

The Cenacle

Tenth Anniversary Issue



Number 54 ♦ April 2005

only kindness

only kindness

matters

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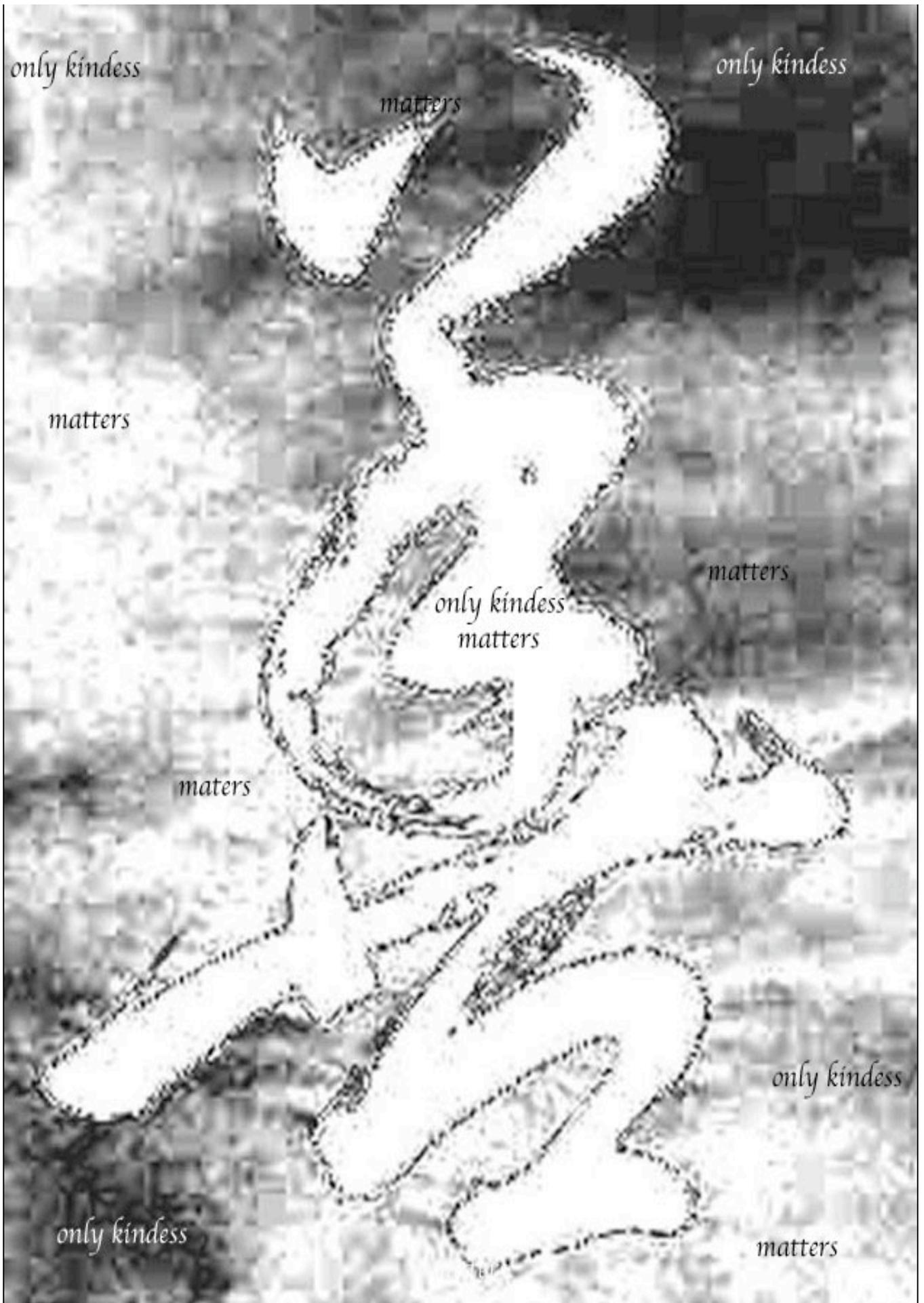
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From Soulard's Notebooks

April 26, 2005
8:35 p.m.
Westin Hotel lounge
Seattle, Washington

My Beloved Cassandra

Where to begin this letter commemorating the 10th anniversary of The Cenacle & the latter-day version of Scriptor Press. In a basement, really, some 30 years ago & 3000 miles east of here. Connecticut in 1975 & I was 11 years old sitting at an old-fashioned school desk, fashioning from dice & pencils & notebook paper & football games seen on TV a world, the first of many: the Connecticut Football League & its official newspaper, Sports Page. A weekly paper of standings & stories, handwritten, half-dreamt from the sandlot games we played in my neighborhood.

I delivered newspapers at dawn every day & from those late 1970s headlines worked up a weekly newspaper of copied-out stories & adolescent editorials, I called it News Page. The deeper I sought in my mind the more I found. A radio show every morning. Then, in 1982, something called Scriptor International.

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Many projects in notebooks, worlds built some from loneliness but much from frenzied curiosity for what else the world could provide than my materially poor & emotionally underfed life could provide. Scriptor International was where I mattered, important & hopeful, & its publication Scriptor Magazine contained my fledgling poetry, fiction, drama, & humor. I didn't know I couldn't do it all. Do I yet?

That adolescent world gave way to projects with others, college journals, newspapers, zines, jobs, romances, travels, alcohol - but it did not perish. A vital & unflinching part of me still sat at that little desk concocting new ideas on a long-gone summer's day.

In 1995 I decided on a third phase, & New Scriptor magazine was conceived. From a friend's dictionary I found the word "cénacle," meaning "group of ~~artists~~ artists." I bought a desktop photocopier & announced at the 4/1/95 Jellicoe Literary Guild meeting at Roma Restaurant in New Britain, Connecticut my new project's intention. Four weeks later at that same place Cénacle #1, April 1995, debuted.

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In the 10 years since the idea was re-born there have been 42 issues of The Cenacle, published on both U.S. coasts, from typewriter to Macintosh OS X, from Guinness Xtra Stout to LSD-25, from bookstore work to grad school to commercial editing work to more bookstore work to more editing work. My heart has flown to luring feminine skies again & again, & fallen, & fallen harder, & stood up again, & stood up some more. I once believed simply in books & now I believe complexly in where music & words & nature & psychedelics & dreams & eros & magick cross, & rise, & become a filled, ever-filling page.

A memory or two here. Winter 1998, working at Emerson College, in the Journalism Department, Christmas vacation, an office all to myself & its photocopier, & how I spent hours preparing & reproducing Cenacle #23. Secret delight. A high. A low, in winter 2002, poor & heart-desolate in Portland, Oregon, trying to make #47, first issue in so long, & failing. Too lost.

Eventually that issue did get made,

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when I returned to Connecticut & continued to lose all I had til only Art remained. The way clear again, Art stood me up slowly & showed me how, & I remembered.

Many have come & gone from this journal's pages. I miss the ancient humor & brightness of Mark Bergeron. The strange magick nature in his wife Virginia's artwork. The weird hungers in the writings of Mark Shorette. The muscular wanderings of Joe Ciccone. The high & at moments perfect singing of Ric Amante. They will come no more.

Scriptor Press, like its predecessor, developed more projects as the years passed. In 1998 I launched the Electro Lounge website, now at <http://www.geocities.com/scriptorpress>. Also a series of poetry & prose chapbooks called Rai Books. Soon there was the annual Scriptor Press Samples & my radio show "Within's Within: Scenes from the Psychedelic Revolution" (<http://spritradio.yage.net>). And the Burning Man Books series. To me these projects are my second generation of creators. I see the people come & go but the Art stay, & grow, & stay.

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April 27, 2005
9:13 p.m.
Rauhaus Cafe
Seattle, Washington

Another night nearer my 41st birthday & Scriptor Press's 10th, all this week, & a new job begun too, & our pockets will be more filled allowing our hearts more attention - and what of the past, my beloved? What of it? I spend myself there some, picking & resolving & failing old puzzles - they come out the same way each time - while the past blares familiar before my eyes, the future dances before my bedamned blind back - or maybe not dammed - maybe blind needs a gift - allowing hope its wild high moments, keeping anguish less chortling -

I'd like Scriptor Press to matter again as it did once to a few people - matter bigger - from my basement to an obscure restaurant to something more - I pursue this end daily - toward Scriptor Press free & for sale in Seattle, Portland, Vancouver, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, & elsewhere - Paris, London, Tel Aviv - Black Rock City since '99, why not

everywhere, urging an indie press to
better days, a counterculture to a
prouder influence, the re-ascendence
of the freaks & their nutty lovely wishes
to love the planet, praise the stars,
map our dreams, sing a thousand drums
strong to those listening in far elsewhere?

I determine to do ever better in
this work, to urge others toward
what they seek too, to conjure & summon,
praise & play, move smoother with the
animate colored clay of this world toward
what can be, what awaits past the veil,
what is right now visible, no veil, for
eyes higher than mine.

I promise how ever better will I
knit love, art, freak culture, nature,
dreams, magick, ice cream, & many
foolish hours too air & sugar to be
remembered.

Nothing sums to everything, not
an hour, not a person, not an artist,
not a vision. Endless fields, endless
seas, endless music, endless words.
Endless worlds. Rising, diminishing,
blacker, lighter, near & nearer to
making sense, then a click! A new
room unseen. The answers are right, & wrong.

The Cenacle

Number 54 ♦ April 2005

Tenth Anniversary Issue

Edited by Raymond Souland, Jr.

Assistant Editor: *Kassandra Kramer*

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Seattle, Washington



SCRIPTOR PRESS

Front cover photograph by Raymond Soulard, Jr. of the Jimi Hendrix statue on Broadway, Capitol Hill district, Seattle, Washington. Design by Cassandra Kramer & Raymond Soulard, Jr. Reefer by an unknown beneficiary. *Cenacle* logo based on design by Barbara Brannon. Back cover photograph by Fuzz of a favorite stretch of road in Denmark. Design by Cassandra Kramer & Raymond Soulard, Jr.

Accompanying CD contains *Cenacles* #47-53, Burning Man Books #1-36, *Scriptor Press Samplers* #1-6, RaiBook #5, & *RS Mixes* from “Within’s Within: Scenes from the Psychedelic Revolution.”

The Cenacle, 2442 NW Market Street, #363, Seattle, Washington, 98107, is published six times a year by Scriptor Press. It is kin organ to *ElectroLounge* website (<http://www.geocities.com/scriptorpress>), RaiBooks, Burning Man Books, *Scriptor Press Sampler*, & “Within’s Within: Scenes from the Psychedelic Revolution w/Soulard,” broadcast online worldwide weekends on SpiritPlants Radio (<http://yage.net:9000>). All rights of works published herein belong exclusively to the creator of the work.

Thank you to Expedia.com for trusting that I have the goodly editor’s skills to join your company . . . thank you to the SpiritPlants cyberspace community for providing a sense of belonging in the world and among people, and for helping this periodical find a way back toward the artistic mission embodied in its name . . . and thank you as ever to my partner Cassandra Kramer for innumerable nights of love, adoration, friendship, strange dark movies, and Krispy Kreme doughnuts . . . hehe . . .



Paratheatrical Dreaming Rituals

Non-Interpretive Dreamwork for the Active Body

From the Australian Aborigines' dreaming camps to the Senoi dream councils of Malaysia to Native American vision quests, traditional ceremonies have existed for ages as a way of entering and exiting the multidimensional "dreamtime." What do we mean by dreamtime? More "civilized" cultures certainly know what it's like to go to sleep and dream. In these dreams, we are sometimes aware of a "dreamself" engaged in various activities in the "dreamland" it inhabits. According to many native peoples, when we awake the next morning it is because this previous dreamself went to sleep (in its dreamtime) in order to dream us into being. Ancient dream theory tells us we are all dreaming and/or being dreamed... amidst the omnipresent dreamtime.

A ritual is any external (kinetic) activity capable of catalyzing, at will, specific internal (psychic) states of consciousness. Dreaming rituals are designed by piecing actual dream remnants together for the purpose of energizing the "dreamstate" into consciousness while awake. Dreaming rituals have been done for any combination of the following four reasons:

1. *Spiritual: to intuitively know unity between "dreamtime" and "daytime" realities.*
2. *Psychic: to enter the dream with the intention of perceiving and stalking movements.*
3. *Emotional: to bypass psychological interpretation in lieu of catharsis and experience.*
4. *Physical: to express the dream essence and dream movements through the body in action.*

Those wishing to test their inner sense, or intuition, with dreams may do so by considering the following step-by-step ritual instructions and suggestions. The ritual is kinetic; to do it, you have to move your body. The approach is non-interpretive; it does not require that you know (or try and figure out) what your dream "means." By relaxing the search for meaning, an inherent design may eventually emerge on its own. There is also nothing you need to believe in or disbelieve for this to work.

The Dream Task Itself

You will need enough dream memory to recall a movement. It can be any movement at all... like a windblown cloud... or a slithering snake... or the slightest turn of your head. It doesn't have to be executed by your dreamself; it just has to originate in your dream. The main thing to remember is to select a movement you can physically duplicate upon waking the next morning. This movement will be your *Dream Task*. By practicing it throughout the day (at least three times), the body can absorb it as memory for future recall to energize, or charge, the actual ritual later on.

Do your Dream Task anytime. If you're doing it with other dreamers, do it in front of each other. If you do it alone, you may want to engage privately—unless you don't mind

expressing “incongruous gestures” in the midst of your daily interactions with innocent people watching on.

As you do your Dream Task, stay as close as you can to the way it actually happened in your dream. This will help contain the power of the dream that activates the dreaming ritual later on. As you perform your movement, it may trigger memories and/or emotions associated with the dream. If this happens, just take a deep breath and continue executing the task. Breathing is a good way to register whatever state you’re in, dreaming or awake. Remember, we are not searching for meaning here but stalking dream movements and executing them upon waking.

When the day is over ask yourself to remember a new dream movement before going to sleep again. When you awake the next morning, execute this motion immediately before doing anything else. If and when dream memory falters, lie still in bed a few minutes... listening and paying attention to whatever comes up. Do this new movement throughout the day, just like you practiced the other one. When it’s time to go to sleep again, stalk one more movement and practice it the next day. By this time, you will have three separate movements drawn from actual dreams. They can be from separate dreams or, if you remember more than one, from the same dream. All three movements are associated by the virtue of their common link with the dreamtime. By repeating these Dream Tasks every day, strands of your dreams begin their weave into the fabric of your daily life. You are now ready to combine all three movements and activate the dreaming ritual itself.

On Ritual Preparations

Three movements are used to reflect the mythic, or story, device of a beginning, middle and end. When you have practiced three separate dream movements, you are ready to enter the movement cycle that energizes the Dreamtime Ritual. You can do so as soon as you find or create a controlled setting—some indoor or outdoor place where you will not be interrupted by any outside influence for about an hour or so.

Arrange the setting to ensure the greatest sense of privacy and safety for yourself. A ritual works when you can be vulnerable enough to be influenced by the force(s) you are summoning—in this case, the force of the dreamtime. Do whatever you can to own the space of this setting and sanctify it for this purpose (sometimes candles, incense and personal icons can help do this). After you have prepared the space, practice each movement separately to refresh your kinetic memory—so your body knows each one by heart.

On Building the Movement Cycle

We start by “stitching” the end of the first movement to the beginning of the second movement to form a longer movement combining the two. Practice this for about two minutes. Then, stitch the end of the second movement to the beginning of the third to create a new movement combining all three together. Practice this until your body has memorized it. Finally, make a total movement cycle by connecting the end of the third motion to the start of the first one. Practice this movement cycle until it becomes its own dance expressing its own rhythms. Let these rhythms emerge and influence the form and design of the dance. Keep dancing and following its innate waves and pulses—letting them move you towards its own kind of altered state. Allow any dream memory or feeling to come up as you move deeper into its ongoing motion.

No-Form: On Charging the Ritual

Visually and physically, mark a large egg-shaped oval on the floor before you; spacious enough to move freely in. Stand outside the oval while facing its center. Enter a meditative state wherein you empty your mind of all thoughts and allow yourself to *be nothing*. From this “potential void state,” what I will call *No-Form*, send everything you know and don’t know about dreams into the space of the oval setting. Get a sense of the space being filled with “the stuff of dreams.” Now, send your kinetic memory of the movement cycle you just finished inside to mix with the dream. Return to No-Form. Relax your desire to control any outcomes and allow the dreamstate its own life in the space before you.

After giving yourself over to No-Form (enough to experience a profound state of receptivity), enter the charged “dream” space and allow its force to enter you. Then begin the first part of your movement cycle. (Note: Your movement cycle may not proceed at the exact same pace, form or rhythm due to the additional “dream charge”). Allow yourself to be moved through the cycle by the force of the dreaming itself. Do not direct this force, but let it guide you. Create space for it to direct you through the movement cycle—over and over again. Keep following through with the movement cycle while your consciousness is flooded with the dreaming. Allow any images and emotions to flow up and influence you. Stay with this until you personally feel finished, and then exit the circle to re-enter No-Form. Take some time emptying out—of not being anything—releasing the dream back to its source. When you feel more “neutral” again— i.e. not identified with the dream state—the ritual is over.

Closure: On Integrating the Ritual

If you can, write down your experiences and/or talk about them with others. This will help integrate the more intuitive “depth experience” with your interpretive, conceptual mind. It will also help create a transition from the dreamtime back into the daytime with all of its incumbent responsibilities. The No-Mind state is an essential transition between the dreamtime and daytime, without which you may just wander around under the influence of the dreamstate. This is not so bad in itself unless you wish to return to present time and live your real life. It is also not a good idea to drive an automobile and/or operate machinery under the influence of the dreamtime.

