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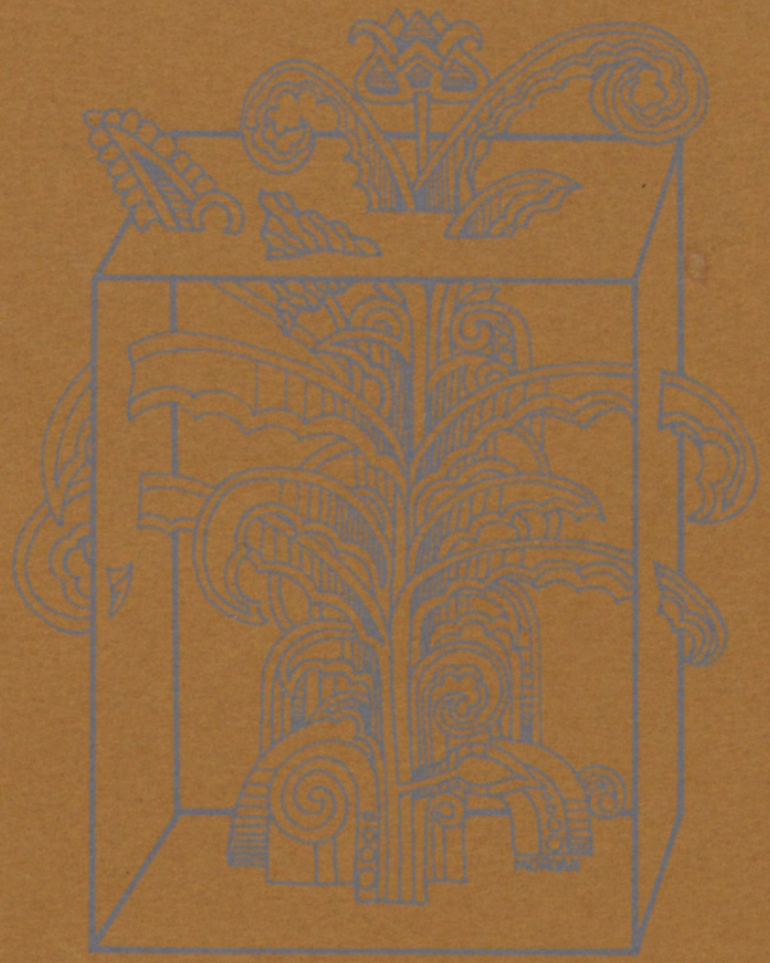


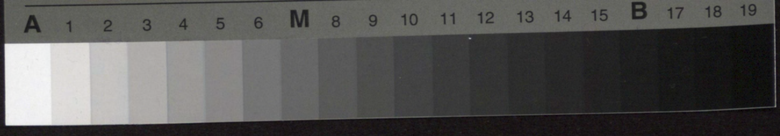
A TRIBUTE TO

Ellen Cohen

"Beyond the Square"

