

# **EXIT**

We had just returned home (i.e., narrowly speaking, [to Eugene {Skinner} land]). As I was driving to the Post Office to garner our accumulated mail I had (a)mused to myself, as I had often outspokenly to others, "I do not wish to croak in this burg." There is something very demeaning for me to be there, (or here, as I write).

While away on our boating trip, we were struck! by the excessive number of hominid (humanoid) entities engaged in the boating thing; i.e., we observed, or were shocked into observing, conveyances, nominally identified as boats, perhaps observing as well the manipulator of the craft only half of the time, assuming it was a hominid entity at the helm. The most succinct conclusion to be 'reached' after all this contact, "The only way to get rid of all the morons (albeit assholes) is to eradicate the entire species." Charline thought I was not getting much out of our boating adventure. She did agree that the off-season would be a better choice in the future. We had 'reached' this conclusion previously, but had somehow forgotten the impact such hominid activity had made upon us, such that we had previously avowed, "Never Again!"

When I say "Never Again", I am speaking of a surfeit of something, as I do when saying "I do not wish to croak in this burg." When I say demeaning, I am speaking of the stupidity of my own repetitious insistence on cowardice and laziness. I remain here through convenience. If I had any guts and wasn't so lazy (actually going through the action of disposing of 31 years of accumulated junk) I would blow the joint. The question is 'To where?'. That isn't all there is to 'demeaning'. It is demeaning to recall that this is the sum total of my existence, living in and upholding this hominid thing that has been proven so vacuous. The "To where?" found its greatest possibility upon the water in a kind of mobility, and its potential of escaping the hominid thing. One necessarily needs to return to basics so that he severs his dependence on the hominid thing to which he had been persuaded, steered, proselytized, harangued and beaten into accepting, rather fearfully and innocently.

Is there any part of the hominid thing to which one may yield without seeming two-faced; that is, is there anything one can do that puts him in proximity to that which he desires to avoid without having to justify or rationalize his decision to do the one or the other? Probably not, and it requires too many lifetimes of energy to achieve the proper transcendence. If you have title to a piece of property, the hominid thing wants to tax it; if you don't have the means or desire to pay the tax, the property will be forcible removed from your life by the hominid thing. The taxing of the property is always a debatable thing; i.e. the reason, the amount, and the means of assessment. Hominid government, governmental agencies, and BUREAUCRACIES have a vested interest in creating any tax or user fee, and will fight to the death to yield any of it; as a consequence, if one intends to battle to free himself from other hominid entities controlling or

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dictating his life, he had better be prepared to die; OR get rid of his taxable entities. Some part of the tax may serve noble purposes, but the furtherance and perpetuation of government and its agencies and BUREAUCRACIES, the primary purpose, should not be amongst them.

In planning my exit, my desire is to find a place where I may for some brief time stew in my own fat with a vista uncluttered by that which smacks of the hominid thing. I do not wish to be held accountable for any assignations that the hominid thing has placed upon me without my consent. Many things to which I have acceded in the past have achieved some status in my life only through shame, intimidation, fear, ignorance, and sundry other hominid weapons and shortcomings. In case you haven't already observed, or from these writings of mine, deduced, the hominid thing is really quite brutal to its look-alikes, despite all its protestations of Christian kindness, brotherly love, and Golden Ruling. We know from our exposure to the rant of the MEDIA that hominidity comes salaciously festooned with bloody chitterlings. Some would argue these as a distortion of the truth. Lets just say that something isn't following the script.

The use of the term 'demeaning' has deeper significance. I had always held high hopes from the very beginning. My inculcators doused me with exemplary hominidity from Homer and Odysseus, Jesus Christ and Sigmund Freud, to Abraham Lincoln and Samuel Clemens. But it has eventuated that these isolated figures prove more an anomaly than the case. The hominid thing amounts to a whole lot less, and because of its claims, has escaped even the dignity of the Dinosaurs which (according to the available records [given our interpretation of them]) had made no such claims. That deeper significance harbors my own laziness and lack of motivation to overcome the inherent trashiness of the species. Small comforts for a Dinosaur who had moved over to allow our passage.

I wish to make a distinction between 'Exemplary' and what is known as 'Celebrity'. The Celebrity often enough will hang itself, given enough time, by becoming involved in suicide, drugs, sex scandals, gambling, murder, selling itself to the highest bidder, etc., that we need not bother assigning them any greater significance than they deserve. A great deal of the MEDIA preoccupation seems to become involved in removing the exemplary status from the celebrity. We know very little of Homer, so he remains safely ensconced somewhere in Archaisms, but we may judge him, if we are so inclined, by the exploits of his protagonist of the Odyssey. (It is to be understood that there is a great difference between Kirk Douglas and Odysseus; that is to say, portrayals by celebrities do not count). Odysseus did what he had to do, all moralizing aside. Jesus Christ and Sigmund Freud, both do-gooders in their own right, get mixed reviews as exemplary figures, but certainly in a class by themselves. Abraham Lincoln, although a public figure, comes across as a serious do-gooder, and Mark Twain became, in his own right, both a celebrity and an exemplary figure, suffering various taints in the latter category. All the exemplary figures

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suffer upbraiding of one kind or another, and often we search assiduously to discover some blemish in either their career or their underwear in order to hominidize them, thus remove from ourselves the need to emulate, or learn lessons from, such impossibly illustrious figures.

What relevance has any of this to my exit?

I am able to answer the question obliquely by guessing my weariness comes from old age rather than the suffering attritions of motivation directly related to hominid interaction. The hominid condition is something about which one learns through living rather than in the classroom. The classroom lives in denial, being more interested in projecting some sort of idealized interminglings of so dubious a species. The teacher is privilegedly able to cling to things that the balance of hominidity must forego, not as matter of practicality, but more expeditiously abandon, as a survival technique in a dog-eat-dog (hominid-eat-hominid) world.

The weariness acts as the stimulus to leave, to discover that place where one may die in peace rather than be obliged to war until the last breath. AYE!, the untrampled landscape devoid of wild beasts; albeit those who live griffin-like in the hominid carapace (carcass). Its all a matter of energy. My mother goes on until 93, as though the next step were 100, finding excuses to go on, drawing breaths, "The Irish never quit!". Wherefrom her energy? I am a quitter; or at least I am planning my exit, my entrance having failed, my existence finding implausible excuses for having taken shape at all. Surely I have lived in the griffin as someone else's nightmare, imagining that it was my own.

Not unlike the dinosaurs, even the Irish must quit.

Its this 'coming back', after a time away. Even the few days we were able to sequester away from the helmless crafts all about us, had produced its own charms, sufficient to allow this 're-entry' to loom as some kind of nightmare from which one must awaken. And Alas! to an even more monstrous reality: the familiar; that one had sought earnestly to escape forever. There must be an end to this. The more one endures it the more notion seems validated.

In planning my exit, I recognize an ambivalence in my ethic, or self-conscious construction. But that in itself is not new for me. While I might imagine myself seeking some place whereinat I might test my thesis; that is, "Am I able to survive alone?" as projected in "The Prophet as Stalking Horse". "Do I want to be alone?" Is the Hemlock the fitting end for my kind?

Athens has presumed upon my life from the very beginning. While granting me freedoms of a certain sort, declared, more or less, explicitly, it has always been more concerned with its implicit urgings, and has schemed circumventions of the original spake. In the last analysis, these

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two interventions in my life, the granting, and the taking away, have existed in a time frame of expedients; that is to say if I had been inserted into the continuum earlier, or later, the onus, or emphasis, might have taken on some more urgent or some more diminished aspect (my subservience [I pledge allegiance ...] to an enforceable idea).

It is clear that one individual can hardly affect what it is that Athens does. But the noise of dissent finds its own mufflers.

Perhaps none of us are able to escape the inherent ambivalence of our own natures, which are reflected in our governments.

If no one had ever mentioned such a condition as GOODNESS, would we then perceive altruism as the natural case? What would set the limits on altruism; individual bias?

I set the limits through my cynical outlook, believing little in the purpose of interaction.

One can never rid himself of the effects and implications of the observation of dogs sniffing each other. As a life form, humanity shows little difference or separation from this perception of "checking it out". Dogs validate something unknown to us in their sniffing of each other. Often they attempt to dominate one another; i.e., effect submission from the other. Where does humanity differ?

In the basics it does not.

I'm wandering too far a-field in this, being drawn into self-imposed arguments that have never yielded fruit. The WORD suffers with its limitations as well as the individual who wields it.

Soon it will be over. Those who dominate, or insinuate themselves, or otherwise presume upon us, will pass the same portal as we, eclipsed into oblivion. What remains assumes the character of a still-life at best, reanimated through the imagination of others. Though photographs abound and biographical details are recorded, we exist as stone once we have taken leave. The penitent whore may wish us on our way, but as HE, never to walk this earth again.

That a penitent one would mourn my passing enough to bear me into the beyond, unanchored from this place, to occupy a place I had never been, a place we have invented in our lust for eternal occupancy - Hmmmnn!

Is it only the soul for which we bargain? A soul without a corpus, without physical delights? AND without a brain, a mind? Can one imagine the one without the other? I cannot.