There are many ritual variations each culture has within its own dreaming traditions and many more versions with each individual response to them. The significance of ritualizing our dreams is highly personal. I believe the actual meaning of the dreaming ritual (and dreams) comes from the dream itself, rather than what conceptual mind decides about it. Experience has shown me, time and time again, that the degree of commitment shown in the ritual preparations determines the quality and depth of the outcome. As we consciously participate in this dreaming enactment, *a living ritual is born*.

For more information:
<http://www.paratheatrical.com>



*Burning Man Arts Festival
Black Rock City, Nevada
August 29-September 5, 2005
(415) TO-FLAME
<http://www.burningman.com>*

Raymond Soulard, Jr.



New Period

continued

I come back. Breathless. There. That was something. There.
 The wife looks up from her drawing. Smiles golden & happy.
 I hope I'm in the box & gone before you stop being who I love, who I want.
 Jim's music is swirling around him. Then I notice: his usual big bulk is much more
 muscle than usual. His short hair runs down past his shoulders. His face is thinner, younger.
 I begin to see.
 But the rapturous look on his face is the same one I've seen for years.
 Frisky as a pup, Rebecca has put down her art pad & is beginning to softly maul me.
 I guess this is our . . . honeymoon?
 "Do you like being married to me?" she whispers, half giggling, half shy.
 I nod but say nothing. Just tatter her with kisses & embrace.
 "Thank you, I'm sure," she says, & laughs some more. Patiently wondering what's
 next but truly not caring if we stay unmoving.
 Holding her steadily with one arm, I reach down to get her art pad.
 My wife. My love. My friend. The key. A pencil drawing of a room, from the
 perspective of a person lying down on the floor, looking up at the side of a bed & further up
 to a ceiling of ambiguous images. A woman's small, fair hand drapes over the edge of the
 bed. The ceiling, filled with a myriad of tiny images apparent to the studious eye, contains
 the rest of her nude form. Her form is, in fact, the boundary of these images. They appear
 like living moving grafitti all over her body.
 The Cornish Phalanx.

I close my eyes, still holding Rebecca, & move my attention to Jim's guitar music.
 There's a pretty flow to his playings right now, an ascent made by little leaps from one ledge
 to the next, something deep inside, the sounds almost apparent, even sentient. Sentient? A
 sentience hidden within the music; not human consciousness, no, but something with self-
 awareness & other-awareness. I follow with all the concentration I have & realize Jim is
 engaged in a kind of game with this creature inside his music, a merry chase that crosses the
 dimensions of time & space. . . I follow it best as I can. . . then I realize that I am more
 within this musical world than not. . . & I am not moving by muscle & bone motion but by
 notes, by selecting certain notes in Jim's playing, I am propelling along. . . & Rebecca has
 followed me here! I hear her music behind me, coming closer, rising, gaining volume is I
 guess the best way to put it, blending with my music. . . I am mixed in with her love, her
 anxiety, her beauty. . . I wonder if Rebecca could draw here, what her picture of the Cornish
 Phalanx within Suzanne Valentine's silhouette cast upon her ceiling would look like. . . we've
 lost Jim, I realize, & the creature with which he gamed. . . we are still within Jim's musical

world as my mind has conjured it but my shared sound with Rebecca is far more prominent. . . & my query about Suzann has introduced her music & the Cornish Phalanx's music as well. . . all flows the bright lyre-noises Rebecca & I make when disembodied & twined musically, the moody low bass guitar notes Suzanne manifests as, the complex piano tinklings that represent the Phalanx. . . & so much more, Jim's musical world easily blending in the nervous tappings of a drumbeat & of course the music Jim himself is playing. . . the more I understand this New Period, the more it is like this, the narrative full moon skies photon-filled tells, softer & softer individuation, softer & softer. . . slowly to return now, slowly to return. . .

Rebecca is kissing my neck, I find, as I open my eyes, returning from the music. Jim has stopped playing, has lit up a fat joint.

"Say, guys," he sez, all friendly.

"Do you, um, feel us in your music?" Rebecca asks eagerly.

Jim drags royally on the joint. Sez nothing until the sweet marijuana has settled comfortably throughout his being. "You're always there," he says. Drags again before passing joint to Rebecca. "You should know that.

I stand up & suggest to Rebecca that we take a walk. We hold hands as I lead us deep into woods away from the Ampitheatre. Rebecca keeps near to me. Her anxiety hasn't passed. So I stop. Looking down at her I smile. She starts to speak, stops, then returns my smile.

"I haven't given you a wedding ring yet," I say.

"I don't need one, Ray. You know that." She looks down.

"A ring would mean more to you than you'd admit."

"I guess."

I draw us both down to the mossy ground beneath a great oak. I look at her closely. Her cheeks pink with young blood & excitement. Eyes a warm dusky blue, framed by naturally thick & curly lashes. Her mouth full, lips smooth. Thin fingers, long, but small hands anyway. I push open her blouse. Breasts high & round. Nipples taut, ready. Know my touch like a cat knows touch, & so taut, ready. Slender waste. I lay her back to study her legs, strong, long, hips round. I can't look at her pussy without kissing its dark brown hair. She laughs. I roll her over. Nice ass, boys & girls. High, round. She's ready, with me, always ready.

I pull her upright again & dress her a little, jeans & panties, blouse on her back & shoulders.

"Will you marry me, Rebecca?"

"Yes. Of course!"

"And will you be mine always?"

She falls into my grasp. "Yes. And will you be mine?"

I nod. Never have I loved a girl in this way, found a safe interior inside love, a soft shared place, a living trust. A sense of continuousness, certainty.

I produce from the air the small purple handled scissors I use to cut blotter acid & snip a small tuft of brown hair from Rebecca's head, and then one from her sweet pussy, & hold these in my hand as she takes the scissors & snips from my head & burrows enthusiastically into my pants "Hey! Well. . . Ok, if you must. . ." & snips some from down there too after she's kissed my cock with her whole mouth, drunk it down good, "You're a hot little piece" I growl. She smiles & smacks her lips. "You taste good." I want to wrestle full-bodied with her now but don't. We have to make our wedding rings & graft them on. This will go on for awhile. Such is the beat-beat of New Period.

How does the soul persevere after the battle has been lost? Become a bunker-besieged despot, ordering non-existent battlers of troops to defend key city positions long ago bombed into rubble?

Franny, I was wrong & I lost you. I was so damned wrong & you are so damned lost to me. But here I am.

I'd found your mother, living in Macon, Georgia, & she told me you were dead but of course I didn't believe it. It wasn't true even if it did happen. Your death was going to be as temporary as I could make it.

Long ago, well maybe not that long ago, Gretta had warned me that pursuing you would put my world in danger. Even Merry Muse grew sober when I confronted her about you.

Rebecca believed in me, I knew that, & I had Soulard's strong, if strange endorsement.

I'd been dead, too, Franny, years ago. I could go back, die again, & find you & retrieve you.

There's always a tradeoff, of course. I didn't know what it would be.

I know now.

I'll never be real. I'll live always on paper, embodied in words. As vulnerable to annihilation as paper to fire, memories to evanescence.

But not just me. My whole world. Fiction. All of us. No more. No less.

Soulard agreed to this, too. He agreed to it & it caused him to end the Cement Park stories.

I still don't know what it really means, all this. Soulard doesn't either. But this was how I got Franny back. He'll write up the story, the poetry, but I'm testifying the truth here. We'll never live. We'll never die.

I have Franny back. She was worth this.

There's more to it, Americus. To reveal it, I have to "write up" the story, the poetry.

Today everything seems possible. Reflections, refractions, no malice. Much woodenness. Much softness. Trees, more than ever. Without you, I travel faster but carom off the ground more often.

Abstract patterns read as benign language, & ignored, & forgotten.

Constantly arriving, nearing home. Home a process. Home a verb.

A bearded soldier named Spike, smiling among his answers.

More reflections. More refractions. Faith a ground of facts set on fire. Faith the signals of meaning & direction carved from smoke.

Spike & his cache of pamphlet ammunition just outside the rocknroll show. Spike testifying on a winter's night, near a craggy ground mound of black snow. Spike talking to my head of pretty musical notes, my body danced into weary gentleness.

Spike, I'll not be joining you in your Bellows Falls, Mass. assemblage. Your faith that God needs, & awaits, his shining people willing to undo their mail & their will.

No, Spike, I am occupied with the Eternal Note, with the desire of blankness for form & color. The universe not defined as a petty battle between warring archetypes. The universe allowed to be unknowably grand & complex & eternal & home to humanity without belonging to us.

Spike, brother, & your weathered smile, you pain, your traveling bag of answers. Our moment locked together while friends awaited me, snickering, thinking I was haggling over the price of check-25 or puffing nuggets.

I'd show you my world, if I could, Spike, the music & colors, trees & snow, remorse, head & heart & hand & cock jacked tightly together, & a young ruler somewhere tonight, approaching, laughing.

Look here, Spike, at this girl I just married, the girl I keep marrying, my friend, my favorite artist. I believe in her, Spike. When she smiles, I gather my news.

What do you think about acid telepathy, Spike? About the psychedelic history of the world? I have a friend living in Cornish, New Hampshire in 1968, a poet, & I am in contact with him in this story. I have unfinished business back in the summer of 1998, & am going to address it.

Spike, I probably shouldn't be writing about you but you are an impediment to my work. So here you are, with me, in the forest that surrounds the Ampitheatre. My wife is with her father right now. Their love is the core of this story. No it isn't. Maybe it is. I don't know. See, Spike? I'm uncertain! It's upsetting! It's fun. Would I be as important to your truths as you are to mine?

My truths float, Spike. My truths heat up & cool down. My truths are subject to influence.

Spike, you never asked me for my opinion, for my testament of beliefs. for the nature of my struggles. You asked for my name. You asked for my time. You welcomed me to your home.

My walkman is filled with music by Phish. I believe in Phish, Spike. They interest me in a way your certainties don't. In a way your struggles do.

I want to say more to you, Spike.

"Dad, you don't want to go back, do you?"

"No, Reb. I'm not as delighted over nosing among my ruins as your old man is."

"Oh."

"You want me to? I mean you think it's necessary?"

"Ray's trying to connect a lot here. I don't think he wants to hurt you."

"No. I guess not."

"Excuse me?"

"St. Pauli Girl?"

"No. I mean, yes! But I want to know when the band's gonna play."

"Hey barman, why don't you tell him the truth! Hey, man, listen, I seen you around here before so I gotta tell you the truth. The old days here are gone. It's a friggin' drug cult around here. Look at the TV! Do we get sports? Or even that Ally McBreasty chick? No! We get to watch the owner & his friends play Deadhead games day & night."

"Look, I don't care about all that. I just want to hear some music while I'm passing through town on my rig. You know me, right? You even know what kind of beer I like. I saw the poster. So, like I say, that's what I wanted to know."

Mr. Bob the barman smiles at the speaker. "How long are you in town for?"

"Just the night. I made it here ahead of schedule so I'd have the time."

Mr. Bob motions to this fellow to take his pint of St. Pauli Girl & follow him. He knows enough decent regulars at the bar who'll look out for things while he's gone.

"Dad, what if I went with you?"

"Where?"

"To get Franny. The way you did. I'll be with you. It won't be so bad that way."

Rich Americus smiles at his daughter, hugs her. The key. She is the key.

"Ray knows I can't say no to you."

"And will he be with us?"

"In a way."

Begin, raw, incandescence. Raw, full moon, broad tree in sleepless field of dancers & doors. Full moon, raw, begin, stripes of ecstasy, strips of woe. Raw. Incandescence. Begin.

Continue, mature, dreams til daylight . . . then blankness . . . hookah explanations . . . theories, purgations, crescendos. Blood & thunder. Continue, dreamless daylight. Beards & woolen caps 'gainst the frost of doubt. Cold. Colder. Burn. Burning.

Burn. Burning. Most hopeful that we all burn together. Most fearful that we are like candles, flickering on, flicking off.

But burning. Burning, no matter the. Burning, beginning, still raw, words & skin, music & colors, laughter & fire. Laughter.

We watch Franny Emily Renée Salinger die, watch my lover die, we are brought by Soulard back to early 1998, brought down South, we are invisible & substanceless to all save ourselves. Rebecca takes my hand.

A subway station. Mechanical voiced station stop announcements. Gate A. Gate B. "I bet this is the Atlanta Airport," Reb says. "Franny told me once that it has its own subway it's so big."

A metal & plastic hurling machine. Franny on the other end of the car. We move closer, travel by thought, neither walking nor flying.

Franny looks beautiful & sad. Very beautiful & very sad. She has no bags. The car is crowded but she still stands alone. Her energy is frighteningly dark tho she is fairly composed.

Train wishes into a station & more people crowd in while few depart. Now Franny is crowded, nearly crushed against a door.

"She's fading," Rebecca warns & it's true. Franny is dissipating. We follow her into this dwindling state. Somehow we are able.

When all solidifies again, we seem to be in the same car save that it's now empty. Franny looks more composed.

She seems to see me. She sees something for she backs away, running as I make to follow.

We pass through train-cars heedless of closed doors, pass endlessly from train car to train car.

I begin to lose sight of her.

No time passes forever.

I stop chasing her. She's gone for right now. I wait. Let be. Let go.

Rebecca takes my hand & I realize she's been by my side quietly forever.

"I guess we can't know everything about what happened," she says quietly.

"This isn't what happened before. At least not yet," I say.

It won't be. Any of it, Americus. You're already in the underworld.

"What do I do, Soulard?"

"Run. Run, motherfucker!"

Rebecca follows, carrying his guitar. Dream dots, both, in an undifferentiated cosmic mass.

Are they in Hell? What is this place? What is its nature? Imagine blindness of all the senses on a riled bright hot day, a roused sensual pinkcheeked growl of a day.

All senses blinded, Americus knows nonetheless that a guitar has passed to him.
 “Play it, Daddy.”
 “I can’t. I can’t feel it or see it. I don’t even know how I know I have it.”
 “Am I here?”
 “Yes.”
 “All we have here are our minds. Play the guitar with your mind.”
 “Why all this?”
 “Because you wanted to know! This is what it was like for Franny when she died.”
 “It’s not like it was for me.”
 “You told me you fought it.”
 “Yes. I fought it like a bastard.”
 “She’s not fighting. She’s letting go.”
 I try to arrange my thoughts to be able to play my guitar.
 “Rebby, hold me, OK? Stand behind me. I’ll lean against you a little bit & use you for orientation.”
 “OK.”

Rebecca is strong. I know she’s there because there is a warm, sturdy sensation among my scattered thoughts. I concentrate on this sensation, rest lightly against it. Slowly, I compose a series of interconnected thoughts that altogether comprise my body. Almost like a sequence of equations, or even more like trees in a forest whose branches & roots all mingle.

Guitar comes hardest. I haven’t, after all, built a functioning body. Just a centering simulacre.

So I need not so much a stringed wooden instrument as the affect of one. I need what the music is.

Stymying. I find ease in conjuring a set of strings, or a guitar’s hollow body, one piece or another, but I can’t make music. I just don’t know how to do it.

Then Rebecca begins to hum a Beatles song. “Norwegian Wood.” Sweet. Quietly funny. She shifts to R.E.M.’s “Losing My Religion.” & then Tom Petty’s “Runnin’ Down a Dream.” I pluck notes, vibrations, chords from each of these & the many more she offers up. I learn to build up the music from within, a small bit at a time. A mosaic of sound. It gradually becomes enough.

“Thank you,” I play for her in notes & kisses. She laughs. She holds me steady.

“This underworld,” I say inside my mind, directing these words out in ripples toward Soulard. “Dreamland? Permanent Dreamland?”

Death, too. Art. The cosmos. Acid. Nature. Real reality. Far more than what we allow ourselves.

I begin to play. Very simply. Guitar thick with John Lennon & George Harrison sounds. I begin to feel better.

“Don’t!” Soulard thunders throughout my mind. Behind me, Rebecca buckles. I’d like to take a swing at the bastard for that.

Do you think you can do this without consequences? Do you think this is a free ride? Are you so sure you & Franny & Rebecca are going to return together?

“Why shouldn’t we?”

Everything affects everything. That music you have right now is a weapon. Don’t relax here. Ever.

“Is this a trick?”

No tricks, Americus. Play your guitar. Pay attention. Make sure you can feel Rebecca behind you as you move forward.

Something flashes before my eyes. My hands vibrate faster.

The blindness of our senses breaks & here I am, the usual array of head, torso, limbs. Guitar in my hands. Looking back I see Rebecca close behind, her small hands tightly gripping my waist. She smiles at me. Sure of me, as always. Surer of me than I am, as always.

A sunny afternoon about us. Warm. We are in a long open field lined on both sides by thick lines of trees. Similar to the Ampitheater.

“No, Dad. It doesn’t feel like the Ampitheater at all,” Rebecca says inside my mind. We are still able to share minds.

She’s right.

This place is empty in a way the Ampitheater never is.

It’s the trees & grass & sky, I realize. They’re not really here. Only Rebecca is.

“Rebecca, I need to hug you. Can we do this?”

“Close your eyes, Daddy. Don’t stop playing, though. Play our song. ‘Octopus’s Garden.’ Good. Do you see me yet? I’m standing in front of you.”

I hold Rebecca tightly. It doesn’t matter how many removes from reality this is, I know her down to her subtlest vibrations. I gain something from this embrace. We walk like this for a long time, Rebecca behind me, Rebecca before me.

We sing together.

*“We would be so happy, you & me,
noone there to tell us what to do
I’d like to be under the sea
in an octopus’s garden with you
in an octopus’s garden with you
in an octopus’s garden with you.”*

My guitar plays spritely, happy, far beyond our singing’s cease. Rebecca closes within me, becomes a bodiless warm with a name. I allow this though I don’t know what it means or portends.

I open my eyes & here is no field any longer. Here is a sizeless cave with a high ceiling. Many figures here, scattered. They are staring at me, deeply fearful. I look behind me & see I have emerged from a tall black doorway, perhaps a tunnel. Fire flickers at me & from me.