A TRIBUTE TO

Edwin Colman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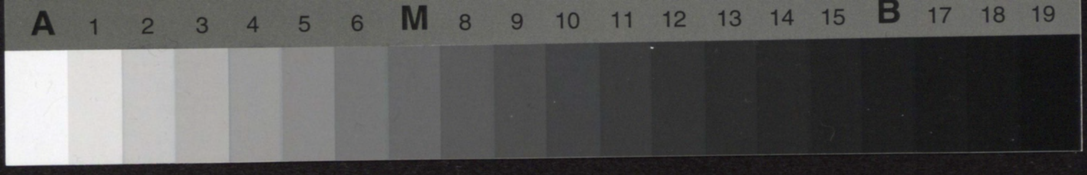
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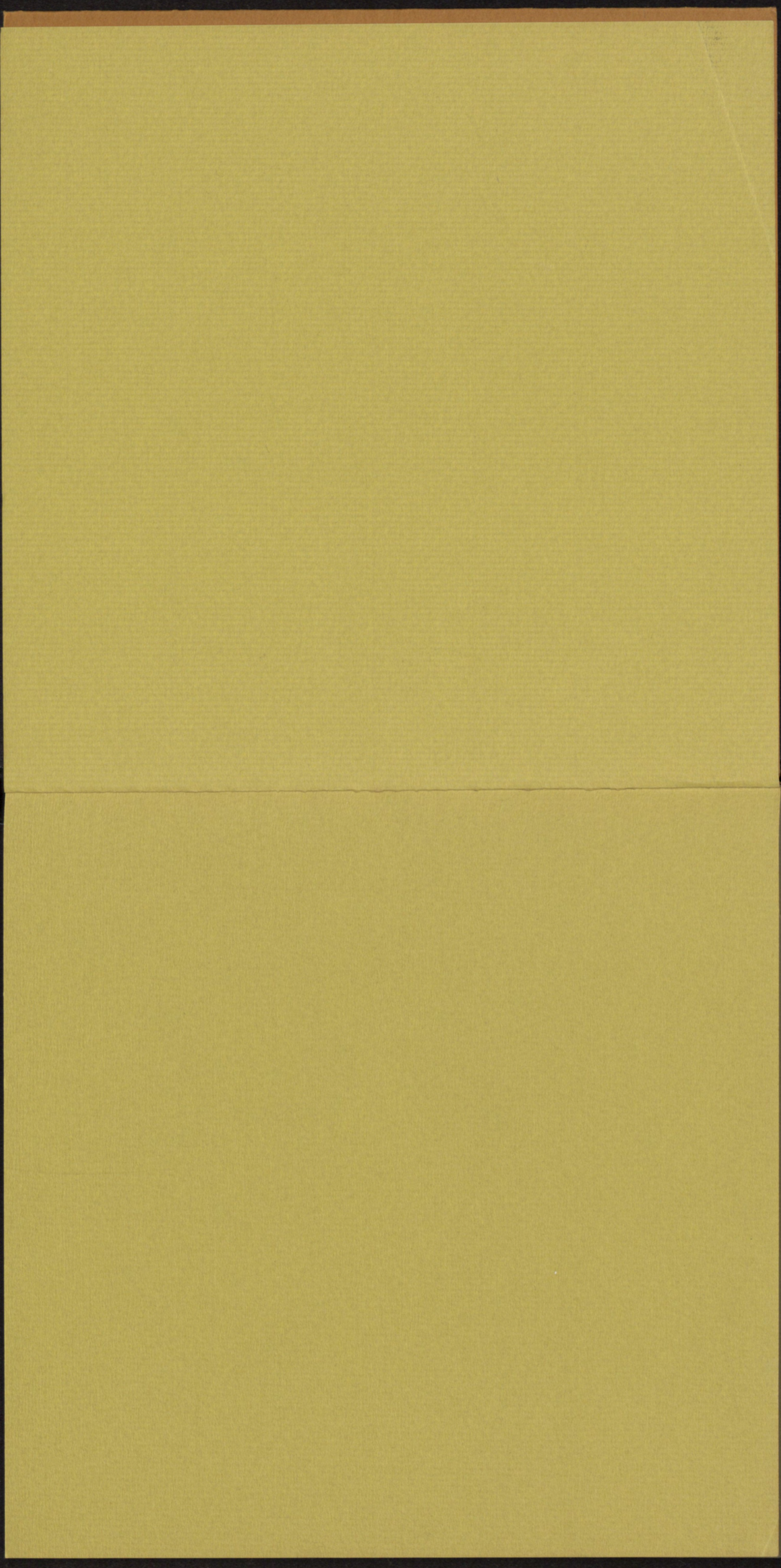

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AMY SAVAGE

BEYOND THE SQUARE A TRIBUTE TO ELLIOTT COLEMAN

Edited by Robert K. Rosenburg

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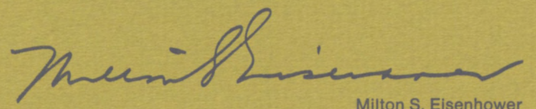
Professor Elliott Coleman—poet, critic, teacher—is one of the most valuable and respected members of The Johns Hopkins University faculty. He is not easy to know, and I'm not aware of any conscious effort on his part to achieve acceptance by students or peers, yet his students openly proclaim their adoration of him as an inspiring teacher, a gentle human being, and a treasured friend. The faculty, recognizing the eminence of the Writing Seminars which he has graced for a quarter of a century, recommended him for a full professorship, one of the few times in the history of the University that this high rank has been conferred upon one who does not have the usual advanced degrees.

