

# POEM OF THE WEEK

## “IT” MATTERS

The Hunt for Uncountable Nouns  
And understanding  
[A story of the members  
of the Cosmic community]

I

Who are we?  
Who am I?  
How do I fit in?  
Where do I fit in?  
Do I fit in?  
Do I matter?  
Questions, Questions  
Questions Answered?

We, first of all, are  
members of a collective  
The collective being  
the subject of size, of scale

The relationship between the one  
and many is equivalent to the individual to the collective  
Being aware of their inclusion in a community  
A relation neither prescribed nor pre-determined  
A relationship defined by social/cultural realities  
As it is by personal circumstances and the individual's  
Response to them and subsequent behaviour patterns

I am “IT”.  
“IT” am I.  
“IT” I am.  
Am I “IT”

II

Let's start here.  
A community for this purpose  
is defined as a group of individuals  
Working together to form a socially  
Cohesive unit!!!, gathered together  
At a time in space and in place

Who, then, might we be?  
One or more of the following?

## ONE OF THE GUYS?

Living in a town, the population is small,  
the sense of community developed  
The social/cultural needs are simple  
And their implementation is dependent on the weather

## CITIZEN

A citizen refers to one who  
lives in a city and takes their identity  
Employment opportunities from doing so  
The population is medium to large

## "COSMOPOLITAN"

The population and the city are much larger  
more diverse and the social and cultural needs  
Are more demanding and complex; competition

## COSMOCITIZEN

A member of the Cosmos!  
A member of the cosmic community  
Formed from the stuff of stars. Huge they are  
In dimension and measurements - either hot  
Or cold - beyond our understanding  
Linked by a similarity of purpose

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## III

We've determined our current  
community status, now comes the hard work.  
Attuning our awareness to the designated role.  
Tuning our awareness to all that we need to be aware of  
the opportunities, the responsibilities, and their emotional cost  
We face the uncertainty of "Do we want to be/do this?"  
And "Do we have a choice? Will the positives outnumber  
The negatives - or vice versa?" When is enough enough?

## EXPLANATION

The title of this poem is "IT" MATTERS  
Does it confuse you? An explanation, perhaps  
The community of cosmic citizens should be equitable  
And inclusive. Yes? As it was. "Cosmocitizens" became  
Abbreviated to "Itizens" and then to "Its". Inelegant

I know. Did I fight the change? Yes? No? Maybe?  
In the end, by my inaction and sullen resistance  
I allowed it to happen. Greetings, I am an "It"

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IV

## QUANTIFIERS AND DANGLING MODIFIERS (A Voyage in the English Grammar)

We need these to describe our environment  
The universe is large beyond our comprehension  
Cosmos, universe, interchangeable? Objectively?  
There's a dangling question mark? Subjectively?

No. We are confronted by a bewildering large  
Complex organism, machine, perpetually changing  
Form and reality; that challenges not only our beliefs  
but also how we perceive, experience and process  
the constant activity against the sheer size,  
magnificence and splendour  
Beauty and Terror of the Cosmos

Very dramatic! Get to the point  
"Quantifiers And Dangling Modifiers"  
A quantifier is a word that describes  
the amount of something; often precedes a noun

Examples? Our natural environment contains  
The very small (a quantifier) to the unimaginably  
Large (another quantifier). The descriptive phrases  
Come after the noun, so could equally be termed

"Dangling modifiers", but you get the idea.

Nouns can be divided into uncountable and countable  
An "uncountable noun" is something that cannot be numbered  
So the singular and plural forms remain the same  
So, quantifiers for these also cannot be numbered

They include many, much, a lot, little, few, some, any  
How many stars are in the sky? A lot!  
How many atoms can dance on a pinhead? A lot  
How many valid questions are there? Many

"Countable nouns" can be numbered, specifically  
As can their quantifiers (not to forget, dangling modifiers)  
Thus, we have our vocabulary to begin to describe our world  
And the cosmos of which it is part, that immense inscrutable Cosmos

Have I mentioned our "insignificance"? Maybe, in a passing comment  
Here's how I see it. Size, function and importance are relative  
Regardless of our stature (or lack of), we are here; a functioning being  
Mismanaging ourselves, a killer species - blinded by ego, ambition and greed

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V

THAT'S NOT RIGHT! IT CAN'T BE.

The stuff of stars? This species, Homo Sapiens  
Quiver in fear against the backdrop of the physical world  
You call us a "killer species", blinded by ego, ambition and greed  
I demand a quantifier, modifier or a pint of beer!

Is the noun, "humanity" countable or not?  
You might malign the species (with some cause)  
But surely not every individual there within  
Remember the classic sci-fi plot, "Show us one

decent human being, show us there is hope  
Then maybe we won't destroy your wretched planet.  
The clock counts down, and the film ends with an act  
Of humanity, human kindness that convinces THEM

To take their finger off the button.

Yes "humanity" is countable, in exceedingly large numbers  
And catalogued by computers increasingly run  
by artificial Intelligence. That's another story, another worry  
For another time. The question might be framed in the form

"Given that we can see, we can name the destroyers, violators,  
and haters. They do not hide and wander about in disguise.  
They flout their power, their wealth, their hunger for more  
If it's GOOD vs BAD, who's going to triumph

"And I've seen your flag on the marble arch.  
Love is not a victory march.  
It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah"  
Sang Leonard Cohen.

If the question were to be so phrased. It would be invalid  
We each contain the elements of good and bad  
We surrender to the comfort and convenience  
Have selective sight and hearing. Hear "turn the other cheek"

And translate that as, "Quick, run;  
we weren't here. We saw nothing"  
Would that count as a "cold and

broken hallelujah"? No, it is cowardice

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VI

That's it.  
I welcome you all, wherever, and whoever  
You are in the inclusive state of cosmos-o-politans  
As cosmos-o-politans, we consider ourselves  
in comparison irrelevant. Let us not jump to conclusions  
rush to ill-informed judgement  
You may be wrong anyway.

Time has little meaning  
for the Cosmos (Or, does it? We don't know.)  
To be a cosmopolitan is to accept the limits  
To our individual and collective understanding  
And knowledge; to pursue vigorously the tools  
To collect and process the vast sources of information  
Into which we tap; a daunting task in its own right

Requiring our focus, authenticity of motive, and attention  
To detail. Sloppy or faulted logic will lead us astray, and into darkness  
[Beware of the dark side, Luke]  
In short, it is a state of being, in which we are all equal  
Broken beings seeking salvation (in whatever form it comes)  
Repentance (the weight of shortcomings grows excessively heavy)  
And forgiveness. Who are we to individually take on the weight of the world?

Too simplistic? If you choose to think of it in those terms  
A challenge? Is not life a challenge to be confronted, comprehended  
And addressed? It is a state in which the individual's strength is applied  
As part of the collective response, thus being twice blessed, in the giving  
And the taking (are you borrowing from Portia's speech in The Merchant of Venice?)  
Borrowing? Abstracting to a different situation, maybe. The point is the state of being  
Under discussion is multi-dimensional, bordering on magical.

Is it not possible that in this dimension,  
we can meet, human essences devoid of history,  
and share that which is uniquely ours,  
They cannot be taken away;  
They are our humanity

If the Cosmos is receptive to prayers;  
that is mine

Leslie D Bush  
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