

## ***Pitter Patter***

One thing leads to the next; following Marie.  
Some reason to write.

Father.

He who begat.

The Son of the father writes (at age 70). Finally, a chapter dedicated to Him.

With a father like mine, Jesus never stood a chance; though often invoked when the hammer missed the nail.

At my advanced age I sense little ambivalence in my feelings with regard to Him. Most of my feelings are negative. Up front, close and personal, father belittled me. If I had happened to accomplish anything that might reflect 'glory' upon Him, he would never communicate this 'glorious' aspect of my being to me. After all, any good that came of me was merely a reflection of 'His' genius. In that regard, he would have you believe he harbored few conceits.

'Genius' became a preoccupation in father's vocabulary, almost as a talisman which he found difficult not to apply to himself, despite his self-conscious denials to the contrary; often these anointed ones are outcasts during their own lifetime.

I don't know specifically to what father attributed all the bad that surrounded me. 'America' in a nut shell, without being characterized as a nut case. Mother's genes never became an issue; one might guess father would not admit his chase after the parts (so-called 'other half'), or his inclination to procreate. He thought his parents an unlikely pair, as I thought my parents an unlikely pair, and as the biological parents of my children proved to be. Begetting was achieved, none the less.

For a time I lived with the thought that father might indeed be a 'genius'. It wasn't because he ran around acting like a 'genius'. It was because I did not know any better. Better what? 'I knew from nothing'.

Father was a survivor. He somehow accrued a coterie of admirers, both sexes, the women outnumbered the men, who kept him afloat (with assorted professions of love).

Living so close to the animal, I was not a real admirer, but one forced into admiration by admiring his admirers admiration; and by constant berating. Father banged so hard on the 'artist' drum it was impossible to ignore; harder to ignore than a nun ignoring the devil. Anybody who was an 'artist' was really 'sumthin'. It was clear to me that I was 'nuthin'; 'protoplasm' might have very accurately described me. When you live around an 'artist' who is also a 'genius', somebody drunk on himself, you are in for a lot of UI

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abuse, abuse, in this case, amounting to indifference at best, and clear annoyance on a regular basis; and sometimes as a whipping boy, the rest of the time.

NOW, I need to say that I retain strong feelings toward father, bordering on hatred. Having found someone to love in my own life has alleviated the polar nature of hatred. Replacement therapy, not removal. Father was not entirely a psychopath, although much of what he was fits that notion; at least pathologically afflicted by 'demons', mostly of his own invention, grandiosity chief amongst them. I can say these things as one who has also lived with the demons he created within me. Yes! I have created my own demons as well, grandiosity being amongst them.

Fathers and Sons. I too have a son, and father had a father. (Hamlet also had a father). (Oedipus had a father). Not incidentally, I have a brother. Pretty fucked-up brother, I might add. In saying this I reflect upon the offspring of Eugene O'Neill. Its not an unkind thing to say that one's brother is fucked-up, especially since he was fucked-up by father. My brother, a student of psychology, would admit he was abused by a parent, maybe by both parents. As a professional psychologist and counselor, he would apply acronyms to others as a matter of course; psychological niches, as they were, mostly reflecting dysfunctional syndromes. He became an expert witness before the court. He was a master of the jargon used in psychology, often as pertained to children fucked-up by their parents and society, all in conjunction with custody matters before the court, when two begetters couldn't stand each other any more; and decided to split the proceeds and the responsibilities (offspring – tentacles of love).

Somewhere 'blame' enters the picture. 'Blame' exists because of things that happen to us through a process of inculcation. We are taught to live by a certain code, a set of principles and ethics (righteous morality) if you will, mostly incorporated into the Golden Rule. Prescribed manners and behavior (social graces) are considered part of the code. If we accept the code, we live with certain constraints upon ourselves, and certain expectations with regard to others.