Successful writers such as John Barth, Louis Rubin, Russell Baker and others speak eloquently of the sensitive guidance, ideas, and inspiration they received in their student association with Professor Coleman, and his books of poetry and literary criticism are permanent testimonials of his creative talent.

I sense that Elliott Coleman sees in people, events, and environments what many of us do not see, and in word images tantalizes us with glimpses of his perceptions.

He is one who ought never cease to teach and write.



Milton S. Eisenhower

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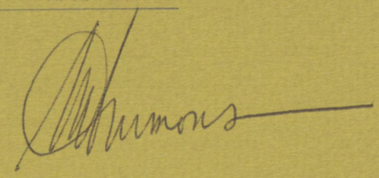
GRACE ABOUNDING

A. R. AMMONS



What is the misery in one that turns one with gladness
to the hedge strung lucid with ice: is it that one's
misery, penetrating there as sight, meets neither

welcome not reprimand but finds nevertheless a picture
of itself sympathetic, held as the ice-blurred stems
increased: ah, what an abundance is in the universe

when one can go for gladness to the indifferent ghastly,
feel alliances where none may ever take: find one's
misery made clear, borne, as if also, by a hedge of ice.

HOW WOULD YOU SAY

LEE ANDERSON

How would you say
What would you say about
The voice of Elliott Coleman?

The voice of this poet
As he reads his poems
Is incandescent.

That may shed some light,
But it is only
Aura and timbre.

Perhaps the best analogue
Is Elliott's own poems, "Roman Light."

To hear Elliott read the "Roman Light" sonnets
Is transcendence.

The voice and the sonnets are one.

Each gives light to the other.

Incandescence.

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VOYEURS AT THE MOVIES

GEORGE BLUESTONE

In 1965, Jonas Mekas, the feisty suzerain of New York's Underground Film, predicted that in ten years time we would have screwing on the screen and that, in the name of artistic freedom and private expression, this would be a good thing. Winning the same freedom for the film that has long since been accorded the novel would have a cleansing effect, would allow the film-maker to explore genital realities that had been restricted to stag movies (a more ancient and profitable Underground than Film Makers Cooperative) or were simply taboo.

Mekas was too pessimistic. Within five years, in examples as various as I AM CURIOUS—YELLOW, FUTZ, WOMEN IN LOVE, DANISH BLUE, SWEET SWEETBACK'S BADASS SONG and CARNAL KNOWLEDGE, the battle has been won. In the oddly blurred arithmetic that seems to govern those dreary endless debates among censors, the camera has won the freedom, inch by hard won inch, like advance scouts in a fire zone, to move from back to butt and so to the thing itself.

I argued then, and argue still, that I hoped the day would come quickly because when frontal nudity and sexual intercourse were as common as kisses, we could get back to judging films as films. And now that we have a shelf full of celluloid on which film-makers have exercised their sovereign rights, we can begin to count the cost of victory. Eros is exiled, pornography is queen. For reasons that may have less to do with the intentions of writers and directors than with the film experience itself, obscenity (no matter how defined) has won out over the richly dark eroticism of old Garbo movies. Garbo was always in love. In pornographic films the partner does not matter.

It will be no news to followers of agit-prop debates about the New Freedom, in everything from THE VILLAGE VOICE to SUCK, that film viewing approximates the conditions of voyeurism. In the solitary darkness, at a distance from the illuminated act, the spectator is like a voyeur at a peep-show. He seeks performance without cost, desire without consequence. He would get the same results with a Masters-Johnson milking machine.

