

## *The Island*

### XIII

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Now, it is time to interject the querulous IF. IF hinges upon what we necessarily identify as WILL (an act of volition) not the idealistic WILL, but the WILL embodied in the conceited presumption and motto: "It is ours to do with" (a Will pursuant to some manifest Utopia?). We do so in order to approach some recognition and understanding of the 'power' invested in a notion of WILL, if only to point the way toward the ideal, if that might be construed our objective. We must choose to overcome the exegesis of our apparent Destiny, the Inevitable, foredoomed, *fatefully inevitable*, Destiny, and associated persuasions, toward assuring failure of the enterprise (the expression of the ideal through the force of WILL) in order to fulfill the higher equalitarian prospect and promulgation of, "It is ours to do with".

HOW?! "Is that a salutation?" You want me to answer the question, do you? I'll answer the second, 'No, it is not a salutation'. I want you to answer the HOW. Already I am beginning to suspect you have generated only too many ways to pigeonhole me, all with the urgency to put me aside, discredit me, if not in the spirit of the argument, or even in the particulars, you will soon search my underwear for some irrelevant discrepancy like you have done with all the others. I detest what you have done to Herman Melville, just because you were too damned lazy to get into his think and his morality, which you suspected asked too much of you. You attempted to discredit him by calling his sexuality, about which you knew nothing, to our attention; and getting this kind of think anointed in the Harvard Survey of American Literature Curriculum. It all goes to say, if you can't get at me by insinuating I am naive, visionary, utopian, extravagant, rhapsodical, grandiose, perhaps hallucinatory, you'll go for the underwear. O.K., so that's the way you wanta play - the shoe is on the other foot - yours. Its your opportunity to divulge HOW, "It is ours to do with".

Are you able to pose the question? Are you even interested? And, if so, can you wish for me to answer it, or are you able to begin to answer it yourself, gleaning from the awareness stimulated by the proposition inherent of the question? What do we do with this, 'IT IS OURS TO DO WITH'?

Individual visions vary amongst themselves. Are you able to imagine the world in the manner of Salvadore Dali?, or in the manner of the Landscape Painters? Are you able to imagine an architecture in the manner of Antonio Gaudi? Are you able to imagine the human scale of a Jonathan Swift, or François Rabelais? Are we truly more wedded to an inexorable condition as most of the fatalists perceive, the Shakespeares, Melvilles, Dickens, and Freuds. Are we so vulnerable and such easy

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prey to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? Are we such drivels as depicted by Samuel Beckett, and other of the existentialists? Are we apt to be secure in "Each according to his abilities, each according to his needs"? Nothing is quite so simple.

It is complex, and not so simple as a Bill Of Rights, a Communist Manifesto, Mao's Red Book. Nonetheless these are to be recognized, studied as some constructs from which to choose (possibly); some social mechanism to implement, in the manner "It is ours to do with" - we WILL it thus; that is, we choose, we declare our intent, we embody our intent in some formal sense as a construct, (Gud forbid) a Law of the land (as reflecting the 'spirit of the times'); we (gud forbid) enforce the (gud forbid) construct - impartially.

You might rightly argue, 'in spirit, we are already doing that NOW; we have already done that THEN', etc. The results are in - Hmn? Questionable? O.K. Continue to question; do not be afraid to answer; let the answers fall where they may.

We have intimated, 'Enforce the Construct Impartially', something we already pretend to do - but know we do not do - the examples of our dereliction are too glaring. (I am reminded of the precedents for such behavior in watching my children play when they were quite young and innocent. The elements of the play were simple and the manner of achieving objectives very blunt. The first condition to be met was the social construct where indeed they did agree to interact, full of propositions, and, ifs and thens, 'if I play with you in your game, then you will play with me in mine' - such was the understanding. The boy was the older by a year. His object in play was either to win or to dominate the course of the social interaction; his sister's was mostly to interact. When it appeared a loss was in the making for the boy, he changed the rules that he might win; since he engaged in games that mostly interested him and not so much his sister, she was at his disposal when it came to recitation of the rules, [he was the rule maker, referee, and player all rolled into one], she not being sufficiently motivated to learn and defend the rules. Invariably he won. Occasionally when he felt more secure and benign he would 'allow' her to win, just to keep her interest from flagging. When it came time to play her game, the persuasion to dominate the hows and whys also became his prerogative; if she could not abide his domination; he would say "I'm not going to play". She would be forced to forego sociality, if she would not permit the heir apparent the full range of the sibling prerogatives. Occasionally I would say something about these things to them; he, to play fair; and she to defend herself. But their manner of interacting was more or less established by what he wanted out of the deal. They did grow up; and things are different; he has had to endure some setbacks in the larger world, and she has found her tongue [at least with regard to her parents]]. Big 'kids' play in like manner; they change the rules to suit themselves;

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and when they gain the summit, they tell you where to go (Oh, there's the occasional token, conscience salving, altruistic gesture.).

