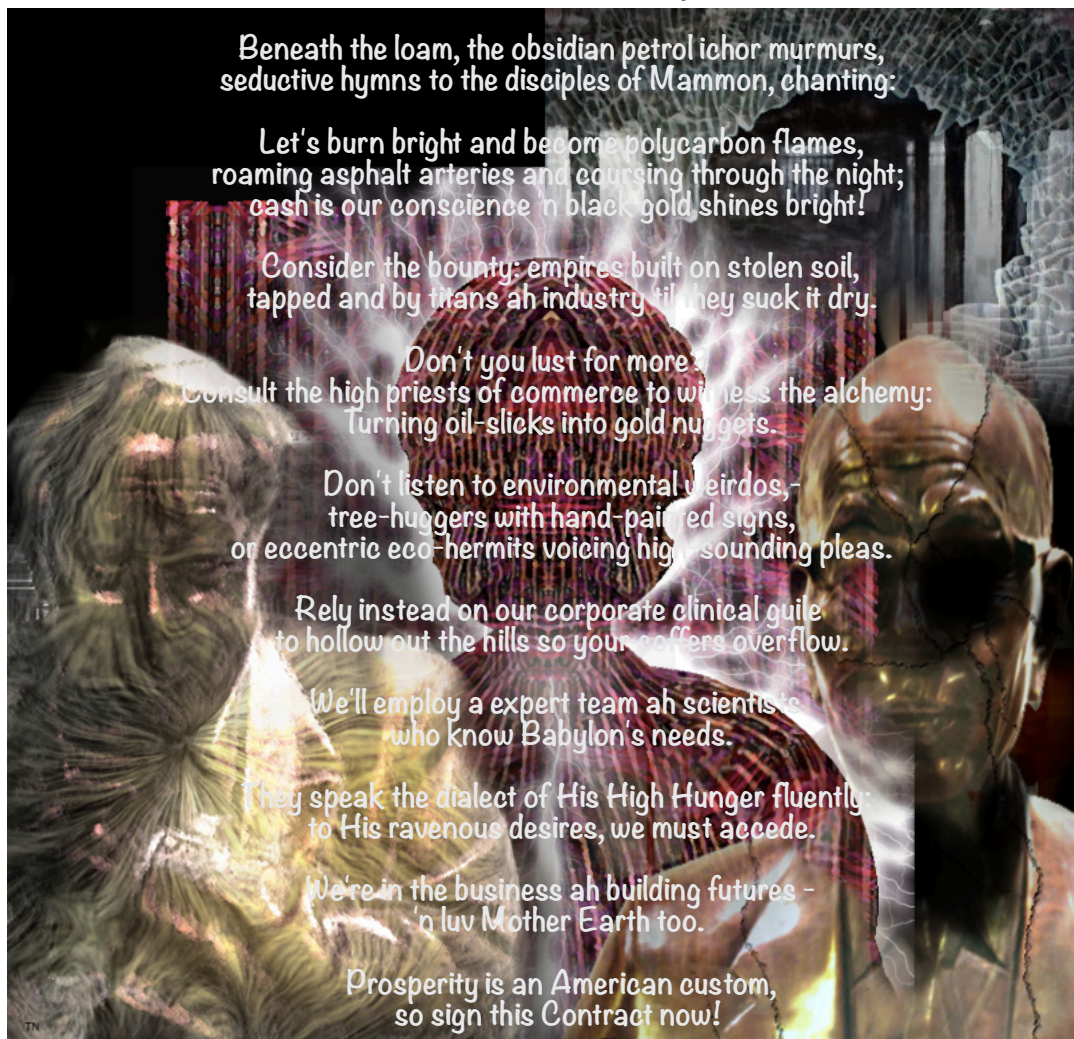


PETROL LUST:

Reflections on the Gospel of Greed



Terri set down her coffee, porcelain clicking softly, the poem's final line still hanging in the air like smoke. "Petrol-lust," she said, letting the word linger, sour on her tongue. "It's fueled a century of geopolitics, toppled governments, started wars. And we're still addicted. Aren't we a species defined by our cravings?"

Kris leaned back in his chair, folding across his chest, a grim half-smile tugging at his mouth. "Yeah, it seems that the dealer's running out of product. That old dream's dying—we're just too strung out to admit it yet."

"Lust for anything invites suffering." Tim added in a low, unadorned voice. It seemed as if he carried the weight of someone who has watched the same error replay itself too many times. "We've got to learn to live more modestly. Not because it's noble, but it is the only viable survival tactic. We can't afford the excesses of the past."

Ted raised an eyebrow, his skepticism barely concealed. "You think we're disciplined enough for that? Can we choose restraint over excess?" A short laugh escaped from his throat, brittle, humorless. "We've never been good at saying no to ourselves."

- T Newfields

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