Erwin Straus, in "Shame as a Historiological Problem," makes a useful distinction between the lover and the voyeur. Rejecting the Freudian notion that "Man could be happy if only he could live without shame and disgust," Straus argues that perversions are "modifications of and disturbances in man's communication with the world." The voyeur does not become a voyeur because he has a heightened "urge to look." He "lives continually at a distance," he remains alone, "without a partner, an outsider who acts in a stealthy and furtive manner." His looking is utterly different from the looking of the lover, because the lover moves normally towards approaching and uniting with the partner. The voyeur keeps his distance, and moves away into "looking at," away from some form of human communion.

There is thus a radical difference between voyeurism and normal sexual meeting and encounter. According to Straus, "Objectification is the . . . essentially perverse action of the voyeur . . . Objectification is only possible with a keeping of distance, and . . . it is only the keeping of distance that makes voyeurism possible.

The peculiar mode of existence of the voyeur directs his curiosity towards the sexual organs, the sexual function, and the sexual word, continually in search of both clarity and closeness, whereas lovers search for concealment, half-light, and silence."

If we accept Straus's distinction, we can explain the incredibly glacial coldness of most scenes showing sexual intercourse, for example in Bergman's THE SILENCE and Melvin Van Peeples's SWEET SWEETBACK . . . The film-maker is always stuck with his brand of objectification. There is a telling scene in Van Peeples's film, a brilliant hallucinatory rendering of sexual and racial hang-ups, which typifies the problem. Sweetback, on the run from cops, is taken up by a gang of bike freaks. They give him a chance to escape, but first he will have to prove himself in fair combat. Which will it be? Fighting or fucking? Sweetback chooses fucking.

The gang's leader, who has so far been hidden behind dark goggles, helmet and leather jacket, strips down. Underneath the uniform is Big Mama Bike Girl, the gang's earth mother. The bike freaks form a circle, voyeurs to a man (a grim perversion of communal longing), and watch the sex act in all its jolting detail. Sweetback, an utterly joyless stud, literally uses his sex as a weapon. Like a gun, a knife, a chain, it is another "tool" of combat and escape. At the moment of orgasm, Big Mama Bike Girl cries out, "Sweetback!", as close as the New Freedom can come to the communion of lovers. The name partially redeems the scene because for the moment at least the girl recognizes the agent of her orgasm. But the next minute it is over, Sweetback puts on his hat, the film's fey signature of indifference. They will not meet again.

Sweetback does a lot of screwing, but he is never in love. He performs solely for voyeurs who are damned to the excommunication of those who "live continually at a distance." Plenty of kicks, but no caring. A parade of sex objects, but no affection. I think the peculiar power of the scene (whatever it is, it is not erotic) comes from a kind of triple voyeuristic circus. The bike gang is watching Sweetback. The camera crew is watching the gang. And we in the audience are watching the camera watching the gang watching the intercourse. It is hard to imagine a more voyeuristic prison than this.

I realize of course that Van Peeples has shot a nightmare put-on. He is having a good deal of fun playing the stock image of the black man as stud and criminal against the libidinous fantasies of his audience, black and white. There is a cauterizing anger behind this paradigm of sex and violence. Whitey made Sweetback, so Sweetback does Whitey—the nub of race-sex politics. But the impassioned outcry of New Freedom film-makers is: we want the right to tell it like it is. If SWEETBACK . . . is telling it like it is, then we might as well sink dreamily down beneath the inky waters of Thanatos and give up making films, to say nothing of life. If we are, after winning Jonas Mekas's battle, incapable of imagining and rendering convincing images of sexual and/or political salvation, then the New Freedom will find itself swapping one prison for another, and it won't have the pigs to blame. If you share the white nihilism of Sam Beckett's bums, there is no point in telling the tale. "Getting the message" is falsifying a vision which says there are no messages to get.

