

# Awaiting the End of Time

*by Gary Hardaway*

## **Autobiography 5**

It is difficult to live in Century 21.  
Everything about it cries out

for termination of the human enterprise.  
I imagine the world my granddaughters will inherit

and cringe. Water as commodity,  
infrastructure as pay-for-use private enterprise

without regulation. Action without thought  
but amply bloody consequence.

I shudder considering the future  
I once thought would be so grand.

The dreams of the interplanetary I once embraced  
dissolve in a bitter sauce of the “practical”.

## **Morbidity Play**

We look for a moral  
in the stories of extinctions.

For decades, we blamed  
the dinosaurs for slothful lack

of adaptation that lead  
to their demise.

The story was amoral  
as catastrophe always is.

There is no moral in any  
extinction except in the one

underway. The Anthropocene.  
This one is on us.

### **Medical Directive**

When my cancer comes,  
I will acquiesce and greet it  
with a weak and deferential  
shake of hands, my still

fleshed and clammy palm  
and fingers yielding to the  
bony scratch and crush  
of imminent death. No chemo,

please, no surgery, no clever  
genetic trickery of experimental drugs.  
Just the fluid wave of  
morphine drips as the pain becomes

otherwise unbearable  
and I wave my white flag  
of palliative surrender to  
the random raids of cellular insurrection.

### **The Perishings**

The alligator will perish.  
The bonobo will perish.  
The chimpanzee will perish.  
The dingo will perish.  
The elephant will perish.  
The fox will perish.  
The gorilla will perish.  
The human will perish.  
The iguana will perish  
The jaguar will perish.  
The koala will perish.  
The lemur will perish.  
The mango will perish.  
The nutria will perish.  
The otter will perish.  
The panther will perish.  
The quail will perish.  
The rhinoceros will perish.  
The sable will perish.  
The tarantula will perish.  
The umbrella bird will perish.  
The vulture will perish.  
The walrus will perish.  
The xenophobe will perish.  
The yak will perish  
The zebra will perish.  
The alphabets will disappear.