So, I fall back to earth into my cynicism, sneering at all the strife, mocking all the passers by. What little I offer in my interactions may be perceived as self-serving; that is, if I expect anything from my fellow, I had better put out. Is there a GOOD feeling comes from 'giving' of oneself to the other? Perhaps, but is that feeling one that comes from the lesson

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(imitation), or from the heart? Does one examine too closely his motivations? Or is it some vain pursuit of the truth that juxtaposes question and answer in a special context, unarguably?

I do not deny the grandiose presumptions. If the task were given over to me, not unlike Sancho Panza, would I not yearn to be relieved of command, or of the burden? Would I or could I dedicate myself to the alleviation of the crying need, if everyday all I heard was the lamentation? Do we not all wail at the crossroads? Perhaps only the schizophrenic, the mad lunatic, perhaps the Don himself, and the grandiose exemplary one, escape that harsh reality; and perhaps we judge them too harshly.

Many of us disguise our true proclivities, masking them in beneficence, and cloaking them in some white raiment, knowing ourselves to not 'measure up'. Our perfunctory giving serves as a bargaining chip in a scheme of things of which we are uncertain, yet, as chronic doubters, we yield that which can be yielded, to satisfy that which prevails elsewhere, the where of the unknown, which may hold us accountable, which may judge us, which may consign us for eternity to some dire circumstance devoid of love and human compassion.

Loveless, anyway. Our scheming walls us in. Pathetically? There are those of you who are not like me, that is, those who give of heart, because the heart is big, possessed of that special human capacity, acquired from who knows where, perhaps from a surfeit of love, spilling over, impossible to contain. Exemplary? Or could I be mistaken? I know there are those of you who seek no obligation, and would feel uncomfortable if so perceived. There are those who do not want the reciprocity because it compromises their own ledger which they desire to remain favorably out of balance on their side, themselves avoiding the implications of obligation. Is someone looking on, keeping track?

Of course I examine closely, seeking truth. And if, in the last analysis, the truth becomes known to me, will that be the end of it? Does anything matter beyond the truth; i.e., if thee or me assume the dimensions of a scoundrel, of a zealot, or a saint, or something in between, does it really matter? Will there not always exist someone who will confound the truth?

Perhaps it will be safe to say that we do not know, and that we will never know. If we construe this lack of knowing as some sort of excuse, or whitewash, then we had better be prepared for the hoards to overwhelm us.

There is ample room for arbitrariness in the persuasions of the Golden Rule. One makes exceptions, conditions, rationalizations, excuses to avoid the implications of 'fair play'. Fair play seems to preclude advantage; we all want to be winners. If we do not wish to be tyrannized by the advantaged, then we violate the Golden Rule. Its not a matter of Equal Opportunity. This latter is perceived as lip service, and temporizing. Is this the fairest we can be? We must recognize the advantages of the other, and assume our proper place in an hierarchy of advantages or disadvantages,

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notwithstanding the Golden Rule which would turn us all into Socialists without advantage. You know what they say about the lack of incentives in a socialistic world. Although fair in principle, dull in practice. That we would all be treated Equally denies the presumption of excellence, the benefits of competition etc.

There exists an odd comparison in all of this. Earlier (of Athens) I mentioned the explicit grant of rights, while simultaneously enforcing the implicit temporal condition. The Love It or Leave It mentality expresses this notion clearly enough. Mixed objectives? Compromised? In a socialistic world there would not be an explicit grant of rights; there would be what is implicit to the Golden Rule wherein advantage, for example, was not so much as denied as it was precluded as the operative in the social contract. The advantaged (no differently than the other) would be required to SERVE the greater end than the self. Some question this modus operandi as devoid of incentive. So be it.

Some become advantaged in their ethics (unethical, perhaps behavior). They may not be any cleverer than the next; they may lack only scruples. Do we require standards for ethics? Is there an optimal ethic which we must apply to each and every one? Dreamer! Socratic ruminations; just remember wot happen to the ole sophist. Banishment OR! All prophets are doomed to a satin finish. Lusterless. Some get nailed, some hung, some burned; some permitted a glorious EXIT.

Perhaps ENVY is the key. Envy argues for socialistic resolution. Perhaps envy would not exist if we did not put such store in comparatives (or is it superlatives?). I can't see what he sees in her. We can't all possess the ultimate fleshpot, i.e. the most attractive of the lot. Many eyes beholding will confirm that some are more alluring; a sort of vague conundrum (Pandora's Box). All that glitters is not what you think it to be. (Relevance, Sir?). Assuming one is more beautiful than all the rest; a sacrificial virgin? So it has been said. OR, do the spoils go to the victor? How the hell did that get in here? Excuse please ... Beautiful Spoils! Love has no place in any of this. The Moose with the biggest horn and the male with the biggest Beltbuckle WINS. Naw!

Can one really be serious in this discussion?

What has any of this to do with my exit? Its all an excuse to write. If we all had it to do by hand would we do it? In the hypothetical future (wherein what ever is left is sufficient for this enactment) the hand will be required for little, the larynx will chortle along with its actuating spake, clarity of vision still remaindered to the encephalon which is forever snarled in befuddlement. I do not believe the future will go down in a blaze of glory. PROGRESS, that consumerist religion, will have pumped the well dry; even shame will provide insufficient energy to bury the relics of the failed promise. Someone might still exist to ask the question, "Where did it all go wrong?" A different kind of mourning; but a fuller realization that the

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whole gambit was a waste; i.e. the whole evolutionary erection fell rather precipitously; Adam was the foretelling of the eventual banishment. "Do not forsake me oh my darling." There is no one who is forsaking in the cold universe. We might feel better if there was a forsaker. But none exists. Drat!

EX EUNT: to continue:

I know most of what I say may be characterized as an oversimplification. But believe me I attempt to make it as complicated as possible. Perhaps most of this spake might be characterized as tawdry cynicism, or sour raisins. Really, the whole prospect of Life might be characterized as a White Elephant. One might find himself wandering from one platitude to the next, beginning with, "One man's meat is another man's poison." "Paint the Elephant another color."

We were 'given' this 'thing' called Life, what I characterize as a 'cursory palpitation'. How say, as a gambit? Just to do what we could do with it? Or to see how much strife we might create? Or how greatly we might presume upon others? Or to exude the lactate of human kindness? To wander in the darkness, to be sure.

Question: Why not abandon the prospect?

Answer: Right Question.

Purportedly planning my exit, I ought abandon that which cloy the palate; not sweetness, but sourness.

One finds himself seeking a non-transcendental existence amongst the surfeit. Damn!, its not possible. Hence, Transcendent we become.

When we copulate we are purported to produce a tertium quid, a thing different than ourselves, i.e. Hope (Grope). There, but for the Grace of Failure, go we.

Planning the Exit has not been a sudden thing with me. It has been going on for some time. I am confronted directly with the prospect each time I conduct an inventory of my underwear, both literal and figurative, these two being somewhat transposable terms. The transposable part, beginning with a literal connotation, reveals a perplexed individual attempting to make a crucial decision about the requirements necessary to fulfill a prospective term of existence. Regarding the threadbareness of the under containment, one amuses himself with projections into a dubious future. In case of accidents, once again, of differing kinds, one feels compelled to be prepared, in the boy scout fashion. To be caught out in threadbare and dingy under garments may be thought a humiliating prospect, at least whilst one is living. If perchance an accident resulted in one's demise, sparkling white underthings might leave a good impression, however insufficient to stay the onslaught of what else a figurative biographer might discover therein.

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One plans to leave a good impression, but don't underestimate the innuendo. It is universally believed that "nobody's perfect", hence the power of the innuendo. A good innuendoer will not give up until he finds someone, anyone, even a nefarious corroborator, who will attest to the imperfection in others. Since matters regarding what happens in the under-world generate the most return (capital) on time invested, our proclivities being what they are, somewhat smutty, there is a degree of assured success in delving into what lies beneath. Geeeeezzzzz!!!! Louise. You can't compete with J.C., notwithstanding Kazantzakis' Last Temptation. The Fruit Of The Loom.

One wonders if obscuring the truth is not the more appropriate, and more in character with the level of our consciousness and our questionably conscionable actions. If one casts doubt upon our sacrosanctity, our unbelievableableness, then we are more or less off the hook as an exemplary figure. Nobody is going to depict us erupting into boils, or being lured down the garden path by repentant fleshpot. We will be cheated of supplications rendered by 20th Century school children, making their dutiful morning oblations to one very exploited exemplary figure. Such loss of grandiosity. Iniquity, Impunity and Immunity.

I had thought I would extend to you the benefit of my wisdom before Alzheimer's or dementia had set in. You may not appraise what I have to offer as wisdom. That is the only WORD I am able to discover what will embody a particular kind of knowledge, such as stored in the gray matter. I have borrowed the WORD from all that has passed before from which I am unable to differentiate the spake. In any case many utterances that have been passed, shrouded in such a guise, have not solved very many of our problems. Our platitudes and homilies have served as well.

When I was a young whippersnapper, as they say, I felt I could lay no claim to wisdom, simply because I felt I had not the experience or book learning to so say. Also I had little command of the language. At least what ever command of it I possessed, I had little confidence in its ability to express what was going on inside.