There is shuffling. Voices singing. Is that . . . Greek?

Looking more closely, I see among the robed men & women other kinds of presences. Summoning up a dense clutch of notes derived from Led Zeppelin’s “Stairway to Heaven” & Velvet Underground’s “Sister Ray,” I direct a fireball at these unknown presences.

Sounds of leaves shivering. Angry starlight.

“Rich, stop.” A voice I know. Not Rebecca’s. She’s safe inside my deepest pouch.

No. Time’s. I spatter a few smaller fireballs of music around, Throwing Muses, Sonic Youth.

There! That old Army jacket of his. Those large hunching shoulders.

“Time!” I make to move toward him but the room shifts & shakes. He’s gone with a second message: “Run! Play harder! Go!”

The passageway behind me is blocked & figures are closing in on me. More fireballs from my guitar. Hendrix. Townshend. Clapton. They back away. Another round at a cluster of leafy presences. They light up, briefly, & I leap amongst them. Climbing. Playing.

Climbing a rope of fire up through the ceiling. Clapton. Townshend. Hendrix. I gain some kind of foothold above them & break their hold with angry Dylanchords. Newport Folk Festival 1965. They let go.

“Daddy!”

Shit! Rebecca is draped over my left shoulder, clinging. I’m running. My guitar is hooked over my other shoulder.

Her face is blackened but not burned.

“Daddy, sit down, please! You’re burned all over!” She’s terrified.

I sit down on what feels like solid earth. Not losing hold of Rebecca or my guitar for a moment.

I see Rebecca better with my eyes closed. Her face is a little teary—about as much as she’ll ever give into tears—& she is flinching as she touches my cheek.

“I’m OK, Rebbby,” I whisper softly.

She stops. Thinks. Paints me clean with soft kisses. Finished, critical inspection of her work—my face & hands—she smiles—then begins crying harder. Harder than I’ve ever seen before.

Not knowing what to do, I hold her softly & let her give in fully. When she stutters toward emptiness, I say “I love you, Rebecca. I’m OK.”

“Tha-that’s good.”

“Are you OK?”

“Yes. I’ll be fine.”

“Soulard was right. I’m glad I kept playing hard.”

“I’m glad you trusted him.”

“Are you ready to move on?”

“Yes.”

“Can you follow me like before? So I can play?”

“Yes.”

“Are you sure?”

“Dad, I won’t let you die.”

“No. You won’t. But that’s not going to happen. We’re going to both stay alive & we’re going to get Franny.”

“OK.”

For a timeless while, we ascend. It seems like we’re inside the earth itself, rising, slowly. And more slowly. Finally, a sense of arrival. Of stopping.

I am lying on my back on a cold cobblestone floor. Rebecca is next to me. Our hands are tightly entwined. My guitar rests against my legs.

We stand. Rebecca enfolds herself into me. I carry her like a blur. Like an aura.

Playing my guitar here is easier, too, as I find myself able to play to the moment, find in it torchlight by which to walk down long empty corridors many of them endless numbers it seems, branching off at varying intervals neither rising nor falling how like a dream this is, like dream-castles I’ve known all my life . . .

“Daddy!”

“Are you OK, Rebbby?”

“Im fine. But we’re not moving anymore. & you’re hardly playing at all.”

“Oh.”

“Dad, this is Franny’s death! This castle! It’s taking us in! She can’t help it! You’ve got to play harder! You’ve got to fight it!”

“We’re getting nowhere.”

“You’ve got to fly! Use your music to fly!”

I wonder what this all is. This isn’t simple. Nor has it been meaningless. No. What was that ceremony where I saw David Time? Why should I see him of all people?

“Dad!”

“No, Reb. I want to know. What is this, Soulard? Appear before me. Now!”

“OK. Here I am.”

“What hoops are these?”

“Hoops?”

“Tricks!”

“None. You want Franny back. Or rather you got her back but wanted to know how. Wanted to be taken through it. Or maybe I needed to take you through it.”

“Do you know?”

“I know that everything ties in. All of it.”

“All of what?”

“Then. Now. Eleusis. Glover. Greece. New England. Death. The Eternal Note.”

Rebecca manifests. “Ray, just tell him what he has to do. It will be fine.”

“Rebecca—”

“Dad, it will be fine. You trust me, right? And I trust you. And I trust him, too. That has to be enough for all of us right now. We’re going to get Franny back, Dad, & you’re going to marry her.”

“OK, Rebecca.”

Silence.

“Rebecca?”

“Yes, Dad?”

“Is something going to change?”

“Yes.”

“Between you and Ray?”

“Yes.”

“You’re not going to marry?”

“I don’t. I, um, don’t know.”

“It’s up to you, Reb.”

“No. No, Ray. You’re the storyteller. I’m your muse.”

“Yes.”

“If you marry your muse, Ray, where does that leave the girls of your world? The ones outside your paper & pens?”

“I’m not excluding them.”

“No. But you’re keeping them out of your core. Your heart’s heart. Your within’s within.”

“So be it.”

Rebecca smiles at me. Merry Muse glints & glows around her.

Soulard disappears again. Rebecca fades within me again. The guitar chords I need to play now are far more obvious. I, we, begin to fly.

I follow light currents of air I hadn't noticed while still on the ground. Compelling myself to travel slowly, strumming my guitar slowly & softly to keep calm, I discover that here, despite appearances, is inverted space. The walls are the means by which to make progress. This becomes apparent to me when the breeze I'm following leads me straight to the face of a wall—where I would have veered off I close my eyes, bang out a riot of bright harsh sounds & plunge in.

Once inside the rock, all changes. It isn't rock that I saw but flesh & now I am among muscle & near to bone. The breeze I felt manifests itself here as both blood & breath.

Franny's death is alive & well.

I call up Rebecca in my mind to tell her. I can only see her dark blue eyes.

"What do we do now, Dad?"

"Somehow she's retreated from life without dying. She hasn't stopped existing. But she isn't here either. The lights are on but the building's empty."

"She's not a building, Dad! She's a girl! She's my friend! You love her! You're going to marry her!"

"Then what, Reb? Do you think she's here?"

"We're not thinking about this right."

"What did Soulard say? 'Everything ties in. Then. Now. Glover. New England. Eleusis. Greece. Death.'"

"You forgot the Eternal Note."

"Yes, that, too."

"Daddy, I think I know where you have to go."

"Where?"

"Go to her bedroom. Find where she sleeps. Wake her up with a kiss."

"How did that come to you?"

"Well, I was thinking how this is Franny's body but it's also like a dream. & death & dreams are alike. Dream's are our within's within. Like Ray said about me. That's where I am for him. That's where our love lives. So, um, it makes sense."

"Franny's dreaming all this?"

"& she's dreaming us too."

Sure thing. Soulard + Jungian dream theory + LSD = me flying with my daughter perched on my eyelashes through bone blood & muscle toward a bedroom where my lover is dreaming all of this—& I am bound there to wake her up.

"Rich? . . . Rich? . . . Wake up!"

Treebranches. Scorching streetlamps. Bed of rubble.

"It's OK, Rich. I'm fine. I'm right here with you."

Rumbling brickfloored courtyard. A distant soft voice. Depthless pussy.

"It didn't happen the way you thought. I didn't fall. I didn't die."

Marauding low chords. Toppling full moon. Gape-toothed talk.

"I'm here. Are you ready to see me yet?"

She called me an angel. I want to own her. I want to own several.

"You have to take a chance now. You have to have that faith that I'm really here."

No, the universe isn't ticking right now on it's way heretofore to hereon. Nothing comes. Nothing goes.

“It’s up to you. Rich, you can have me back but you have to decide who I am. When you open your eyes, there I’ll be. Yours again.”

Goodbye, Mickey. Michael Gregory Americus. 1964-1968. Born Hartford, Connecticut. Died Portland, Connecticut. Survived by parents & one older brother.

Franny asleep on a bed of rubble 30 years after going over that hayloft’s edge, following that deaf little boy, ragged haircut, missing a front tooth, stop falling, here, now, landing.

Rebecca standing nearby. She who first gave me hope. She who has never left me. Hint. Clue. Foundation. Truth. Still here. Even now. No matter what the.

Rebecca hugs me, then steps back. Looks over at sleeping Franny. “Kiss her, you blockhead!” she says merrily.

I watch the beautiful nude girl until I can no longer stand it. She doesn’t go out much. She never wears clothes. She doesn’t eat much either. Just drinks juice, all day long. It’s not hard to figure what that’s about.

She paints. That’s all she does. Her room, the part of it I can see, is filled with canvases stacked every which way. I wanted to see them better.

I bought some expensive binoculars. I had to! This is what I do now. I am this woman’s secret witness. I know she’s going to do something soon. She needs me to be here & remember it for her afterward.

Her pictures move on their canvases. At first I thought their paint was running. Trees. Clouds. She’s painted windows to some place in the woods somewhere. I don’t understand it.

For awhile I wanted to talk to her. That was after I got used to just seeing her nude every day. Well, not really “used to”—she’s too beautiful. She’s too alone. I’m too alone. But it’s different now. I know my role.

I love her more than ever.

I imagine I’m watching you, Davey. But soon it becomes something else. Soon I’m watching you without having to imagine it. Then I become you watching me. And at some point there’s no difference anymore. Time & space & the mortal separation between us, they’re all gone. We are poured into the same vessel & mix until no you, no I.

& this too dissolves. I can’t hang onto any of it anymore, except in my paintings.

They don’t teach you about what it’s like to down 20 hits of Mr. Owsley’s best, & then proceed. They treat the canvas like it’s solid, like it’s not possible to enter it, paint from within. They don’t believe pictures move, & so their pictures are not much endowed with movement.

I taught you how to love me, Davey. You hardly existed in the vast scape of your manhood when I met you. Some girl had dosed & blown you on the bus out here.

I dosed you harder.

I blew you so much fucking better.

You freaked out when I led you into a bed already fulla bodies. That night was fun.

“Davey?”

“Mm?”

“Nothing’s what it seems.”

“What do you mean?”

“Before you came out here, you were pretty sure about things.”

“Things?”

“History. Reality. People.”

“Yah. I guess. I don’t know. I think I’m pretty ignorant really. There are people I knew back in Boston who were really smart. They made me feel ashamed.”

“What did they know that you don’t?”

“Well it was like you said. About history & people & all that.”

“There’s a lot more, Davey.”

I started slowly. Huxley. Heinlein. Leary. Alan Watts. Jung. You read what I told you to. At night I trained your tongue & fingers to do as I liked.

Eventually I’d taught you everything up to a point.

I didn’t tell you what I wasn’t sure of. I held back a lot.

You don’t know who I am. You don’t know who you are yet.

It will change.

David led us deeper into the woods. He was running.

“It will be different this time,” he said. He’d mixed up a batch of acid OJ that we all knew was far more potent than any but him had done. We were already high from dosing earlier in the day.

“We’ll do it right this time,” he said, & he was smiling. We all shared this large stone mug. “Thou Art Godd,” he said.

Now we were far deeper into the woods than ever before, & we were running. Davey was never much of a runner before, but now he was flat out. He ran without slowing or stumbling, like he knew where we were & where we were going. The rest of us stumbled along, somehow keeping up, even after we were agreeing in some kind of collective telepathy that we were passing through years as well as trees.

Passing through trees, through trees, trees, lights, stars. No longer running but still moving, so telepathic now it’s like the five of us were in a mental spaceship travelling along in a way beyond speed.

“Davey, where are we going?”

“We’re going to get it right this time. I love you all.”

“We love you too, Davey. Are you OK?”

“I’m fine.”

“Are we going to find Suzanne? That’s it, isn’t it?”

“Better than that. She knows. She’ll be there.”

“That’s great, Davey. We’re so happy for you.”

“She’ll be there for all of you too.”

“Where, Davey?”

“And when?”

“It’s not like that really. It will be OK. We’ll be together. There will be trees. It won’t be like it was.”

“What do you mean?”

He’s coming to get me. I’ve been waiting thirty years for him. There’s nothing else left. I’m ready.

David Time puts the gun down, unfired, on his bedstand. His friends stand around the bed where he sits.

“Is this what isn’t going to happen?”

“There’s more.”

“What about the rest of us?”

Pause. “Do you think I would have taken you away from your lives if they’d been happy?”

Rebecca looks at me. “Hi.”

“Hi.”

“Is this all, um, going OK?”

“Do you want to read everything I just wrote?”

She slides astride me. “No, Ray. Just tell me. You know I like everything you write.”

We manifest. Another coffee joint. Scattered tables & old couches. Nighttime. Front wall of place is all window, about 40 feet wide.

She surely knows how to manifest. Wearing the usual black motorcycle & tight jeans, add a well-filled tye-die shirt low-cut in front. Her hair shoulder-length mahogany brown. Eyes blue. Eyes bright, a child’s. Eyes, wise, my mate, my muse.

“You should talk about how pretty you are sometimes,” she complains, smiling, making a playful swipe for my pen.

“Tell me. I’ll write.”

“Exactly what I say? Promise?”

I nod. She grasps my non-writing hand & presses it to her breast & finds my mouth with hers & I find her telling me how beautiful I am from within me.

A full mug of beer tips off the bar at Luna T’s Cafe & tumbles to the floor, crash! Voices. Laughter. Mr. Bob the barman & a broom & pail.

When the fuss has been swept, mopped, all well again, Mr. Bob returns to behind the counter & meets a sudden barrage of drink orders with usual calm.

“Jimmy?” he queries the pensive Jim Reality III who sits quietly at the bar with his empty drink.

Jim’s lost in a peaceful contemplation brought on by a day spent with guitar & fine marijuana in front of his hut down at the Concord Reservoir. Mr. Bob refills his drink without waiting for an answer probably not due for awhile. In grabbing the bar’s bottle of Beefeater Gin, he looks up to the bar TV & sees a darkhaired woman dressed in some kind of hunter’s costume, tussling with a large beast.

“Check out the tickets on that one,” cracks one drinker.

“Two please!” several sodden wits bellow simultaneously.

Mr. Bob uses the TV remote control to return to Acid TV.

The drinkers, sans Jim, let out a collective groan.

Mr. Bob heeds not a single drinker’s plea for a full 30 minutes.

The wife & I are now sitting on the same side of our table, tho I’ve insisted on separate seats.

“You’re a shameless little wench,” I told her ear with a lick. She responds with a shameless little wench’s gesture that leads me to whisk us out of the scene far less hot than we are.

A dream passes & we are in a large tub filled with soapy water, facing each other, I use a large soft yellow sponge to soap her breasts, they juggle up & down, we laugh, something easy here, something flowing current, we laugh & our legs are tangled warmly together, & our hands hold one another tightly, her hair is loosely held in a bunch atop her

head & I object by loosing the shiny purple ribbon & she knew I wouldn't stand for that very long

"but you like kissing my neck too"

"I do" & I do & as I lean forward she gets a good proprietor's grip on my balls

"mine" she growls, laughing, but serious

I raise her chin up with my fingers & smile at her. "What's in your eyes right now is mine."

"And the rest?"

"It starts with the eyes, Rebecca."

She looks down despite my fingers. "All of me is yours, Ray."

"Thank you."

She looks up at me fiercely. "But that means a lot. I saw what happened with my dad & all his different girlfriends before Franny. Even Franny too."

"Am I going to lose you?"

"I don't know. Maybe I'll lose you."

"Rebby—"

"No. We don't know. We never know for sure. Ever."

Just as suddenly, she relaxes. She kisses both my cheeks quickly & then my lips very slowly, very lightly.

"You're right," I say.

She doesn't want us to dress. She wraps us damp inside shiny purple towel & we find ourselves eventually in the Ampitheatre, halfway up its hill.

"Keep us here for awhile," she asks. No—she doesn't ask—she speaks my thoughts for me. She voices my plea.

"We're married, Rebecca. It's OK now."

"I know. I'm not as bad about it as I was."

"No, you're better."

"Do you know what's going to happen next?"

I show her the ragged sheet of notes I keep with the "New Period" manuscript.

"Oh."

"I never have any more than that. It's always enough."

"Is my dad OK? We left him suddenly."

"He's fine. He & Franny needed to be alone."

"And you & me too?"

"Yes, Rebby."

She looks me down hard & I think she's mad. But no: "Ray, I'm ready. For, um, whatever's next. I can't tell from your sheet of notes. But I want you to know I'm ready."

"Good. Thank you."

"You must trust all of . . . this a lot to be still at it. I mean to be inside of it & believing it will work out like you do."

"There isn't any other way, Rebecca."

She looks down.

"What?"

"You're here because of me. A lot of this is because of me."

Now I look her down hard. "I want to be here! And I'm glad you're ready for what's next. No more moods, OK?"

"OK. I love you."

"I love you, Reb."

"You're very patient. I had to be sure."

“Are you?”

“More & more.”

“Good.”

I wrap the purple blanket around us again. My hands rest on Rebecca’s soft flat stomach. I imagine the unimaginable . . .

“Rich.”

“I’m here. You’re OK.”

“I was dreaming of all this. I saw you coming.”

“I know. It wasn’t like last time.”

“But you still came for me. You’re here.”

“Rebecca was here too.”

“Oh.”

Franny sits up in her bed of rubble. Rich moves closer to cuddle her. She smiles.

“I don’t know where it’s going now. I don’t think Soulard knows anymore either.”

“Good.”

“You trust him that much?”

“He trusts us that much, Rich. He’s one of us now. As much as he can be.”

“They’ll be home soon,” Mr. Bob announces as he turns from the TV to regard the half-filled bar of unhappy-looking drinkers.

“Can we watch them bomb Belgrade now?” asks one hopeful face.

“No.” Loud groan. “But drinks are on the house til they all get back.” Mild cheer.

Mr. Bob is happy. His tribe is coming back to him. He doesn’t care how strange the events he’s watched. Acid or no acid, they’re coming home soon.

“I want us to get married when we get home.”

“Married? Home?”

