**\* *Oscar and the Universe \****

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*****The Fate of the Universe***

***A Bit of Chit-Chat***

Mr V:

*Oscar, even the stars will rust,*

*Will oxidise away into*

*Cold lumps of metal drifting through*

*The voids of interstellar dust.*

*The stars will rust, will rust away!*

*God’s eye, in which you put such faith,*

*Will yellow and go blind, and death,*

*Oh death! will have the final say.*

Come, dear, do not encourage God’s

Inveterate Hamlet tendency

To ask, *To be or not to be*.

To live is to defy the odds,

And life needs all the help that it

Can get. If God were Schopenhauer—

Which, God forbid!—he, being sour

And grim, would cite the infinite

Superiority of death

To life, with its blind, brutish will,

Trade *fiat lux* for *fiat nil*,

There’d be no lungs to draw a breath

And we would not be talking here

Of life and death, the universe,

And other things. Don’t think a hearse

Is the last stop in Life’s career,

At least don’t treat it as a *fait*

That’s destined to be *accompli.*

The Cosmos must be made to see

That things need not turn out that way.

We are the only means by which

This universe can understand

Itself. It needs a helping hand.

In turn it should not simply switch

The lights off—not, at least, without

Consulting us. We have a stake!

It must not make this grave mistake.

It must be cured of its self-doubt.

And I am *very* sure of this:

It’s sensitive to what we say.

Don’t tell it it will die one day.

No, tell the universe it is

Immortal, and, if it believes

You, what you say may well prove true.

*God* doesn’t know *quite* what to do,

He grieves how things went wrong, He grieves,

And sometimes His believers have

To talk Him out of suicide.

What would we do, if poor God died?

The cosmos would become a grave.

He looked upon his Work, and saw

It *might* be good, but wasn’t sure.

This is what makes the Lord so dour:

His Plan may have a fatal flaw.

He fears exactly what you fear,

That all will end in dust and rust.

Let’s reassure Him, dear—we must!

Or every *where* will be nowhere.

Material substance, too, can’t quite

Decide to exist or not exist.

If not, ah, how it would be missed!

We should encourage it to fight

The impulse to annihilate

Itself in any way we can.

We should present it with a plan—

*Which would be?* To procrastinate!

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