

Pebbles Against Empire

by Gary Hardaway

Exceptional and Unsurpassed

We're Americans. We can quantify
and commodify anything--
beauty, vulnerability, despair.

Whatever you have,
we can monetize it
for investors

savvy to the common touch,
schooled by sociologists
and the marketing department

to recognize the mother lode
that stitches the tender loin
with marbling unsurpassed.

Deus Ex Machina

O, sad, sad, people-
there is no God in the machine.

There are but blips of electromagnetism
and the algorithms coded

by sad, sad people
whose role it is

to die, neatly,
off stage.

Available online at *«<http://fictionaut.com/stories/gary-hardaway/pebbles-against-empire>»*

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Dynamics of the Free Market

Our anxieties wear out.
We find new ones, just our size,
for the shelves are always stocked
with bright new offerings, free for the taking.
Some, of course, wear like iron
and, like the little black dress
or cordovan penny loafers,
are always in fashion.
With a little dry cleaning,
or saddle soap and polish,
they're always ready to wear again.

Commerce

The new Fascists
won't even run the trains
on time. Fuck trains—
if you can't afford your own
transportation, who needs you?

The Art of the Deal

If you need some shit,
we'll sell you some shit.
If you don't need shit,
we'll still connive
to sell you shit.

