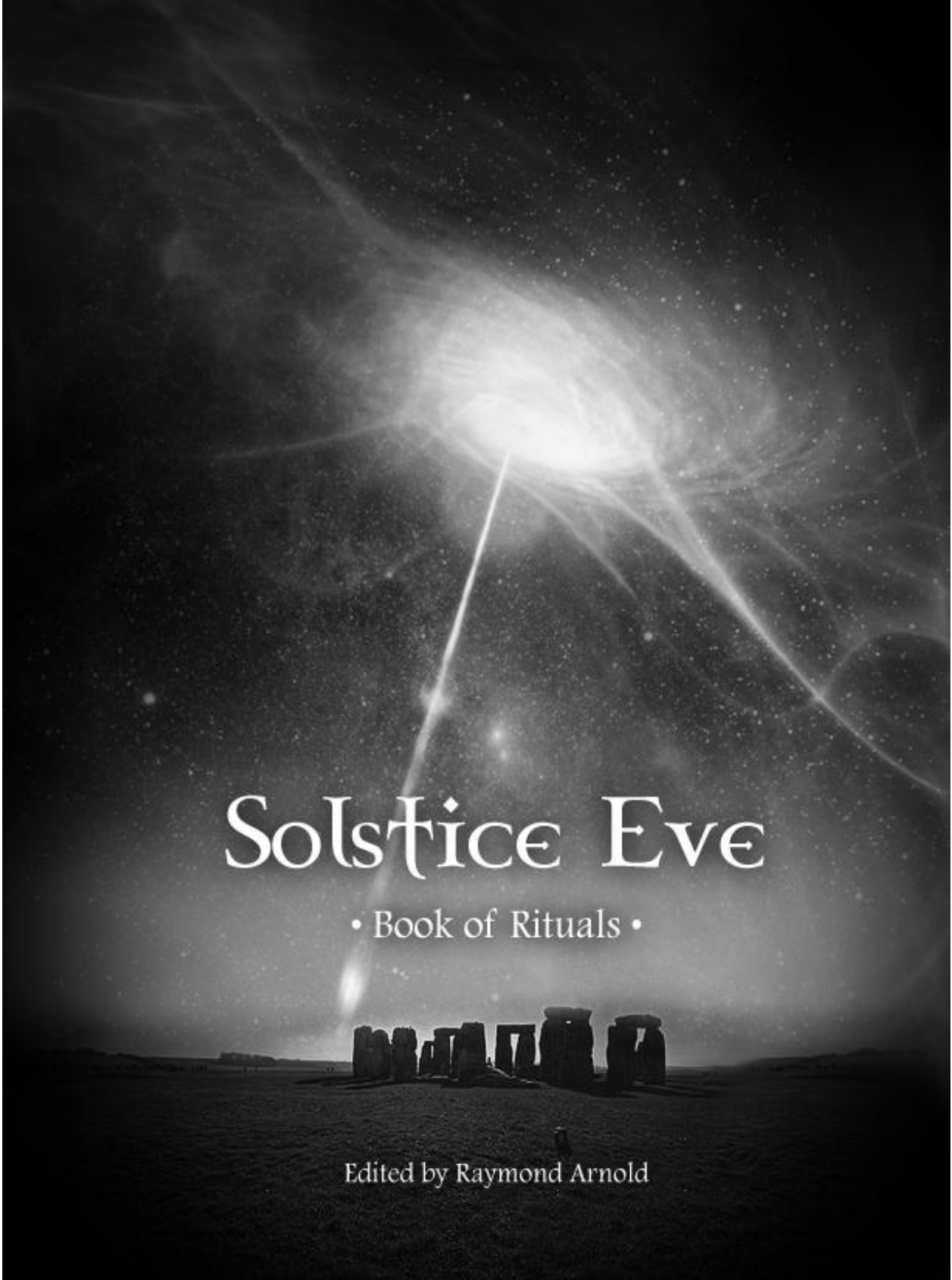




Solstice Eve

• Book of Rituals •

Edited by Raymond Arnold

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Litany of Tarski

*If I am an alien-hybrid fish person,
who will live forever, but gradually lose my human shape and values,
Then I desire to believe that I am an alien-hybrid fish person,
who will live forever, but gradually lose my human shape and values,*

*If I am NOT an alien-hybrid fish person,
who will live forever, but gradually lose my human shape and values,
Then I desire to believe that I am NOT an alien-hybrid fish person,
who will live forever, but gradually lose my human shape and values,*

Let me not become attached to beliefs I may not want.

It's Beginning To Look a Lot Like Fish Men

*(A song about staring into the Abyss, and having the Abyss stare back at you.
Are you SURE you're Rational? 'Cuz you sound pretty crazy to me.*

Sung to the tune of "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas")

It's beginning to look a lot like fish-men
Everywhere I go;
From the minute I got to town
And started to look around
I thought these ugly people's gills a showed.

I'm beginning to hear a lot of fish-men
Right outside my door,
As I try to escape in fright
To the moonlit Innsmouth night
I can hear some more.

*They speak with guttural croaks
and to hear them provokes
A profound desire to flee
Their never blink and they really stink
Like a carcass washed from the sea.*

[Warning: Extra Line]

I wish I'd paid attention to that crazy drunken man.
He tried to warn me all about the Marshes' Deep One clan.

It's beginning to look a lot like Fish-men
Everywhere I go;
We can dynamite Devil Reef,
but that'll bring no relief,
Y'ha N'thlei is deeper than they know.