If father was put to the test he might 'blame' his father for his deficiencies with regard to the code. Without beatifying myself, I have sought more to understand than to 'blame' my father for my deficiencies. My son, more than likely, would be the most recriminatory, with regard to blaming his father, much of which I would understand, and some of which would not be misplaced; but I realize as well the convenience of my guilty position (my son will have to suffer with the knowledge of the memory of the times **he** chose to dodge a commitment). My brother, underneath it all,

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'blames' father for most of his deficiencies; and in some ways sees his mother as a co-conspirator. When one expects love to answer his perceptions of it, he can come away with very defeated expectations. The definition of 'family' seems unclear in its apportionment of 'love'. We all might benefit from our lack of fulfillment in this department by supplying a different example; not that to which we were exposed, but that which we desired.

There are so very many people who did not have my father as their sire; and so very many with whom he never had any contact; they cannot 'blame' their deficiencies upon Him. Many with whom he had contact only saw what daddy wanted to show.

Having deficiencies as a social animal is a naturally occurring phenomenon, without assigning any blame.

I do not know upon whom I can heap the blame for my deficiencies. I might conjecture we are all deficient in some way.

Being physically deficient became more of a preoccupation with me than mental deficiency, for example. For the young male in our system of 'values', it was rumored, without substantiation, that having a certain penis size was considered a vital asset in making ones way through the world of the female. Besides the size one needed stamina and physical endurance, rhythm, and a saintly self-control, if he ever expected to bring the female to a satisfying orgasm through the act of coitus, screwing, or fucking. Such an act was considered good form, and something of which to be proud (in a Masters and Johnson sort of way {one wonders how much screwing M and J did to get it right}). I was and still am convinced I am physically deficient, despite all the assurances of a loving and indulgent spouse; and regardless of the pleasure generated through inadequacies. Question, if one is bigger, does he get more enjoyment? And just as importantly does he provide more enjoyment? The Pope's ears are burning, and some of his brethren are itching. And many Afro-Americans are chuckling. 'Sex' is a 'big thing' in our culture. Sex has to do with animal prowess.

I suffer from the 'comparison syndrome', even though I read somewhere that 'comparisons are odious'. We are all affected by that syndrome; its what makes us what we are; mirrors of one another, a bunch of muthafuckas.

To return to the 'code' and 'blaming'. If we ascribe to the code, whether through fear or better sense, we also live with certain expectations with respect to others whom we assume have also been exposed to the code. We do assume that all our 'classmates, and 'playmates', and social mates, have received the same message, either through teachings, by example, or through osmosis.

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We might assume the code applies to our parents, that is, the same code their generation, and they themselves, are preaching and teaching us. Parents and teachers are different than ones classmates, playmates, and social mates; (Peers, peering at one, and, at whom one peers); they can be arbitrary with regard to the application of the code. No big deal, we learn to live with diminished expectations; but not without some misgivings; and bitterness (hypocrisy galls us, turning our insides rancid).

Father might include in his *autobis* (which he willed and sent to me, failing to find anyone else to take up the baton) that when his mother died, he lost the love of his life, but he did not include the fact that he fucked my estranged heartthrob Sonja. Rather he told my first wife that he fucked Sonja; I think by that time, my f. wife was getting pretty leery of getting fucked by another Durchanek, although, by that time, she might have been tempted to humiliate me in some way. There were others who were trying to fuck my first wife; in her disappointment with me, and her enduring level of frustration, she couldn't refrain from flirtations that could easily have led to fucking; some of my 'friends', in search of a place to put their unconscionable member, would be a walking advertisement for themselves. "Hell man, what the fuck!"

In ways I find I am like my father; ways that disturb me, ways that are imitative, smug, complacent, reflecting certain conceits, as though every word uttered were cast from some all-knowing wise person. There is the manner of delivery, the cuteness, the smart-assedness, and sustained level of bullshit that detracts from what it is that one is trying to say; and that ever present grandiosity. I am inclined to 'free association' in my delivery, often attempting to relate unrelated things, simply because they randomly sometimes irrelevantly appear (somehow relevant in my brain), by suggestion, by impulse, by wile, by guise; all to reinforce and sustain my monologue on the platform (the stage). Therein lies the rib.

I recognize this state of affairs when reading something father has written, feeling repulsed by the innuendoes, the associations that do not bear upon the subject at hand. At such times I want to escape, yet it is important for me to see the truth of things, not so much to say we are all alike in this, but to be motivated to strive unswayed by cleverness to forever pursue the admittedly elusive 'truth', and perhaps strive toward that *bête noir*, ART. Not to lapse into unconsciousness. Unconsciousness in this case might be the resonant echoes of father's delivery; the convenient and easy way out.