I have read a fair amount. Reading, and thinking about what one has read, does help to overcome some of the lacks one suspects within himself, and does treat of the aphasia inherent to ignorance.

After living now for almost 62 years, and feeling there is almost no time left to gain the ultimate experience, I must go with what I have, in expropriating and conducting this wisdom business.

Spreading wisdom, per se, is a grandiose undertaking no matter who gets the job. Some people come by the grandiosity naturally. I am one of the latter. Even though I realize that wisdom, per se, is largely ignored by the species, and the time spent rendering it could be used potentially to one's better enjoyment, I find myself unable to resist the temptation; or calling, if you will.



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I cannot set the wisdom thing into a convenient one thru ten spake upon some stone tablet as did Moses. Whatever wisdom I possess requires a filter of some sort. As I babble, the reader or listener must use his noggin and his patience in order to extract the message.

Many people have an aversion to wisdom; this is a fact to which I am able to attest from my own personal experience. For most of my waking hours I have made a point of summarizing things as I have found them, sometimes venturing (voicing) my assessment thereof, for which I have often been recognized as a 'wise guy!'. Although often a misrepresentation of the true opinion of he that uttered such a complimentary epithet, and often uttered in jest, it is oft' opined more is said in jest than in truth. Often the term 'wise guy' was accompanied by a glaring look of disapprobation, sometimes with clenched fists. So, to me, this wisdom business has betimes proven a precarious occupation.

But still, the insuppressible nature of things warrant the taking of huge risks. However, usually I assess the audience, the caliber of the sheep, sometimes swine, upon whom will be heaped these lustrous pearls. The other recipients of these insuppressibilities, those cognizant hominid beings, have been seen to wander away, finding sayings and opinions not much to festoon the day.

If I had been less discriminate in my choice of audience, I might be even wiser, for it is oft' opined that suffering makes a man wiser; a clout or two along side the head might have tempered the spake.

Since I am of the nautical bent, an apt nursery rhyme comes to mind:  
Three wise men of Gotham went to sea in a bowl,  
If the bowl had been stronger, my tale had been longer.

Being of the aforementioned bent, it may be said, oft'times, 'he is all wet', without dulling the luster of the truth.

A marketable commodity?

Wise American say:

Don't count your chickens before the gate is closed.

After the horse escapes, the chickens will hatch.

Don't count your chickens until the horse escapes. Close the gate after your chickens hatch.

Don't count your horses until the chickens have hatched.

Close the gate after the chickens have flown the coup.

Hatch your chickens before you count your horses.

Close your hatch.

Count yourself lucky if your horses hatch and your chickens close the gate.

Don't hatch your gate before you have counted your chickens.

Hatch your horses before you close your chickens.

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Close the Gate after the cart leaves the horse.  
Put the chicken before the horse.  
Stick the gate in the cart.  
Horse after the chicken.  
Gate before the cart.  
Count your gates before the horse.  
Count the carts before the gates.  
Horse chicken gate cart hatch close leave count before and after Don't  
put the horse before the cart.  
Don't hatch your chickens before you count them.  
Don't close the gate before the horse escapes.  
Don't.  
Don't! Don't! Don't!

Wise American signs off. (Ex Eunt].

'Wise Guy' has spoken.

Beyond that, I might offer suggestions.

In 'Knotted Twine' I have said many things and hinted at many others. I suppose I should make the additional effort with The construction of the Log House. Its not so much the making of the log house as it is what the making of a log house makes of you, in as much as journeying about in a boat makes something of one as well. There is a whole lot less rhapsody in building a log house; more of Sturm and Drang, accompanied by a whole lexicon of unconventional epithets, than the perusals of a lazy boating adventure. While perhaps the boating adventure entailed various degrees of courage not required in building the log house, a kind of persistency was indeed required of the latter, that seemed unnecessary with the former.

Wise man say when you climb the latter be ever watchful of the former. When you descend from the former use the latter. Wise guy speaks. Wise guy spawns chuckles.

There is something commonly inherent (hidden) (but revealed to the wise) to both boating and log house building that tarnishes both. I speak of something that intrudes upon every sphere of our lives. If you own a boat, you must pay a personal property tax, you must pay a license fee, a user fee for using the water, a customs clearing user fee, an excise public property user tax, a radio and radar license user fee, otherwise known as pittance taxes (tithes) and fees created by a bureaucracy operating with a bunch of hominid thugs employed to live off the fat of the boat as highly paid vested interests, better known as white collar welfare recipients. The methods used in collecting these revenues is extortionistic. The enabling laws that enshrine this practice are enforced by abrupt seizures at the blunt snout of the .357 magnum; modeled after the IRS. The PEOPLE are entitled to a share of your HIDE (the HIDdEn part). With the log house

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thing, one discovers an oversimplification of bureaucratic extortion, the huge chunk removed from your wherewithal as a SHARE in your labor that belongs to everybody else in the form of a property tax, which if you are unable to fork it over, you are thus kicked off your logs and your log dream is auctioned off to the next guy who has the wherewithal to afford your labor. So beware the dream. Keep your fucking ass harnessed to the grist mill, and forget the good life which is the inherent right of your self-serving overseer ONLY. One supposes the bureaucratic mentality gets the occasional free ride along with the overseer.

Anyway, you can appreciate why the overseers and the bureaucrats live in deathly apprehension of the revolt of the masses, so fearful are they of having their fucking assess harnessed to the grist mill, devoid of dreams. There but by the grace of a fucking bureaucrat go I. Is that a question?

The harness is created to restrain your fucking ass in the event it felt the urge to revolt. When you are led to stable each night for your quartering and your nightly grog you are obliged to watch Monday night Horse races along with blatantly seductive images of THINGS to which the rich and famous aspire. What the hell relevance these things have to a harnessed ass is beyond me. One supposes the notion is to get your ass hocked as well as harnessed to make damned sure you will never be able unilaterally leave the traces. Free choice is one of those succoring lip services to which even the merest is granted a blown kiss, without ever removing the bit.

To return to Wisdom, that which I pretend to impart before I depart, in part. The whole hierarchy invested in the control of the hominid presence by other hominids, beginning with Moses and ending with Three Strikes and Your Out, constitute the more obvious ramifications of this hierarchy. The less obvious are the many forms of slavery required to maintain the privileged amongst the hierarchy with whom the more obvious are in league. The Big League in the Big Picture. Slavery has been created as a Subjugation for the sole purpose of Exertion to relieve the privileged, recognized in some circles as cybernetic instrumentality. Be grateful for life, mere myrmidon. Be ennobled, for upon your fulcrum, the whole edifice is held in sway.

The poetry of slavery and the poetry of hunger are in order.  
Hold your heads on High  
Fear not, and do not Cry

The day hast come when the heart takes leave of its confinements to wander impulsively beyond, into forbidden regions . Yes! it began with a smile, not so much a beckoning, as an awakening. Whyfor has thou tarried so long? Already many implausible unrequited hours have past. In these walls her handmaiden dreamed, whilst eternity presumed upon the scene with its formidable countenance. This stirring promises nothing

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more, perhaps only a heart driven for cover, fearful to throb again. One does not anticipate the wounds, little suspecting the archer will appear unerringly, as the wanton heart abandons all discipline and care. Selfish heart are thee, deserved of the wound that ye wantonly inflict. Fee Fie Foe Fum, Ho Hum.

Now the day is past, one may rest at last. A Captive to Torment, the heart hast retreated into its hidden labyrinth.

Scour and ply the world as one might, little appears to relieve its plight.

Awakened, Refused, Mismatched, Rebuked. He lay upon the sepulcher, as though thrust upon the rack, the repository twisted in an agonized heap of reddened lifelessness. Not one more unrequited throb remaining. Is it so, this must pass unavenged? Fee Fie Foe Fum, Ho Hum.

Anyway!

I sit here before the alphabet as I have many times already. The familiarity of it all leads me to discouragement, for a feeling of failure pervades this ambience; failure to say and convey.

I try to imagine what more I could say beyond the many already extant repetitions. What more could I say in the way of emphasis?

What more by way of clarity? Certainly nothing new. What would I hope to accomplish, in any case?

The stage, as always, belongs to others. It is their utterances that claim the day. To these I react. I resent their presence. They become trendsetters, or void fillers. Nearly everyone I meet is stewing in this ferment. They seem little acquainted with themselves; they seem little able to form independent thoughts; instead, they mirror the hour.

I might claim I am interested in the Truth only. Such a presumptuous claim; but not filled with haughtiness. Would I be satisfied just to feel certain I knew of the Truth; to just leave it lie like a sleeping dog; or would I feel the compulsion to spout away? Knowing what I do, would that seem a betrayal; for who else is interested; and are there not many who would attempt to annihilate the Truth?

Is silence then the better part of wisdom? Am I able to abide this assessment? Is this not a cop-out?

I have spoken of transience; others have spoken of transience. There are those who would have it that Shakespeare would seem a functional illiterate, using his tongue amidst our modern day babble. However one might use his tongue, if it does not aim for the Truth, but if it is flapped to deceive, transience may be said to weigh heavily thereupon. There is Truth in lies; the deceiver is known by his utterances. So desperate are some, perhaps no more nor less desperate than I, but they, desperate to say it all, will leap to conclusions, will reach 'far and wide' in order to construct meaningless correlations, will seek out transient expert babble for corroboration of some haphazardly founded notion. This Way; This Way!

