

## The Annunciation of the Papal Visit to Detroit

*T. Fulano, February 1987, on the announcement  
of the papal visit to Detroit for September 1987*

All the city mourns, and the crumpled masses  
languish at the gates, and the cry of all the  
freeways has gone up.

The politicians have sent their runners to the waters,  
but they come with all their vessels empty.

The limousines fester in long lines like links of meat  
waiting to be roasted in the devil's barbecue.

The ground is broken and darkly stained with blood,  
and an ashen rain falls down along the straits  
where two gasping lakes lie exhausted.

And the proletarians cover their heads, throwing  
their useless tools to an oil-spattered concrete.

And the animals stand in the high places, snuffing  
up the wind like anguished dragons, their eyes  
failing, fleeing the wheeled incense and the  
pirouetting saturday night specials of a  
hardening rain.

And the daughters of the city are on the threshing  
floors, harvested by gangrened nightshade  
warriors on gloomy motorcycles.

And the children are devoured by the palsied  
sorrow in executive suites, the telephones gnaw  
their parchment bones in the looted  
supermarkets.

And the heavens and the earth are receding, like the  
skin of prisoners handcuffed to radiators in the  
dank basements of justice.

And weary are the sowers and reapers, their seeds  
scattered in the cornucopic sewage, their crops  
flattened under a blistered light.

And all the plate glass windows are shattered in a  
winded frenzy, a final rage rising from the  
strange flesh drifting down the river.

And the factories give off a strange and giddy hue  
against the coughing sky.

And the jetset pope, crowned eunuch of the honeyed  
imposture who blessed the shrapnel as it  
shredded the children of campesinos.

The contra pope, gowned golem chastising the  
Nicaraguan mothers for their anger while  
secretly pawning the relics to pay for poisoned  
bullets,

The C.I.A. pope, who would not suffer a witch to  
live and who had the zen lunatics thrown down  
spiked pits,

The corporate pope, who cut a secret deal with the  
banks to subdivide and develop Nirvana as a  
judeo-christian theme park,

The mafia pope, who arsones the tenements to flush  
out atheists and to collect the insurance when  
bingo revenues are down,

The nuclear pope, who exhorts a holy indifference to  
crush the peasantry with a cosmic boot to punish  
their low productivity,

The petrochemical pope, who drinks the blood of  
gypsy children while drawing up plans for a  
polystyrene cathedral to be melted over the  
pagan shrines,

The laboratorial pope, who genetically engineers  
mathematicians to compute the number of  
angels dancing at the end of the hypodermic  
needles he uses to inject choirboys with deadly,  
experimental viruses,

The fast food pope, coming to Detroit to christen the  
first of a chain of thousands of franchises selling

the blood and flesh of Jesus to hungry  
schoolchildren,  
The incinerator pope, who finances the clearcutting  
of the Amazon to obliterate the Garden of Eden  
once and for all,  
The high tech pope, whose special computer  
program goes into every Star Wars satellite so  
that the apocalypse can be videotaped and  
carried with missionaries into outer space,  
The industrial pope, who operates clandestine  
factories in Asia where vivisection is performed  
on heretics,  
The pharmaceutical pope, who has replaced the  
opium of the people with phenomenological  
methadone,  
The death squad pope, who burns the rebels with  
electromagnetic cigarettes in tumescent chapels,  
That pious contamination, sweeping down on  
riveted vampire wings, descends on Detroit!

The word of this Lord, foul oozing disease creeping  
from the newsprint generations, abandoning the  
desolate fields long sown with salt, brought  
notice of his coming to a Jeremiah sleeping by a  
steam grate downtown as he gnawed a stale slice  
of bread in a dream.  
And the polyester angel, descending from a cadillac,  
said unto him: Behold, the Lord shall send the  
truncheon of his strength out of the holy  
headquarters,  
The Lord maketh the workers and the workless his  
footstools and his chamberpots, and verily, he  
shall defecate the beauties of his holiness upon  
them.  
The sacred conspirators shall judge among the  
heathen and fill the many places with the dead  
bodies, spilling the blood of the nations.  
The robed representative shall defend the  
boardroom door, stifling the riotous, driving  
back the Jordan of revolt and making the barren  
women to keep house and to mother man's  
many children.  
The jeweled judge shall travel the glass-strewn  
streets and motorcade the murmurers deeper  
into the dunghill, and reward his loyal servants  
with stocks and bonds, and wealth and riches  
shall be in his house, for his investments  
endureth forever.

And he shall sit with princes over businessmen's  
lunches and martini blueprints for robotic  
seminaries.  
And he shall raise his cup of salvation before the  
disobedient, cursing the festivals of the  
oppressed, for precious in the eyes of the Lord is  
their slaughter.  
And he shall bless the terminals as they chatter out  
the interest rates, as the spreading nets gather in  
the frightened birds.  
And he shall bless the cameras as they send his spirit  
out from the Silverdome to deceive the nations  
which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog  
and Magog, to gather them together to battle.

And he who heard this angel's tidings raised himself,  
trembling fearfully in his broken down boots,  
remembering when he dreamed of this, and said  
he unto the angel:

You hypocrites, who have come to the frozen  
nakedness of a stricken city, with famine sore in  
the land,

You who have driven the corn maiden and the  
coyote and the wolf and the beaver from these  
lands,

You who have contracted the cement companies to  
bury our Mother in this rock upon which you  
found your church,

You who turned a place of godless pleasures into  
ashes to make of it an example unto those who  
would dare live for pleasure,

You who razed the sacred groves to manufacture  
toothpicks for the magnates after they feasted on  
the wretched,

You who teach a bloodless love, that true carnal love  
wither and die on the vine,

You who teach the lamb to lie down with the lions to  
be torn apart, who teach the free to live on their  
knees:

Only pleasure, only liberty, only irreverence, only  
animal energy can keep your servitude and  
mortification away,

Only a wilder festival than all that came before will  
make your master hesitate and turn back  
beneath his robes.

Now is the time for the barricades, the orgies, the  
laughter, the bonfires, the time for the circle  
dance around the maypole and the Golden Calf,

Now the time for the Commune, for the corn  
ceremonies, for the beavers and coyotes.

Let your everlasting chains be rent asunder, let the cities give themselves over to fornication, let them exalt the flesh, despise the dominion and speak evil of the dignitaries.

Raising a fist, said he unto the angel: To he that cometh, let them hurl a white stone against his windshield,

Let them eat of the hidden manna, opening the storehouses and flinging the goods therein down among the poor,

Let them drive all pharaohs and their guardians away, sowing the land with a mad and defiant herb,

Let them plunge deeper into their bodies to find their souls, let them mock his prayerful supplications with an impenitent hymn,

Let them love the world which is the only world they have, the world and all its creatures, let

them hurt not the grass of the earth nor any green thing, neither any tree, but only those who would bar them from the gates of Eden, And let them flee into the wilderness, drawing it out of themselves as the child from the mother's womb,

Let them smash the tabernacles of the iron patriarch, driving the black robes and the pinstriped three-pieces and the uniforms away, Let Heaven on Earth commence!

And awoke he, Jeremiah, in the cold of a February morn, and he went among the tumult of the rush hour and the harried workers to panhandle dreams.

*T. Fulano is a long-time staff member of the Fifth Estate. This poem originally appeared in the Summer 1987 Fifth Estate.*

