



BLUE LIGHT



*De l'éternel azur la sereine ironie
Accable, belle indolemment come les
fleurs,
Le poète impuissant qui maudit son
génie
A travers un désert stérile de Douleurs.
L'azur, Stéphane Mallarmé*

*Je parlerai du revenant, de la flamme et
des cendres.
Jacques Derrida,
De l'esprit. Heidegger et la question.*

Rome

The Lecture

'I won't ask why there's something rather than nothing, since we're all hoping to find some lunch,' says poor old Professor Harmless – some German name – fishing for laughs. 'So I'll just ask, "Why is everything as it is and not something else?"'

‘Silly old fool,’ I think, ‘everything is quite different,’ as I’m eyeing, pulling on, that girl over there.

‘You’re mafia, aren’t you?’ she asks.

‘Some silly people say I am, so what? There’s a stigma. Some silly people say I’m not, they’re still silly.’

‘It’s my dad,’ she says. ‘He’s got some smelly cash,’ and I say,

‘It’s mostly smelly. Banks have a scent they spray, otherwise you’d not go past, nor in – sniff the new notes, there’s no drugs, no sweat, just clean and tidy.’

There is a pause, then I say, ‘Of course I’m not mafia, just invest.’

Well, I wouldn’t say if I was, or would I? Intervention, the investment stuff – it doesn’t change a thing, like the prof says, just brings forth some more isness. Change, like he says, is an illusion, going on like birth or like decay, spring and whatever follows – even if nothing does – all’s still firmly in the isness slot. It gives you something to hold on to – isness, the everything.

I say, ‘There’s commission.’

‘Much?’

‘For you, thirty per cent,’ and she says,

‘That’s OK, it’s just like taxes.’ She thinks it’s commission on the interest, not the capital: who cares, capital is soft as butter, spread it thick or thin, and in the end it’s all chucked into Capital that keeps the world a-going round, deciding who is up and who is not or has been once.

‘Where did your father get the cash?’ I ask.

‘Importing women and children. In rags. And beating them. And stealing what they earn.’

‘OK!’ I say, what I don’t know won’t hurt her, and I’ll give her documents – that capital’s like butter, and when it melts, it’s gone, but – there’s old Capital, it licks its lips, and down it’s sunk!

‘I’ll give you documents,’ I say. They’re useful, keep your feet warm on the park bench. Or even – maybe you’ll earn, we’ll take a slice each year off what you give us, and there! It’s all yours, – though it’s all ours too. Don’t ask too much.

How fortunate for her – not mafia, I just invest.

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