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The film-maker's "vision" aside, movie men are left with a dilemma I cannot resolve. Pornography makes voyeurs of us all. It has always puzzled me that when Bergman wants to show joyous sex, as in SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT, he leaves his characters clothed. But when he wants to show the body's damnation, the misery and despair of profane characters, poor doomed envelopes of glands and hair, as in THE SILENCE, then and only then will he allow nudity on the screen. Scandinavian Puritanism? Maybe. But I have come to believe that this configuration in Bergman's work has as much to do with the puzzle of film experience itself.

One of the few recent instances showing sexual salvation occurs in the love scene between Birkin and Gundrun in WOMEN IN LOVE. But there is no genital exposure (in contrast to the brilliantly perverse wrestling match between Gerald and Birkin which, judging from reviews, makes a far more forceful impression). In Birkin-Gundrun's love scene the frame tips lyrically, ferns seem to answer some mysterious call to shield the lovers, as though Ken Russell too senses that their privacy must be protected from the intrusive touch of the voyeuristic public. On film, the cult of orgasm seems to demand sexual apocalypse. And as long as characters of the New Freedom are damned to lovelessness, their murderous dissatisfaction will be attracted to destruction and death. Pornography is Thanatos in disguise.

I would never argue that pornography should be banned, or that matters should be left to vigilantes and state censors. I would still rather take my chances with Van Peeples than with Lord Longford. But I do think we are obliged, as practitioners of the craft, to see and describe accurately what passes before us. The fact remains that viewer and film are locked in a voyeuristic stranglehold. Sexual intercourse on the screen, that ritual of public objectification, will always be masturbatory, driving home a longing of which, at the moment, audience, actor, director are only dimly aware:

Mr. Portnoy, child of Mum,
Jerked his way to Kingdom Come . . .

THE TEACHER

GEORGE BOAS

He did not stand upon a platform behind a lecturn, but sat at a table like a gracious host with his students beside him. His teaching was twofold: exploration and interpretation, always tentative, with "maybe" taking the place of "is." He fully understood the reality of time and accepted mutability as the most natural thing in the world. As it is. In his classes right and wrong turned into sincerity and hypocrisy and one had no impression of being lectured at. He did not transfer information. He brought potential ideas into actuality, ideas which you had no suspicion of possessing. You saw them sprout and grow and flower before your eyes. You knew that you were on the right track when he smiled and that you were wrong by your shame at not having met his expectations. But how you knew this I cannot say.

Soft of voice, gentle of manner the Teacher radiated a light like that of the sun in April. New life began in that light, for it neither burned nor flickered. When the hour was over, it seemed as if the sky were overcast and a chill passed through one.

SUMAN

EDWARD BRATHWAITE

Something is happening out of my eyes
issuing streams and feathers
a bird's wing flaps
leaves glitter

something is flickering out of my loins
prayers, rock-steady tunes, blues
the sunlight stops
hope filters

through thatch, muddy sun-
bonnets, my hands curve like curlews
of vultures, rock, ice, kilimanjaro
kalahari basins of the dead

and I settle on clay.
to have had no iron
known no steel, war-
ships rimming horizon

to have used gold-
weights of chameleons, lizards
bronze slipping from crucible copper

and to choose this nearest
to the flesh
this smear of spirit
daub of god

to have known that from this
clay:
goblets of water
doorways, walls of a home

cool mother of the stone
builder of prayers
to have touched your face
traced centuries

of labouring towards
this: worn
so near the blood
designed so near the heart.

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FEBRUARY: MONTANA

For Simone Weil

WILLIAM BURFORD

Turned from those moralists of either side,
Of private right over public wrong
Or public right over private wrong—

Am submerged like every natural form
That yet raises its head, from the slush
Like thickened blood, of a melting, then freezing
Again winter month, like everything ruined
And growing, the terrible thicket in which
The shattered limbs pile inextricably
On one another, on which we look
As on the blackened pattern of all our slaughters,
The killed, the killing, fallen together—And cannot turn;

As if it were a picture of struggling birth,
Though lying still: so that we turn—The spirit
Would extricate itself, plant icy heel marks up the slope
Of this mountain of rubble now robed with snow,
That exposed is like tumbled coal whole forests
Are dragged away on, that carries faces upturned.