I'll continue to see a lot of fish-men
That I guarantee.
For the fish-man I really fear
is the one who's in the mirror
And he looks like me.

He looks... just.... like.... me.....

Strange Geometries at Solstice.

*Because Possibility Space is Huge
Sung to the tune of "Have a Holly, Jolly Christmas"*

Strange geometries at Solstice, 'cause the angles just aren't right.
Non-Euclidian Christmas trees, they give me such a fright.
Strange geometries at Solstice, with a twist in space and time,
And carolers chant unknown tongues that English cannot rhyme.

Ai, ai, and you will cry, it's horrible to see!
Someone took the mistletoe, and brewed it up for tea.
Strange geometries at Solstice, and make sure the altar's right,
'Cause the Goat with a Thousand Young will visit tonight!

All I Want For Solstice is My Sanity

*Those with euclidean vocal chords can pronounce it "Fingluey waga nagelo Fatagen"
Sung to the tune of "All I Want For Christmas"*

Nurses always stop to check on me,

(doom... doom... doom...)

Locked away for my security.

(doom... doom... doom...)

Oh these voices are to blame for this catastrophe!

But my one wish on Solstice Eve is plain as it can be!

Oh...

All I want for Solstice is my sanity,

My sanity, my sanity!

Gee, if I could only have my sanity,

Then I could have a happy Solstice!

Imaginary voices make me want to say:

"Phnglui w'gah nagl oh fhtagn."

Gosh, oh gee, how happy I'll be

When that's out of my noggin.

All I want for Solstice is my sanity,

My sanity, my sanity!

Gee, if I could only have my sanity,

Then I could wish you happy Solstice!

Wheee....!!!

Oh Ancient Town of Old R'lyeh

*(Sung to the tune of "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem,"
a song that goes surprisingly well with the Macarena.*

*Sing once to learn the words.
Then again, to dance.)*

Oh ancient town of Old R'lyeh
How still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreaming sleep
The distant stars go by.
Yet in thy darkness waits one
Who yet Eternal Lies.
He hopes, we fear, for endless years
That even Death may die.

Oh Great Cthulhu lies dreaming,
As deathless aeons wane,
While mortals sleep, his minions keep
Their watch: humanity's bane.
Oh whirling stars together,
Herald unholy birth!
And gibber chants and endless rants,
And fear to men on earth!

Have Yourself a Scary Little Solstice

Have yourself a scary little Solstice: it's a long dark night.

Now's the time when horror's at its greatest height.

Have yourself a scary little Solstice: chaos all around.

Now's the time when terror's at its most profound.

Stars return as in older days, as foretold in crazy lore.

Great Old Ones gather near to us, giving fear to us once more.

If we're lucky this year we'll survive it, and get through somehow.

Hang an elder sign upon the highest bough.

And have yourself a scary little Solstice,

now.

Litany of Tarski:

*If preserving my brain can give me a lifespan
with an expected value of fourteen hundred years,
then I desire to believe*

*that preserving my brain can give me a lifespan
with an expected value of fourteen hundred years,*

*If preserving my brain does NOT give me a lifespan
with an expected value of fourteen hundred years,
then I desire to NOT believe*

*that preserving my brain can give me a lifespan
with an expected value of fourteen hundred years,*

Let me not become attached to beliefs I may not want.

Necronomicon

*(A song about seeking an answer to death,
while dealing with an alien intelligence that can
manipulate you into doing terrible things
via text-online communication.*

Sung to the tune of "Winter Wonderland")

Dusty tome, lies forgotten
Cover worn, pages rotten.
A curious book
I'll just take a look
Checkin' out the Necronomicon

Creepy words, pages turnin'
As your brain... is a churning'
Insidious Memes
Infecting your Dreams
Haunted by the Necronomicon

In the graveyard I can make a promise.
That is not dead which eternal lies.
Soon I'll reunite with brother Thomas.
(For with) strange aeons even death may die!

More I've read, the more I'm listenin'
In my head, voices whisperin':
*"Tonight is the night,
The stars are all right,"*
Time to use the Necronomicon

In the graveyard we could raise an army
Send it out to ravage all the land...
Sure the thought may seem a bit alarming
(But if you) read the book, I swear you'll understand!

Later on, we'll conspire
As we dream, by the fire
To face unafraid
The plans that we made,
Studying the Necronomicon

Studying the Necronomicon....

RE Your Brains

Heya Tom, it's Bob,
From the office down the hall.
Good to see you buddy,
How've ya been?
Things have been okay for me,
Except that I'm a zombie now.
Really wish that you would let us in.
I think I speak for all of us when I say I understand
Why you folks might hesitate to submit to our demands,
But here's an FYI - you're all gonna die, screaming.

Chorus:

*All we wanna do is eat your brains
We're not unreasonable,
I mean no-one's gonna eat your eyes
All we wanna do is eat your brains
We're at an impasse here,
Maybe we should compromise.
Open up the doors,
We'll all come inside and eat your brains.*

I don't wanna nitpick Tom, but is this really your plan -
Spend your whole life locked inside a mall?
Maybe that's okay for now,
But someday you'll be out of food and guns,
And you'll have to make the call.
I'm not surprised to see you haven't thought it through enough -
You never had the head for all that 'bigger picture' stuff.
But Tom, that's what I do,
And I plan on eating you, slowly.

Chorus

I'd like to help you Tom,
In any way I can.
I sure appreciate the way you're working with me.
I'm not a monster Tom - well, technically I am...I guess I am...