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There appears to be no final solution. Doubtlessly there will be an end to it all. The end will occur beyond me. I, therefore, will be deprived of a full knowledge. I cannot even presume to conjecture.

I am mindful of Mr. Truman who would not leave in the face of what was virtual certainty in the knowledge of the eventual eruption of Mt. St. Helens. (Imagine the by-line, months later, in the sensationalizing National Catastrophic, "Mountain With A Death Wish.") That one should be ennobled to choose such an alternative. We go with you, Mr. Truman. We ought all stand for the planet; we ought all seek our final home away from all mirroring transience, only to discover our true identity, however meager and humble; naked before that over which we have lorded ourselves with our imaginary divine admonitions. The LORD sucks; and that which he has created in his own image SUCKS.

Beyond that:

YOU KNOW ! ? . I have fancied myself a writer. O.K., so I've written.

A certain amount of exhibitionism and grandiosity is inherent to this activity.

Why should what I think or say presume upon the rest?

Not just because there are others who are doing the same, and perhaps influencing the rest. A clash of opinions or egos?

In the last analysis, whether or not one is influenced, does it really matter? Is what matters, being left alone?

Can we not make that the purpose of our spake; "Leave me alone!"?

Do we really have to tell that story, or write that poem; and if the compulsion is there, why the urge to broadcast? Is it because it has been done before? I mean, is it because the TEXT has made such a big issue (fuss) of the literate aspect of our lives; as have others all our other methods (of hominid [self] expression), appearing also in the TEXT? Are we so moved; or, what moves us? Are we impressed?

Whether its so-seeming relevance is momentousness; or so-seeming momentousness is relevant, as though the very thread of life depended on the clamor; is there not a delay, in any case, unless one access the vital organs of dissemination (or dissimulation)? Even the President has to call a press conference. And the Almighty is as 'slow as molasses'.

Even though the pulp presses stand at the ready, having all the TEXT organized, in code (ASCII), in the RAM, just needing the names and dates of who did what to whom, and how much they are worth, and how much its costing them to assure their celebrity status, what they secrete in their underwear, it still knells the bell to crank out and distribute.

Even though we would have complete control over the organs of dissemination, who the fucks gonna listen? Must we rely upon the absolute boredom of the listener, who is weary of listening to the sighing of the wind in the bower, or the heart-throbbing laments of the winged ones,

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the CRASHING!! of the sea upon the rocky shore, or the marvelous persuasive protestant (Protestant marvelousness of the) cacophony of hominid activity? Filler for the boring hours between feedings and sleepings, and Media Gleanings, until death do us provide relief?

Am I convinced there is little purpose to this activity? Am I just being lazy? Do I do this thing, this, for a lack of a better word, 'creative', thing, only because I got on the track. Is one not free to get off the track, especially when everything argues against remaining there?

Is it not more fun to just talk about it, and get drunk while doing so? If one could afford some higher high; well, you know. Drawback: necessarily one must get drunk everyday. Choice: either one gets drunk on himself, like Narcissus, like I'm doing right now, or he finds some pleasant company, along with the flagon, and, you know, whiles away.

I hardly chose the track, of my own volition. Does this mean I am about to blame someone else for my predicament? Is it someone else's fault that I would submit to this exercise in self defense? And what is there to defend in one paltry existence? Do we not get it all wrong in any case? I mean who really learns anything from the lesson, assuming there is a lesson, and something to be learned? Do we not all go our way anyhow? Dichotomously, is there anything cheaper than life, and more precious than life, simultaneously?

Would my incentive be any more lubricated if I happened to become a well-rewarded guru?

Sometimes I believe I am very perceptive, very clever, very apropos, and very amusing, in more words, 'very'; and on a good day, very much able to hold your attention and move you; at other times, I even bore the ever livin' out of myself. Now, if I bore the ever livin' out of myself, what can I expect of you? And conversely, if I move myself, should I expect also to move you? Is that what I wish to do, move you? And If I do move you, should I expect also, congratulations, and a, you know, monetary reward, so I can buy a yacht, and become a legend, if not a legendary asshole? My wife is always chiding me not to apologize. You know.?.?.

The things that have happened to me, the things I have done, that is, when I am not avoiding all this involvement, but when I am in other ways living between sunrise to sunrise; what possible relevance? Should I attempt to entertain you, or hope to entertain you, as I have entertained myself? Is this not just entertainment of which we speak? And have I not sort of stumbled upon this waywardness? Getting on the track that only seemed to be going somewhere? If it goes in a straight line, it either goes over the edge, or disappears into infinity; or as the Copernicans (Copper Cans) would have it, comes around to the place of its beginning. If the track is laid to preclude the infinity stuff, or going over the edge, or so straight that, when it returns, it touches upon itself, whereof does it lead us; into the nether regions? At least if we return to the beginning we might

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realize the ultimate futility of the journey, that we might have remained at home; or is it so wonderfully reassuring to have returned, to have discovered that all those things that were found at home could only be marginally altered elsewhere, and those moments elsewhere so dependent upon one's frame of mind, one's state of soul; you know. Fanciful stuff.

We might sit by the track wondering. Does one not have to lead his life, in any case? Is not the requirement to put in your time, whether stationary, or in full flight? Is that not how we finally discover the real truth? The quandary; if we have remained stationary, how will we know the other; and vice versa? We have already decided it does not matter, only to the self, as a doubt, or a pang.

Now suppose you get to read all this stuff; i.e., this stuff gets published, and the publisher gets his money back on the first X number volumes necessary to recoup his investment, THEN, above that, into the ether of free-sailing I get to earn some (sum) enough to buy the yacht (I don't really know how to spell yacht; its strictly a visual thing; recognition of rightness; yahct, yacth, yathc, yahtc, yatch; see what I mean). THEN I get to sojourn to the shapely isles, you know, like Herman's stuff, obtaining all the readily available shapes at all hours of the day and the night. Wouldn't you want to have this happen to little ole me, rather than some General Motors executive, or Bill Gates? I'm one of you, whereas these other guys are not. Would it not appear as a, you know, travesty or tragedy, for those guys to get it all, to have all the privileges; all because they are into automobiles and software? Do you suppose they could write anything like this, ask these questions, juxtapose these thoughts, stimulate you any more than I? The thrill of owning and riding in a new Cadillac, or the thrill of titillation as you, you know, Diddled your computer with Internetted Windows; let me tell yuh, it doesn't last. Besides I would cost one helluva lot less? Suppose the going rate for my stuff was Twenty Bucks a tome, and suppose I wrote Five tomes, that's a hunert Bucks. These hunert would be amortized over a lifetime, and being what they were, you know, special, enduring, that would cost you, lets say you live to the continental average age of 70, that would cost you, assuming you latched onto it when you were twenty, instead of the hunert dollar Gutenberg, it would cost you only .005 cents a day. Comparing that to a Cadillyac, at the going rate of 300 hunert bucks, it't'd cost you 61 cents a day (for fifty years) just to get the thing into your front yard. And with the software, which will be outdated before you get it home, a total waste, even if you slept with it. My stuff would last you a lifetime, no deterioration, never outmoded. You could carry it with you wherever you would go, to heaven or hell; paradise, utopia, the ends of the earth. You wouldn't need petrol, or the black box; just you and me; something animate; and something with a helluva lot more humor than Gutenberg, an automobile or software. And you could be buried with it. Try getting buried with your Cadillyac; the plot 'd cost yuh, you know. And as far as the other contraption that you'd need to run your

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outmoded software (Oh, I guess you could always take the absolutely useless software (which version [Gideon, Kink James, American Revised?]) to your sepulcher. No, absolutely no, distinction, you know, in either one of those; whereas, if you packed my cheap shit (you remember what she said about apologizing) with you, you would have a real distinctive, one-uv-a-kind, animate companion. You are right about that; when you are dead; well, you know.

There are other possibilities; there are other writers; and they're almost as cheap as I am. And don't forget the Mona Lisa. But lets not dwell on what happens afterward.

Yesterday I went, Yes!, I went with my spouse [RCWD] to her relative's place for a 'sit-down'dinner, where other relatives of relatives were in attendance as well. As much as I might hope some people might jump their tracks, I discover they are all the more attached to them; glued as it were; even though they appear to be locomoting, they are spinning their wheels until DETH o'ertake them. Who the hell am I to assume the right to ponder that someone else should jump their tracks?

There was something about the get together that was stifling. These individuals do not challenge themselves to do anything special, or anything individual. They count their shekels daily. They converse in shekels; they think shekels. Shekels are it. Without shekels they are nobody, nothing. The standard! In our world you have to show some interest in and respect for shekels, because that's the way it is. In the preamble it clearly states this is a shekelular democracy. The proof of success (and how well you have mastered democracy) is measured in shekels.

They had mentioned they had taken 90 cruises. Ships. Fly there Sail (hah!) for a week or two, hardly ever out of the sight of land, eat DRINK, and be merry (be entertained, seemed an important criteria). One of them proposed the whole family ought to get together for a Cruise of sit-down dinners.

