



What Could Possibly Be Wrong With A Man Who's Lived As Long As I Have

*O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walk'd,
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars all look'd on,)
As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something I know not what kept me from sleep,)*

-Excerpt from *When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd* by Walt Whitman, 1865

O powerful western fallen star! Zebulon Walton exclaims as he prepares for death. While witnessing a meteorite he suffers a pain in his heart, a sure sign to a superstitious man that his time has come. The rock permeates the membrane between two worlds: the celestial and our own. Its command over its viewers is total, the gaze of the entire Walton family is drawn skyward to witness its final descent. Daily life is suspended as their understanding of time and distance alter immeasurably to accommodate the significance of this object.

The meteorite brings with it - to this pastoral scene - the certainty of death. Its journey completed over an unknowable, seemingly infinite number of lifetimes. The Waltons, a television series, was created through the 1970's as a nostalgic depiction of rural America during the era of the great depression. It has since been re-broadcast almost ceaselessly and it is this repetition that holds the promise of an infinite future.

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd quoted above by Zebulon Walton is an elegy to Abraham Lincoln. Venus, the first star at night is seen at once as both the celestial embodiment of Lincoln and paradoxically as a relentless recurring memory of the death of someone much loved.

An infinite past, mortality and an infinite future are thus viewed through the prism of an unassuming moment in television history.

Et in arcadia ego 2013 2.35 min single channel video projection

Elegy 2013 4.55 min single channel video