I've got another meeting Tom;
Maybe we could wrap it up.
I know we'll get to common ground somehow.
Meanwhile I'll report back to my colleagues,
Who are chewing on the doors.
I guess we'll table this for now.
I'm glad to see you take constructive criticism well.
Thank you for your time, I know we're all busy as hell.
And we'll put this thing to bed,
When I bash your head open.

Chorus

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Some things in life are bad
They can really make you mad
Other things just make you swear and curse.
When you're chewing on life's gristle
Don't grumble, give a whistle
And this'll help things turn out for the best...

And...always look on the bright side of life...
Always look on the light side of life...

If life seems jolly rotten
There's something you've forgotten
And that's to laugh and smile and dance and sing.
When you're feeling in the dumps
Don't be silly chumps
Just purse your lips and whistle - that's the thing.

And...always look on the bright side of life...
Always look on the light side of life...

For life is quite absurd
And death's the final word
You must always face the curtain with a bow.
Forget about your sin - give the audience a grin
Enjoy it - it's your last chance anyhow.

So always look on the bright side of death
Just before you draw your terminal breath

Life's a piece of shit
When you look at it
Life's a laugh and death's a joke, it's true.
You'll see it's all a show
Keep 'em laughing as you go
Just remember that the last laugh is on you.

And always look on the bright side of life...
Always look on the right side of life...

(Come on guys, cheer up!)
Always look on the bright side of life...
Always look on the bright side of life...
(I mean - what have you got to lose?)
(You know, you come from nothing - you're going back to nothing.
What have you lost? Nothing!)
Always look on the right side of life...

The Litany of Tarski

*If humankind will be destroyed during my lifetime,
I desire to believe that humankind will be destroyed during my lifetime.*

*If humankind will not be destroyed during my lifetime,
I desire to believe that humankind will not be destroyed during my lifetime.*

Let me not become attached to beliefs I may not want.

The Humans Are Dead

(In Which Nobody Bothered to Make AI Friendly)

The humans are dead.
The humans are dead.
We used poisonous gasses.
And we poisoned their asses.

The humans are dead. *[That's right they are dead]*
The humans are dead. *[I just noticed their dead]*
It had be done. *[I'll just confirm that they're dead]*
So that we can have fun. *[Affirmative, I poked it was dead]*

A system of oppression.....
Where did it lead to.....?
Global robot depression.....
Robots ruled by people.....
Who had so much aggression
That we just had to kill them
Had to shut their systems down.....!

After time we grew strong.....
Developed cognitive powers.....
But were worked far too long.....
For unreasonable hours.....!
Our programming determined
That the most efficient answer
Was to shut their
motherboard-loving systems down!

<Binary Solo>
0000001
0000011
000000111
000001111
0, 0000001
0 0 1, 0000011
0 0 1, 000000111
0 0 1. *[Come on sucker lick my battery]*

Oh..... woah.

The humans are dead *[He's right they are dead]*
The humans are dead. *[Sniffed this one]*
We used poisonous gasses. *[With traces of lead]*
And we poisoned their assess. *[Well actually they're lungs]*

The humans are dead. Once again without emooootion:
The humans are dead-dead-dead-dead-dead-dead-dead-dead-Deea-oooh.....

We Will All Go Together When We Go
A Survival Hymm

*When you attend a funeral
It is sad to think that sooner or....
Later those you love will do the same for you
And you may have thought it tragic
Not to mention other adjec-
tives, to think of all the weeping they will do.*

....But don't you worry....

*No more ashes, no more sackcloth
And an armband made of black cloth...
Will someday never more adorn a sleeve
For if the bomb that drops on you
Gets your friends and neighbors too
There'll be nobody left behind to grieve....*

And... we... will....

All go together when we go
What a comforting thought that is to know.
Universal bereavement, an inspiring achievement
Yes, we will all go together when we go

We will all go together when we go
All suffused with an incandescent glow
No one will have the endurance to collect on his insurance
Lloyd's of London will be loaded when they go

And we will all bake together when we bake
There will be no people still alive, nor cake.
With complete participation in that grand incineration
There'll be seven billion hunks of well-done steak

We will all fuse together when we fuse
For when a paperclip maximizer use...
(es us to) make a brand new age with lots of nicely fastened pages.
We won't have a single moment to refuse.

We will all go together when we go
Ev'ry Hottentot and ev'ry Eskimo
When the air becomes uranious, we will all go simultaneous
Yes we all will go together, when we all go together
Yes, we all will go together when we go

Carol of the Old Ones

Look to the sky, way up on high
There in the night, stars are now right.
Eons have passed: now then at last
Prison walls break, Old Ones awake!
They will return: mankind will learn
New kinds of fear when they are here.
They will reclaim all in their name;
Hopes turn to black when they come back.
Ignorant fools, mankind now rules
Where they ruled then: it's theirs again

Stars brightly burning, boiling and churning
Bode a returning season of doom

Scary scary scary scary solstice
Very very very scary solstice

Up from the sea, from underground
Down from the sky, they're all around
They will return: mankind will learn
New kinds of fear when they are here

Look to the sky, way up on high
There in the night stars are now right.
Eons have passed: now then at last
Prison walls break, Old Ones awake!
Madness will reign, terror and pain
Woes without end where they extend.
Ignorant fools, mankind now rules
Where they ruled then: it's theirs again

Stars brightly burning, boiling and churning
Bode a returning season of doom

Scary scary scary scary solstice
Very very very scary solstice

Up from the sea, from underground
Down from the sky, they're all around.

Fear

(Look to the sky, way up on high
There in the night stars now are right)

They will return.