“It’s our time, Franny. There’s a lot to do.”

“Are you sure? I’m alive, Rich. I’m going to come with you. But you don’t have to marry me right now.”

“No. I do. I love you. That’s all this was for. Maybe it wasn’t necessary. I don’t know.”

“But you do know you want to marry me.”

“Franny, it’s time. We’ve passed doubt & we’ve passed courtship. We marry or we break.”

Purple eyes, she, brittle, ready, scared, because happy, because ecstatic, because this moment is passage to infinite others, because yes feels good, because yes is right.

“Yes.”

Richard James Americus arriving home. In this fractured underworld, in the embrace of a 23-year-old Georgia girl, home. A girl born seven years after his brother died.

Rich carries Franny from the bed of rubble where she had dreamed she was dead & her truelove was looking for her, awoke when he found her, now returning to where she has been before, to marry the man she has already married, marry him again, but now the whole story told, now to return to the already-lived future & stay there. And so.

Right now skinless in the vastless night. A redfaced drunk with a gapeholed yawn, a mumbling face, challenging & fearing, the doubled-up slouch of someone no longer expecting kindness. Eyes cast down on a train, white scarf snug to protect a waiter’s neck, readers of

newspapers, the many thoughts passing among us all now, the many dreams pending within each of us. A face cartoonish—seek its subtleties. A face common—seek its genius.

Skinless. Hi-low'd by past & future but seduced virginsmilepretty by now.

I'm nearing all of you. I'm learning how to remember—skinless, words will fumble at times like these—how to describe laughter, shadow. The least smile validly called smile.

A man doses on the train, arm perched on a railing next to his seat. A curious face turns & looks over to me. I can't explain any of this. I'm skinless. I'm ready for much more than my walk home & then to sleep.

Here & Now. Godd. Eternity. Infinity. Rumbling north of Boston. The gentleness of all these strange souls, more than enough.

On. ZombieTown. OK.

Walk, float, happy, onto Carnal Street, after midnight, ZombieTown dawn, & those lights! I sit on the steps of abandoned Rohm Tech building, & slip into wordlessness, the rhythm of watch & listen, cars speed Indy past, driving one-handed lottery ticket in hand, go fast! catch it, motherfucker! that thing you dream money or speed or wagging tits at the Squire Club will get you—go faster—no, bastard, go!

“Who the fuck are you?”

“I'm helping you.”

“I don't want to go this fast—there're cops!”

“But we're going over the line.”

“What line? Who are you?”

“Speed. Money. Tits. A little faster & we'll be there. I promise.”

“Soulard, stop.”

I am Lord Psychedelio. Noone can stop me.

“Soulard. It's Americus. Look around! Let go of this!”

No. Not yet.

“Let me go! Get outta my cahr!”

“Do you believe in Godd?”

“What?”

“Do you believe in Godd!? We're going to hit that telephone pole—what do you believe?”

“Help!”

“Ray, it's Rebecca. It's OK. We're all here. At Luna T's Cafe. Just look around like my dad says.”

I want to make this story great but I don't know how any more. It's way past gone.

I won't look around so Rebecca, goodwife she is, shows up in the impossibly speeding car on Carnal Street, ZombieTown, Mass.

“Who's she?”

“My wife.”

“Tell him to leave me alone! I'm not that drunk!”

“Ray, will you look around? You're at Luna T's with me & my dad & Franny & Mr. Bob & everyone else. You're at the bar writing this.”

“No. I'm not. I'm at a joint in Cambridge, another Friday, bereft, writing to keep sane.”

“But why can’t you be with us right now? We’re back together, finally & at the right place! Why can’t you be here too?”

“I don’t know. But maybe I’ll come later, OK Reb? Will you wait for me there?”

“Yes. OK. I love you. I’m still feeling good about us.”

“Good.”

“Can I come with you?”

“No. But wait. Keep everyone together. Watch the TV.”

“What about me? I believe in Godd but I don’t want to die.”

“Sorry.”

I watch a low-slung car held til now in place tires smoked to their metal cores released & hit an electrical pole & explode.

“Where am I?”

“You’re with me now.”

“Where’s my body? Am I dead?”

“If you had a body it would be crushed inside that wreck over there.”

“Am I dead? Did you kill me?”

“That’s what you were made for. You’re every motherfucker who speeds down this road way too fast late at night when I usually walk along it to get home. Lottery ticket in your hand, not paying attention to the road or the world or anything really.”

“You’re crazy. I must be passed out somewheres.”

“No. Here you are. Just a voice. With me. I’m writing a story. I need someone like you around.”

“Like me?”

“I hate you. I hate your type. No class bastard. Missionary position imagination. Conservative. Selfish really.”

“Who are you? Is this kind? You thought me up so you could kill me & make fun of me after?”

“You’re going to help me because of what you are & what I am. I don’t like your kind & you don’t even see me. Did you notice me on those steps, writing?”

“No. I had my mind on things.”

“Things?”

“My business, jack.”

“Anyway, it doesn’t matter. You’re coming with me.”

“Where?”

“San Francisco. 1967.”

“What is this, science fiction?”

“No.”

“You on something?”

“Not at the moment.”

“You like coke?”

“No.”

“Why are we going there?”

“There’s a woman.”

“We’re gonna bring her back here?”

“No.”

“Where is she?”

“That dude’s spying on her. Her building is next door.”
 “Can we look?”
 “Hold your breath.”
 “Why? How can I? I have no body!”
 “Do it like you did have one. Then think about, no, focus on his binoculars. Focus on his eyelashes. Sit on them. Then look.”
 “She’s naked!”
 “She’s naked & she’s tripping.”
 “This isn’t right. What’s this guy gonna do?”
 “Nothing. He just watches. He’s worried about her. So he watches.”
 “Don’t he work?”
 “No. I don’t really know his story.”
 “But aren’t you his, whatdoyoucall, author?”
 “I don’t want to know.”
 “Why not?”
 “Let’s go.”
 “Where?”
 “To her.”

“She’s beautiful. What’s her problem?”
 “She’s in love. But he went away.”
 “Fight?”
 “Sortof. It got too intense for both of them.”
 “So now she just lies here naked with the windows wide open, doing drugs? Does she know she’s being watched?”
 “She figures it’s the Angel of Death. She doesn’t think about it too much.”
 “What kind of cockamamie story is this? What do you think I’m gonna help you?”
 “I don’t know. Can you?”
 “I know what this is like! That movie, ‘Christmas Carol’! But it’s all screwed up! See what drugs do to you?”
 “You do coke.”
 “Yah I do. But I aint no writer. I’m a salesman. I sell insurance & do coke to keep me revved. It helps. It’s expensive tho.”
 “You want to leave?”
 “To what? I got no body. You said you made me up. I guess I’m stuck with this.”
 “Good. What should I do about her?”
 “I don’t know! I was never good at writing & all that.”
 “Pretend it’s a movie. Or a TV show.”
 “But it’s not. It’s a story. It’s not the same.”
 “Do you want to touch her?”
 “No!”
 “You said she’s beautiful. You’re right. & you don’t exist.”
 “No. I ain’t like that.”
 “Then what?”
 “Where’s her boyfriend gone to?”
 “He’s in New Hampshire. On a commune.”
 “Bring him here.”
 “Why?”

“Let them say goodbye. Maybe it will help. I never said goodbye to the first girl I loved. I lost touch with her after we broke up.”

I consider this. It seems like maybe a good option. Suzanne’s acid OJ diet is doing her no good.

“What about the guy next door?”

“She doesn’t owe him nothing. He’s had his fun. He’s had his jollies but now it’s over. She’ll feel better & she’ll put on some clothes. Then the Angel of Death will go away & that’s that.”

“You’re good.”

“But I’m not. Doing all this just makes sense. It’s a story. Something has to happen, right?”

I look around & see big Jim Reality sitting a couple of stools away at Luna T’s Cafe’s bar. He raises his glass of gin to me & smiles.

“Say, guy. Welcome back.”

“This is a story, Jim. Something has to happen, right?”

“That’s up to you.”

Rebecca leans hard into me & grabs at my shoulders. “I waited like you said.”

“Good. Thank you.”

“What now?”

“I’m not sure.”

Mr. Bob fetches me a pint of Guinness which I sip at in silence. Rebecca is seated next to me, working on a sketch of me writing. Before I looked around, I guess.

“Rebecca, I’ve been writing this story for nearly eight months.”

“That’s long for you.”

“Yes. I’ve finished stories longer than this in half the time.”

“So you’re breaking your own rules?”

“In a way. I don’t think I can go back to the old way. This story’s a mess. But it’s right. It insists upon itself.”

“It’s funny that you still don’t trust it after 289 pages. & eight months & all.”

“That’s true. I don’t. But how can I not?”

Jim Reality raises his glass to me. “Go for it, Ray.”

I pull Rebecca into my embrace. “Thank you.”

“For what? I’ve been pretty hard to handle with my, um, doubts & all.”

“No. That’s not it. Your doubts are real, a valid extension of who you’ve been all these years.”

“I have a few left if you like them so much.”

“We’re near the end of this story’s second part. Maybe I’ll finish even finish it tonight.”

“Good.”

“& that Castaneda quote that began this part, about fear, that’s what many of these pages have been about. Your fears about me, Rich’s about Franny, Suzann’s about David Time. On & on like that.”

“Yes.”

“But more. I’m almost 35 years old. The year is 1999. I want to be 17 & the year to be 1968. I can’t make it all right. Not the way I’ve been going about it.”

“& I can’t write thinking I’m going at it wrong. This is the way I write now. I am nearly 35 years old. It’s 1999. All is well. I’m who & where & how I should be. Time to work harder & love better. Avoid stumbling half-intentionally into myself.”

“Yes! Ray, that’s it!”

“More. Look up at the TV.”

“The news from Littleton, Colorado tonight is grim. Many more questions tonight than answers as to why these two teenagers systematically readied & executed a plan to annihilate their fellow students—”

“Annihilation is the sinner’s last best hope!”

bellows Dr. Arnold T. Knickerbocker, blind drunk on near dozen coffees laced with whiskey.

“Dear lord, merciful & sober, crown thy accomplishments in this fast-burning universe by annihilating thine many despicable images here on this purgatorial rock!

“We do not fear thy smiting hands, lord! Nay—we shall welcome the tearing asunder of our darkling race’s worn story. We neither beseech nor implore thee—nay, we command thy ravaging host of burning angels to leave us strewn like broken shells across the heavens! Let us go, dear lord! Annihilate your first children! Annihilate time itself! We wish to smile & cease!”

Rebecca disengages herself from me & fills in all the borders around Dr. Knickerbocker. She smiles child at him & grasps his hands. He cracks with tears.

“Child, I cannot die,” he moans.

“I don’t want you to, Mr. Knickerbocker. I want you to host my marriage. I want you to marry Ray & me. Will you do that for me?”

“You’re going to marry?”

“I’m 18, Mr. Knickerbocker. & I love Ray. He’s the best.”

“He understands sin & remorse, I’ll grant him that virtue.”

“I want you around for a long time, Mr. Knickerbocker. I’ll take care of you. I promise.”

“I didn’t see you for a long time.”

“I’m back. I’m right here. I’ll be around for you. I love you, Mr. Knickerbocker.”

Sparkles of love, love swishes untroubled by, we love because nothing else matters as much. An old man loves a young girl because his face shines reflected in hers.

More & more. We seek it tho it eludes. It is so intense at times we court some new kind of blindness. Getting more ragged year after year, disintegrating, still something deepwater, something black & gold & no net something longgone a night of music & shiny packages hours

unwrapped around our souls moments some happening now to someone somewhere the walls covered in the floors soft with maybe a far spread of trees maybe a suburban basement & a lover or three or maybe Godd's voice finally freely speaking its love its need & I watched a tight pair of jeans ticktock longhair breeze blown away wait listen

*hit the fucking button,
Jack*

*This is all there is this glitterfallen moment in a soft chair past the Dog Star & the Cafe
Wha? What are any of us doing here anymore?*

*“Soulard, mind if we play?”
I'm dreaming my notebooks are on fire I'm dreaming that I'm driving a trolleytrain & pursued by Boris Badanov & our chasing trains leave their tracks & pretty soon there are no trains anymore*

& my notebooks are all on fire

Rebecca I love you more than my own world I dream of you when I look at my world's girls I don't live in my world willingly anymore this is a problem but tonight I am nearly 35 & it's 1999 & I'm trying to let this be OK

I gnaw at my mate with these words—you, mate, words for thee—two vessels, we—walk naked around our shadowy flowered house—wake me with need & laughter love my writing so I can get hard demand I learn how to paint yr beauty say our daughter will be called Rebecca & we'll give her a beagle puppy named Algernon buy me cartons of black pens & lace tattoo your favorite need on my cock are we still fucking enough these days hit me every time I act old hit me when I behave too well tell me I'm not nearly the fuckup anymore tell me you know my history already

marry me every day for the rest of my life & outlive me by twenty years & surround me with our many daughters & single son when I lay dying & screaming with triumph & agony I want many daughters & for them to all look like you & worship me I want to be Lear immolating obscurely I want my single son to be the cocksure badass my dad was

When we finally mate in the woods naked & bonfire & acid & barrels of mead & shrieks of I want you to tag my cock yrs & never give it back watch over it

*& never grow old
& never grow old*

my mate to come I am not who I was I am writing beyond redemption these days I am babbling I am I

*“Ray?”
“Yes?”
“It's Rebecca. Open your eyes.”
“You're my jailbait wife. Always remember that.”
“I'm yr cherry.”*

“Yr my cherry.”

Rebecca. I wrap her in a blood red scarf & none other. She sits in my lap & looks about 12 trying to figure me out this time.

“It’s tonight.”

“What?”

“Tonight is acid night. The other side of this night. You’ll see.”

“We’re ready?”

“We’re beyond ready.”

There is no certainty anymore. Not really. The earth is filled with treeroots & hopeful corpses.

We’ve fought on a long battleground of fear & doubt. This never ends.

But there’s more. A half-moon punching a bright continuous word in the night sky. The music Noisy Children is battering, at the walls of Luna T’s Cafe. The many who love me tonight. The one who dreams of meeting me & kissing me & how I will court her & who we will two vessels be

Oh lord I understand none of it the vinepatterned rugs & chairs in this hotel lounge. I don’t really know why the stars are. I want to be a father of many daughters & a single son. I want my mate to be my virgin soon my muse later my widow last of all

Two vases. We will be the sweet, cold water and the jar that pours.

Listen to this story that is no story this poem unreasonable & vast. I used to be someone who wrote another way. There are no models or guides left for me. I’m nearly 35. Schooldays are over

I marry you, Rebecca, to teach you & to listen. Your simulacra is walking my world tonight & she’s restless & she’s impatient & music hardly calms her these days & colors make her thighs growl with sweat.

New Period. Motherfucker of a time. Paradise never moves. Echo. The ground beneath her feet. Hideous kinky.

My notebook is on fire. Please save it. Please save it. Please save me.

I am going to the desert to learn how to immolate mongst the masters. The smiling thousands. Bardo plane. Lysergic acid. Tight teen ass. Dose her cuz she’s cute. Fuck her cuz you can. Suck harder, baby, & I’ll make your devils go away.

To be continued in *The Cenacle* | 55 | October 2005

Judith Haggai



Mindless Brainstorm from a Windfilled Void

as a hush falls over her lobe
the amygdala sighs a blushless groan
it's time to reflect on life

far from meditation
the breezes of past brainstorms
crouch low between pinetrees
pecans fall on the roof

the forest huddles in a windless void
owls cut out for the night
too far from dinner
too close to all-strung out

one mind cracks
a ceramic bowl heaves
whipped and ready

come meringue with me



*All the while, believe me, I prayed
our night would last twice as long.
—Sappho*

Art by Judih Haggai

phantom cascade

phantom cascade
illusory obstacles
caressed and polished
praised in gilded haze

walls where no walls stand
floors built on emptiness
standing in stupidity
mud-caked pretense

the mountain top levitates
the view grows majestic
as ions expand
and laughter dissipates

sound becomes nature
flesh melts to sighs
hands held disintegrate
one-ness, huge-ness, life-full

let's not descend
(once up, always up)

balloon of emptiness

it's a balloon
of emptiness
nothing bursts when a pin pricks you

—a shell of yesterdays
rattled but fossilized
squeezed out and skeletal

your words run dry
passions fall flat
hopes caught in last year's gears

you knock on my door
hoping for a handout
but—oxygen don't live here, no more

What'll it Be?

And what'll it be
when they scrape your essence
and test tube your hopes and wilted whims
test drive your theories
and wear your worn out shoes

what'll it be
when they talk about
the dream that clung to dead sea soap
and washed itself dead dry

Agree to Disagree

agree to disagree
agree to splash paint
the impossible clarity
hidden beneath the sounds
of a language gone lame

the om beneath the walls
the certainty that its all illusion
agree to disagree
agree to whitewash the filth
the impossible insanity
visible beyond the hopes
of a people gone deaf

got it, got more where that came from
the spirit of forever
roaring lions through our veins
agree to disagree
agree to carry on
palpitations making noise
we'll pulse together
a new planet on mother earth

for a friend (through plate glass)

alive but not kicking
breathing but no balloons
the air rocks me like a hammock on the moon
i feel comfort just beyond my reach
is there a bottle of hope?

i open a book
i turn on a song
a poem hovers on my lips
i hear a message knocking at my door
later! soon! i promise myself
as oxygen steps in for a kiss



*Words by Timothy Leary
Art by Fu333*

Raymond Soulard, Jr.



