

Awaiting the End of Time

by Gary Hardaway

Autobiography 5

It is difficult to live in Century 21.
Everything about it cries out

for termination of the human enterprise.
I imagine the world my granddaughters will inherit

and cringe. Water as commodity,
infrastructure as pay-for-use private enterprise

without regulation. Action without thought
but amply bloody consequence.

I shudder considering the future
I once thought would be so grand.

The dreams of the interplanetary I once embraced
dissolve in a bitter sauce of the “practical”.

Morbidity Play

We look for a moral
in the stories of extinctions.

For decades, we blamed
the dinosaurs for slothful lack

of adaptation that lead
to their demise.

The story was amoral
as catastrophe always is.

There is no moral in any
extinction except in the one

underway. The Anthropocene.
This one is on us.

Medical Directive

When my cancer comes,
I will acquiesce and greet it
with a weak and deferential
shake of hands, my still

fleshed and clammy palm
and fingers yielding to the
bony scratch and crush
of imminent death. No chemo,

please, no surgery, no clever
genetic trickery of experimental drugs.
Just the fluid wave of
morphine drips as the pain becomes

otherwise unbearable
and I wave my white flag
of palliative surrender to
the random raids of cellular insurrection.

The Perishings

The alligator will perish.
The bonobo will perish.
The chimpanzee will perish.
The dingo will perish.
The elephant will perish.
The fox will perish.
The gorilla will perish.
The human will perish.
The iguana will perish
The jaguar will perish.
The koala will perish.
The lemur will perish.
The mango will perish.
The nutria will perish.
The otter will perish.
The panther will perish.
The quail will perish.
The rhinoceros will perish.
The sable will perish.
The tarantula will perish.
The umbrella bird will perish.
The vulture will perish.
The walrus will perish.
The xenophobe will perish.
The yak will perish
The zebra will perish.
The alphabets will disappear.