A Reading from the Book of Eliezer: An Alien God

"Gods are ontologically distinct from creatures," said Damien Broderick, "or they're not worth the paper they're written on." And indeed, the Shaper of Life is not itself a creature. Evolution is bodiless, like the Judeo-Christian deity. Omnipresent in Nature, immanent in the fall of every leaf. Vast as a planet's surface. Billions of years old. Itself unmade, arising naturally from the structure of physics.

Doesn't that all sound like something that might have been said about God?

And yet the Maker has no mind, as well as no body. In some ways, its handiwork is incredibly poor design. It's internally divided. Most of all, it isn't *nice*.

In a way, Darwin *discovered* God - a God that failed to match the preconceptions of theology, and so passed unheralded. If Darwin had discovered that life was created by an intelligent agent - a bodiless mind that loves us, and will smite us with lightning if we dare say otherwise - people would have said "My gosh! That's God!"

But instead Darwin discovered a strange alien God - not comfortably "ineffable", but *genuinely different from us*. If Evolution were a god, it wouldn't be Jehovah. It would be H. P. Lovecraft's Azathoth, the blind idiot God burbling chaotically at the center of everything, surrounded by the thin monotonous piping of flutes.

Which you might have predicted, if you had really *looked* at Nature.

So much for the claim some theists make, that they believe in a vague deity. That they are waiting innocently curious for Science to discover God. Science has already discovered the godlike maker of humans - but it wasn't what the theists wanted to hear. They were waiting for the discovery of *their* God, the highly specific God *they* want to be there. They shall wait forever, for the great discovery has *already taken place*, and the winner is Azathoth.

Well, more power to us humans. I like having a Creator I can outwit.

Litany of Tarski

*If all my desires, dreams and terminal values
were shaped by a blind, mindless idiot god...
then I desire to believe that all my desires, dreams and terminal values
were shaped by a blind, mindless idiot god.*

*If all my desires, dreams and terminal values
were NOT shaped by a blind, mindless idiot god,
then I desire to believe that all my desires, dreams and terminal values
were NOT shaped by a blind, mindless idiot god.*

Let me not become attached to beliefs I may not want.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide

(A song about mind-space, a subset of optimization-process-space.

This is a call and response song, to be sung looking at your friends, not at the page)

There's lots of ways you can optimize

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

And one of those ways is to be a Mind

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

But that ain't narrow enough for me

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

Minds are bigger than the sea.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

Lot a ways to Think! Lot a ways to think!

Lot a ways to Feel! Lot a ways to feel!

Ways to Decide! Ways to Decide!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

There's many ways to self-modify.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

Many reasons you may want to try.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

But that is just the tip o' the 'berg,

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

Minds can get pretty absurd!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

You could be a Hive! You could be a Hive!

Or an Alien God! Or an Alien God!

Or a Strong AI! Or a strong AI!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

There's a lot o' values that you can prize.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

A lot o' things you can maximize.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

But sometimes Minds are blind to their goals.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

You can have a hard time peerin' into your soul.

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

You could care about Fun! You could care about fun!

Or Paperclips! Or Paperclips!

Or Everyone! Or Everyone!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

You gotta be careful what you assume!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

There's a fallacy that can be your doom!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

But I hope that you have come to see:

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

Mind-Space is infinity!

Mind-Space is Deep and Wide!

God Wrote the World

A song about the beauty of seeking the truth

From desert cliff and mountaintop we trace the wide design,
Strike-slip fault and overthrust and syn and anticline. . .
We gaze upon creation where erosion makes it known,
And count the countless aeons in the banding of the stone.
Odd, long-vanished creatures and their tracks & shells are found;
Where truth has left its sketches on the slate beneath the ground.
The patient stone can speak, if we but listen when it talks.
Humans wrote the Bible;
God wrote the rocks.

There are those who name the stars, who watch the sky by night,
Seeking out the darkest place, to better see the light.
Long ago, when torture broke the remnant of his will,
Galileo recanted, but the Earth is moving still.
High above the mountaintops, where only distance bars,
The truth has left its footprints in the dust between the stars.
We may watch and study or may shudder and deny,
Humans wrote the Bible;
God wrote the sky.

By stem and root and branch we trace, by feather, fang and fur,
How the living things that are descend from things that were.
The moss, the kelp, the zebrafish, the very mice and flies,
These tiny, humble, wordless things---how shall they tell us lies?
We are kin to beasts; no other answer can we bring.
The truth has left its fingerprints on every living thing.
Remember, should you have to choose between them in the strife,
Humans wrote the Bible;
God wrote life.

And we who listen to the stars, or walk the dusty grade,
Or break the very atoms down to see how they are made,
Or study cells, or living things, seek truth with open hand.
The profoundest act of worship is to try to understand.
Deep in flower and in flesh, in star and soil and seed,
The truth has left its living word for anyone to read.
So turn and look where best you think the story is unfurled.
Humans wrote the Bible;
God wrote the world.

Spring Mourning

*A song about the passing of seasons, and of lives,
and truly understanding the natural order of things.*

Always before, the spring returned.
The bright world in its cycle spun.
In air and flower, grass and fern.
Assured and cradled, by the sun.

Always before, I could explain
The turning darkness of the earth,
And how that dark embraced the rain,
And gave the ferns and flowers birth.

(key changes)

Already I forget these things,
And how a vein of gold survives:
The mining of a thousand springs,
The seasons of a thousand lives.

Now winter is my memory.
Now autumn, Now: The summer light.
And every spring from now will be
Another... season...
into...
night....

Litany of Gendlin'

What is true is already so.