"How circumvent the NOW?", I might imagine the boy asking, as does his father ask, each from a different perspective. The children, like the father, have developed into citizens, mostly in response to demands from the outside; I am convinced I had a lot less effect upon my offspring than did their other societal environs.

If we were permitted the luxury of designing our own environment, how should we fare? A NEW TOWN; not to be occupied until all criteria are met, not just the physical criteria: water, sewage, electricity, etc, but the communal covenants, establishing order, concordance and conviviality. A Ghost Town? Would we be able to leave our baggage behind, our formative selves, our heritage, our genesis? Can we not WILL the thing which we have chosen to happen? "Impractical", you say; "Man is a mountain", you say. Gud conveniently drowned the whole, only to begin again with the same animal.

I would like to speculate that we may be more that previously described figure in the landscape than we realize, for it may only be a matter of realization, if we give ourselves that opportunity to make choices based on some condition more deliberate than a state of merely, fearfully, acquiescing to a status quo that presumes over us. At heart, I mean, innately, perhaps constitutively, do we not feel more affinity with the dirt, than the incessant, unremitting clamor from out the asphalt, the concrete of the Established Orthodoxy; the VESTED, the infamous Status Quo, in all its banality, proselytized (propagandized) through monopolized organs of communication (in some ways not too differently than in 1984), browbeating us into the avid Pursuit of the NOW, which 'They' have double dealingly created, and who become its reaping beneficiaries? This 'thing', this Asphalt World promises a satiety through a transient materiality which is intended to overwhelm our transience; somehow translated into that goddamned *bête noire* STANDARD OF LIVING. Instead of a 'materiality' serving our needs, the acquisition of it has become the primary purpose of our life whether or not it serves our needs (real needs!). Our STANDARD OF LIVING, alias 'materiality', has achieved its ultimate absurdity, our enslavement to it; not just you and I, but the Japanese, Koreans, the Western Europeans, with the Russians (*ex eunt*), and the Chinese hoping to crash the gate; the Third World is showing an increasing appetite to adopt the STANDARD OF LIVING credo, hence the abysmal indebtedness of those who have bought the argument hook, line, and sinker. Our enslavement is not confined to the NOW, but also the ongoing NOW; we have so acquiesced in the totality that we have further enslaved ourselves, extending our term of indebtedness beyond the useful lifetime of the materiality. Those with a no cash flow problem, i.e. oil-rich countries with small populations, and the well-to-do

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in every nation; and so on, quite obviously escaping the indebtedness; however they are the chief proponents of the continuance of the status quo. Its what they reap best. (I really do not wish to get into economics or the philosophy of economics, particularly one which argues that the planet must be converted into a STANDARD OF LIVING (rapereaping) (making nothing out of something)).

Materiality, through the advent of the Ind. Rev., at the outset, was starily envisioned as an investment in permanence, perhaps emanating from the hard-goods feel of iron and steel; the fact that it didn't (hah!, 'materialize'), permitted the evolution of planned obsolescence (the happy marriage of thermodynamics with GREED), which became a management problem, not a production problem. In the beginning it was a nice scenario, an evolving technology, that eclipsed all the other ages, stone, bronze, even the Golden age, that, in successive and progressive stages, brought improvement in the durable goods, from the metals used in plows, to bearings and lubricants in machinery, to the internal combustion engine. Until, until manufacturing became a way of life, a source of INCOME, EXPANSION, DIVIDENDS, quite apart from utility, although tacitly serving some socially redeeming purpose; if governments could be convinced to buy shit, only to throw it into a deep dark hole (like they do with military hardware) manufacturers (corporate entities) could care less, nor the populace, whose tax dollar purportedly makes this possible, to wit the survival of entities like, the US Generals, Motors, Electric, Dynamics; Krupp and Mitshubishi, Hyundai. I believe if the populace could get over the Making the World Safe for Democracy mentality, they might begin to view their part in this horrible business somewhat differently.

The idea of permanence has lost its meaning (almost cynically on the part of the business community) as any real objective. One of the insistent bugaboos (social concerns) of the U.S.A. in the ..er.. Decade of the Eighties (we tend to get all decaded up), has been the loss of our "competitive edge". What a bald-faced bit of chicanery resides in that little nuance, when you consider that big corporations have attempted to act collusively to keep out competition and to monopolize markets (despite all the 'free' market claims), with shoddy goods; even when collusion could not be proven, the tacit spirit of the endeavor nonetheless prevailed (they learned from each other how to produce and market transience for whatever the market would bear); again not in the spirit of what was needed, but what became a manufactured (propagandized) requirement as part of a social phenomenon. This is still true, and will not change, the phenomenon must run its course; it must fall into receivership before it will return to basics. How do I know? Trust me. Regard what else ye have trusted!