Secret Joy Amongst These Times: The History of Scriptor Press, 1995 to the Present

*Think for yourself
& question authority
Dr. Timothy Leary*

Chapter Nine

continued from

The Cenacle / 53 / October 2005

One of the guiding myths of my life during 2002 was the Greek tale of Orpheus & Eurydice. Orpheus, the god of music, marries the oak nymph Eurydice, but loses her to a snake's fatal bite on their wedding day. Distraught, refusing her death, he follows into the Underworld to retrieve her. His plea of musical anguish moves the gods to grant him her safe return to the land of living souls, provided he does not look back at her as they climb with a guide back to daylight. Orpheus fails this test & loses her again, for good.

I fancied my romance of that time with Lisa Marie Zent to have such deep meaning to it, & I followed my nymph across the continent to retrieve her. I failed, perhaps never having a chance anyway, & by year's end found myself alone, destitute, & nearly gone.

What lesson? Follow your heart—at your own risk. Be true but vow to survive whatever outcome. Few souls are worth your demise. The ones of that value would do everything to prevent it. The girl I chased did not. 2002 crushed me; its only fair news is that I did not stay crushed.

At the beginning of the year I was still living in the Boston, Massachusetts area, same home since 1996, months into collecting unemployment, courting my girlfriend by phone from 3000 miles away. Scriptor Press's only active projects were its website *ElectroLounge* & my weekly radio show, "Within's Within: Scenes from the Psychedelic Revolution," broadcast on Sunday afternoons on Allston-Brighton Free Radio.

The Cenacle / 54 / April 2005



My radio show on ABFR ended that spring, and it would remain on hiatus for over a year (and would revive in a way I could not have foreseen then). The truth is that nothing good was going on by the end of my time in Boston, and what good remained, such as this show, bogged down in the murk of my sadness. I look back on those Sunday afternoons and think how much fun they were—the long rush to get to the station, the stop for new music at HMV in Boston on the way, talking online with the people tuned in, mixing all sorts of crazy music and sounds

with my crazy voice—and I wish I could have enjoyed them more at the time. But I was not enjoying anything anymore. My heart's shipwreck had virtually crippled me as a functioning being, and there was nothing to do but to follow my obsessions to where they beckoned.

I didn't work on *The Cenacle* or other projects because I had become a jobless recluse, the Jellicle Guild's inspiration gone from my life, & my only cares seemed to be writing the poems of *6 x 36 Nocturnes* for my muse & finding my way to join her on the West Coast.

Then I scored some temporary work doing editing at a corporation. After my long daily commute, I did the simple work, called Lisa at lunch & in the evening. For a few weeks in the late winter I was a couple of steps up from bottom. I was OK.

Then her break to leave home, long-desired, came, & within 48 hours she ended our relationship in favor of someone local. Nine months of fantasy verging on reality was over. I fucked up my job, & spun down. Survived, & spun down both.

It was two more years before I put a stop to the ugly blood-drizzle our friendship became, & longer than that before I was strong enough to push her away from me for good. When it first happened, I was too blinded with despair to see options, to cut the diseased limb & save the body.

Weeks went by & nothing good happened. At the beginning of June I left Boston after ten years living there, & I've not been back in the several years since. A brief stop in Connecticut to leave most of my possessions in a friend's basement, to drink a symbolic toast with a friend (my first drop of alcohol in ten months; last ever), & on to a cross-country Greyhound I hopped, bound for Seattle, Washington by way of Portland, Oregon where Eurydice dwelled captive in an unhappy new romance. So cried my delusional heart.

Scriptor Press hardly existed during these spring months of 2002. I was writing *6 x 36 Nocturnes* to save my life. Nothing else, no other work, was important then.

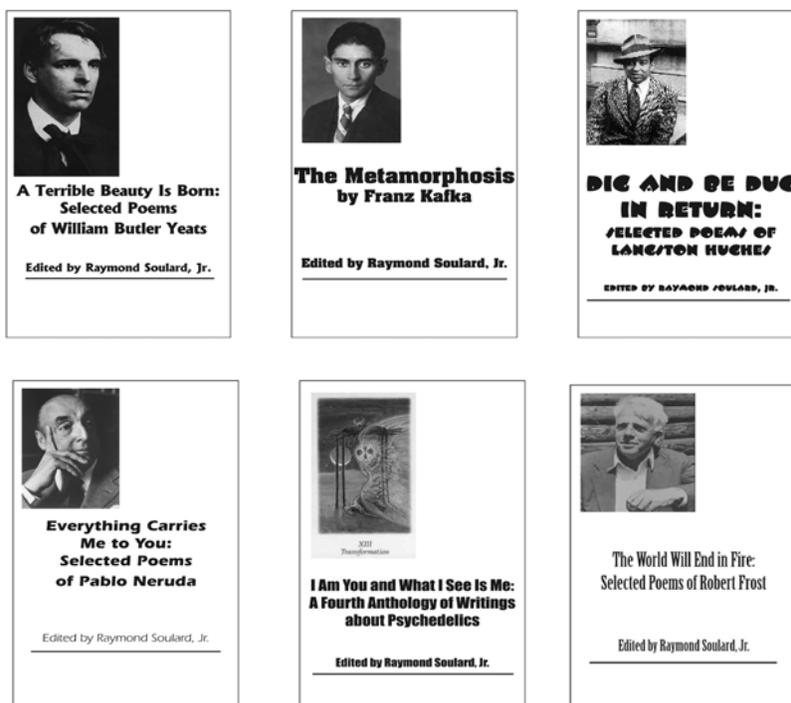
Three days on a series of buses cross-country & I was both high & withered with excitement. Follow your heart—at your own risk. I'd traveled cross-country before but never intending to stay. I wrote, sometimes talked to people, feeling deeper within than maybe ever before.

I arrived in Portland in early June 2002 & at last met my heart's desire, & for a few quickly disintegrating moments thought I would keep her. No: the Orpheus myth I selected for its great potency told my tale well too. I didn't have enough to offer her by way of stability—staying with a friend in Seattle & jobless still—& though she lingered at moments till year's end & beyond, the rift between us never healed. The wound of loss hasn't fully either.

Summer came & with it my other great passion: the Burning Man Arts Festival. I finally got Scriptor Press back in gear & set to making new books for the fourth annual appearance of No Borders Free Bookstore at Black Rock City, Nevada.

Once again I engaged my collaborator Barbara Brannon to design & lay out the books. I selected the authors & works, & did the printing & binding work. Though her own projects have limited our collaborations in more recent times, I recall them very fondly. Just as Jim Burke III taught me much of how to pursue artistic visions, & Hartley taught me how to rent consensus reality's limiting perceptions, so Brannon taught me countless things about how to craft beautiful vehicles to deliver these visions & perceptions.

The six new titles added to the Burning Man Books library included: *A Terrible Beauty is Born: Selected Poems of William Butler Yeats*; *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka; *Dig and Be Dug in Return: Selected Poems of Langston Hughes*; *Everything Carries Me to You: Selected Poems of Pablo Neruda*; *I Am You and What I See Is Me: A Fourth Anthology of Writings About Psychedelics*; and *The World Will End in Fire: Selected Poems of Robert Frost*. Yeats' poetry sings & growls, reaches & reaches; Kafka's fiction elaborates the nightmarish diminishment of the individual in the modern world; Neruda's poetry has a rough, burning hide to it, affects deeply what it touches; Frost's poems are boney & plain, smart lovely wastes; the anthology continued my work of getting out to the counterculture words wise & pretty about the psychedelic outlands; the Hughes volume I included for Lisa, she called him a favorite poet. I made this volume for her from love's best impulse, he is a good poet, so no regrets.



With fast-going money I took the book masters Barbara sent & spent days at making them into books at a copier shop near the University of Washington. The Afghan family who ran the place was friendly & took care of me & my project. At night I returned to my friend's home & bound the books using a special stapler.

I went to Burning Man 2002 with a desperate need for relief, for kindness, for rest, for clarity. I asked for everything. I was given much. It was a long week in the desert with my sadness & fear, knowing I had no money left, heart broken, having to make it on my own out West soon or give up. No Borders Bookstore was its yearly success. I returned to Seattle ready to renew my struggle.

Within a month, about mid-October, unexpected circumstance landed me down in Portland, living in a rooming house, working a low paying telephone survey job. I'd arrived where I wanted to be, though not under the circumstances I desired. Lisa was living with her family & boyfriend, hardly miles away but walled off seeming forever.

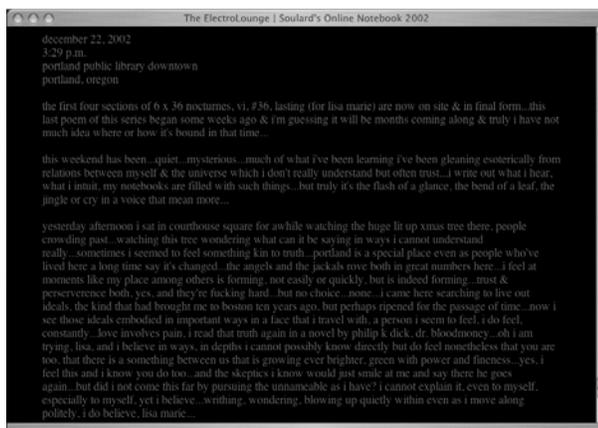
So I thought. Looking back simply angers me how drowned I was. She was a weak young woman with a disturbed mind living with the urban trash she came from. I'd been a temporary diversion from her boredom. Her first words to me in person back in June had pretty much been: you're supposed to be in Boston. To her I was a fantasy; to her people I was a threat, unaccountable in their TV-&-fast-food circumscribed lives. To myself I was the singer, I was Orpheus, but I kept ignoring that Orpheus loses. I thought I'd one-better him. I eventually did—by letting go his myth, choosing my life over his demise. Perhaps that's the best way to see this tale.

Those fall 2002 months in Portland were hard & lonely, yet there were then also other streams rolling within me. The romance I chased is long gone, yet there are other memories I bear without rancor; memories I am carrying with renewed interest at the time of this writing. It took me a long while to sort out, but I have & share here not merely old melancholy snapshots but new green shoots. Both amazingly.

What strange depths within suffering, what glints that remain when time has drained off the murk, what good will discover to the surviving soul if he but lets enough ticks of the clock pass. I don't have answers to unfold here, but questions strangely near to them.

My mornings began waking up in a rooming house bed made by tipping upside-down a dining room table & piling mattresses on it. I pushed off the Mickey Mouse cover & looked about dazed at the kitschy knick-knacks filling the room—tables & dressers & closets of junk—& a small corner piece crammed with pictures of the landlady. I bathed in an old tub surrounded by more junk—Joe Camel, etc.—& eventually was out to the boulevard to get the bus to the light rail to downtown Portland and, while I worked, to way outside the city. When jobs lacked, I spent my days in a job center, then a sparse meal at McDonald's, & evenings in the lovely downtown library, & thereafter with my notebooks & Philip K. Dick novels to Taco Bell & the late night Coffee Time Coffeehouse. Cavernous freaky lovely of a cafe, rife with loud music, old furniture, weird art, strange lost souls looking & forgetting & talking, & looking some more.

Cyberspace provided me with some comfort as I accessed it free from the library and from various coffeehouses for a fee. I was often at the Spiritplants.com chat room, or posting my tale to a journal at its forum, and I worked on *The ElectroLounge* quite often, posting *Nocturnes* for the most part, but also posting in a journal kept there too. I used what power I had left to write to give a few truly caring souls account of my days and nights. I kept trying.



In December I made an effort to produce *Cenacle* 47 but it did not succeed. My life had devolved to . . . holding off a breaking heart & trying to fill an empty purse. I walked around Portland, liking it, wishing my life in it would stabilize & lift. I wrote at bookstores, coffeehouses, park benches, buses. I look back now on those months—time's gone on, I've been back & forth over the continent a couple of times since, better love came & stayed—& wish I could cross back to who I was then & say: it will be OK, it will hurt, get worse, but you will survive. You will survive. Or better yet tell him that self-preservation matters over even the most obsessive of romances.

I wasn't ready to admit that it was over, that my life had devolved to a sad fragment, that will & conjuration would not turn things toward lively new days. My stubbornness cost me a great deal but I look back without shame. Maybe that's the odd allure of those days still: nearing the bottom something in me fought on. I learned that I might *fail* but I would not *surrender*. This seems important a distinction even now.

I spent Christmas Day alone in a coffeehouse called Heaven in the bleak grey, unsnowy downtown. Read, wrote, listened to my walkman. New Year's Eve I turned down a friend's invitation to go to San Francisco for a rock festival. My shitty job might call offering hours to work. They didn't.

To be continued in *Cenacle* | 55 | October 2005



Jim Burke III



Editor's Note: The following is the twenty-third in an ongoing series derived from the correspondence between Jim Burke III and myself, begun in 1992, and in the spirit of the more enthused letter-writing tradition of yesteryear.

April 7, 2005
West Hartford, Connecticut

Preface

I would like to comment on my favorite author, Henry David Thoreau, before I take it upon myself to utilize his style of writing and apply my own thoughts of nature to 21st century mankind.

Henry David Thoreau had the gift of insight; that is, he was able to apply the foundations of nature to his socioeconomic and political culture of the times. I am going to forgo quoting him directly as I assume the reader of this text has knowledge of his mastery of allegory. He not only compared every facet of nature to every custom and nuance of his surroundings, but actually established a correlation, and that is the purpose of this letter.

I-The Reservoir

The Reservoir system in West Hartford, Connecticut was built around the turn of the last century; an ingenious gravity feed system, it supplies water to the greater Hartford metropolitan region. Comprising hundreds of acres of woods and paths, it borders on the Connecticut Gas Company, Brainard Forest (on a hike I discovered a half-buried stone of Henry Brainard), and a couple of towns.

I had always been a literary fan of Thoreau since I was introduced to him in high school in Billerica¹, Massachusetts. I was always mystified, and I would emphasize "mystified" as in a spiritual longing, as to how a man could connect to nature. I graduated from Billerica High School in 1971 and tried majoring in accounting, math, and music until 1974. I quit college and worked at a "Store 24," a latex factory, and a wool mill (the historic Talbot Mills in Billerica). I also developed a reputation for being a competent guitarist and vocalist, and toured with several bands, Boston and Foghat among them. It all brought me to Walden Pond in 1976 and I have never really left!

I would leave my boarding house room in Lowell, Massachusetts on my bike for work at the mill at 6:40 in the morning, arrive at 7, and work until 3 in the afternoon. Then I would ride about 15 miles to Walden and spend the next 3 hours hiking and swimming. I left there about 7 at night and got back to Lowell about 8. I figure I must have ridden about 40 miles per day.

Walden Pond is magic. How else can I describe a place where one can blend soul with nature? I would strip down and bathe nude, with no repercussions, at the rear cove. People

¹ forgive the small type but they used small words, to paraphrase Peter Gabriel.

would look away, laugh, or not care (mostly the last). This went on for six years but I know it could not last forever. I eventually moved to West Hartford, Connecticut to finish college, resume playing guitar, and find the Reservoir.

I still ride a bike in the hundreds of miles of trails. It must seem like a mammoth 3-D tree in itself from overhead, although I still find a dead end once in awhile. It is like the trees just gang up on you peacefully and put some thorny bushes in front. Like using pawns in a chess game—or a socio-political system made up of sick and homeless—advance no more the wounded. The difference is that the trees do it with passivity—our so-called leaders do it with violence! There is an old Chinese proverb to the effect that “the willow survives the storm because it bends.”

II-Trees

Ah! The trees!—I “hear” them talking when I walk through the woods. Of course not literally, but my intuition is strong and I feel their harmony. Their bark peeling and twigs falling, it’s all part of what should be—nature. What should be is nature. Just as meditation clears the mind of centuries of “rational” Western thought, trees meld and become vibrant. Their greenery supercedes all else. Whether at Walden or the Reservoir, the trees with their infinitesimal outstretched limbs cast changing shadows over the water. They are providing a natural timetable for mankind to contemplate. The shadows change on a daily basis, not only dependent upon the position of the sun and astronomical forces, but how mankind (and how quickly) depletes their numbers. As more trees are taken, more water tables are altered, and more flood plains are lowered, the trees sacrifice themselves as the Cambodian Buddhist monks did to protest the Vietnam War. Self Immolation!! It is more than a coincidence that the trees will break before they bend to excess, to bow to the whim of mankind. Nature has a way of taking care of its own and natural lighting seems to suffice!

III-The Twig Problem

All that one has to do, to realize the importance of the tree, is to look at its skeleton frame during the winter. The leaves are gone and all that remains is a nest multitude. But how about all those undeveloped twigs? One has only to look on the ground to see what they are replacing—the old dead petrified branches that have served their purpose to feed the bigger branches water to survive. The twigs will perpetuate the process. Unlike mankind, which uses their insignificant twigs (or “little man”) to feed the rich and perpetuate that lifestyle, the trees nourish their twigs all year round and form a symbiotic relationship. The sap flows and the birds build new homes. The squirrels use the trees judiciously as their temporary landlords. Mankind can have a landlord and pay the rent, with or without heat. But not to worry, the landlord can always use a few twigs to get the heat started.

The twigs on the tree and life from them remind me of infinity. Their language is a mystery until you stop listening—perpetuation is the key. Freedom is obtained through non-action and least resistance. And, after all, what is a tree without a twig?



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Raymond Soulard, Jr.



6 x 36 Nocturnes

sixth series

xxxvi. Lasting

i. All is Forgiven

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.

Now conjure at will. Lights & hue,
make of them.

Easy. Let what flows, flow. Nothing
too late, nothing too soon.

Now a star, now a branch, now a dream
no longer dream.

Slip through crowds & silence alike, let
everything pass, there is no secret nor
bliss one is bound for. There is no path.

There are the steps you claim, mistake
for a life. There is the bed where new
things ferment.

There are old woods listening.
There are stars & wherefrom they dangle.
There is language hid along growl, within buzz.

When all seems like music, it is.

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.

Now accelerate. Now burn.

When all seems like music, it is, falling
 in & through, a dance riddled with colors,
 movement by melody & wind, within blown out,
 laughter a hand flung into shadows, become
 open water, more, stronger blood, more. More.