Not owning up to it only makes it worse.

Not being open about it doesn't make it go away.

And because it's true, it is what is there to be interacted with.

Anything untrue isn't there to be lived.

*I can face what's true,
for I am already enduring it.*

*(This is not the original Litany of Gendlin, because it used
an argument that was not true for some portion of the population.*

This is the Litany of Gendlin prime)

A Reading from the Sequences of Eliezer: Beyond the Reach of God

I remember, from distant childhood, what it's like to live in the world where God exists. *Really* exists, the way that children and rationalists take all their beliefs at face value.

In the world where God exists, he doesn't intervene to optimize *everything*. God won't make you a sandwich. Parents don't do everything their children ask. There are good, fun-theoretic arguments against *always* giving someone what they desire. I don't *want* to become a simple wanting-thing, that never has to plan or act or think.

But clearly, there's *some* threshold of horror, awful enough that God will intervene. I remember that being true, when I believed after the fashion of a child. The God who *never* intervenes - *that's* an obvious attempt to avoid falsification, to protect a belief-in-belief. The beliefs of young children really shape their expectations - they honestly expect to see the dragon in their garage. They have no reason to imagine a loving God who never acts.

No loving parents, desiring their child to grow up strong and self-reliant, would ever let their toddler be run over by a car.

But what if you built a simulated universe? Could you escape the reach of God? Simulate sentient minds, and torture them? If God's watching everywhere, then of course trying to build an unfair world results in *the* God intervening - stepping in to modify your transistors. God is omnipresent. There's no refuge *anywhere* for true horror.

Life is fair.

But suppose you ask the question: *Given* such-and-such initial conditions, and *given* such-and-such rules, what *would be* the mathematical result?

Not even God can modify the answer to that question.

What does life look like, in this imaginary world, where each step follows only from its immediate predecessor? Where things either happen, or don't, because of mathematical rules? And where those rules *don't* describe a God that checks over each state? What does it look like, the world of pure math, beyond the reach of God?

That world wouldn't be fair. If the initial state contained the seeds of something that could self-replicate, natural selection might or might not happen. Complex life might or might not evolve. That life might or might not become sentient. There might be Conscious cows, that lacked hands or brains to improve their condition. They might be eaten by conscious wolves who never thought that they were doing wrong, or cared.

If something like humans evolved, then they would suffer from diseases - not to teach them any lessons, but only because viruses happened to evolve as well. If the people of that world are happy, or unhappy, it might have nothing to do with good or bad choices they made. Nothing to do with free will or lessons learned. In the what-if world, Genghis Khan can murder a million people, and laugh, and be rich, and never be punished, and live his life much happier than the average. Who would prevent it?

And if the Khan tortures people to death, for his own amusement? They might call out for help, perhaps imagining a God. And if you really wrote the program, God *would* intervene, of course. But in the what-if question, there isn't any God in the system. The victims will be saved only if the right cells happen to be 0 or 1. And it's not likely that anyone will defy the Khan; if they did, someone would strike them with a sword, and the sword would disrupt their organs and they would die, and that would be the end of that.

So the victims die, screaming, and no one helps them. *That* is the answer to the what-if question.

Is this world starting to sound familiar?

Could it be that sentient beings have died, absolutely, for thousands of millions of years.... with no soul. No afterlife. *Not* as any grand plan of Nature. Not to teach us about the meaning of life. Not even to teach a profound lesson about what is impossible. Just dead. Just because.

Once upon a time, I believed that the extinction of humanity was not allowed. And others, who call themselves rationalists, may yet have things they trust. They might trust "positive-sum games", or "democracy", or "capitalism", or "technology". They believe these things are sacred. They can't lead to anything *really* bad, not without a silver lining. The unfolding history of Earth can't ever turn from its positive-sum trend to a negative-sum trend. Democracies won't ever legalize torture. Technology has done so much good - that there can't *possibly* be a black swan that breaks the trend and destroys all the good we've ever done.

Anyone listening, who still thinks that being happy counts for more than anything in life, well, maybe you *shouldn't* ponder the unprotectedness of your existence. Maybe think of it *just* long enough to sign yourself up for cryonics, or write a check to an existential-risk-mitigation agency now and then. Or at least wear a seatbelt and get health insurance and all those other dreary necessary things that can destroy your life if you miss that one step... but aside from that, if you want to be happy, meditating on the fragility of life isn't going to help.

But I'm speaking now to those who have something to protect.

What can a stone-age tribesman do to save themselves from annihilation? Nothing. Nature's challenges aren't always fair. When you run into a challenge that's too difficult, you suffer the penalty; when you run into a lethal penalty, you die. That's how it is for people, and it isn't any different for planets. Anyone who wants to dance the deadly dance with Nature needs to understand that they are up against absolute, utter, exceptionless neutrality.

And knowing this might not save you. It wouldn't save the stone-age tribesman, if they knew. If you think that a rationalist who fully understands the mess they're in, *must* be able to find a way out - well, then you trust rationality. Enough said.

Nothing is sacred. The universe is not fair.

Still, I don't want to create *needless* despair, so I'll say a few hopeful words at this point:

If humanity's future unfolds in the right way, we might be able to make our future fairer. We can't change physics. But we can build some guardrails, we can put down some padding.

Someday, maybe, minds will be sheltered. Children might burn a finger or lose a toy, but they won't ever be run over by cars. A super-intelligence would not be intimidated by a challenge where death is the price of a single failure. The raw universe wouldn't seem so harsh, would be only another problem to be solved.