To repeat, permanence has become incidental to sales; planned obsolescence more accords the objects of production of capital, expansion

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and the receipt of the dividend, than permanence (a durable good). Only competition from the OUTSIDE could compromise planned obsolescence. Oh! you would hear arguments that innovations were occurring at such a rate that it was foolish to invest all your efforts in creating an artificial permanence, from something that would soon become outmoded; just another gimmick, still insinuating permanence in the sales pitch (gotta get rid of that inventory). What has happened, and as is now happening; the OUTSIDE (foreign as we are apt to say) competition is being invited, as well as on its own, is seeking, to unite with those who control the markets in order to peddle their contribution to what we do not need, even if marginally more innovative, and marginally more permanent than what we have failed to produce; to make a long story short; ensueth the alliances between General Motors and Mitshubishi etc., compounding the faulty argument for existence, insisting we are not WORTH anything unless we partake. You aint nobody unless you are somebody.

In the last analysis, we are in debt to yesterday (unfortunately to yesterday's DECADENCE [more decading]). And ironically through planned obsolescence, yesterday is declared obsolescent. If all your yesterdays have become junk, how soon will you become considered as junk? As I indicated, I wish to avoid economics, because it is such an exploitative endeavor (making something out of nothing; and because economics is based in the conversion of the planet into the dubious STANDARD OF LIVING.) Should we not know where we are headed before we abandon yesterday?

If we paid cash, the banks could only, parvenu-like, blood-sucker like, parasitically earn money on savings - IF we allowed that much, otherwise those F.F.s (fat  $\Omega$ uckers) would be out of business. If there were no loans, and no savings - END OF BANKS! - END OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS - END OF FAT  $\Omega$ UCKERS! If there were fewer thieves (damned recalcitrant and disenfranchised social contrariety) we might leave our wampum on the kitchen table; maybe if everybody had a table and everybody had some wampum, maybe the thieves would evaporate, and all we would have to worry about would be graft, embezzlement, fraud, 'whatever the market will bear', military appropriations, and the generalized pettifogging and improbity (corruption) associated with government. Needless to say I do not envision the banker as the exemplar to occupy that sole place in the Landscape, although the banks are rapidly acquiring all the real estate that once passed as farms, only to peddle it to Agribusiness, whoever and wherever they may be located (perhaps Liberia). Hideous! Asphalt Corpulence superimposed upon, the *reapingeth ofeth whateth oneth sow*.

Heedious! Heedonism! Quite naturally, there are no words to embody and revulse this phenomenon I wish to depict, what might inspire someone like William S. Burroughs to expel as a 'sack of



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bloodshit, jissom, rot, pus and vomit' Revolting enough? Of course not. (Some thirty years ago I read 'Generation of Vipers' hardly recalling its essence, but I do recall it introduced me to quite a vocabulary redundant in vituperative words, whose meanings escaped me in the reading, calling forth the lexicon repeatedly, which at the time I also had catalogued; how inadequate and tame they seem now; and how much less a revolting image they conjure than that of Burroughs, but how it is the two cannot convert the word into a three dimensional object of revulsion, improving its effectiveness TO MOVE MANKIND in another direction.

What is it that one must visualize, nay, see, with his own two eyes, and smell with his very olfactory sense, to know with what revulsion I feel in this matter. I loose all objectivity, knowing with such certainty that these types who subsist on other peoples weaknesses, vulnerabilities, gullibilities are the lowest forms of human life (whose further genesis will affirm our decadency from the apes); and are responsible for the quagmire of NOW; and who deserve to be held up for public calumny and spectacle; instead they are depicted as the benefactors.

Well. wasn't that an inspiring speech; the NOW that does exist with *homo sapiens!* Of course, this isn't the whole of it; we pay lip service still; we still pretend; things haven't got so bad as to fall apart entirely, even though a little sordid; we manage to resurrect, Lazarus-like, the failing corpus (carcass) with new illusions, susceptible little creatures we are. Tomorrow is always held out as promise, thus avoiding the perdition of the NOW. The only reason the Now functions as it does, however implausible and undesirable, is because WE DO NOT redefine it FOR OURSELVES! "It is ours to do with". Thy will be done. Otherwise it becomes a matter of forfeiture to those who act as the Controllers, since there is nothing to replace that which serves us not.