I'm sure there are many such sit-down family dinners wherein the plight of the less 'fortunate' only arises as a "There for but the Grace of Lingchewthem go I"; summarily dispatched. Thereafter follows the smug recitations of "Got It Makes" until DETH. I do not begrudge those who have provided something for themselves in their dotage, however they manage it, because the balance of the human contingent would as readily ignore them as they ignore the balance of the human contingent. Charitableness is something you exercise when you say Grace, invoking the Lord's charitableness toward oneself (and supposedly the others present as well).

Reading last night how they deduced Willa Cather was gay. This kind of sleuthing only verifies what I have thought all along; there are lesser minds with a dubious agenda who make it their business to look into



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other people's underwear. They did a similar thing to Herman Melville. Whereas they said Herman described Captain Ahab sticking his wooden leg into an augur hole, they had Willa describing a crotch, i.e. a canyon with (prettifying scrub brush etc.). There was a great disadvantage in being born too soon.

Susan B. Anthony was probably gay. You heard it here. Every woman who votes is gay. And so on. Kelvin Cleft has made billions from designer crotches; and anything else that is gay (a happy coincidence).

Nowadays they have software programs concocted by underwear inspectors that scan for suggestible phrases, like: "Freudian Slip".

You can easily imagine why there is no hope for the species. Everybody is an asshole; that makes them gay. The whole forking species is gay; yet remains reproducible. Cheers!. Small comforts for a dinosaur. This too will pass.

Some of this is written in defense of those who are maliciously maligned by those who search for prurient truth; by those making the assumption before they begin that everyone has dirty underwear. Once this kind of assumption has been made all one has to do to complete his work is merely make the suggestion. Its almost as easy as declaring that one is an asshole. Once you have impugned, discolored, or denigra(d)ed; carry on!

Where is the flaw? The fatal flaw? The Femme Fatal Flaw?

This kind of conjecture is 'Freudian' in character. It is also (William) Jamesian in character wherein one assumes that most of those of the 'creative' bent, are pathologically bent. The pathology begins in the underwear; the pathology, hence the underwear, is the driving force behind their opussies.

Can one fault Sigmund? Did Sigmund get carried away? Did he take a plausible thing to extremes? And what about those deviants, Mr. James? Pitch all the poets into the ravine, like Mr. Plato recommended. Fellow sufferers, be damned.

Nowadays one attempts to broaden their understanding of what happens in the underwear by indicating that perhaps genetics is responsible, rather than some psychic disturbance. The psychic disturbance (abnormality) ensues there from etc.. Its all a matter of degree; your genes are merely relative to the most normal amongst us; the more famous and the more controversial (perhaps least understood) the more apt one is to be examined closely (the genetic component of one's underwear, etc.), by those who are less distinguished. Its a matter of attempting to create a level playing field, with a few bumps. Bring oneself up or bring someone else down. I understand the latter, because most of my writing is in that vein; but, while the underwear thing proves titillating, and might affirm my negative feelings toward some, I would rather do my leveling on another plain (plane). I would rather reveal the hypocritical seemliness of appearances; my own included. My interest lies chiefly in

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wanting to know what is true. I can be honest about my own feelings, regarding them as some kind of measure of what others might know about or admit to themselves. How important is it to me to want to know what other people know about themselves etc.? In a general sort of way I would seek affirmation of those areas of self-indulgence that stigmatize us in some way. And why? The more others are like me, the less stigmatization? Or the more probable that the species has been fooling itself for too long.

While it might be true that we cannot dispense with our sexuality, and perhaps its influence in what we are or what we do, is it right for us to notify the other that his or her sexuality is flawed? If we are accustomed to thinking of things in terms of opposites, in a polar manner, because life is seemingly easier to comprehend in that manner, do we not forego the perspicacity necessary to understand all that is not opposite or polar? If we are accustomed to think of male and female as distinct purposeful polarities, with respect to each other, and believe these as the manifestation of the natural order, what do we do with all those who do not affirm this precept? Do we stigmatize them? Declare them abnormal? Perverted? Do we adjective them to shame; pillorize them? If, at the same time, we somehow recognize variations on the main theme, how do we rationalize them, or resolve them into the polar equation? This dialectical method of approaching the conundrum at least allows for some extraneous understanding. It is assumed that ALL cannot be the same, even as much as we would wish it to be so. The logical absurdity of sameness would disallow shortness, tallness, fatness, skinniness; then of course, equally obvious differences having to do with color, physiognomy etc. Everybody must mirror the archetype?

We need to cut some slack in part of the argument to account for our own ugliness. We might stand firmly righteously by the polar argument, all the while being short, fat, and ugly. Do we declare we are normal, except that we are short, fat and ugly? Just because we do it, and just because we have done it, bringing about continuance through offspring, does this permit us to make assumptions about those who do not? I have heard fornication equated with riding a bicycle. Even if those who do it produce ugly offspring, can it be said they are doing it right? You can see how easily the arguments become absurd. Should one disallow those who do it, who thereby produce ugly offspring, to continue to do it? If one produce ugly offspring, the greater the likelihood that offspring will not receive sufficient affection (affection deprivation) to make it feel wanted, needed, included, as part of, normal etc.; therefore may seek a variety of means to offset, to compensate for the lack, the deprivation. They might even forego the polar arrangement for one more immediately satisfying; they might become narcissistic etc.; in order to appear less miserable than their ugliness earns them, they may affect gaiety.

What we might order philosophically, that nature has assured our continuance through polarity, i.e., as we are wont to think in physics, that

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opposites attract, is most likely the most severe limitation we place upon our wish to understand life as part of nature, or vice versa. We come across not seeming to understand either nature or life; we isolate ourselves from what we are able to observe all around us, i.e., similarities, but also differences of all kinds. The more discriminating we become, hm, the more tolerant? It doesn't follow we will become more tolerant, but it does follow we may become more tolerant. This is so because it is based upon our observation, it becomes a concrete fact to which we may refer in assessing the next such occurrence (the next observation). Its not a matter of trusting or doubting our own observations; its a matter of recognizing that our observations enter another factor into the equation. Coupled with what we know and are able to admit to ourselves about ourselves; perhaps the better the understanding, hence, the more tolerance. I'm just guessing.

All this 'rambling' as Charlie now assesses it, fills one kind of space. Without the extension of myself, the black box, and the soft'wear', the disc, the printer and the (pap)yrus, most likely that space would not be filled. The space filling satisfies some urge in me. Father is to blame. Put that in your under'ware'.

Father spent much of his time attempting to gain attention for himself. While he did so he also promoted myths about his occupation. His chosen method of gaining attention was through the visual arts. The myths came with the profession. A person engaged in the arts becomes an artist by inference. Artists have prerogatives; such is part of the myth. Artists are to be tolerated in their eccentricity, not necessarily understood; they are unique and difficult to comprehend. But every one should make an attempt to attain to their level, in order for their message to be understood. Solipsism and Narcissism may work for some, and in the end may become the defining limits of one's audience, but such solitary monastic indulgence usually results in less productivity, or even more bizarre attempts at gaining attention.

Father carried his proselytizing to extremes. He believed every one should become engaged in the arts, should at least become thoroughly educated in the arts. etc. so they could understand and appreciate him, be more receptive to cranks like him.

Judging by some of what has been produced by such involvement, one feels compelled to question what is happening within such individuals. Perhaps one will discover the answer in the under garments.

Perhaps father intended that only certain ones should art, and all the others should admire; but that all should be fully schooled in the arts in order for this arrangement to be realized.

So here I am carrying some dubious brand that becomes extinguished with too much exertion, hence this rambling; cheap shots; cheap thrills. My muse is not amused. I seem to be my only audience. For now. Fruit Of The Loom!

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Later. Father was a great dabbler in underwear. Freudian Psychology as pertained to sex was an eye-opener for pop. He carried that to extremes as well. Mixing Freud with Nietzsche was his specialty. Some Brew. He dumped it on all he knew.

He told my first wife that he had laid Sonja. He didn't tell me. His purpose in telling her? Devious man.

He wouldn't tell me because he knew I was smitten by Sonja, therefore might react rather savagely to his 'triumphant' (father was an odd one) conquest. One consolation for me; I'm sure Sonja wasn't thrilled (unless I miss my guess); if it was at all true.

Sonja was a city girl, growing up nearly under the Williamsburg Bridge on Stockholm Street. She lived with her mother and brother; her father absent for some time. Her mother worked as a waitress; she had come from the 'old country' to the land of opportunity. Sonja's brother, two years older, was hoping to become a New York City Policeman.

Sonja was eighteen when I met her in a drawing class at the Brooklyn Museum Art School (I was twenty-two). She was 'studying' painting and drawing. I was 'studying' sculpture and drawing. I was also working full time at Sperry's on Great Neck.

At that time in my life I knew very little about anything. I suffered under the curse of my father who more or less intimidated, 'unless you were an artist you were nothing'. I surely felt like nothing, so maybe by studying art I could find a way to feel like something. The fact that I could outwork all my co-workers at Sperry's didn't make me feel like anything special, because father mocked all that kind of activity. I hadn't grown up enough to be able to tell father to 'stuff it'.