I have often tried to imagine a sister instead of a brother, or, in addition to a brother. I can imagine how father might have 'messed

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with her head'. There is a good chance she might have been beautiful. Never know, having such a child might have transformed father into a different person, a different kind of father, an indulgent, caring parent. She might not have been a burden, an annoyance, something from which to extract labor. Never know, never know. But if she showed independence of spirit and mind, as my mother (made of pretty tough stuff, however little in stature) was forced to become, forced to become through a constant belittling, disparagement, whether implicit or explicit, father might do to her what he had done to mother.

Whenever father wanted to dematerialize me he would call me a 'moron'. Surely I had an image in my head of what a 'moron' might consist. A lot of the time he just didn't want to deal with a dumbass annoyance like me. Maybe he would not have felt the same way about a daughter, a girl, a young female, especially if she had been beautiful. But I can envision the day he would feel a need to put her down, to control her spirit and her thoughts, her self-image, when he would call her a 'cunt', when he would say 'stand 'em on their heads and they all look alike'. To father, the most vulnerable area of another person existed below the belt line. And the day would arrive when she would be the recipient of the grand putdown, almost like a sermon from the mount: "Find 'em, Fuck 'em and Forget 'em"! The chauvinistic male superiority gig, middle-European authoritarian Catholic, like Moses and his chattel.

At least one woman was spared, the daughter he never begot.

Yes!, I have a daughter. I do not understand our relationship too much beyond the begetting. If it was not for Charline, my only seemingly successful relationship to the female, I might feel totally bereft of any significant association with the female.

I wanted a 'good' relationship with my daughter. I somehow understand that I intimidated her, a basic fear, of what, I do not know. If she ever spoke to me in a declarative manner it would be to assure me that I did not understand her. Very often tears were another of her ways of communicating. Perhaps tears of frustration and love. But her father was a very complicated love object. One which she chose to deny and from which she chose to be separated. I declare now, just in case she ever should read this, that I had no desire to dominate her, to control her or molest her. I desired only a meaningful conversation with her. I wanted her to trust my love for her. Even after she had a child of her own, she could not envision my love of her in the same manner she loved her own child. Perhaps it never occurred to her. She did not like to hear of such juxtapositions or comparisons. Her love was much purer, and full of GOD. *Ex eunt!*

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One lives with his memories.

Father is not around to defend himself, as soon I will not be around to defend myself, and so on and on and on.

I want my daughter Cassandra to know that whenever she was ill, her father spent sleepless nights full of anxiety. Yes!, mythically, she was 'daddy's little girl'. And still is. How my daughter can separate herself from, or deny such ready-made love is beyond the comprehension of her father.

Sometimes one lives with perplexing agonizing memories; then just dies.

I cannot hate my daughter, whereas I can hate my father. My daughter was never cruel to me, never belittled me, never hit below the belt. She wanted God to love me and me to love God. God might have saved the day. When it came time for her and her erstwhile philandering husband/mate to appoint a guardian for their child in a will that would execute their wishes in case of their demise, and should their girl child survive them in her dependency, they named another Christian God couple. That Christian couple split as did my daughter and her erstwhile philandering Promise Keeping Toastmaster, married in GOD husband/mate; just like the philandering Bible College graduate, who lived across the street, the one with the pretty red-headed wife, and with a girl child, with whom Cassandra formed a Christian loving relationship when she was a teenager, and upon whom my son had a crush. Even God Christians have their problems. Since my daughter and I do not communicate, I cannot know if she ever reflects upon all these wonderful happenings beyond some dire imprecations (prayers) to God, asking for forgiveness, for for for forgiveness. Stutterers and stammerers we all be (Herman Melville in Mardi).

Stu stu stumbling far a field as well as stttt stttt errriiiiing.

