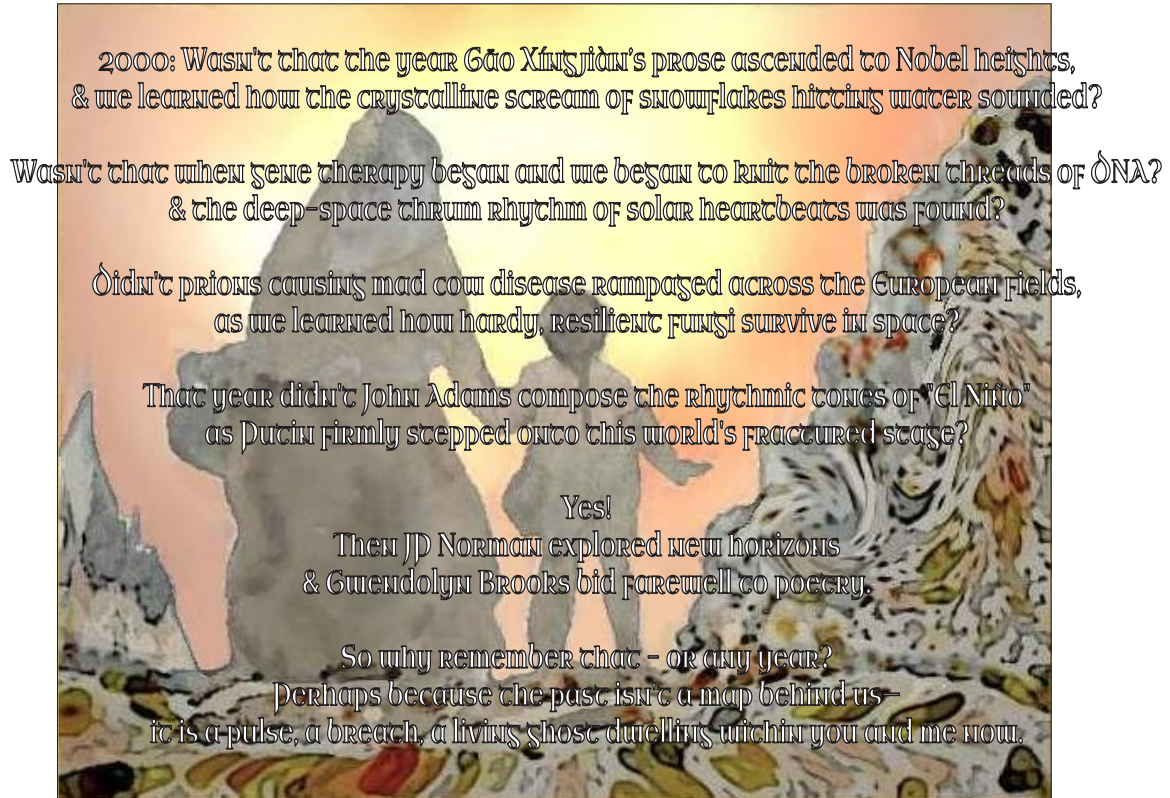


REMEMBRANCE:

Echoes from the Y2K Horizon



The familiar coffee shop was cool, smelling of cedar, bitter coffee, and the sharp, metallic tang of old computers. Outside, a soft rain drummed against the roof—a rhythm that felt like a ticking clock. Soo pulled a heavy, leather-bound almanac from the shelf, its pages yellowing at the edges.

Tracing a finger over the headline 'The New Millennium', Soo added, "Twenty-five years ago. It feels like a dream now, doesn't it? That year we thought the computers would die, but instead instead we just watched the world reinvent itself."

Andrei leaned against a stack of crates with arms folded. "It's the strange juxtaposition that gets me. Back in 2000, we were obsessed with the rot of Europe's cattle—madness on the ground—while simultaneously discovering that life, in the form of simple fungi, could survive the absolute freezing void of space. We were looking down in fear and up in wonder at the exact same time."

Ellesha whispered softly, almost to herself, "Every century is a reflection point. It is a chance to think about what has changed, and what has stayed the same."

Jules skeptically, swirled a glass of tea, "And so many things that need to change remain steadfast. The status quo continues, though superficial window changing takes place."

Soo closed the book with a soft thud, "Maybe not during breakfast, Jules. But Liao is right about this poem. We don't just 'remember' 2000. We are 2000. We aren't just observers; we are the containers for everything that has already happened."