My ambivalence about what father had said was partly responsible for my feeling of nothingness and my studying of art. Father might be right. The artworks he had 'created' provided example enough of his argument. At least those things he did were thought-provoking and showed some degree of skill in their execution. What I might think about other endeavors in this life didn't amount to 'a hill of beans'.

At loose ends after a hitch in the military, I ended on father's doorstep only to get the heave ho (not welcome); I found myself living in my chevy coupe until my first paycheck from Sperry's. After finding an attic in Flushing, I launched into the arty world in my spare time. I began with guitar lessons at the Brooklyn Conservatory (Queens Branch), just around the corner. Also I was learning some of the structure and theory of musical composition. Shortly thereafter I had enrolled in the Brooklyn Museum's Sculpture classes. Somewhere along the way the guitar instructor collapsed from nervous exhaustion, whereupon I switched to the piano. And somewhere along the line I added life-drawing to my endeavors.

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Enter Sonja. A tall, large boned girl. Blond. Germanic, I suppose, if one can judge by her namesake, Sonja 'Marlene', after the famous Marlene, whose physiognomies bore resemblances to one another. Yes! I was smitten. And Sonja was set upon a marble-based pedestal. In hindsight I should have been grateful that she would even look at me, from such heights.

Beside the few things I have already said about her, which might hardly endear you to her, anymore than any other creature, Sonja was 'talented'. She had been schooled in music, playing both the piano, and the viola, the latter of which earned her a place in the strings of the Brooklyn Symphony. I accompanied her to one of her rehearsals when they were working on Beethoven's 7th. Her drawings and paintings were things done rather quickly. I cannot remember being particularly impressed with her painting. I want to say sort of Elaine DeKooningish, rather sketchy ill-defined reality, color unremarkable. I do remember a rather sensitive pencil sketch of a sleeping Sylvia, a friend of hers in the drawing class.

She seemed seriously interested in painting.

What she saw in me I do not know; I will never know. She may have seen everything I was, better than I did, most likely. In hindsight I need to recognize that she was on the rebound from some unrequited romance that involved a married cellist in the Brooklyn Symphony. Otherwise she seemed to have many male acquaintances who contacted her from various quarters of the globe.

Compared to a cellist, what was I? Someone listening to the sound of a distant drummer. What I have become doesn't matter; what I was then did matter.

Father attempted to impress upon me that "Art and wimmen don't mix!". During my early teens father relished saying "Find 'em, fuck 'em, and forget 'em!". He promised to tell me when I got older he would reveal the three C's. Elsewhere I have mentioned that father turned out to be one of the world's greatest hypocrites. But in those days, his admonitions haunted me. To become serious about a woman was to threaten one's holy calling. That was a plausible scenario, given my family's Catholic background.

Yes! there was a mother in the background, whose philosophy on these very same matters was never uttered, or if uttered, never recognized; father tended to put her down. I do remember mother saying once out of father's earshot, in regard to Sonja, "Faint Heart N'er Won Fair Maiden". (Very much later she was able to call father a 'bastard', although she would speak rather reverentially of him on other occasions, and would quote him regarding the arts about which she seemed to know nothing.)

A more stalwart heart? Without father's admonitions, I had come into this thing with very little experience in matters of the heart. All of my earlier heart throbs, mostly of a fantasy nature involved high school chums or pin-ups. While in the U.S. Navy I might have pursued a pen-pal

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relationship to its final conclusion; she, a real Irish lass who thought me a smasher. If I had been more of a stalwart instead of a faint, I might have had different relationships with that fair sex. Also while in the U.S. Navy, I essentially ran away from the only potentially serious relationship, that, with a married woman, mother of two children. All relationships were unconsummated things that left one with a feeling of inadequacy.

I came into Sonja's life with a huge father figure, and very little knowledge of how to express my feelings to the fairer sex. Obviously I could not approach my heart throb with father's dictum of the three F's. Doing what came naturally did not seem all that clear to me, and if it had, Sonja was safely out of reach on the marble base.

The relationship with Sonja remained pretty much the same throughout. She on her pedestal, and I mooning about its base. We went to one or two Chaplin movies at the Modern Museum Of Art, I visited her at her home on several occasions. I remember her mother saying things like "You cannot live on love, air, and springwater". And something about the 'bohemian' life style which might find one behind "Spanish Curtains". Whether her mother saw in me a serious suitor, I cannot say. Her utterances were of a practical nature; she wanted the best for her daughter, surely not an art bum. Perhaps she saw in me the eventual failure I would become.

I visited Sonja while she was away on a Cape Cod Summer thing with the 'great' Hans Hoffman. I remember sitting with her on one of the Cape's beaches, she in swimming attire. I can remember being impressed with her wide shoulders and large limbs, and, if I remember correctly, hairy legs. I do not remember her as large bosomed; rather dainty, which made her seem smaller when sitting along side her. It was a different look at her, but not one to alter what was in my heart. I was captivated by the beauty of her countenance, and a quality of her soul.

On one occasion I stupidly brought Sonja to my parent's home in Upstate New York. The 'stupid' is applied in hindsight. I had thought if I had brought a lovely lady of the arts to present to father he would be very enthusiastic about such potential good fortune for his son. In driving through the countryside it became clear that Sonja had little been in the country, so to speak. She remarked how all the vegetation stirred in her thoughts of the past, as though past indicated the early days of mankind. Much later this remark was further validly illustrated by the famous Steinberg cartoon appearing on the cover of The New Yorker depicting a vast wilderness on the West Side of the Hudson River, with NYC rising up on the east side.

Anyway Sonja was obviously in her element in the presence of father, even painting a quick portrait of him. I'm sure father was impressed in ways that he wasn't about to reveal to me. They were impressed with each other, which naively or otherwise pleased me. I do not know what words

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passed between them, or what intimations passed between them. I do not know anything of the occasion or the circumstances whereupon the one laid the other. I feel almost certain it was some time after she and I parted company, if indeed it did happen. Perhaps father was only practicing his dictum. I can only suspect the untruthfulness of father's words, and his motivations for unveiling them to my wife. I suspect father was a low character who would take some sadistic pleasure in 'making' his son's significant others. You think me biased and unfair? Naw!

I must confess to not knowing Sonja very well. While we were together she did not particularly say things to hurt or offend. As a matter of fact I thought her sensitive to my feelings, although she did not quite know what to do with them. On one occasion she arranged a movie date for me with her girl friend, Sylvia. Sylvia was very quiet. A lovely petite girl of Jewish parentage, someone whom I might have become smitten if I had not already been smitten; that is, until I would encounter her, perhaps protective, Jewish parents. Anyway, it may have been Sonja's way of attempting to wean me of herself.

Two questions, each posed by Sonja, remain succinctly in my memory. In one of my visits to Stockholm Street, while we were alone together, as time to part was nearing, a tentative embrace somehow occurring, she asked, sort of teasingly, "Don't you find me desirable?" When I attempted to kiss her, she coyishly pulled away. Mr. Faint Heart did not press the issue. Never again did she descend from the pedestal. On another occasion, while we were roaming the streets of Fifth Avenue, eventually into Macy's, she tried on some garments, primarily sweaters. Later as we were driving down Manhattan, at a stop light I noticed a garment tag sticking out from beneath the sweater she was wearing. I didn't say anything; but she had seen my glance, and knew I recognized what had happened. She asked "What do you think of me now?". I cannot remember my answer. I cannot say it affected my feelings or lessened the allure. Most likely I was inclined to overlook it then, but now might view it as part of the consumerist world we live in. I was not above petty thievery. In any case Sonja remained on the pedestal untarnished.

On one occasion, after I too had moved into Brooklyn, from Flushing, mostly to be nearer Sonja, she had visited me at that St. Mark's Ave. hole-in-the-wall, which I had painted all white to brighten it up. I can remember playing for her Schubert's Death and the Maiden, sighing and mooning to the romantic music. I do not know what I expected from all of this; perhaps some wondrous embrace that would seal our fates forever; but nothing even remotely approaching such a thing ever happened. Some kind of a fizzle.

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Eventually, I could no longer bear the heart ache in that God Damned Dusthole located at the estuaries of the Hudson and the East Rivers. A parting took place, never to see one another again. I traveled throughout the Southeast, across the South into Texas, and into Mexico, Mexico City, then North to the Pacific Northwest. In Mexico City, I had purchased some silver and jade-like jewelry which I sent Sonja from the Northwest. We exchanged letters for a short while, until one day I received a letter from her requesting money. I was broke, telling her so. I sent her nothing. I can't remember if she ever responded to that last communication, but soon thereafter there was silence - forever.

Other ladies came along; stories in themselves. Learning about oneself, about commitment, about cowardice, about tawdriness. Some things happening which show bad judgment, where feelings never intended for hurt were indeed hurt; misunderstandings that were never resolved or remedied. And in the background, all those unknowns to do with art. Art, Art, Art. Yeah, Art. And in other cases, Art was never a consideration.