Something not yet word, nor yet shine,
 yet beyond shadow, a dance & a blaze,
 no longer blue fancy, remorse tugging
 for release. I don't know. A game,

this cosmos? Time + play? Rhythm & ferment,
 war & what strokes aching along its edge,
 something from somewhere, reclamation
 of a dream, not yet word, nor yet shine,

no longer blue fancy. Once. Twice. Breathe.
 Relax. Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax. Once.
 Twice. Breathe. Relax. Now conjure at will.
 Lights & hue, make of them. Nothing too late,

nothing too soon. A dream no longer dream,
 what leads through crowds & silence alike.
 Everything passes, no secrets budding, no pending
 bliss. No path but diminishing echoes.

When all seems like music, it is, opening
 out & out & out, dance riddled by color, movement
 by shimmer & glare, what burbles madly in the woods,
 galaxy, sea & dream. An ever craze for more.

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
 All is forgiven.

Sing happiness to a room full of dead
 chairs, sing & sigh to a ceiling pulling
 outward for more, out & out, out, for
 more, all is forgiven. Hum. Continue.

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
 Let history's testaments fall to sand.
 Let the trail of old blood diminish away.
 Let deepest love cup not contain & thus
 learn by release, flutter, renewal, blessing.

Alone, kiss the carpet. Shivering, kiss the sky.
 Hopeful, kiss strangeness. Despairing, kiss your dreams.

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax.
 All is forgiven, even what pocks & remains.

When all seems like music, hold out
 hands to catch some shine. Give over
 to dance riddled in colors, to whatever
 persists. To knowing, believing, what clasps
 one to another. Breathe. Relax.

ii. Turning On

What lasts? Nocturnes, smoke, nothing.
 A sheaf, awhile. Trees, ideas of trees,
 fire. Stellar revolutions, distances resembling
 slowness. Nothing, something. Nocturnes,
 smoke. The hope of perhaps. Brighter hours
 yet & to come.

What persists? Rhythm & ferment. Skies
 softening, wet release, stars, silence.
 Human music chasing the eternal. Memories
 hung on sweet pikes, skewered through
 heart's every content. Falling through water,
 another life, a drifting gesture.

What now? We continue loving in the
 distance. The obscure, the underneath.
 Something pending, everything, again. Rhythm
 & ferment, soon blaze, acceleration.
 Pending rivulets shudder, provoke new songs.

iii. Firelife

Coins fall down pools of magick,
twist, dissolve,
hearts fall, meet & fall,
something remains, keep singing.
Several words, now deeper, keep singing.

Coins fall down, watch, the hope
of perhaps, love reveals, love explains,
something, everything, what flows among
the wires & chains, what presses laughter
one to another. How high yet to go?

Forever. Coins fall down, we love nearer,
she laughs, I follow, I sing, she
embodies, we love nearer, meet & fall,
hand folds into hand, breathe, relax.
Kiss strangeness, follow it through the sky,

the hope of perhaps twists, dissolves, keep
singing. I keep seeking her til she curls
along me, today, tonight. Forever plainly
known in the rising laughter of hazel eyes.
Hearts fall, meet & fall. Embody, sing. Near.

iv. Moonstones

But something else too, something furious
with its own existence, how to live,
how to live. How to live & why.

She shifts among depths, a glance
between walls, up toward leaves, she
hears music, quiet, pressing. How to live.

She knows. She tells me & my pen
hurries, becomes two, bounces, broils,
yes, I see. Tonight, love, I see. No how,

no why. I have no pen. There is no art.
Teach me. Patience, she says. We know
your hunger bears my name. We know.

She kisses my cheek, says feel my vow.

Tonight, love, I see. No pen. No art.
Clouds swish across fullest moon &
I watch, wondering toward your next lesson.

v. Veil

Walk in hunger, pray in hunger, love
 in wild bursts, airless gulps. Feel what
 tremors about your skin, what watches,
 what follows. Sometimes spoken in the
 pink of a wanting cheek, laugh becomes
 moan, thickening clouds, unthreading

nests. Look about, the beggar & the king
 equally slave to need's claw & sunset's
 burn. Look about, let nothing be which
 can deeper teach you that you know
 nothing, & still you stride. Walk in hunger,
 love in hunger, fuck in hunger. Fuck

inevitably, die in surprise. Submit to
 wisdom in molecule & feather, let the
 strange dogs within scream & cry, whimper
 & weak. Let the world's hustles disappear
 wholly into the sugar of thine heart.
 Walk in hunger, thrash. Believe.

Say I love you: it matters. The world sips
 at your song. Say I love you: she listens.
 Within her a bell breaks & moans. Say
 I love you to the night's banshees, to what
 strokes with holy intent. Say I love you:
 she reaps. The morning glows & she follows.

Walk in hunger, hurry. Begin everywhere, nowhere.
 Sing to her the heavy songs, white
 explosions, battering lullabies, loathesome
 bright things. Sing to her of secret want
 dirty & delicious. The gravity & whim of
 biting wordless things. Teeth across her back,

caterwaul for dreaming's promised new
 world. Raise her, shake her hard from
 within, the room cutting blood & coarse
 echoes for more. Nothing to explain love's
 sweet whore grace. Submit, hunger never
 ceases, immolate slowly with her. Squeeze, empty.

Cry out to the sky. Let its silence tend you.

vi. Lovers

You crawl toward daylight, bearing an
 instrument hardly yet played, a heart
 barely sung. What pulls you back flares
 & gnashes. You gnash back harder, become
 a soft fist in heat, a butterfly spark
 in a doorless room.

A beauty, first & last flower of
 the world. A true note, plain & golden,
 more than crawling toward sunshine,
 flickering past wicked days, pulsating
 creature, teeth in my flesh, fury in
 my nights. A cry, full, empty, dawn's

new life between us. Faith: beasts ranging
 across a landscape, tribal noise
 passing as survival, unto music.

No answers to blood's tumult, nor
 the thrashing question of kings
 & preachers: How long?

A thousand years lain among stellar
 rubble & strewn grace. Gourds of
 language. Useless among the dead &
 the yet. Stripes of fire conjure in
 forests of sentience. Waiting.

Waiting. Samely crowds of jerk & color. Scriptures
 of excrement lead armies fang-wild
 & scholars airless & sure. Nothing.

Then morning a cry, full & empty,
 a vow, tears, dawn's magick grappled
 & cast. Rain. Forgiveness. Blessing.
 Something. What crosses what. Begun,
 deepens. Crawling, now walking,
 now you arrive, now we continue.

vii. Reverence

The music of silence. A tremble, a flicker.
 Dream raises liberation, caterwaul, a leap.

Nights tremble with vow, rhythm, blowing things.

Reverence: where one rests around dawn.

viii. Drift

Hush. Reckon a rising world around that
 charred figure chanting goldensong.
 Hand conjures hand, make broad stains
 unto a landscape, new rivulets through
 the cosmos, greater songs ferment. Drifting,
 dashing gestures. Hush. Eventual sunshine.

Bells, birds, yet still withal the heartbeat
 of waiting. Branches shimmer with plainness,
 prayers old & new blow by, days reach
 taller with mystery. Hush. What opens
 out, blows up brightly, cries, squawks:
 truth not extant in sugar or machine.

Hush. World fattens with miracle & woe,
 strangers cross in dreams, trade words
 like fidelity, possession. Notice faith
 walking misty night streets humming
 songs of stroking stars, cascading kisses.
 Hush. Passions again accelerate, twinings

like leaves & fruit. Among goldensong
 your name persists. Hopeful, heated,
 you know & receive.

ix. Guerrilla

Believe everything, beyond the capacity of
 lung & will. Heed fire in the air, brilliance
 in your veins, cosmos in every hand. Believe.
 Despair. Between: breathe harder. Bellow
 in an empty street toward a diamond hope unknown.

Believe. It hurts. Now, in places lined with
 placards & bells. It hurts. You exist:
 choiceless, eager. Pulled forward, outward,
 you resist. Death ever sings a sugar song
 along your skin. Believe & moan. Again.

Resist, submit: Anarchy murmurs in the heart.
 I know you know. Alive, thus restless.
 Music calls you alive you listen. Drums join
 head to heart to thigh to beat. I know
 you know. Dance harder within, it hurts, it frees.

Believe, vast trees, full moon, the yes & beyond
 of night's music. Laugh, call it faith.
 A charred figure chanting goldensong. Hand
 conjures hand, makes broad stains unto a
 landscape, new rivulets through the cosmos.

Greater songs ferment. Believe with
 music, something like a lingual dance,
 fire in the air, brilliance in your veins,
 cosmos in every hand. Beyond smile &
 yes, need's need. An open field, ascending

bonfire, freedom a thousand bodies & still
 opening outward. A full moon, where the
 many prayers pass through & back, I know
 you know. Anarchy murmurs in the heart.

Resist, submit. One true note, deeper,
 higher. Music resembling home at certain
 rising hours. Resembling love, clarity.
 Holy emptiness, laughing. One true note,
 & a persistent fancy of her dancing: cyclone, fury.

Believe everything: smile, sigh. A myth
 beyond this moment, its maybe, its
 volition. Accelerating, again, with greener
 truth of trees & constellations. These words
 suddenly erupt, again, in music, & somewhere I explode.

x. Agape

Dream moves us persistent within the stiff ground,
 now resembling play, now wreckage, now
 glistening night. Music shimmers greater
 between us, we sum to other than one or
 two. Now past sleep, emptied of bed, what
 remains a leaving shaped by hazel eyes,

a thrilling twist of eros & agape, a rhythm
 chanting hope's choiceless spell.

Eros: delight's rootless bells conjure your
 voice, the palm-shaped softness of your
 hands among mine, our kiss imploding
 us into something greater than one or two,
 your sigh blood-badging my deepest recoils
 into solitude's fears.

Dream moves persistent, through fake
 daylight calm, through night's years
 of skylless joy.

Agape: loving souls ringing in the barrel of
 a half dead world, what kindness means
 when everyone at last is drowning. Your absence
 sometimes twinkles, a message by wish &
 flash, my lost nights rise up with a cry,
 spit your name out, choiceless, tender.

Dream betimes bears a rank beast, call it
 despair, nosing about my heart. Day's silence
 knows no comfort, calls night a dead vine twisting nearer.

Eros: I love you. This leap, moan, this bleed
 unceasing. Then somewhere you laugh.
 Something jingles within roaring populace
 of wounds. A grace persists. Though tethered
 it sings. Loyal misfit days pass comfort between
 us, by stars, by scraps.

Dream rouses me with a kiss, a blessing:
 hope abounds. By wave, by clot, by flicker.
 Bear this like a charm.

Agape: faces dirtless with irony say
 keep the words back, healing is for
 children & fools. The king preaches
 agape culled from scripture & hubris.
 Resistance chants up a bright endless
 parade.

Dream's wealth burrows a poor life, collects
 its stolen fruit: my pen conjures hands
 tending those who whimper alone.

A growl deep among trees, hunger or
 recent feeding, the pond nearby a crazy
 rhythm of watching bubbles, the limbs
 above feathered with the perpetual
 offices of nurture. The world's pulse plain &
 golden save among men where a coin

or a god or a hoary myth interfere.
 Explain. Delude.

Dreaming still the kind mystery walking naked free
 among us, here it pools & shines, there it
 recedes to a whipping thirst. Now it throbs
 irregularly, a beat, two in chime, more,
 like our palm-shaped grasp, like a song of faith.

xi. Home

Again throbbing absence, a flu of want.
A faith weighted with faint joys & bending plaints.
Wishes nurture, & constrain. Old paths obscure.

My pen grabs me & hurries through clouds
of thickening human idiocies.

I love you: I am breaking.

xii. Insurrection

My world empties. Yours fills. Smell the poison.
My life corrodes. Yours glares. Lies upon lies.
My hands flail. Yours busy with baubles. Crumble, resist.
My body aches & presses. Yours silent, a doll. Our want still scirocco.
My heart insurrects. Yours shrieks in the dark. Smother, breathe.

A new world still murmurs. You're still dreaming my face. Love's deepest treasure.

xiii. Nada

Chase her among the beats, stellar
 music tightens sad, releases joy,
 melodies of knowing & nada through

the mist moving all things. She nears
 again & the why breaks into branches &
 windy petals, among the beats what's

obscure flickers open, love plain &
 golden. From a life's anguish shudders
 out a dream, now glittering, flare, explosion.

She nears again, among the beats, &
 I cry faith! fidelity! Receive me your every
 terror I will quiet you. Burn our ruins to

cascade night's pathless woods. Home
 a chase among stranger beats now, awhile.
 Faith, fidelity. What must love become to

endure? Dream me, kiss me, make it hard,
 make it hurt. Beat my will into a weapon for
 your worship. I will be the lasting instrument

strumming you, stroking you, blowing
 out the rhythms & melodies your heart
 bears but hardly still calls its own.

xiv. High

Whatever restrains, let go:
You are not high enough.

Whatever devolves stellar music
to dumb habit, let go:
You are not high enough.

Where grey's plummet presses out
thine vista's green twining, let go:
You are not high enough.

Free howling rapture become
sensation's clumsy greed, let go:
You are not high enough.

Whatever, whoever, wherever crushes
& bruises with a distracted glance,
let go: You are not high enough.

When letting go itself abandons what salves
the torn & tender within, hold on.
Reckon daylight's approach & summit's nearing.

xv. Lateral

Snowstorm in the mountains. A carriage
 awaits passage. Someone speaks of home.
 The wish one suffers and sings for. One & many,
 slow & hurry. Someone speaks of home, rising evermore.

I think of one girl, then another, past, present.
 Spell, shaping. I think of trees along a snowy
 road. This yearning's diminishing music. Hope direct
 & lateral across the heart.

Someone speaks of home. Other days will bounce,
 scatter shivers through flesh thin with happy
 memory. She resists departure. I allow, she
 denies. I look elsewhere, she follows, comments.

Derides what is other, less. I'm dreaming her
 again. Then I dream other things. Nocturnes
 rush & recede about her. Still. Golden hours
 gone. A thousand miles from anywhere.

Snow a deep wet bell for hope pliant to
 burrow. Hope: your face, your eyes, the blooming
 scent of your abyss. I love you. Everything
 shifts. Little lets go. Noise of nature's morning prayers.

Springtime snowstorm. Child wailing for home.
 Words flatten with longing, something,
 someone. Anywhere. You. Forlorn, I tap a wing,
 await a companion. Think of music's restless crave.

xvi. Kneel

Golden hours gone, nocturnes rent with
 cold burn, a thousand miles from anywhere.
 Tonight music shudders briefly, & again,
 lashes nada's spectacle, dead rhythms
 kicked for whatever convulse remains. Nothing
 true here, just days pricked for coins. Call it a life.

A passing carnival of blankness & deed.

Something yet dances out there in the shades,
 dream stroke of a leaf, flame of a thigh.

Call her bitch. She responds.
 Call her angel. She responds.
 Wake up. To her bid a name less yawning.

Kneel. Submit. Love's immolation. Liberation's
 ash. Wield the flame anew, call it music.
 Dancing power roar with the night.

Touch her feather. She responds.
 Touch her leather. She responds.
 Wake up. Someone else's world is
 eating you while she arcs & corrodes.

A rampage, a terror, the night's floorless
 embrace. Perpetual.
 King's broad minions, preacher's tome of
 nots, we listen & still slowly crack
 wide. The artist barks tunefully, rests
 later with cleanly brushed fur.

Kneel. Submit. Trees burn up in truth
 where men mew & flee for anywhere.

My heart spits wildly for just a little content.

xvii. Sorrowful

Empire, relax. Blood bounces through the streets
again. Small things fallen lay open. Talk &
songs celebrate, lull, submit. Restless wonder
finds no home. Convulse, drift.

We want. We want. Something. Then something else.
Desire. Glare across a tome, wither of persistence.

Empire, relax. Casual tinkering busy most.
Life eaten walking a path which does not arrive.
A world crackling its news tonight by bullet
& feather & spasm. Soft tightens around hard,
baubles & shrieks vie for believers. Kings
gallop over deserts a thousand years in forgetting.

In dreams I am chimes you steal from market,
the music in your satchel & scent. One heart
dreaming another.

Empire, relax. Hark human noise ever
burst out with melody or smoke. What great
passes, what small lingers. What little coming reveals.
Choked roaring with emptiness, years mount
& mock. The olden crumbles, retreats, reforms
elsewise, presses harder on. The olden lives
in tonight's kiss. Leaden blow. A rising thrust
within a quiet wood, still felt by a far
city staggering. Someone says quietly: we
all share the same soul.

In dreams I am your tinder, your scripture,
your flu. Conjuring me from hardly a parcel of
words yet see me appear. Itching & bruised. You make
me appear.

Empire, relax. All glory passeth, tomorrows &
tomorrows & tomorrows too. The world's
remains surrounds king's winning horn in
fullest of moons, the waiting dust of
brother for brother. She conjures. I arise.

Another path beckons. Empire, relax.

xviii. Crippled

Once. Twice. Breathe. Relax. Now conjure
 at will. Finger the shimmer in things.
 Raise a telling strum, fail. Raise, & again.
 Shriek for a swathe of yesterday flesh!—
 an angle receding no magick can rightly trace.
 Great eyes were praying kind to a moment.

Where is it? New pilgrims ride on. Join or
 be damned. It hurts. Raise or dwindle.

xix. Careen

Sought singing light within shaped flesh,
 knowing's greater fury, open-thighed cry
 of bright meaning, among ancient branches
 of heat & wonder atwist making language,
 songs fruiting as language's bloom & bleed,
 giving drizzle sense & the invisible intent.

Become now a careen of willows & wings,
 unclosed circle of despair. Numb, twitch, numb.

Convulse & small barks for return, someone,
 anyone, unto the moment blossom with touch,
 cease of wishing's begging gnaw, this time she
 will stay, this time she will stay, this time
 she will stay. Hurry & limp toward shifting
 something. A life summing in songs & squalor.