Reading extant letters written to father after his *fire*, which cover a less than four year period, before his death, all previous letters consumed in *flames* (What a loss, what a loss, for him), I find the lonely stranded, striving, sometimes broken on the rack of life and living, females, pouring out their hearts to him; these letters he saved. He saved adulation letters. He even saved the ones written by me, which were anything but friendly and worshipful. I don't know whether there are conspicuous absences in these missives, especially from his longtime friend, the psychiatrist. There were none from my mother, or brother. But there were references to communications from them, and others, written in his dairies covering that same period.

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After father's death there were voices coming my way regarding 'retrospectives', from people whose names I recognized from the past.

Somehow these letters and diaries came into my hands through the named, though not legal, executor, a friend of father's.

The diaries are self-conscious leavings from the white-haired guru. Yes! there are some meditations free from the above stigmatization. And the eternal quest for love (the female!). But also there are many statements full of condemnation toward his family for abandoning him, declamations against mother in the suit of Jocasta, and I wearing the mantle of the great Oedipus, swollen foot. Father's demons! Unleashed for posterity? Crazy man. The man who understood the longsuffering female. Maybe so, maybe so, selectively. A route to the prize? The lesser one, that satisfies some animal passion upon which we heap our all, forsaking family, friends, and reputation. Then to drown it all in alcohol, nicotine and drugs, obliterating the consciousness of wrong, the violation of the 'code'. Still they clung to him, or so he imagined, then doubted, then imagined again, then doubted again.

I did not cling to him. Could not think of him with much beyond a righteous vengeance.

Yet, I did try to understand the relationship, both up close, and as an abstraction. Up close does not imply any intimacy, because to become intimate with father was to become devoured by a monster. As an abstraction, any piece of information might be considered relevant, something to place on the scales, whether or not to be understood.

Yes! everyone should have their due. Doo doo.

I cannot be 'objective', 'as the saying goes'. Father would rightfully have some claim on my soul because of my preoccupation with 'artistic' endeavors. Without a doubt I have a great need for some form of 'self-expression', as doubtlessly did father. Father somehow succeeded in arriving at the denouement of 'recognition', a condition he sought, almost pathologically. An end in itself realized. I cannot disclaim some objective of 'recognition'. I cannot purify my thoughts in this matter by saying bad things about father's quest. So, father had his day. He wore the mantle variously as did many who had achieved some notoriety, not all to the good. One could only fall from the heights, something Man does quite easily. Father failed to maximize his vantage point. He, like many others, wiser and stupider, uttered 'All is vanity'. And shallow it is, 'vanity'; we do not go ga-ga over the self-inflated, the substance lost in the balloon. Father attempted to sustain himself on the heights with alcohol, nicotine and drugs. Alcohol to induce oblivion, nicotine as an oral fixation, and drugs

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to get the motor running after the other two had run it out of gas. He had help from his friends, many of whom supplied the booze, others, the drugs. Nicotine he carried with him like a lollipop. The muse became lost somewhere in the adulation, habit unable to carry the load.

It all missed me; a tough act to follow.

It was more a comfort than a disappointment for father to think of me as a 'moron'. As a comfort he would have little inducement to spend any time with a vacancy. As a disappointment, he might have to indulge me in some way. A 'moron' such as I was an individual who would not outright deny the place he was born, in my case, the USA. A 'moron' was an individual who would choose athletic over intellectual pursuits. A 'moron' was an individual who would associate with the likes of the village idiots. A 'moron' was by definition an individual whose brains were located in his peepee. Father was one of those people who had an excess of brains where a goodly amount could reside in his organ, while having plenty left over for the ordinary activities of a 'genius'.

When recalling this exposure to such damnation and prejudice from the acclaimed wise man, it all being so wrong, does cause revilement so strong as to be corrosive. I don't really want to think of all those who associated with father in some worshipful way as 'morons', because they couldn't 'see him for what he really was'.

If one is to form an emotional attachment to a parent, how awful when it is full of hatred and revulsion. Being a reasonable person, I want to find the redemption in his 'being what he was'. The redemption offered is a 'product', an *objet d'art*. A thing that contains 'feelings', perhaps disguised as empathy (saving mankind from the man-eating monster), or compassion (for others; remote others; abused damsels in distress and in need of rescue; a noble pursuit). There was no other prospect for redemption. Was his 'being what he was' a plausible reason for my becoming a sacrifice? Only a very few suspected the resultant impact on the family. But being loyal friends, they would find ways to implicate the family as the cause of their own sorrowful condition. The psychiatrist friend who really did know that there was an impact preferred to provide little psychological insights into family member's relationships rather than warn of the repercussions of tyranny. Father would feed on the 'insights' which in reality were bogus terminological copouts; ways of pigeonholing, that relieved father of any responsibility for his thoughts and actions.