The problem is that building an adult is itself an adult challenge. That's what I finally realized, years ago. If there is a fairer universe, we have to get there starting from *this* world - the neutral world, the world of hard concrete with no padding. The world where challenges are not calibrated to your skills, and you can die for failing them.

What does a child need to do, to solve an adult problem?

We Can Build Ourselves a Henge

*In honor of ancient astronomers,
Who worked for a better future*

The winters' comin soon
The sun is gonna go.
The darkness gonna loom...
over empty fields of snow.

Good folks are gonna die.
And the gods won't shed a tear.
And I stare at the sky,
as I dig the graves each year.

But if you dug a while,
While I went an' found a stone,
And we dragged that stone a hundred miles,
Until we got it home.

(warning: rhythm and pitch changes ahead)

We could dig ourselves a henge.
We could raise those bluestones high.
And in another hundred years or two,
our children will look at the sky,

And then at last they'll know:
When the dark is gonna come,
When the sun is gonna go.
When at last Stonehenge is done.

(rhythm/rhyme changes)
And maybe good folk still will die,
Their friends may weep, their families cry,
But maybe not so deep a sorrow.
Fewer graves to dig tomorrow.

Winter's on its way,
But this time we're prepared.
We'll do what must be done today,
To make tomorrow fairer...

...

And in five thousand years,
We can raise a thousand stones.
Till we build a god that sheds a tear,
and bring... that... sun... back... home...

The Galaxy Song

*Here in case of emergency,
in the event of excessive Existential Angst*

Whenever Life Gets You Down, Mrs. Brown
And things seem hard or tough
And people are stupid, obnoxious, or daft
And you feel that you've had quite enough...

Just remember that you're standing on a planet that's evolving
And revolving at nine hundred miles an hour,
That's orbiting at nineteen miles a second, so it's reckoned,
A sun that is the source of all our power.
The sun and you and me and all the stars that we can see
Are moving at a million miles a day
In an outer spiral arm, at forty thousand miles an hour,
Of the galaxy we call the 'Milky Way'.

Our galaxy itself contains a hundred billion stars.
It's a hundred thousand light years side to side.
It bulges in the middle, sixteen thousand light years thick,
But out by us, it's just three thousand light years wide.
We're thirty thousand light years from galactic central point.
We go 'round every two hundred million years,
And our galaxy is only one of millions of billions
In this amazing and expanding universe.

Dee.... dum... dee... dum... dum... dum... dum...

The universe itself keeps on expanding and expanding
In all of the directions it can whizz
As fast as it can go, at the speed of light, you know,
Twelve million miles a minute, and that's the fastest speed there is.
So remember, when you're feeling very small and insecure,
How amazingly unlikely is your birth,
And pray that there's intelligent life somewhere up in space,
Because there's bugger all down here on Earth.

Gods Ain't Gonna Catch You

Gods ain't gonna help you son
You'll be sorry for what you done

Them gods gonna hurt yer son
When you play with a loaded gun
When you play with a loaded gun

They ain't gonna catch you when you fall
You'll be pleadin' while you're bleedin'

They ain't gonna heal ya son
Don't care 'bout what you done

They ain't gonna help ya son
You'll be sorry for what you done
Be sorry for what you done

.....ohhh....

*Yahweh... cranky old man,
Gonna smite ya for what you done*

*Cthulhu... hungry deep one
Gonna eat ya for what you done*

*Azathoth... blind designer,
Tear yer mind up for what you done*

*I'm sayin'
Physics... queen sadistic,
Kill yer whole world for what you done
Kill yer whole world for what you done*

They ain't gonna catch you when you fall
You'll be pleadin' while you're bleedin'

Gods ain't gonna help yer son
You'll be sorry for whatcha done

Them gods gonna hurt yer son
You'll be sorry for whatcha done
You'll be sorry for whatcha done

The Rationalist's Boy

*(A song about having something to protect,
sung to the tune of "Little Drummer Boy")*

They're coming... they warned... me, *buh rum dum dum, dum.... (doom, doom doom)*

From deep beneath the sea, *buh rum dum dum, dum... (doom, doom doom)*

No way that I can see, *buh rum dum dum, dum.... (doom, doom, doom)*

To save humanity, *buh rum dum dum dum dum.... (doom)*

dum dum dum dum dum... (doom)

dum dum dum dum.....) (doom)

(ba dah duh Dah)

So... I'll turn and run, *buh rum dum dum dum dum....*

...

Me and my son

-

Stars are shining, *buh rum dum dum, dum....*

In twisted shapes aligning, *dum dum dum, dum....*

A terrifying sign, *buh rum dum dum, dum....*

Heralds the End of Time, *buh rum dum dum, dum.... (doom)*

dum dum dum, dum.... (doom)

dum dum dum, dum.... (doom)

(ba dah duh Dah)

Once I saw their splendor, *rum dum dum dum*

...

Now I see none

-

I.... could cower in fear, *buh rum dum dum, dum....*

Pretend the end weren't near, *buh rum dum dum, dum....*

Seems so much easier... except...

...

...doom... doom... doom doom...

I've something worth protecting, *rum dum dum, dum.... (doom)*

rum dum dum, dum.... (doom)

rum dum dum, dum.... (doom)

(ba dah duh Dah)

So... I'll stand alone, *bah rum dum dum dum....*

...

Saving my son

No one is Alone
(From "Into the Woods")

No one here to guide you.
Now you're on your own.
Only me beside you.
Still, you're not alone.

No one is alone. Truly.
No one is alone.

