

The Age of Greed

A Poem by William Page

Of man's final arrogance we now must speak:
eyeless and pathless, the ravaged earth
falls blindly in a cloud of poisonous air,
while mutinous man, in rebellion against
the shortness of his painful, pitiful life,
has plundered the planet of its treasures,
tainted the very air that sustains
his flesh and blood, and fouled the landscape
that was meant to inspire his deeper self.
Men calling themselves caretakers of the soul,
but thinking of nothing but their own appetites,
deceive the leaders and the millions alike;
they talk of moral warfare, of chosen tribes,
and spread false visions of a profane afterlife
or of a paradise on earth, a new Jerusalem
rising from the cinders of human sacrifice.
Men of finance hold sway over nations,
peddling the cult of their great god greed
who promises balance and growth for all
while taking what little the poor possess
to feed the pride and the gluttony of the rich.
Cities are terrorized, towns strangled,
whole continents are burned and laid to waste,
and the seas are made uninhabitable.
Wise men watch, helpless, as their planet
is destroyed for nothing, for the miserable ease
of a few who are willing to sacrifice
the whole of the human experiment
for a few paltry years of decadent life.
While madmen wage private wars and disfigure
the very picture of youth and strength,
decent men of knowledge and spirit
are ignored or choose to hide their light.
We must here report of a time of chaos,
an age of greed, a time when frantic, deluded men
believing that they are in the right;
murder whole populations and raze
the work of generations in an hour.
How can we, as men, anymore justify
the ways of men? And who now can save mankind
from the peril of his reckless path
and the desolation that lay in his heart?