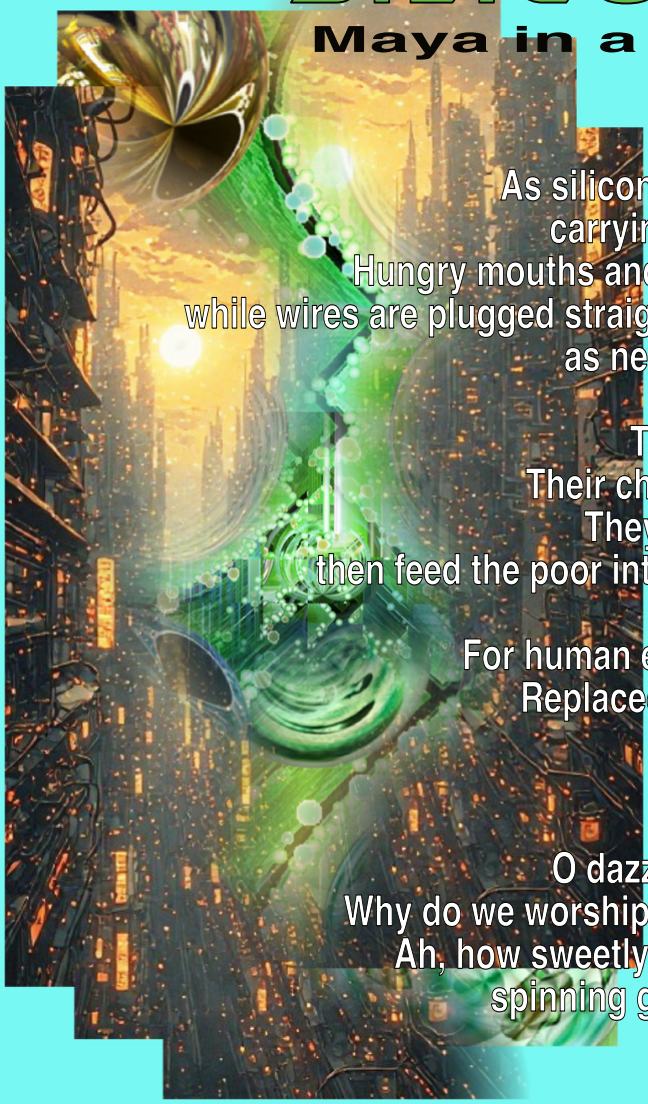
SILICON CITIES:
Maya in a Virtual Machine



As silicon spires stitch across virtual streets
carrying consumers to new electric highs
Hungry mouths and dark psycho-active crystals meet,
while wires are plugged straight into the pulse of a million brains
as new cyber-links hum in the neon rain.

The council sits in sealed machines,
Their chrome lips bright, their eyes serene.
They weigh each soul, sifts each name,
then feed the poor into countless zero-sum yield-games.

For human emotions are cast far from the field,
Replaced by cold math for maximal yield—
Their algorithms, sleek and whole,
grind numbers from every soul.

O dazzling structures of crystal and light!
Why do we worship wafer-thin unrealities of the night?
Ah, how sweetly they hypnotize, whisper, and glow,
spinning glittering webs of maya to all below.

The evening air hummed between a group of friends sat leisurely at a coffee shop near a tech expo. Outside, ten thousand windows blinked on in tidy rows like a circuit board waking, one golden eye at a time. Rain slid down the glass, drawn toward the towers.

Gus leaned toward the polymer window, his curiosity perking steadily. "*Someday,*" he mused, "*will cities look like silicon computer chips?*"

Liao didn't answer at once. His gaze drifted toward the horizon, where the last of the daylight caught the geometric lines of the skyline and turned them briefly to fire. For a quiet, measured moment, he peered closely at Gus, then murmured, "For a brief time, maybe."

Across the table, Nadya shook her head slightly. Her expression settled into a sober calm that while waxing philosophical. "*Every city becomes debris eventually. Taxila, Tenochtitlan, Trantor, Terminus— we pour concrete and call it permanence. In the long run, entropy triumphs.*"

Liao let out a soft, contemplative breath. Beyond the window, the rain kept climbing. "*Perhaps no civilization is sustainable,*" he said calmly.

Nobody argued. The towers shimmered in the glass, upside down and underwater. Liao watched the rain fall in the night, carrying the city's lights with it—one bright landscape, vanishing pixel at a time.

- T NEWFIELDS

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NOTE: *This piece was partially generated with AI tools for styling and ideation; human editing was then applied.*