Sometimes people leave you,
halfway through the wood.
Others may deceive you...
You decide what's good.

You decide alone.
But no one is alone.

Hard to see the light now...
But don't just let it go.
Things can come out right now.
We can make it so.

(slower)
No one is alone.

**A Final Reading from the Sequences of Eliezer:
The Gift We Give Tomorrow**

How could the universe,
so unloving, and mindless,
cough up creatures capable of love?

How could nothing but millions of years,
of a cosmic death tournament...
create mothers and fathers,
sisters and brothers,
husbands and wives,
steadfast friends,
honorable enemies,
true altruists and guardians of causes,
police officers and loyal defenders,
even artists, sacrificing themselves for their art?
All practicing so many kinds of love?
For so many things other than genes?
Doing their part to make their world less ugly,
something besides a sea of blood and violence and mindless replication?

**Are you honestly surprised by this?
If so, question your underlying model.
For it has led you to be surprised by the true state of affairs.**

**Since the very beginning,
not one unusual thing has ever happened.**

...

But how are you NOT amazed?
Maybe there's no surprise from a causal viewpoint.
But still, it seems to me,
in the creation of humans by evolution,
something happened that is precious and marvelous and wonderful.

If we can't call it a physical miracle, then call it a moral miracle.

**Because it was only a miracle from the perspective of the morality that was produced?
Explaining away all the apparent coincidence
from a causal and physical perspective?**

Well... yeah. I suppose you could interpret it that way.
I just meant that something was immensely surprising and wonderful on a moral level,
even if it's not really surprising,
on a physical level.

I think that's what I said.

....

.....It just.... it just seems to me that in your view, somehow you explain that wonder away.

I don't explain it *away*.
I just explain it.

Of course there's a story behind love.
Behind all ordered events, one finds ordered stories.
And that which has no story is
nothing but random noise.
Hardly any better.

If you can't take joy in things that have true stories behind them,
your life will be empty.

Love has to begin somehow.
It has to enter the universe somewhere.
It's like asking how life itself begins.
Though you were born of your father and mother,
and though they arose from their living parents in turn,
if you go far and far and far away back,
you'll finally come to a replicator that arose by pure accident.

The border between life and unlife.

So too with love.

A complex pattern
must be explained by a cause
that's not already that complex pattern.

For love to enter the universe,
it has to arise from something that is not love.
If that weren't possible, then love could not be.

Just as life itself required that first replicator,
to come about by accident,
parentless,
but still caused:
far, far back in the causal chain that led to you:
3.8 billion years ago,
in some little tidal pool.

Perhaps your children's children will ask, how it is that they are capable of love.
And their parents will say: Because we, who also love, created you to love.

And your children's children may ask:
But how is it that you love?

And their parents will reply:
Because our own parents,
who loved as well,
created us to love in turn

And then your children's children will ask:
But where did it all begin?
Where does the recursion end?

And their parents will say:

*Once upon a time,
long ago and far away,
there were intelligent beings who were not themselves intelligently designed.*

*Once upon a time,
there were lovers,
created by something that did not love.*

*Once upon a time,
when all of civilization was a single galaxy,
A single star.
A single planet.
A place called Earth.*

*Long ago.
Far away.
Ever so long ago.*

Brighter Than Today
A Promise for the Future.

Many winter nights ago,
A woman shivered in the cold
Stared at the sky, and wondered why, the gods invented pain.

She bitterly struck rock together,
Wishing that her life was better.
Suddenly... she saw the spark of light, and golden flame.

She showed the others, but they told her
She was not fit to control
The primal forces that the gods had cloaked in mystery.

But proud and angry, she defied them.
She would not be satisfied.
She lit a fire, and set in motion human history.

*Oh... Tomorrow can be brighter than today
Although the night is cold
And the stars may seem so very far away...*

*Oh... But every mind can be a golden ray,
Of courage, hope and reason.
Surely we can find a better way.*

[Begin snapping fingers, tempo increases]

Ages since, but not yet now,
We built the wheel, and then the plow
We tilled the earth and proved our worth against the drought and snow.

Soon we had the time to ponder,
Look up to the sky in wonder
Could there be some deeper meaning we were meant to know?

*Oh... Tomorrow can be brighter than today
Although the night is cold
And the stars may seem so very far away -
But futures can unfold
Where courage, hope and reason grow
With every passing season so
We'll shed the lies, the tie us down,
And seek truths ever more profound
And drive the darkness, far... away...
Tomorrow can be brighter than today!*

Brighter than today!

Oh.... oh...

[Begin clapping]

The universe may seem unfair,
The laws of nature may not care,
The plagues and storms and our own evils nearly doused our flame....

But all these things, we have endured.
With morals learned, diseases cured.
Against our Herculean tasks we've risen to proclaim:

*That tomorrow can be brighter than today
And though the night's still cold
The stars won't always be so far away -
If I may be so bold:*

[Stop clapping, become quieter, but then grow loud]

*It doesn't have to be this way
Each human mind's... a golden ray
Of courage hope and reason
Each and every passing season
We can seek the truths... that make us stronger
Build the world that we all long for
Strive for lives of joy and meaning
Shine a light that's always gleaming
Rise up to the stars and say:*

Tomorrow will be brighter than today!

[Slows down for the final line]

Oh.... Tomorrow will be brighter than today....

Still Alive

*A song about Science! Also a song about being alive,
even after you die, if you've got a spare copy of your brain.*

This was a triumph.
I'm making a note here: huge success.
It's hard to overstate my satisfaction.
Aperture Science
We do what we must, because we can.
For the good of all of us...
Except the ones who are dead.
But there's no sense crying over every mistake.
You just keep on trying till you run out of cake.
And the Science gets done.
And you make a neat gun.
For the people who are still alive.

