has adjusted to this environment easily
gather, hunt and work in the cooler mornings and
late afternoons conserve energy in the scorching
sun hours, an easy and fretless life yet death
is always near, one critical mistake and its finished
but that is how it should be,
be aware and you live easily in the red centre,
the graveyard of early European explorers

Afghans were brought here with their camels
and had no difficulty with our deserts, in fact today Oz camels from released
herds now infest the land and are sought by Arab nations as they
are the finest specimens, robust and fleet footed

brumbies thrive in the southern mountains and many a folk tale
is sung praising them in Oz -
these wild horses tamed for the first world war proved their incredible stamina taking Damascus
after a grueling approach from the desert, all before British heavy machinery arrived, though one
would have to search history to discover this truth, but true it is, Lawrence the British agent drove
into Damascus after the Aussie horsemen had received the written surrender of the local authorities,
yet the Brits received the credit though we know better.

it couldn't have been done without the extraordinary stamina of our wild bush horses from the wild
Australian mountains
and flat harsh plains. the reward for the service of these noble beasts
was death, none returned to their origins, a heartless, cruel outcome
and a grief for many a bush rider in uniform fighting British
imperial wars

and make no mistake
this land also creates an unusual breed of man and woman, peculiar
to this nation

yes, it's all a matter of life, death and survival in the rawness
of Oz

i am proud to say i am of and bonded to this
ancient land under the southern cross -

we respect all life and are extremely proud NOT to be mass murdering, plundering, criminal Americans, the scourge of humanity.

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-2709.html>