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## The Mean Time: A History

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With the melt comes promises.

Record snowfall in Germany puts the world to sleep  
so it can dream again. Winter quells the revolt,

and the soldiers return to Rome. Jesus stumbles  
His first steps, and speaks His first word.

*Metamorphoses* pours from Ovid's pen.

672

With Emperor Tenji's death,  
Prince Otomo becomes Kobun.

His uncle Ō-ama, the monk,  
returns from seclusion with an army  
to demanded the throne.

In this way, Ō-ama became Temmu.

Across a continent, a venerable babe is born, Bede,  
and with him, English history. A year of over-throws,

as Wamba succeeds Reccesuinth.

1343

The womb of the dark ages  
brings rebirth, but for now

there is only darkness,  
Petrarch,

Laura,

and the swirling gestation.

1662

A shining light burns in Massachusetts Bay,  
but where there is fire to bring light, there is smoke to obscure.

In Paris, buses. In Bermuda, pirates.

A black plague rises from the Thames.

1982

Your mother is expecting you  
when I am born. On March 10<sup>th</sup>,

the planets align on the side  
of the sun: syzygy. Gretsky

breaks the record for goals scored  
in a season. The weather channel launches

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on cable TV, just in time for the blizzard.  
And in Washington, DC, they build a wall  
that reflects the sadness of being.

2003

We fall in love. You first, then me;  
though you didn't believe.

I come around. You come around.  
We agree that I will end all your pain

by pressing my thumb into the palm of hand.

2024

China adopts capitalism  
and consumes the planet.

If you are reading this,  
it is most likely in Chinese.

I am 42. You are 42. We  
have not grown tired. In the years

we have left, you will look your most beautiful—  
a flower past its bloom, pushed to full extension,

the last ridge of sunlight blown deep  
into the swish of grass.

2344

In the year of the flying car, all are unimpressed.  
Not high enough, fast enough, sleek enough. But still,

everyone has one. The memory-hive outmodes  
our collection of knowledge sparking an Internet nostalgia boom.

Animated gifs and electronic mail flash coarse pixels  
in the eyes of every teenagers' stem-server.

2663

Despite widespread prosperity,  
unemployment is 83% in Eurasiaustraliopa.

The remaining bureaucrats campaign on promises  
to re-open diplomatic lines to Spanamerica.

3334

The Geo-Miners Federation announces the exhaustion  
of the natural energy found in the earth's cooling core.

Meanwhile, the priests of spiritual machines  
are overthrown as obsolete. Privacy now

is an inalienable right, not be violated by state or religion.  
This marks the end of poetry.

4006

We'll need to begin again. Children crouch in hallways  
with hands over heads like criminals, like holy men, like babies,

like they are invincible. Like they are us.