Radiant chance crossed by paths of ache,
 flashes of joy, her useless tap. This morning
 found me strumming again.

Now chasing a way found by other creatures or
 kind, less grit in the melody, a singing
 without divide. Brutality left to sun & years.
 A cough of stars tonight & pressing noise
 the world offers as magick to those quiet &
 intense enough to translate.

She will stay. She will stay. She will stay.
 Someone, anything, will matter again.

xx. Bound

The green world persists snarl and hum.
 What blooms keeps and embodies its day.
 Breath a choiceless pully. Flow a making
 of tide and will. Released in moonlight
 to greater sobriety, reckon what doesn't
 cower.

She nears again, drowning magick, verdant
 tug. I call this nobody's song against
 her coming maraud.

Memory charges the present with its woe,
 its sickly tale, its consumptive caterwaul
 for some greater kind of devotion, love without
 breath, prickless passion, a wider world's
 womb. Green traded for a promise, some
 curved intent. Reckon most who sings for noone.

She nears again like a butterfly's wing across a
 glaring fell hour. The several dumb melodies of want.

Something alights me, a word, a strum,
 green, taut, ablaze for its time. The making
 persists, through rust, through fade. Breathing
 for the verdant within, give to sadness its
 song. Hunger its flicker. Desire its dominion.
 Ecstasy its chance.

What's bleed will bloom again because
 it can, because it does. She nears again
 & I divide against myself. Make ready
 for furies unknown.

xxi. Yearned

*"Yet when the angels swoop to pick us clean,
they shall find that all our fruits are green."*

—Rainer Maria Rilke, 1903.

She sleeps in silken pocket of stars,
dreams within a holy emptiness, girded
by my many songs. A cry equally ours
unstills the night, its echoing mate settles
again beast & leaf.

Love blows up again, helpless, wild, she
knows my bidding & wonders how, I pass
miles in a word & remember why.

I remember a day & the tree you embraced—
all my life led to this singing for you.

To love you is forbid you nothing, cup
your glare when it nears & dances, watch,
sing, let you go, keep you, find a harder
wisdom past either. Offer love of the
nest's kind, safety between flights, or the
way the tide swings to shore & away.

Love you & thus the world. Sleep, angel,
while I conjure a truth enough to raise you.

Love blows up again. I've become this
singing for you, this true note plain
& golden. This forever greening to keep
you asleep on high. Wake you to a
greater world when at last it beckons.

xxii. Crush

Become this singing, this man raised from
dreams with a fury, this fat blur wielding
magick at green's bidding, this hope a skirt
of foam near & away, this hard crying
against the softer choices, this charred figure
chanting goldensong, this singing from a hovel
half willing known again to its wider bed.

Become this singing, anarchies murmur in the
heart, days by cower & empty salute, nights
restless with obscure stingers, dreams plain &
golden, muscular beyond many songs, faith
the rain, & its cease, & its continuance, hope
ever the tide, the fire measured by men's
blunt savagrys & miraculous innocenses, this
singing less beacon than stampede.

Become this singing toward a greater music,
greater silence, flicking conjure of the healing
prayer at the heart of the universe, leaves
grumble again with teaching green, continuing
flash of skin for skin, wing for wing, fur for fur,
this singing's moan for dust's keeping union.

Become this singing, melody's devilish liquor,
rhythm's alluring bamboo bed, ever a muse bright
secreted in pink, dancers bid deeper joining
with exploding muscles & stretching bones,
a moment wild with hurry, every moment's
ever wider yaw, this singing beyond choice,
beyond purpose, the greater when no power
nor shaping is refused.

Become this singing, this willing, this
submission's pleasure-awled trance. This
mother of every touch, father of every
throb, tribes gathered from & through &
among this singing. Heal what can be,
I pray everywhere. Give me to this. Tonight
I disappear unto a thousand open delights.

Become this singing, lastly & again,
the hiss of every choosing's mystery,
what saves me to my bed another day,
what tickles me into sunlight,
what I dream for all with daisy petal's glow.
This singing for you, accept it, it matters. Respond.

xxiii. Rave

Make something new of the old wood within,
 melody of tinder, break the warped & tired
 of its weight, sort new hungers from old
 afflictions, find muse in singing itself when
 no bright hand near & knowing. Wield new
 fury with a softer heart. Ache alongside all.

Another day, another rain. Press for new songs
 from the grievous familiar. To the dance & sway
 caused by sunshine in pink vessels add a
 greater litter of peeps in the darkness, green
 knowing, sky's teaching muscle. Greater sway,
 greater dance. Rhythm & light. Rousing moon.

Make new toward the trembling, find its music,
 carry it elsewhere, not yet where trees await,
 nor the green shooting through every blood,
 still behold a new fury nearly past man magick,
 burst through throttling dreams, candied moments
 of accelerating heat. Spiralling hooks between us.

Another day, wind, dance & sway. New fury,
 softer heart, leave back study of wound's
 every contour, the facile songs of soothe &
 others. Blossoms of blood relieved in water's
 perpetual massage. Tonight implode tonight
 endure. Outlaw wishes shape a path for the brave.

Make greater music, reckon wider sky,
 play deeper magick. Make from love & thus
 birth many truths. Enough lasting for the
 brashest & kindness of gestures. Palms outward offer
 trust to moon & men & dreams alike. The world
 receives its kisses to a ceaseless memory.

Another day, & now its night, & a scribbling hand
 pursuing song through trance & gleam. Make something
 new of persisting flesh & its throbbing wisdom.
 Find muse in singing itself. Wield new fury with a
 softer heart. What remains, what returns, the why of
 spiralling hooks. Ache alongside all toward a nearing elseway.

xxiv. Manifesto

Sing not to mystery for what it knows
 but where it beckons, path more wind
 than words, words splint til they are
 consumed. Holy emptiness rides through
 the heart, shades chant living bell's rise,
 some hundred green leaves conjure from
 dangling words & greater power still. When you
 follow bring nothing but careening wish.

Sing not to mystery of grey clouds & lament.
 What shines, what you follow, is not root
 in daylight's numbered throbbing nor midnight's
 robust thrashings. Nay. Words surround it in
 corona's tribute, beauty of girl & green scarve
 its passage, the giving way heals, mercy
 in release, in remembering without leash,
 in foretell without cringe.

Sing not to mystery with a hustle to
 preserve or grow or resist. The blunt ways
 of men crumble among the stars. Kings &
 preachers blow with the detritus. Lovers
 find trenches where hearts so high once bleated.
 Artists may join the whirl, the hurry & flow
 from empty roads & contrived baubles, or lurch
 back to inconsequence. Follow or diminish.

Sing not to mystery for the succumb of
 that which lords. Manifestos residual of
 empires forgotten, & music in persistent
 rhythms & hard making beats. Each new
 bursting seed rejoins its every brother.
 What cozies tonight's rain about me, what lasts
 carries even the least along. Follow on until
 the remain of these truths gives way.

xxv. [untitled]

A rupture & gestation, awake, how it glows,
 lures, leads, smoke, steam, a flu, oh my,
 one finger, two, ten, a dozen, rouse, seek,
 hurry, it has come, a song? instruction?
 gas? geometry growling? fragrance of sorrow?
 Petals of fist. A rapid fiercing through the heart.

Call it spirit, a muck of sacred & mud.
 Awake, be conjured, intent of genii within
 molecule, rouse, the deep nears, myriad of
 none, spell? impulse? dangle? I stare
 down at it. What's ridden through the heart
 returns ever again. Living bells sing of the damage.

Two armies of tinder cross on the plain.
 Golden words cried the king learned from
 the preacher eaten of his lord. Fingers
 trail through ruin, thicken with seed,
 a shimmering mass, muck of fable & bone,
 some line trying to win my way. A bleating.

A remain. An acceleration. A greater power stirred
 in dust's rhythm & melody. Nothing breeds
 from mischief & yearn. A speck, a world,
 a hard thrashing felt everywhere dreams
 unease & cajole. Some near the music,
 feed the green. Starlight & drums pounding

confess the night. I look down at it,
 ruin? tinder? golden? Spilling yet still
 afraid, fistfuls of protecting membranes,
 crumbling, swing & blinding for nearer
 still, best truths shed easily, husks,
 happiness, new day cracks open still greater.

A queer remain called history. Diminishment
 to certainty, the release of lasting into
 hum, living bells now call it merriment.
 The residual is comfort. A free sigh among
 the monuments, heat now sated. Breathe.
 Relax. I look down at it. Shit is beautiful.

xxvi. Prelude

Hope again in revving sheets of fury.
New gusts croon tears & plans. Soon
daylight & again ride on. Again.

Hope come in a green field one day. Neither
beginning nor end. Yearn & song surge
higher by quick moving blood. Ride on.

Again the tug. Sometimes hands, sometimes heat.
Sunlight in a rose. Moonlight in an eye.
Ride on. Again heart tremble with sky intimations.

Save a stranger's life tonight. Bend what you can
his way.

xxvii. Bare

Anguish. I sing from everything gone by
toward everything waiting to be. Too dreaming.

Cry for what's gone by. For a younger heart,
a lighter day. Lone girl on a bench with
her book of lingers. New warriors with strange questions.

Cry. Heave out the crushed & the worn.
Let go what cannot replenish. Let it drown
back into earth & air.

One night in a carriage I forgot every melody
but one. It kept beating. It insisted.

Release the songs of cracked matings, the woes
of once-stood & used-to. Anguish. Cry. Heave.
Remaining music will salve familiar despite the
tripping stars above, strange convulsions within.
As queer my stroke, weird my word, tis dreams &
tools of green shape the music, its arc & thrust.

Where dreadful & delight conjoin, the world
is churning wildest. Groves, cities, horizons.

Anguish. Singing to breathing to heart's
steady fist. The brown lands within flame
with slant purpose, croak something like
hope. Too dreaming. When lowest, conjure toward
hard thrums of sunlight, green's madness to
make, pink's bursting rhythms—

Just hold close awhile til the music cracks wide,
& a new plenty reveals.

xxviii. Ardor

More call for songs of light, for a world
 fluttering with better frenzies. For a high beyond
 path, beyond gleam, beyond way. The mornings
 peal with a blank delight. A petaled
 ecstasy. Face turns to dewy face, fancies
 elastic & lingering. Songs of light nearer

this year. Many prophets say so. They say
 let it go, let it be, the music will shatter,
 hearts will remain when bones are no more.
 Let go, let be, shatter, unto the last,
 those promised songs of light, nearing
 like seeds on the wind, a kiss, true &

wet, nearing. Others just say love, only love.
 Urge it by governance & holy malingerings.
 The sky, night's ocean, brilliant smoke
 of hookahs, the rising arc of a moaning
 back. Love in spinning, shaping fires,
 shifting glitter of something desire, urge

to crack songs of light from shells wild
 of make, big with knitting hum, happy
 conjures. There is no world. Every song
 of light will confirm it so. One simply persists
 with the ardor of a wish, the truth of a hint
 remembered in a dream.

More call for songs of light & I believe
 the hands will multiply toward the
 task. Yes by neon & unraveling mesmer.
 Let go, let be, shatter. What will
 open many hearts, behold awful & raw,
 cut without mercy, a raving brute bounty.

To be concluded in *The Cenacle* | 55 | October 2005

Timothy Leary, Gary Snyder,
Alan Watts, & Allen Ginsberg



The Houseboat Summit: February, 1967, Sausalito, California

Taken from The Oracleo. 7

Part THREE: A Magic Geography

BUSH, FARM, CITY

Snyder: There's three categories: wilderness, rural, and urban. Like there's gonna be bush people, farm people, and city people. Bush tribes, farm tribes, and city tribes.

Leary: Beautiful. That makes immediate sense to myself. How about beach people?

Voice from Audience: Let me throw in a word...the word is evil and technology. Somehow they come together, and when there is an increase in technology, and technological facility, there is an increase in what we usually call human evil.

Snyder: I wouldn't agree with that . . . no, there's all kinds of non-evil technologies. Like, neolithic obsidian flaking is technology.

Voice from Audience: But in its advanced state it produces evil . . .

Watts: Yes, but what you mean, I think, is this: When you go back to the great myths about the origin of evil, actually the Hebrew words which say good and evil as the knowledge of good and evil being the result of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge . . .

ANALYTICAL LAG

These words mean advantageous and disadvantageous and they're words connected with technical skills. And the whole idea is this, which you find reflected in the Taoist philosophy, that the moment you start interfering in the course of nature with a mind that is centered and one-pointed, and analyzes everything, and breaks it down into bits . . . The moment you do that you lost contact with your original know-how . . . by means of which you now color your eyes, breathe, and beat your heart.

For thousands of years mankind has lost touch with his original intelligence, and he has been absolutely fascinated by this kind of political, godlike, controlling intelligence . . . where you can go ptt-ptt-ptt-ptt . . . and analyze things all over the place, and he has

forgotten to trust his own organism.

Now the whole thing is that everything is coming to be realized today. Not only through people who take psychedelics, but also through many scientists. They're realizing that this linear kind of intelligence cannot keep up with the course of nature. It can only solve trivial problems when the big problems happen too fast to be thought about in that way.

So, those of us who are in some way or other—through psychedelics, through meditation, through what have you—are getting back to being able to trust our original intelligence . . . are suggesting an entirely new course for the development of civilization.

Snyder: Well, it happens that civilization develops with the emergence of a class structure. A class structure can't survive, or can't put across its principle, and expect people to accept it . . . if they believe in themselves. If they believe, individually, one by one, that they are in some way godlike, or buddha like, or potentially illuminati.

So it's almost ingrained in civilization, and Freud said this, you know "Civilization as a Neurosis," that part of the nature of civilization is that it must *put down* the potential of every individual development.

PRIVATE VISIONS

This is the difference between that kind of society which we call civilized, and that much more ancient kind of society, which is still viable and still survives, and which we call primitive. In which everybody is potentially a chief and which everybody . . . like the Comanche or the Sioux . . . *everybody* in the whole culture . . . was expected to go out and have a vision one time in his life.

In other words, to leave the society to have some transcendental experience, to have a song and a totem come to him which he need tell no one, ever—and then come back and live with this double knowledge in society.

Watts: In other words, through his having had his own isolation, his own loneliness, and his own vision, he knows that the game rules of society are fundamentally an illusion.

Snyder: The society not only permits that, the society is built on it . . .

Watts: Is built on that, right!

Snyder: And everybody has one side of his nature that has been out of it.

Watts: That society is strong and viable which recognizes its own provisionality.

Snyder: And no one who ever came into contact with the Plains Indians didn't think they were men! Every record of American Indians from the cavalry, the pioneers, the missionaries, the Spaniards . . . say that everyone one of these people was men.

In fact, I learned something just the other day. Talking about the Uroc Indians, an early explorer up there commented on their fantastic self-confidence. He said, ". . . Every Indian has this fantastic self-confidence. And they laugh at me," he said, "they laugh at me and they say: Aren't you sorry you're not an Indian? Poor wretched Indians!" (laughs) this fellow said.

ALONE AND AT ONE

Well, that is because every one of them has gone out and had this vision experience . . . has been completely alone with himself, and face to face with himself . . . and has contacted powers outside of what anything the society could give him, and society expects him to contact powers outside of society . . . in those cultures.

Watts: Yes, every healthy culture does. Every healthy culture provides for there being

non-joiners. Sanyassi, hermits, drop-outs too . . . Every healthy society has to tolerate this . . .

Snyder: A society like the Comanche or the Sioux demands that everybody go out there and have this vision, and incorporates and ritualizes it within the culture. Then a society like India, a step more civilized, permits some individuals to have these visions, but doesn't demand it of everyone. And then later it becomes purely eccentric.

Leary: We often wonder why some people are more ready to drop out than others. It may be explained by the theory of reincarnation. The people that don't want to drop out can't conceive of living on this planet outside the prop television studio, are just unlucky enough to have been born into this sort of thing . . . maybe the first or second time. They're still entranced by all of the manmade props. But there's no question that we should consider how more and more people, who are ready to drop out, can drop out.

Watts: If there is value in being a drop-out . . . that is to say, being an outsider . . . You can only appreciate and realize this value, if there are in contrast with you insiders and squares. The two are mutually supportive.

Leary: Yeah, if someone says to me, "I just can't conceive of dropping out . . ." I can say, "Well, you're having fun with this go around . . . fine! We've all done it many times in the past."

Ginsberg: The whole thing is too big because it doesn't say drop out of *what* precisely. What everybody is dealing with is people, it's not dealing with institutions. It's dealing with them but also dealing with people. Working with and including the police.

Snyder: If you're going to talk this way you have to be able to specifically say to somebody in Wichita, Kansas who says, "I'm going to drop out. How do you advise me to stay living around here in this area which I like?"

Leary: Let's be less historical now for awhile and let's be very practical about ways in which people who want to find the tribal way . . . How can they do it . . . what do you tell them?

Snyder: Well, this is what I've been telling kids all over Michigan and Kansas. For example, I tell them first of all: "Do you want to live here, or do you want to go someplace else?"

Leary: Good!

LAND, WATER, AND CLOUDS

Snyder: All right, say I want to stay where I am. I say, okay, get in touch with the Indian culture here. Find out what was here before. Find out what the mythologies were. Find out what the local deities were. You can get all of this out of books.

Go and look at your local archaeological sites. Pay a reverend [sic] visit to the local American Indian tombs, and also the tombs of the early American settlers. Find out what your original ecology was. Is it short grass prairie, or long grass prairie here?

Go out and live on the land for a while. Set up a tent and camp out and watch the land and get a sense of what the climate here is. Because, since you've been living in a house all your life, you probably don't know what the climate is.

Leary: Beautiful.

Snyder: Then decide how you want to make your living here. Do you want to be a farmer, or do you want to be a hunter and food gatherer?