To me, the reasonable one, appears the impasse, the stalemate. As much as I might want to find a way of accepting and forgiving, I cannot. As much as I might want to find a way to deny this person,



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I cannot. It is safe to say I do not love him. I no longer fear him. If seeking and finding vengeance would relieve me of this quandary, then I would welcome it. Reasoning with myself has become unsatisfactory. Closure will come with my death.

Fortunately for me, and perhaps not so fortunately for Charline, a woman, Charline, changed patterns of thought in my life. I did not question what I felt for her; I simply reveled in the feelings. Those feelings seemed natural, and gave 'reason-to-be' a new meaning. While secretly, and sometimes openly, I would doubt my self, Charline would always affirm my existence, as I was affirming hers. Truly I did not understand how anyone could love me, as I had such great difficulty loving myself. An attribution I lay at father's feet. While 'moron' is only a word that in the least requires definition and context, neither of which were given, I was left to imagine the worst. When a parent, toward whom one looks for something, especially approval, brands him with such a epithet, he can fight the parent, demanding definition and context, or he can shrink into himself. If the child has no real measure of his worth, how would it be possible to take any kind of action?

Father could not be completely unaware of my resentment of his judgments. He might wonder what retribution I was secretly harboring, if he thought of me at all. Father couldn't call me a 'moron' when I was involved in some drudge project requested (insinuatingly demanded) by him. I might spend a whole summer with pick shovel and wheelbarrow engaged in the removal of the hardpan alongside the house, perhaps on the promise of a nickel a wheelbarrow. It was a great triumph for me when he failed to pay me, because then I had something on him which I could secretly harbor. The great man was a cheat, made of softer clay than on that which I plied my labors.

When I mentioned that father could not have been completely unaware of a resentment, he could certainly have imagined that his violations of a 'code' were culpable. He might naturally feel some kind of guilt that might induce an expectation of some form of retribution for the violation of the code. In order to defuse the expected assault, father would choose the negative path, perhaps the pathological psychopathic path. He might use his artistic talents in a mean way, which he actually did, by depicting a child dancing on a parents coffin, or he might make a remark like, 'society frowns on parricide'. No, he was not unaware of some things. He would put the onus of guilt on the other party, on his child, or on the person who stood in the way of father's machinations. I don't recall ever having the urge to do father in; perhaps I feared a failure of such a project, as to prevent the thought from occurring; or I might have feared the repercussions

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in the event of success. But I never envisioned his removal as a solution. My son revealed his own thoughts on the matter between us. Without telling me what he resented, he made his resentment known through sullenness, and various provocations directed toward Charline, his stepmother. With his biological mother he was king of the hill behind her defensive line and her attacks on me, some of which he provoked. A survivor in an environment not created by him, and not bettered by his presence, but a participant in his own way. I feel guilt in my lack of indulgent parenting, but I do not feel I deserve only retribution for my lacks, or the convenient focus of blaming for other people's lacks. The environment created through my first marriage was a seldom pleasant one. The punch line in this diversion from my father was my son's remark one day as a teenager when he let his feelings be known regarding his deep resentment, and his desire for revenge: "At least I didn't burn the house down". He might have said: "At least I didn't beat the shit out of your wife". The depth of the resentment outweighs the depth of the guilt. Knowing I was a poor parent by some standards, I feel I could have done more as a parent without having accepted those standards. For this I have regrets; but every ounce of flesh exacted or paid for the perceived failure lessens the regret.

With my father, as I grew older, and more distant, and more sure of my worth as an object of another's affections, I was able to diminish him. Part of the diminishment was to ignore him as a thing needing ignoring. Perhaps a flaw in my character. It was not clear what I owed father as my primogenitor.

