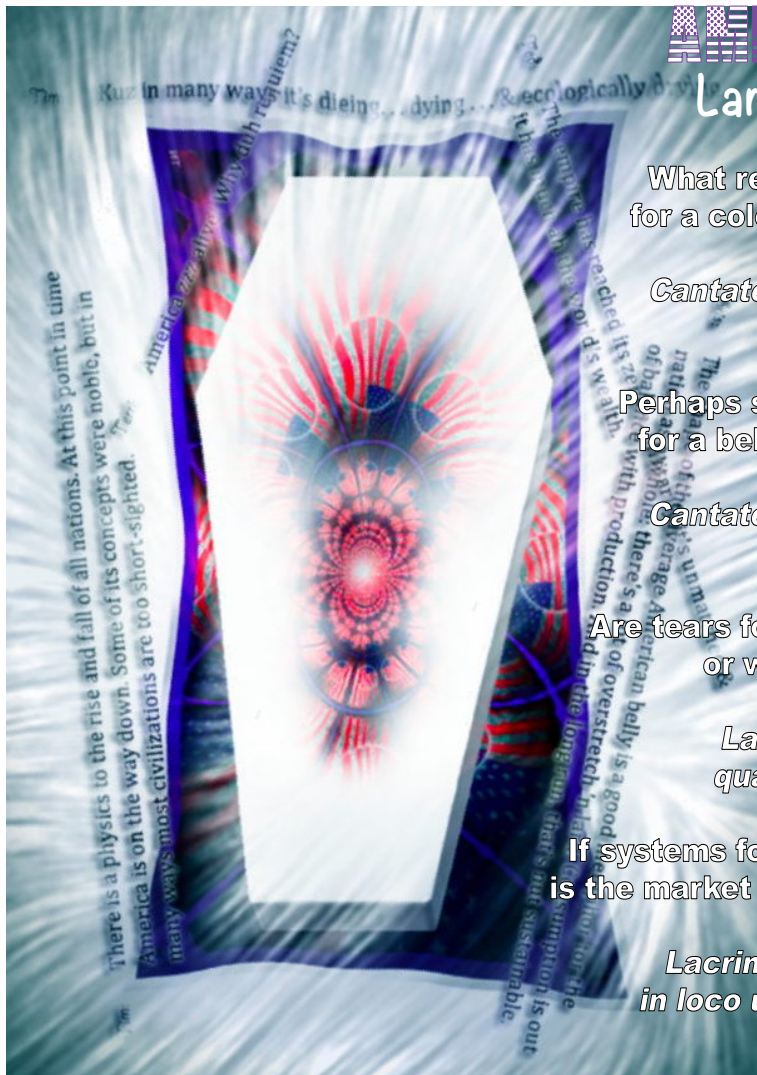




AMERICAN REQUIEM: Lament for a Fallen Nation

What requiem should be intoned
for a colossus with ossified bones?

*Cantate requiem pro democratia
quae mortua est!*

Perhaps silence is the best soliloquy
for a behemoth prone to depravity

*Cantate requiem pro democratia
quae mentita est!*

Are tears for fading empires warranted –
or will body bags suffice?

*Lacrimam democratiae
quae mortua est effudit!*

If systems focus solely on short-term profit
is the market bell the only meaningful chime?

*Lacrimam effudit omnibus nati
in loco ubi nulla democratia viget!*

SETTING: The air hung heavily, thick with the poem's palpable nihilism that clung to every surface like a funeral crepe. A group amateur poets hunched in the glow of a dying bulb, as the poem lay sprawled on the scarred table.

Sam shoved the page away, a harsh scoff scraping from his throat. His head shook slightly, eyes darting like startled sparrows. "Damn," he growled, "this whimpers! It's a funeral dirge for a fantasy that has hardly ever found flesh."

Terri tilted back, crossing her arms with a skeptical smirk. "Spot on. Last I looked, America's heart still hammers. Why pen this premature elegy? This 'Requiem' feels a bit premature."

Tim didn't look up. He was tracing the edge of his coffee mug, his voice barely a whisper but heavy with conviction. "Because in all the ways that actually matter... America is already a corpse. Can't you catch the stench of its decay?"

Ted's face tightened, twitching with irritation. He jabbed a finger toward the window. "Well, isn't America at its apex? Look at the ledger; Militarily, we're matchless; we hold the lion's share of the world's wealth. How do you call a titan 'dead' when it's holding most of the chips?"

Kris chuckled coldly, pointing to Donald Trump's corpulent belly. "His paunch is a perfect parable for our nation, Ted. Look at it: bloated and burdened by blubber. He is Jabba the Hutt. We're a society that's swallowed itself. We've become a society where consumption has completely swallowed production whole. Simply put, that is unsustainable."

Tim lifted his head, his eyes icy. "There is a mathematical physics to the rise and fall of every nation, and we aren't exempt from the gravity. At this point in history, America is on a downward arc. Sure, its founding concepts were noble — maybe even beautiful — but civilizations are inherently short-sighted. We're just another behemoth too blinded by its own size to see the approaching cliff."

- T Newfields

Beg.: 2002 Nagoya ☆ Fin.: 2026 Shizuoka