One lady had come along a couple years after Sonja, with whom ironically father had put me in touch, with whom I had established a brief correspondence, that might have led to other things, if only I had been more of something than I was. She had written me inquiring how I would feel marrying a woman who was or was not still a virgin? Many years later, after her affairs with men and mine with women, she wrote to tell me that she had never slept with father. Oddly, whether or not it mattered, I do not believe I would have even suspected her of such involvement. First of all, I felt she had class. Did Sonja have class? I believe Sonja was a very vulnerable person, whereas the other came from a situation in life that imbued her with much self confidence. Yes! also an aspiring artistic type, she sought guidance, and reassurance that she was on the right track, but someone able to distinguish amongst the various types of guidance. I don't have the same feeling about Sonja; I feel I knew her less than the other, not really knowing either a great deal. Through the later contact I have had with the other, I have felt in her that same degree of self-confidence or self-possession I was able to feel in the beginning. I have also had time to reflect on dim memories. What I have related of Sonja is about all I am able to remember of her.

I did not feel for the second what I felt for Sonja. That is, I did not fall under her spell in the same way, although I was somewhat intimidated by her educational achievements. I did not spend but very little time with her in the bowels of NYC. Our limited encounter did not allow for the crossing of certain thresholds of feeling. However I was attracted to her in many ways, and I suspect if as my mother had said 'the heart had not been so faint' we two should have fared well together. Hindsight.

During that particular time of my life many options were opening to me. I had more or less committed myself to the one thing, which led me away



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from that second lady, during which time I maintained a correspondence with her. Also I had foregone an opportunity that could have changed my life in so many different ways. As it was the choice I had made led to other places, other people, another woman, children. And after them still another woman.

Now I am a grandfather, enjoying the prerogatives and perks of a grandparent. Like Wild Strawberries I dream away before my exit. I must make do with what I have, and with what remains. Also I am privileged to be exposed to a variety of microbes and flu bugs.

I feel I must understand what has happened to me, before I am able to understand what has happened to anyone else. How our experiences and memories affect each one of us.

Would I want to encounter Sonja now, today? She might be like her mother, only even older than her mother when I met her. Her mother was a large woman, worn from years of work as a waitress, not particularly attractive, as such things go. Not attractive to a young man at least. Surely Sonja would have changed markedly; would I even recognize her? I can remember how time had changed some of my old high school mates after a period of 25 years. Now I am speaking of 50 years. When that fresh blush of youth leaves, other phenomena take over. One becomes prey.

Better left alone, as an enchanting, yet haunting memory, like Yillah.

There was I, a babe amongst the buildings. We would hope to make wise men of teenagers; or young men.

The babe as prey. All eyes in the buildings waiting to suck up the babe; like an immense octopus (*vulgaris*), thousands of arms (a millipus) with millions of suckers.

Surely, one more will escape notice. Its not a matter of meekness; the big things overwhelm the little things. Inherit nothing.

The dog pulled its ears down; it lifted its head, its tail wagged slowly, expectantly. A hand reached out. A touch. No words. The dog rolled over on its back. Dogs do that, for a tummy rub. Now that you've started, don't quit; go all the way.

Foreplay. Afterplay.

The photograph.

Safeway doesn't sell four points.

He'll need to wait a year for the mounting. The taxidermist has stuck the thing in his freezer. Lots of Dead Heads.

It's a country disease; one feels the need to be self-sufficient (like Earnest Boom Boom Hem.).

He bought a stainless steel 30.06 equipped with a nitrogen filled 12 power scope. He bought a 4 by.

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He had been impressed with his neighbor's gun collection, his trophy room, his rig. It all rubbed off.

He didn't need to do the thing, but now that he's doing it, he rationalizes the freezer full. Its a manly thing - to provide. He also found another woman; he did the manly thing there too.

There you have it. The photograph of the dead thing on the ground in front of the 4 by, him with a sort of pleased look on his face. A four point.

Folkways. Manliness. Take that - Safeway! Bull Shit!

It will look corny stuck on the wall of the factory built. No game room. Get cockeyed and dusted over with time.

Beware!; Those who come after have a lot to say. Prepare your defense beforehand. Pour sulfuric acid into their inkwells. And into their underwear.

The question has been asked, "How can we know where we are going if we do not know where we have been?".

Others say if we look back we will be turned into a pillar of s.

'Nostalgia', 'Reverie' are somehow meant to convey a diminished outlook; perhaps reveal a diminished capacity.

I had sent some of my writings to Chronicle Books; one of its editors, a pipsqueak by the name of Le Blond, facetiously (on a power trip) suggested I send my material to someone who publishes Memoirs. I had to assume that the chosen expletive for the publishing house had more to do with habituation than time. Like a house For Chain Smokers poring over forbidden texts.

The one that smarts the most, or the smart one came from S.S., one of those enthroned ones whose brilliance is more mirror than substance. An SASE went unanswered; a stamp got wasted. I had hoped since she was good at making something out of nothing she might give me a whirl. Just a thought. In the Annals of Time; who will be judged the biggest asshole?

Nothing like being deluded (denuded) by one's brilliance. Who can stand the glare?

This may not make much linear sense, but it does hold its surprises, its substance, its stimulus.

On The Road by Jack.

Off The Road Vehicles. Off The Beaten Path.

Cripes!, is that possible, even with a 4 by? Monkey Wrenching the World. There's always helicopters (flying insects).

The plank might be a place to get away; few walk the plank nowadays.

I was reading about the Jane Austen Formula. The hero, the heroine, the obstacle, the rival and the foil; rivalette and foilette a sort of

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quadrangle; a real rangle. Then there's Scarlet Hester, Dimswitt and Chillyworth, and Hapappyppearl.

This stuff is better known as F(r)iction; frickin fiction. It is claimed that fiction and fantasy are one and the same. Plain Jame.

I often wondered if one could make as much from truth. But how can one have non-f(r)iction, i.e., non frickin fiction; or non fantasy.

Most fantasies end at some convenient time or or through some formulated denouement. The trouble with the truthier renditions is that life goes on, and very often things trail off into a stasis until the do part scene arrives. When that time arrives one goes on anti-depressants. Bigger than fiction?

We expect that everyone will fall, and we are sort of pleased if mother finds a lover, especially if we think the old man is sort mistreating her. He's probably mistreating her because he's got some fantasy on the side. Aw, come on! We do expect that everyone else will fall; that's the nature of neighborhood gossip.

Lately I have been earnestly wishing my daughter's former male attendant, DEAD. Unfortunately between them somehow came a third. This appendage has proved an avenue for the slimy bastard to continue what had been his domination of her during their nupts. The Law does nothing, nor can it do anything. The LAW did allow the third to remain with the mother when it was all over. The egotistical bastard thought he was going to be awarded custody since he had hired one of Packwoods's former attorneys to represent him. It didn't materialize, so now he's hoping to crush her in some manner in order to gain control of the offspring he didn't want in the first place. Anyway, to make a long story short, I wish for his demise; the sooner the better, the shorter the story. You can tell I aint a good Keeeerissstian, since I do not ask for his forgiveness. Gratefully Dead!

What a blast - that.

It has been four years now since the heart valve replacement. Those good doctors had estimated that if I hadn't had the surgery I might live for another two to three years.

So, in essence, all other things being equal, if this had happened just a few short years ago, before the advances in surgical procedures, I would have been dead already for a year or two.

Allow me to amplify this scenario a little. Part of the good doctors' routine consisted of conversational matters, as though those matters mattered. I visited these good guys in their little patient rooms with all those plaques hanging variously; not in their offices with the plush carpet and the executive desk. Somehow the doctors had found me out; me and my big mouth. They had discovered I had boated, cruised, sailed. Leisure

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time activity to which the professionals aspire, and to which they are entitled, and which comes with the territory, affordable. We did not have any furniture in our home, no golf clubs, no Mercedes, but we had a boat. So our humanity had found a common chord with the professional. Common. Common Come on!, a Come On. Anyway, one would think he had made a friend. Actually, psychological principles were at work. I was being set up. Rather than speak of the physicians surgical skills, he spoke of his involvement, how many he had done, how often, and the success rate, which by the way was not 100%. I was being asked to play the odds, while the surgeon attempted to gain my confidence by speaking conversationally of the good life on the water. After all, it was boring and going to speak of the scalpel.

Like I said, I thought I had made a friend, like we were sailing aficionados. After the surgery, the subject was dropped. The surgeon was doing everything he could to sever the conversations, as soon as possible. Like the man said, "Anywhichway I can".

There was a technical problem that required some attention afterwards, a little something that had not gone as planned. Attending to this problem became an inconvenience to the good doctors. I had to raise holy hell in order to get these conversational practitioners out of their skiffs. It was kind of like taking your automobile to your mechanic to fix the engine, to have the auto returned with a leak in the gas line. It just happened; it had nothing to do with incompetence, or clumsiness. An Act Of God; sort of like when you're sailing, a squall comes up before you can get your sails down; and you get knocked down and thrown into the drink. That's why sometimes doctors are all wet.

What can I tell you about life after death? It's not as foretold in the good book.

I have not really appreciated my good fortune, squandering this precious palpitation.

I've lived long enough in this afterlife to inform you that things have not changed one iota in my absence. In fact they remain reminiscent and redundant, and no more attractive than when I was obliged to abandon them.

