

Updated 1-1-19

Thank you for your interest. I pasted recent poems in 3 pages, in chronological order from most recent (as if anyone would read more pages). I welcome comments, accolades, and razzberries; alert me of typos, syntax issues, mixed metaphors. I'd be honored if you wish to pass any on; please credit me and my site, [petervenable.com](http://petervenable.com) Your comments are welcome on my blog!

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### Poetical Dissent

“Vanity,” he confessed, “not avarice, is my ruling passion.”  
—A. E. Housman

I protest! Who dares claim poets are vain?  
Such effrontery, we justly disdain!  
As we hone each poetical shape and phrase,  
Our egos shrug editorial praise.

We politely attend at open mikes  
(Never muse about sex or mountain hikes)  
And suppress the urge to show envious looks  
For poets who read from glossy chapbooks.

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### I Remember

I remember reading (I think) some journal  
“memory is not ‘photographic’ but reconstructive”

Then the dark green house stood but decades passed  
it buckled, collapsed into a scrap pile

now when I retrieve warped beams and planks,  
window frames, floorboards and reconstruct  
a leaning structure I know it's the same  
lime house I saw as a child

I remember that house my porch  
red wheelbarrow holding potted white lilies  
I stand by my tricycle brandishing  
my Spaceman Ray Gun

but was that a memory frame

or a lost colored photo  
I remember or  
cannot remember?

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Before

there was nothing—  
pure nothingness—zero— no spacecurvesvoidvaccum—  
absolute stillness, silence

not

energy—waves—matter—motion—forces—

nothing

until

The Word spoke

15,000,000,000 years ago—

an infinitesimal point exploded

into a nova >100,000,000,000°  
spacetimeenergywaveicules  
expanded multiplied cooled  
into gallivanting galaxies  
orbiting star systems  
spinning spheres . . .

How can this be?

By faith we understand that the universe  
was formed by God's command,  
so that the visible came forth  
from the invisible. Heb 1:3

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About Ants

22,000 or so ant species (1 human species).  
Argentine Carpenter Fire Weaver Soldier Leafcutter . . .  
There's something about ants crawling inside out.

Females work, care for the queen and her brood.  
Male ants have glossy wings, mate repeatedly, drop dead.  
Argentines suck spilled soda on parking lots  
Carpenters bore nests inside dead wood and scavenge  
Fire ants, venom armed, build massive subway cities  
Weavers silk leaves into arboreal nests  
Soldiers' mandibles draw-and quarter crawlers and pick bones bare  
Leafcutters cut and plant subterranean fungus gardens . . .  
    Their skeletons are inside out.

We marvel at their orderly roles, assigned hierarchies, cooperation,  
division of labor, family loyalty, parenting devotion, insect purpose.  
Some are racist—red and black ants attack, destroy, plunder.  
Some raid, steal eggs or larvae and raise them as slaves or dinner.  
    They are ourselves, inside out.

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Every Poet Is Narcissus

When the poem is finally filled  
with image, and metaphor frilled,

we gaze and bask at perfected reflection  
(dazzled by texture and glittery complexion)

and glance at it over and over—  
it grows on us like a four-leafed white clover  
then we hit SUBMIT.

Nemesis, squirming and saddle sore  
from reading pages of submissions,  
squinting at the screen's pitiless glare,  
eyes stinging from amateur emissions,

e-mails the polite rejection,  
imagining Echo's question

“Who's there?”

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