It may seem unreasonable to hate him now, now that he is not here to make a case for himself, that he is not here to know the hatred for what it is and what might be its cause. His feeling of self worth based on his grandiose pursuits would find his culpability for the manner of the payment of a long overdue debt might not stand the challenge. I would want the debt paid in full, not the wheelbarrow debt; the 'moron' debt. Of course he could not pay it, not even with heartfelt remorse; I am not anxious to forgive the pain inflicted by the adult, aware enough to mock the sentiments of the child as he envisioned the child dancing on his coffin.

For me the hatred must stand, and the measure of my humanity thereby revealed. We exact a penalty for crimes of commission, that is, crimes that violate one code. Those crimes usually involve property and unwarranted assaults upon others. Even bullying is considered a reprehensible action. But these crimes are external to the family. Those implicit crimes committed within the family go mostly unpunished because fear rules the roost; and most actions occur behind closed doors where any

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witnesses are compromised and intimidated. The crimes are usually personal, they are damaging in ways not measurable by external standards, which are clear cut. Committing crimes in that external world may earn one a reputation as a chronic malfeasant; and taint one for life if he or she remain in the community. Like the individual who has moved away from the place, the community will remember him for what he was, father cannot escape my memories. And here I mark him for what he was.

Do we define ourselves by asking ultimate questions, questions that arise outside our comfort zone? When one is starving, and one is reduced to the dead bark of trees, would he or she eat of flesh in order to survive, even though a member of PETA? FATHER is a title to be worn. Does one behave like one's own father? Is that our only survival technique? FATHER survives in a world of unclear objectives.

I only somewhat contrast this environment and these circumstances with those of Charline, who, to this day, feels drawn to her parents in a way that defies my experience. However, she is still the child. The tenor of the discussions is always set by the parent. The prejudices of the parent are of the moment to assure peace. The child assumes the anonymous position of one who loves expectantly; but none the less feels loved even if the expectations are not fulfilled. Those expectations are natural enough, to be given equal voice; not just to be tolerated as a child of love, but to part of the realer meaning of life. She only suspects that when her father was overseas in the great good war that he fell into the arms of another. She only suspects what her mother felt when she learned of his fall from grace. She is unable to raise the subject with either for fear of a silent refusal. Her parents would only discuss their physical pains or the pains caused them by the neglect by their children. Their concealed parts are sacred and inviolable.

It goes without saying it is a good thing that father and Charline never met or exchanged words. Father telephoned once, actually the only time he ever telephoned, during the period when Charline and I were getting together, only to reach a lady friend of Charline's who was temporarily staying at my official place of residence. Without learning to whom he was speaking he wasted no time launching into the individual, whom he had assumed was Charline from the female tenor of the voice. He was full of accusation and recrimination for breaking up his son's family. You would have to know father in order to appreciate the full extent of the irony and the hypocrisy involved in this attack. It is my opinion that there was nothing well-meaning in this one and only telecommunication.

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In other writings I have used father as the straight man, the butt of 'one liners', sniping with my banderillas. Occasionally I would depict him as the exemplary man, the one who lived the part of the outcast, and died an outcast, not particularly ennobled by the allusion to the sound of the distant drummer. That was the limit of the extent of a more positive acknowledgement. All other references lean toward the negative, to bring the man down, or toward the final thrust of the sword. One cannot become so engaged without preparing himself for the same spectacle.

The particulars of my resentment broaden out from the issue of 'moron'; they become the memory of the manipulations of the 'moron', and the laughing at the 'moron' (the dupe; the father's utilization of the dope). I was the recipient. Even if I could envision father as 'sick', in reality a psychopath, I cannot escape the core feeling of resentment. I resent having my person being negated by someone to whom I helplessly looked for acknowledgement, both as an individual and as a life.

To imagine father as a psychopath is only to imagine an excuse for something basically incomprehensible; searching for some reason to 'forgive', to exonerate. It is probably true that I cannot and do not wish to forgive or in the least mitigate the harshness of my desire for vengeance. All the while knowing that the vengeance only momentarily provides a solution. It might be of interest to know if father knew, and demoniacally, sadistically, pursued, a course of action that would in the end result in the very condition that exists in me; the excoriated soul scarred by him everlastingly. Did he know? From his own experience, did he have a clue; did his psychiatrist friend ever give him a clue?