I do not believe this is a matter of perception. In all my previous judgments, no matter how scathing, there always existed an element of doubt. I had usually blamed my paranoia for the outbursts. But in reality it was my hopes that were responsible for the lack of fire in my condemnations.

Things haven't changed. And as for where we go when its all over, I believe we have been misled by those shamans on the pulpit.

I say these things in order to get you to reconsider your frittering, despite my bad example. There's all kinds of frittering. Not just squandering your life in procrastinations, to which we are all prone, but

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our disregard for our home and all of its other forms of life, not excluding our look-a-likes. It seems a flagrant disregard and mockery of our presumed intelligence and spake.

There is no escape valve. If you wish to perceive it as such, as I believe many of you do, this planetary existence is a condemnation, a hell in its own right. The hell is man made. God, if it exists, does not injure us as much as we injure ourselves; and we do it with such relish, cunning and vengeance. We speak of the Lord's Vengeance. If its anything like ours, we are in for a rough ride. But I believe only man or men are capable of our own worst nightmares. We have no equal in the Universe.

Did I learn these things after death (or afterlife as it were)? Not really. I had always suspected them of being true; but I wanted to view them as an aberration; mostly because I did not wish to believe the worst about us, or that such potential existed within me, or for that matter, my closest companions.

They claim that, "Seein's believin".

Yes!, some are programmed to see only the bad.

Perhaps I should leave it there; and just allow you to do your good, your best good.

Your best good is less apt to be recognized than your best bad. The species demonstrates a distinct tendency to emphasize the worst than can be known about one.

The assumption that "Nobody's Perfect" enables us to seek until we find. It's that old "knocking 'em off'n their pedestal" feeling. Or if they are too tall naturally, shortening them.

Nobody escapes. Even Jesus Christ is portrayed as human in his dealings with Mary Magdalene. There is a certain advantage to his image in this portrayal in that he is less suspected of being gay. It is wrong to assume that God and Gay do not go together, but nowadays the anti-aborts and the anti-gays fill the legions of the fundamentalists, so it is better for the romance that J.C. appear like most of the rest of us.

I'm neither gay nor a fundamentalist, nor do I believe in GOD as a person, or an amorphous three dimensional presence. I do recognize Universal Indifference, and the possibility there are some things I will never know with any degree of certainty. Much of our so-called knowledge is speculative; which is O.K. for getting us from here to there. There are some predictable occurrences which we have come to recognize and account; necessary to our continued existence; and an area where our supreme intelligence can be put to some use; good or bad remains for future assessments thereof.

It is terrible when the sometimes rather miniscule dissemblance overshadows what had been a person's greater substance. In our attempts to fulfill our aspirations, two things reappear to haunt us throughout the duration: our own limitations, and the impossibility of the task. For some

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reason or other finding failings in the other brings comfort. Even though we so gravitate, it remains a mystery why we should aspire beyond what is practical or achievable; as we eventually perceive our drives toward perfection. Some triumph through other's triumphs, while others triumph in other's failures. From, "See, it's possible!", to, "See, its all so futile". To achieve or not to achieve; to make the effort or not make the effort. What is the goal or what is the motivation?

Father sought FAME, of a kind that is reserved for those who never really sought it, like Michelangelo, as a household first name. But even Michelangelo could not escape his other part, Buonarroti, or still other associations that our curiosity led us to discover or assume. Would a taint have been invented, if we were not able to speculate with our customary scant gleanings; for so seldom does a witness appear to confirm our suspicions? Ludvik does not appear as a household first name; and because it doesn't, it is immaterial what was his sexual preference. But given time, who knows. Would not the extant diaries of his last three or so years leave you with a confused and perhaps less than favorable impression, although those diaries in part were intended to reveal the workings of a 'great' mind? I do believe Ludvik failed in his mission, although he leaves behind sculptures that will fill a space in the human void, that will stimulate thoughts and feelings he may or may not have intended. One might argue, "More than Most!". If we knew little about him, it would be best. Is it ours to seek an explanation? Is it not better to assume that "Anything is possible", letting it go at that? Yes!, that urge to separate the work from the man or the man from the work.

It was because of Michelangelo's fame that Ludvik was inspired to seek his. He chose this avenue rather than some other, like perhaps that of becoming the fastest human. It was because of Michelangelo's fame infused into father's desire for the same that I also became infected through father's infection (affectation). I am little able to convey much objectivity in this. I can only say that I began this life with a heavy burden that I have never really been able to shed. Through nearly endless worded repetitions I am attempting to gain respites from the weight of the burden. I live also with some regrets for not having pursued the scuplting end to superlatives, that is, to, more in depth, more human, more compelling, works than father's. Father would have regarded such hypothetical achievement with ambivalence, particularly if it overshadowed his achievements during his lifetime. Father might have privately admired, but at the same time would have been publicly compromised. Durchanek The Elder and Durchanek The Younger. Comparisons would become inevitable.

To this day I am able to offer not a plausible argument for the doing or the not doing. The doing part is the easier to state; the doing of something for the pure enjoyment of it, regardless of the part that somehow involves an audience. To do it as a ego thing, a thing that gains other's attention,

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seems already some reason not to do it, unless it is to demonstrate one's skills to a prospective mate, or conquest, like preening one's feathers. Then what? Or to do it because it truly brings joy? Much of human activity involves such 'mundane' pursuit; now, in a world laden with too many humans. However, Father was not really interested in producing offspring. He wanted to rub elbows with the beautiful and the alluring, and to gain their adulation, and whatever else prospectively came with it. That was the real good stuff. Was that the primary motivation? A man is more for all that. The grandiose notions were there as well, however inconsistent, and at variance with the muse. The hypothetical makes easy hypocrites of us all. One argues in his isolation, "Its all grist for the mill", a semi-demonic excuse for one's self-conscious behavior. It became necessary to challenge and violate certain social tenets in order to get on with it. Somehow, 'character' was not at issue. "Blind Ambition"?

I would assume 'character' is variously not at issue in my mind, especially 'character' that only reflects the status quo. But character that demonstrates a disregard for other's feelings seems chancy. Character that invites accusations of a sort that tend to undermine the associations that one would wish to project about one's sacred endeavors, seems all too risky if one wishes to make it all the way to the top (And I am not groping the underwear at this time). I realize this is asking a great deal of any one individual; especially when one considers there is no apparent purpose to life; only that which we assert or assign. Even if the purpose to life was only its own 'mere' continuance, either as a holding action until something better came along, or as an imperative without direction or vision, we seem not to be able to escape a nonsensical moralizing, which is mostly designed to keep it (channeled) within certain bounds, to benefit all those others. On the one hand there seems no limit to perfection.

## The Death Issue:

Where one knows not a soul, and there are many of them, clearing the landscape seems the right thing, although everyone of them was a good person. Saturated, not satiated.

I will not apologize for feeling this way, because I include myself amongst them. That's easy to say since I have already come so far down the road toward the inevitable. I have squandered a lot along the way.

I have always been selfish, remaining selfish about this. I have had no say in the matter, like one has no say in the matter of government. One just puts up with his equipage as he does his government. One wakes up one day to this. He finds it makes little sense. Its a matter of choosing whether to remain, or to exit. The inducements for remaining are few, if you don't happen to have arrived with certain advantages. Without those advantages, one is forever being herded, prodded off to the side.

An advantage is a condition that makes life seem worth living. One becomes a functional occupier. Some recognize this condition as a

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prerequisite; it is characterized as incentive. If one has an advantage he has an incentive; it matters not whether or not he is good. Occupation with advantage is the way to go. Where?

For those shoved to the wayside, marginalized, there exists a condition recognized as fantasy. Instead of becoming a follower or an emulator one opts for his own perception of things. One of those is found in the beginning of this essay, the removal from the landscape of all of Them. A purification so to speak; through the fantastic.

Once They have been removed, Pay As You Go becomes history. One doesn't need to think of forms of government that Pay lip service to all our concerns, where they haggle over who is to be responsible for what; your welfare. We do not understand this perpetration, called government, whether it arises in 1776, 1984 or in the coming millennium after Dominos. Foxes guarding the chickens. Foxes have definite advantages. Eric Blair visualized the pigs having all the advantages. It doesn't matter, because fantasy will take care of the whole lot of them. Its called fantasy mode, or in computer speak, enhanced mode. Real mode is for the suckers and those with certain advantages, equipped with the ability to screw the daylights out of their look-a-likes. On the keyboard they punch: Compunctionless. And lets not forget the dichotomy, or the hypocritical stance; if you do not do as they say, you are guilty of treason. Servitude!

I know you will say, "Oh, its him again, the railer!, the malcontent, the cynic." Sticks and stones.

One on one, sometimes things work out, but I'll tell yuh, its a long way to true companionship, true brotherhood. It may seem thus a matter of tolerance, do unto others, and what not.

I'm getting off the subject with rationalizations, explanations.

Things are petering out as one is wont to utter. I think when a thing peters out it means all the ejaculate is used up. One could say, its all peckered out, all penised out, all a flaccid phalluscy. Ex Eunt would seem a reasonable alternative to the continuance of homo erectionless.