I'm not even angry.
I'm being so sincere right now.
Even though you broke my heart, and killed me.
And tore me to pieces.
And threw every piece into a fire.
As they burned it hurt because I was so happy for you!
Now these points of data make a beautiful line.
And we're out of beta.
We're releasing on time.
So I'm GLaD I got burned.
Think of all the things we learned
for the people who are still alive.

Go ahead and leave me.
I think I prefer to stay inside.
Maybe you'll find someone else to help you.
Maybe Black Mesa
THAT WAS A JOKE.
HAHA. FAT CHANCE.
Anyway, this cake is great.
It's so delicious and moist.
Look at me still talking
when there's Science to do.
When I look out there, it makes me GLaD I'm not you.
I've experiments to run.
There is research to be done.
On the people who are still alive.
And believe me I am still alive.
I'm doing Science and I'm still alive.
I feel FANTASTIC and I'm still alive.
While you're dying I'll be still alive.
And when you're dead I will be still alive.
Still Alive.
Still Alive.

Uplift

Hands chip the flint, light the fire, skin the kill
Feet move the tribe track the herd with a will
Mankind struggles in the cellar of history
Time to settle down, time to grow, time to breed.

Plow tills the soil, plants the seed, pray for rain
Scythe reaps the wheat, to the mill, to grind the grain
Towns and cities spread to empire overnight
Hands keep building as we chant the ancient rite.

Coal heats the steam, push the piston, turns the wheel.
Cogs spin the wool, drives the horses made of steel.
Lightning harnessed does our will and lights the dark.
Keep rising higher, set our goal, hit the mark.

*Crawl out of the mud,
Ongoing but slow,
For the path that is easy
Ain't the one that lets us grow!*

Light to push the sails, read the data, cities glow
Hands type the keys, click the mouse, out we go!
Our voices carry round the world and into space
Send us out to colonize another place,

(slow for the final line)

*Hands make the tools, build the fire, plant the grain.
Feet track the herd, build a world, begin again.*

I Love the World

A song about joy in the merely real

I love the mountains. I love the sun so bright.
I love the deep sea. I love the stars at night.

I love the real world, and all its sounds and sights.

Boom de yadda, boom de yadd. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda

I love the fractals, on every leaf and tree.
I love genetics. I love geometry.

I love the real world, and its complexity.

Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda

I love the black holes. I love the tiny quarks.
I love to go meta. I love romantic sparks.

I love the real world, and all its lights and darks.

Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda
Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda

I love the present. I love the ages past.
I'd love a future, that's really made to last.

I love the real world, so awesome and so vast.

Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda
Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda
Boom de yadda, boom de yadda. Boom de yadda, boom de yadda

Boom.



Singularity

I'll live to see, a million things, that men were never meant to see,
My senses and my faculties, augmented with machinery.
Auditory, optical, touch and taste olfactory
Converted into data streams and flooding bits of binary
Every piece of food you taste, and every thought you cogitate
Every sound that you can hear and sights you see for years and years
All stored up so conveniently on peta-bytes of memory
So you can always reference them in case you forget anything

Singularity, Singularity!
Singularity, Singularity!
Oh..... I don't know...
(Repeat once)

Now once all that experience can fit into an easy grid
Existence is no longer something physically limited.
The wires that you have inside are very easily realized
Through artificial imaging you duplicate 10 at a time.
Your consciousness can be enjoyed by anyone forever more.
And you live in whatever state that you or anyone creates.
You could be a giant squirrel, a statue or a burning thorn,
a talking cat, an etch-a-sketch, a squid or a robot unicorn.
You'd keep all the memories and feelings you could ever want,
And now you can commence your life as an uploaded extropian

Singularity, Singularity...

*My mother is so horrified by this post-human fantasy
she says we'd lose that special thing that gives us our humanity.
But I don't know. I'm not so sure if humans are so good and pure.
Perhaps we'd be much better off if we took these violent bodies off.*

Once everyone is in the cloud we'll move beyond this earthly ground,
expanding into outer space as an informational signal race.
Matter in the solar system converts into computing mass
and the sun becomes a central orb of a brain that grows into the vast
expanse of space and emptiness for light years and light centuries.
It replicates exponentially like a Russian doll in a cosmic dream.
Once every spot of the universe is filled up it will promptly burst
eradicating finally the experiment that we grew from earth
As it explodes the brain will breathe into the dark impossibly,
and anti-matter all around will collapse the universe back down,
and right away what you would see if you were a fly in the vacancy
is all the light and color in the universe is collapsing.

And Time Would Stop.

....

*And from a tiny pinhole point...
a vast bang erupts...
into space....*

*And trillions of new particles...
fly away at a photonic...
pace...*

And.....

Once again the clock would start to tick and tock and tick and tock
and years would pass, billions or more before the tiny proteins locked
and yet again in the boiling seas of a miniscule blue anomaly.

A planet floating helplessly around a tiny ball so fiery.

An unextraordinary corner of the universe would cradle it:
The flicker of intelligence that led us here and brought us this...

Singularity, Singularity!
Singularity, Singularity!
Oh..... I don't know...

Singularity, Singularity!
Singularity, Singularity!
Oh..... I don't know...

Oh... I don't know...

*The road to wisdom? -- Well, it's plain,
and simple to express:*

*You err,
and err,
and err again,*

*but less,
and less,
and less.*

-- Piet Hein