

DESTINY by Eric R. Pianka

Molecules in motion, nearly an infinite number
of the tiny little mindless inconsequential things.
Each its own dynamic entity but interacting
with others according to definite rules.
Dissociating, forming a crystal or a hydrogen bond, changing state.
Collectively creating the wind and rain, even our sunshine,
as well as day and night, and seasons.
Don't forget the ocean waves and currents, too.

Most are inanimate, moving randomly or obeying simple physical laws,
but a certain special class of molecular assemblages have been designed
by natural selection to its own end -- replication.
Thus helical DNA codes for our proteins and indirectly
via complex biochemical pathways for neurotransmitters and hormones,
ultimately eliciting behavior (hopefully adaptive!).
Subservient to natural selection, all living systems are doomed
to procreate themselves endlessly.

On a still vaster scale, each of us darts through his/her lifetime,
either meeting or not meeting Ms x or Mr. y, capriciously,
at the whim of seemingly stochastic forces in a vast sea of moving molecules.
Out of such encounters emerges friendship or even love, but also hatred.
Babies are born, people marry, divorce, and die.
Karma unfolds, leaders emerge, wars begin and end.
The ups and downs of our daily existence, tears of agony and joy,
are merely perturbations of this molecular ocean.

Brilliance, technological breakthroughs, addictions, failures, fortunes made and lost,
constitute water rings, eddies, whirlpools, ripples and even waves in the great sea of matter.
All of us rushing headlong towards our fates.
Our population doubling in a mere two decades . . .
Three billion, four, five, no wait . . . SIX . . . and on and on we go.
Hold on to your hat! Population growth is a force on par
with the Earth's rotation or the Sun's fusion . . .
just a multitude of tiny molecules with inexorable momentum!