I must depart for the Island. Thereupon I become the Fourth possibility, the semblance of the figure in the Landscape, imagining the NOW that could exist with *Homo Sapiens*. This imagining resides in me whether existing here as I am in the now of the Asphalt world, feeling more intensely its lack, or whether I am existing in my semblance, where I feel less intensely the lack. It is part of the burden I unwillingly carry about, perhaps destined to knaw upon this obdurate and ossified presence (the human condition) until the light becomes extinguished; somehow convincing myself the whole problem is part of me, is intrinsic to me; as much as solving those physical problems whether within my Asphalt or my Island environment, that will find accord (harmony) with a certain aesthetic, a pleasing situation for my personal feeling of comfort, security, and repose - conducive toward the promotion of good vibrations (vibes). I have been formed (or deformed) by the burden, an unremitting one, perhaps I have lost all objectivity. I

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have merely become a noise (a loose cannon) within the Fortress. Because *homo sapiens* is destined never to be still (restless) (anxious), even in EDEN or PARADISE, the whole endeavor does assume a perception of absurdity. There exists no hope of having any effect NOW, even though one were allowed access to all the organs of promulgation (communication) even as part of a daily admonishment - one would be viewed as a disturbance. That would have consequences.

Man, must, on his own accord, understand his situation, must take it upon himself as his own burden; a different kind of burden than DEBT; debt is easy, easily incurred, easily maintained, encouraged, and even tolerant of bankruptcy. But this other burden requires more than the mere mechanics of the marketplace to effect its occurrence; it requires perception, and understanding, these occurring through awareness, awareness of the perversion through one's interdependence, the preying of man upon man within the guise of a communally beneficial relationship (a togetherness, mirroring each other as lives *ad infinitum*), the violation of trust, which becomes facetiously swept aside as 'misplaced trust', (trusting in any outside agency is pure foolishness, is it not?). 'Be to thine own self true', - "railed by platitudes" instead of actual - real -beneficial, equalitarian, interdependence. Surely, we are brought down in the failures, and bankrupted by them. Yes! damn it.

Some would rather take the whole species down with them, along with planet, and all other forms of life than succumb to another way, as a matter of conceit (VANITY). Don't try to whitewash the truth by claiming the successes; whatever successes accrue are only those that were promised, built with everybody's participation and help, in good faith, founded in trust. The failures which might occur on their own because of mistakes or miscalculations, are things we are able to understand, but failure that occurs because of what we do in the Asphalt heap, are not acceptable, because they do deprive us of Trust, in the first instance, and, in the second, they destroy the argument for collective interaction. If we exist to be preyed upon by individuals and/or corporations, then we exist as Nothing. If that is our share, then the edifice must be torn down - all of it to begin anew. In this we (you and I) have no choice, but to demand that it be razed!. Only in this way will we discover equity in NOTHINGNESS - from which we may hope to construct an equity in somethingness. Somethingness falls into the category of 'NOW as could exist with *homo sapiens*'; if not, 'twere better 'NOW existed without *homo sapiens*'. This is the strongest statement I make from the Asphalt reality. From the Island reality, that Fourth possibility, of the 'semblance' to the figure in the Landscape, I must care more, I must devolve (dissolve) into that which was described at the outset in the "Circularization of the Defined (page 12), the seeking of a place to pass on, unencumbered with one's consequentiality", an EXEUNT without

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drama, and not waiting for a false promise, or a looking forward to something in which one cannot believe (nothing).

I am convinced that such will not happen - this fourth possibility. Because on the Island I am surrounded by those others who have also sought out Islandness for their own reasons, and to them I represent an intrusion; in short, I must account them as they do me; therein lies the different drama of the conflict of boomity boom booms of the peculiarly paradoxically different drummers; however, one may anticipate some commonalty of purpose, as do the bankers and corporate entities in the Asphalt world.

**IF** there is hope in any of this - this 'It is ours to do with', the Transfiguration of the NOW, this transience, into a vision - the 'NOW that could exist with *Homo Sapiens*' - when we do leave off the one, and institute the other - Who makes the first move? Must all occur through attrition of grandfatered abominatios? Must all the  $\Omega$ ucking bastards die off first? Their decrees (Fortresses) must precede them.

OR - do we yield to the awful probability of not doing anything that requires WILL-EFFORT? What can we propose besides the nothingness this, and the ensuing attrition promises? Are we merely to stand idly by, with our mouths open, passively observing our own Death, and the Death of our companions, those other forms of life; what else would you call this acquiescent non-existence? Must we also be the unwitting agent of our dubious and colorless departure? A complaisant non-event are thee? An adjunct smothered in Asphalt? Your One And Only Life converted into a STANDARD OF LIVING. NOT YOUR OWN!!

The Annihilation of Yesterday.