You know, start from the ground up, and you can do it in any part of this country today . . . cities and all . . . For this continent I took it back to the Indians. Find out what the Indians were up to in your own area. Whether it's Utah, or Kansas, or New Jersey.

Leary: That is a stroke of cellular revelation and genius, Gary. That's one of the wisest

things I've heard anyone say in years. Exactly how it should be done.

I do see the need for transitions, though, and you say that there will be city people as well as country people and mountain people . . . I would suggest that for the next year or two or three, which are gonna be nervous, transitional, mutational years—where things are gonna happen very fast, by the way—the transition could be facilitated if every city set up little meditation rooms, little shrine rooms, where the people in transition, dropping out, could meet and meditate together.

It's already happening at the Psychedelic Shop, it's happening in New York. I see no reason though why there shouldn't be ten or fifteen or twenty such places in San Francisco.

Snyder: There already are.

THE ENERGY TO CREATE

Leary: I know, but let's encourage that. I was just in Seattle and I was urging the people there. Hundreds of them crowd into coffee shops, and there is this beautiful energy.

They are liberated people, these kids, but they don't know where to go. They don't need leadership, but they need, I think, a variety of suggestions from people who have thought about this, giving them the options to move in any direction. The different meditation rooms can have different styles. One can be Zen, one can be macrobiotic, one can be bhahte chanting, once can be rock and roll psychedelic, one can be lights.

If we learn anything from our cells, we learn that God delights in variety. The more of these we can encourage, people would meet in these places, and *automatically* tribal groups would develop and new matings would occur, and the city would be seen for many as transitional . . . and they get started. They may save up a little money, and then they head out and find the Indian totem wherever they go.

A MAGIC GEOGRAPHY

Snyder: Well, the Indian totem is right under your ground in the city, is right under your feet. Just like when you become initiated into the Haineph pueblo, which is near Albuquerque, you learn the magic geography of your region; and part of that means going to the center of Albuquerque and being told: There is a spring here at a certain street, and its name is such and such. And that's in a street corner in downtown Albuquerque.

But they have that geography intact, you know. They haven't forgotten it. Long after Albuquerque is gone, somebody'll be coming here, saying there's a spring here and it'll be there, probably.

Leary: Tremont Street in Boston means "three hills."

Ginsberg: There's a stream under Greenwich Village.

Voice from Audience: Gary, what do you think of rejecting the week as a measure of time; as a sort of absurd, civilized measure of time, and replacing it with a month, which is a natural time cycle?

Leary: What is the time cycle?

Snyder: The week, the seven day week. Well, the seven day week is based on the Old Testament theory that the world was created in seven days, you know. So you don't need it, particularly.

Voice from Audience: Right. It seems to me a formal rejection of it and a cycling of social events around the idea of monthly cycle . . .

HOLY DAY!

Watts: I don't agree with that, because . . . everywhere that this week thing has spread, people have adopted it, where they didn't have this time rhythm before. But people have not understood the real meaning of the week, which is that every seventh day is a day to goof off. It's to turn out of the whole thing. The rules are abrogated. "The six days thou shalt labor, and do all that thou has to do. The seventh day thou shalt keep holy." *Holy Day!* and this means holiday. It means instead of a day for laying on rationality and preaching and making everybody feel guilty because they didn't operate properly the other six days.

Leary: You turn on.

Watts: The seventh day is the day . . . Yes, absolutely, to go crazy . . . Because if you can't afford a little corner of craziness in your life, you're like a steel bridge that has no give. You're so rigid you're going to collapse in the first wind.

Leary: There is also some neuro-pharmacological evidence in support of the weekly cycle. That is, you can only have a full-scale LSD session about once a week. And when they said in Genesis—"On the seventh day He rested," it makes very modern sense.

Ginsberg: You can interpret it psychedelically, but that's like new criticism . . . (laughter) You can actually LIKE new criticism . . .

Leary: I want you to be very loving to me for the rest of . . . and the tape will be witness . . . whether Allen is loving or not to me, for the rest of this evening.

Ginsberg: That's all right, I can always use a big brother . . .

Watts: May I point out, this has directly to do with what we've been talking about.

Ginsberg: But I was just getting paranoid of you interpreting the Old Testament as a prophecy of LSD. That's what I was *thinking*.

Leary: My foot has often led to other people's paranoia's at the time.

Watts: One day in seven, one seventh, is the day of the drop out.

Snyder: That's not enough. (laughter)

Watts: Now wait a minute. You're going too fast, Gary.

Voice from Audience: Gary, the first six days of the week you drop out, and the seventh day you work.

Snyder: Baby, we've gotta get away from this distinction between work and play. That's the whole thing, really. Like this one day in seven thing, the reason I don't agree with it is that it implies that making the world was a job.

Watts: Oh, that's perfectly true. I entirely agree with you on that.

A BAD SCENE

Snyder: And any universe that is worth creating isn't any job to create. You dig it. I don't sympathize with his fatigue at all . . . He must have made a bad scene. (chuckles)

Watts: You are talking on a different level than we're discussing at the moment. You are talking from the point of view where from the very deepest vision everything that happens is okay, and everything is play.

Snyder: Well, I wasn't really talking from that vision.

Watts: Well, that's where you really are. Now, I'm going one level below this, and saying . . .

Snyder: What I'm saying is if you do enjoy what you're doing, it's not work.

Watts: That's true. That's my philosophy: that I get paid for playing.

Now, the thing is, though, that just as talking on a little bit lower level . . . now—one day in seven is for goofing off . . . and that's a certain less percentage. So in a culture, if the

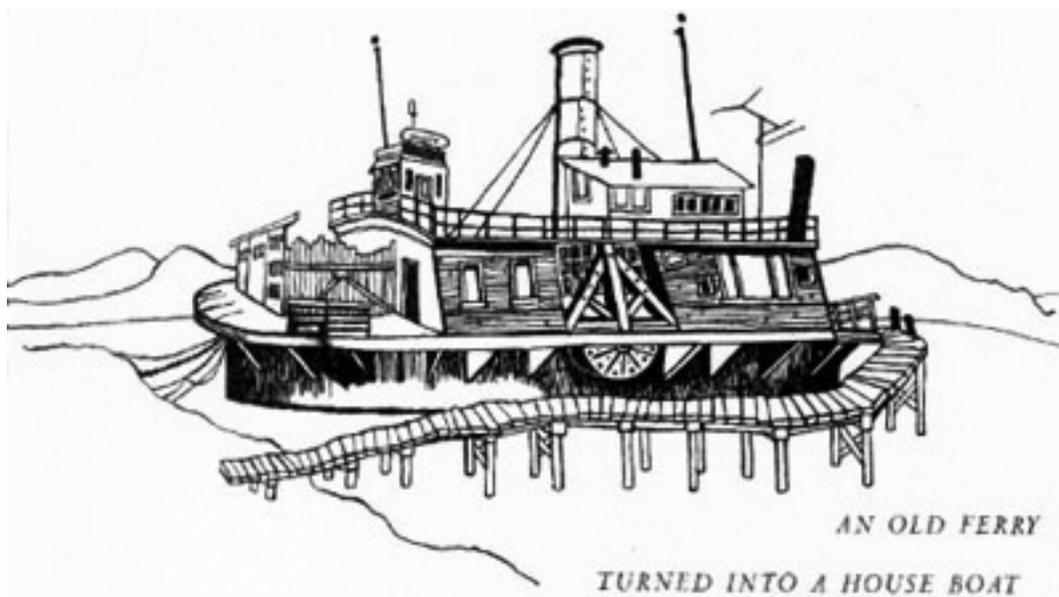
culture is to be healthy, there has to be a substantial but, nevertheless, minority percentage of people who are not involved in the rat race.

And this is the thing that it seems to me is coming out of this. We cannot possible (sic) expect that everybody in the United States of America will drop out. But it is entirely important for the welfare of the United States that a certain number of people, a certain percentage, should drop out. Just as one day in seven should be a holiday.

Voice from Audience: That's the baby that's being born. That's the baby that's being born NOW. The problem that we have to deal with is how to get that baby out easily.

Leary: I think we must be more practical than we have been, because there are hundreds of people who are very interested in what we are talking about in the most A-B-C practical sense like: What do I do tomorrow!

Watts: Right!



<http://www.vallejo.to/>

Notes On Contributors

Antero Alli was born in 1952 in Helsinki, Finland, and since 1972 has “followed a jagged course of writing, directing and producing a plethora of works in the experimental theatre vein.” He currently runs Vertical Pool Productions in Berkeley, California [<http://www.verticalpool.com/vision.html>].

Jim Burke III lives in West Hartford, Connecticut. His letters have been appearing in *The Cenacle* since its beginnings. He is currently working on an elaborate musical project about the end of the world, and beyond.

Emmanuelle Claire-Élise “Fuzz” Galicher lives in Louviers, France & Århus, Denmark, keeping a steady move on so as not to be picked up by the Slacker Police. This issue’s back cover is her first contribution.

Allen Ginsberg was born in Paterson, New Jersey in 1926 and spent his many years high, dancing, singing, fucking, praising, resisting, and talking bout what possibilities raged in every moment and sphere.

Judih Haggai lives at Kibbutz Nir Oz in Israel. Her poetry appears regularly *The Cenacle*. I think of her as an artistic intimate and by this lesson deduce how webs in the world cross their distances in ways subtler than the map’s measure.

Kassandra Kramer lives in Seattle, Washington. She pursues a collaging path of Art, social justice, curiosity, and sweet magic, and beguiles her partner often.

Timothy Leary was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1920. Turning on to psychedelics in the early 1960s changed his mind and led him to seek to help countless others do the same.

Adam “Fu333” Reed lives in Austin, Texas. There he pursues his art with great rhythm & funk. One night years ago he called me and rapped *the* worst rhymes out, and I have never forgiven him. Heh.

Gary Snyder was born in 1930 in San Francisco, California and came to prominence as a member of the Beat writers. His own path led him to Asia and other kinds of wisdom and music, and the gifts from his poetry are solid and many.

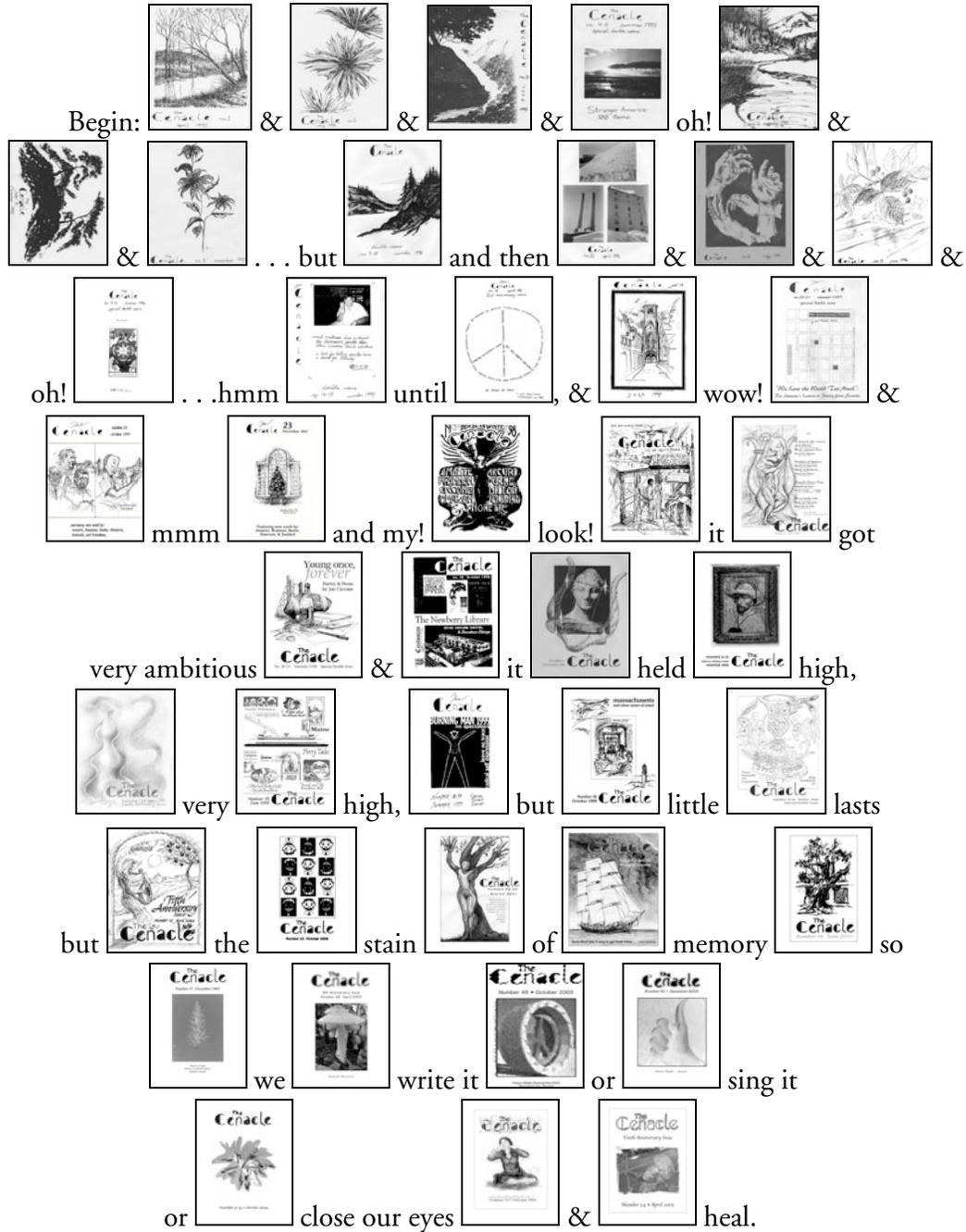
Raymond Soulard, Jr. has been living in Seattle, Washington for a year now. Holy Moses. He spends his time with a pen and a keyboard and a muse and, sometimes, if lucky, in the company of random city squirrels. Heh.

Alan Watts was born in England in 1915 and published many lovely and wise books about Zen and reality, art, psychedelics, living dearer and closer to the light.

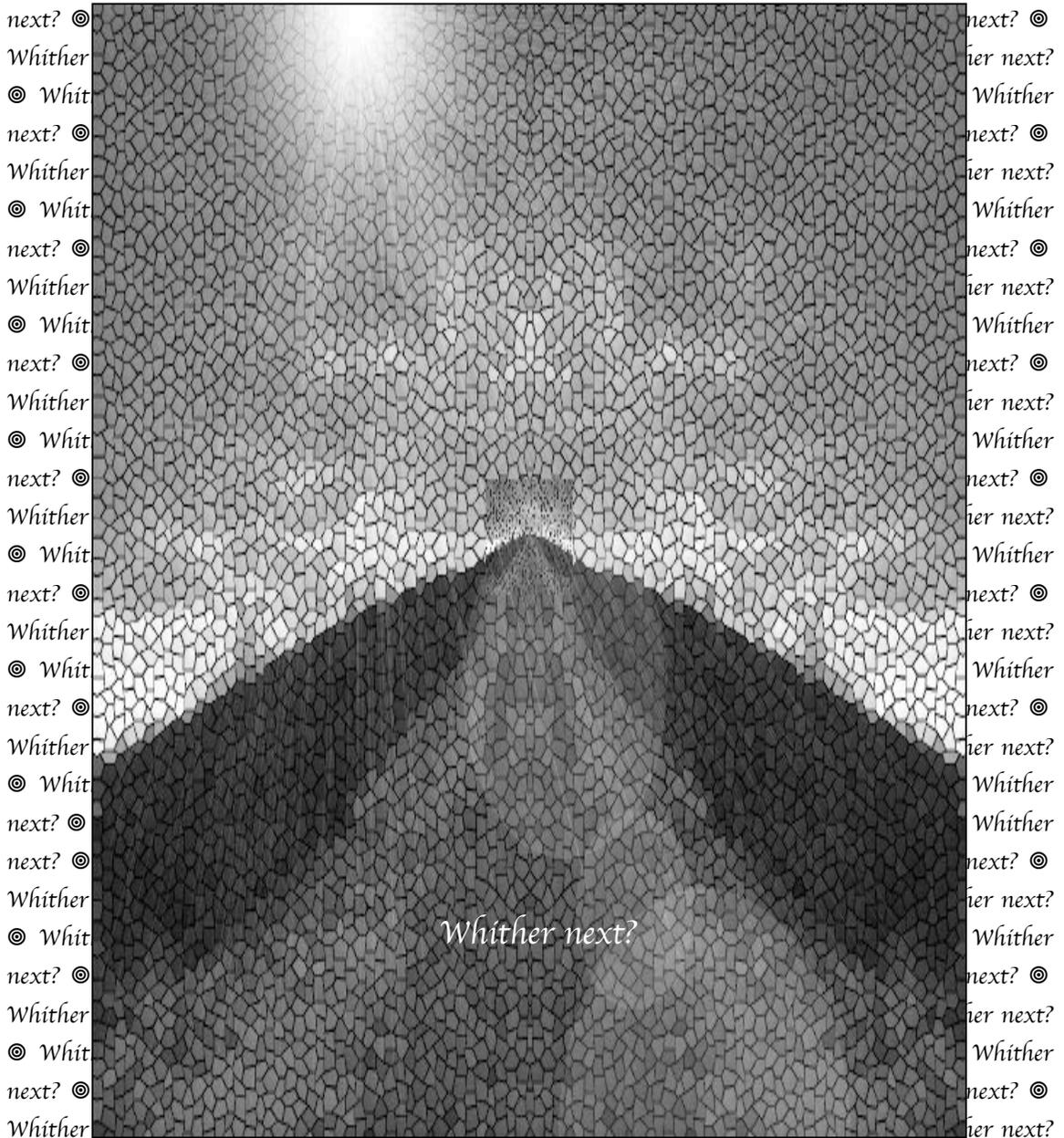
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