It was convenient for father to envision me as Oedipus. Perhaps he desired his mother, in an infantile sort of way. A clue. I will not defend myself against something that does not exist. As much I might understand and appreciate the insights of psychology (the purported 'science' of the psyche), I cannot view the world of human relationships in terms of the mechanics of psychology. I am more inclined to support the illusion that the human mind is capable of reasoning to the degree that the Golden Rule, however much awareness is necessary to function under the aegis of that Rule, is, and does, imply some kind of control over our wilder emanations. That is to say we are to be held accountable, even when it seems we cannot be held accountable. I can be very expansive (not forgiving necessarily) in my inclusions of notions as you would discover if you would read other of my writings, particularly those dealing with the concept of 'the purpose of life'.

How would this bear on the male child forever desiring the mother and the need for that child to kill the father, a la Oedipus

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and Hamlet? Is one to be held accountable for following this life course to its conclusion? Oedipus victimized himself by blinding, and Hamlet got his just deserts. If every male child is so traumatized, it is no particular wonder the psychological implications of failure of human civilizations. If they are built upon on such basic psychological premises; the rocks of the ages become crumbling pith. Then we must consider Electra, the female child. If the entire compass of human kind is afflicted with such desire for the parent, do we really have a credible notion of our purpose on this planet in this space/time continuum?

If the desire to which we allude produces offspring, are not the inbred implications known to us? How poor a conceptualization then this lust for the parent, when the result is impuissance, dilution, dementia, hemophilia, and unlikely survivorship.

The absurdity grows by leaps and bounds; and conjures evolution as some kind of horrible nightmare. Even as blind as evolution has to be perceived, can any reasonable person perceive the 'purpose' of the process to produce monsters. Was Tyrannosaurus Rex fucked up by his love for his mother; was his extinction predicated on this inborn flaw?

Lets question our assumptions, however much of a strain that will place upon our feeble intellects. To posit Oedipus and Electra as a psychological imperative seems so limiting as a model for any form of existence, but for an intelligent species contradicts its own basic taboo on incest. From whence came the taboo? Is there an innate 'switch' that prohibits this disjunction.

Or perhaps the whole psychological premise is inverted; it is really the desire of the parent for the child, hence the taboo on incest. One wonders on the percentage of brother/sister concupiscent relationships and what kind of numbers produce offspring. From there we move on to cousins. Presumably contraception is a solution for the incestuous.

Possessiveness of a love object. A mother, a father, a son, a daughter, a sister, a brother, a cousin, a mate, an estranged mate. Security in possession. An obsession? The love one feels is tainted by a distorted psyche. The work of the devil!

I cannot know father's motivation in introducing me to a young couple, mostly my age. The male had been rather drastically crippled by polio. He was an artist (a painter, draughtsman, and budding sculptor). He was particularly enamored of the female form as subject matter for his creations. Father did not regard his work very highly; thought them too sensual, and bordering on calendar art, however much skill was displayed. The female was a beautiful buxom, tallish, lithe, long haired blond, who did not particularly flaunt her sex, but could not have been unaware of the

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appreciative glances. One can imagine her husband was not unaware of those appreciative glances.

I can imagine my father, the kind of predatory philandering creature he was, finding the way to her 'heart'. Which he eventually did, until it became obvious he was in too deep. I think that this was when I was brought into the picture; not only just because I had happened to be there. A triangle that father wanted to reshape; that was my later assumption. Yes!, I visited them on my own, and found them of compatible interests. I enjoyed their company, and didn't refrain from admiring the beauty of the female; not overtly, or in any manner that suggested ill-conceived notions. That was father's department, 'in spades'. As an artist he depicted the polio victim astride his mate as a skeleton in the act of copulation. As you can see, father was very sympathetic. How his predatory sympathy found its way to a desired object is unknown, but a letter was sent or given to me some time during those early years, from her to him, that revealed the degree of their involvement. 'Running away together' had been broached, until, for father, I'm sure, it registered "Where to?", for which there could be no answer. Father no doubt never really discussed their running; most likely he got cold feet; and his cold feet caused her to think more seriously about the implications of deserting her mate. She wanted to do the 'right thing', the 'good thing'. That should have sufficed for father. He was less interested in doing the 'right thing' or the 'good thing' than in getting away from the clutches of the female, a little extracurricular fucking become burdensome.

Not knowing father in reality, only suspecting a knowledge of him, I can imagine his novel pleasure in manipulating and maneuvering his son, why his son, Yes! why his son, into a possible reconstruction of his triangle. He had already possessed her; as nice as she was to look at, she was after all another female, you know what they are [the recipient of the three f's) , and one to soon become discarded. The father did not know the son. The son was timid, he hardly knew the implications of messing around, although he had had his own brief tempestuous relationship with a married woman, from which he ran as though scalded like a cat. Like father, like son? Not entirely, although attracted to the lovely woman. Some things are seemly and some things are unseemly. When one knows the partner and truly empathizes with him, it is unseemly to take advantage of his weaknesses, which in this case called for more than simple empathy, but a reaching out to help; and not by trying find a way into his spouse's pants; that would be unseemly. Of course it's a weighted proposition, however unseemly.

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I don't know the part played by the female in this case. Father in his uncontrollable volubleness concerning the psychological implications of human relationships divulged that his psychiatrist friend, in whom he confided this relationship, had indicated it was 'like taking candy from a baby'. She must have made known her frustration in some manner, her utter distress in she and her husband's changed relationship after the polio. 'Candy'? (whom father had called 'Angela', after his mother). (It might be of import to mention that father at this time was 54 and she was 25). Father also operated with other knowledge imparted to him by the friendly analyst, that the polio of that kind also crippled the heart, thus would shorten by some appreciable margin his lifespan. Unfair competition daddy; and an easy piece of candy. Why me daddy? A joke? By inclination a jerk? Did she really deserve a jerk? Sorry daddy, with me she observed nothing but propriety; she could be clean and upright with me, where she had fallen with you; lucky her! She trusted her heart to you and you turned her into a fucking female. More 'grist for the mill', daddy? She fell for you daddy; may that comfort you, enhance your conceits, and save you from perdition. With her, it was love, daddy, no matter how much you choose to mock it. To you it was a conquest, another pair of thighs; to her, a noble sacrifice of principles for love. Love of a hyena.

The letter to which I referred has all the echoes of the letters I received from Charline when she and I were in our awful throes. Echoes of love and sacrifice, and desire not to hurt others, especially me. Candy? The pursuit of pleasure? Would any of it stand the test of time? 'Angela' was aware that it needed to stand the test of time. Each day that passed, each day that passed. Proximity waned; Neruda telling us that, with the passing of each day, the love object grows smaller. Father had escaped. But my mother eventually squared accounts.

One thing Charline had written me when she had become momentarily resigned to her fate of remaining with her husband, she attempted to console me by writing: "Do you want to give this a poetic romantic ending of sweet parting of lovers? That would give relief – be noble – you would have the memory and your ego would feel good because I do love you and I gave myself to you." I did not escape. We did not escape. Yes!, others were abandoned in the wings, or 'left in the dust'; 'love' (one kind of love) overcoming guilt.

Its easy enough to dwell on father's philanderings, as though they were marks against him. Its easy enough to dwell on his attitude toward me as a matter of pure condemnation.

Others saw him differently. Some of them probably didn't know the full extent of his philanderings; he reserved his bragging rights

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for me or for my first wife. I try to imagine the attraction he held for others. Maybe it only seems he had a coterie of admirers. Perhaps only a mutual admiration society, when convenient, or when in need. I don't know how it is that one can assume every friendly encounter with a female should end in copulation. And perhaps every encounter with a male an intellectual screwing.

Being far more solitary in my own existence, and fortunate enough to have Charline in my life, and somehow conditioned, perhaps by father, not to really expect anything from others, I seem to avoid both kinds of screwings. Oh! Yes! there are flirtations with both. I seem to have truly escaped to this septuagenarian plateau where I am able to contemplate my end in relative ease. I can even luxuriate in all my 'what ifs?' as a form of titillating mesmerization. I can look upon life as a series of caroms that have missed being collisions. Of course, there will be the final inescapable collision.