But is there a grove the eyes make out
That stands unbroken upon the crest
Like a troop gathered to itself
Holding some final knowledge of life and death?

That we approach—the roots that hold the
Crumbling perimeter, and do not let it go,
Or yet not before Slowly we see the leaves,
As we approach, take form.

PRONOUNS

ELLIOTT COLEMAN

To the Class of 1971

you
we
you
us
them
they
theirs
him
her
she
he
theirs
yours
now is it
your commencement
your continual commencement
could we call it ours
let's call it ours
let's make it us
all of us

I FEEL THE DARK AROUND ME

SAM CORNISH

I feel the dark around me

The dogs who understand the body
trying to be still

a boy with a roll of rice paper
thinking of death

i feel the dark around me
the bones in a dogs mouth

when i go home
i think of strange leaves
out side of an old church

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FOR ELLIOTT COLEMAN: AN EVOCATION
(For many will say other things) — ROBERT FLOTTEMESCH

This volume which honors Elliott Coleman's retirement from The Hopkins hardly needs, I think, an Invocation. I suppose I could write a paraphrase of a prayer uttered and long-since written down, but I am afraid that my version would be, at best, a parody. However, I do feel that an evocation of sorts is very much in order.

In the Fall of 1946, I walked into the outer office of what was then called the Department of Writing, Speech and Drama, and there met Emily Greenslet, Jack Thompson and Elliott Coleman. My life that day was irrevocably changed; for like the Guardians, those three—lying in wait I like to imagine—laid the groundwork for my conversion.

From the outset, the lines of battle were well-marked between certainty and doubt. All theological inferences aside; still, God never ceases to make use of the Incarnation: the word made flesh dwelling among us, for as creatures we at least try to sustain each other. The Holy Ghost knows us well.

I am still a priest because of Elliott Coleman's patience with me and—hardly a syllogism—thus his encouragement. His spiritual doubts and dark nights have given me what courage I have to continue to engage in spiritual combat.

Knowing him as teacher and friend for twenty-five years—his irascibility, his humor, his kindness, and his doubt have lifted me out of despair and self-pity—I just do not know or cannot be sure that I have ever been able to do the same for him.

But we have shared in that wondrous thing which can and does and often happens in the Church—and here, I must quote from one of his poems, that extended, incredible metaphor, which is filled with grace and truth:

What they are to do there is more dignified and more beautiful
than the May roses of Annapolis
than cumuli over the Chesapeake
than the doorways of certain houses
than the logics of jurisprudence and astrophysics
than the cabbage and turnip rows that catch the surf
than courage or kindness
more, even, than blue baby operations at Hopkins hospital
yes, more beautiful, even, than love between man and woman
and the beauty of a child.

AS SUCH — JOSEPH GALLAGHER

With roses as such the poet is not content.
He must append some words—
greeting, praise, lament for brevity.

With roses as such the priest is not content.
Let them adorn some altar,
be a metaphor of grace. Let thorns say sin.

With roses as such the mystic is not content.
It is a shadow that blooms.
Petals are a mask.

With roses as such Eric seems
content.
On them as they are
he deems his care worthily lavished.

At times I think
were I the Flower Father
intending my roses seriously
I'd be most content with Eric
as such.

COLLAGE OF ECHOES
For Elliott Coleman — ISABELLA GARDNER

I have no promises to keep
Nor miles to go before I sleep.
For miles of years I have made promises
and (mostly) kept them.
It's time I slept.
Now I lay me down to sleep
With no promises to keep.
My sleeves are ravelled.
I have travelled.

NORTH CAROLINA MEETING — JOYCE GRENFELL

I was a late starter with poetry. The arrangement of words on the page often pleased some architectural need for resolution stirring within me, and I also responded to rhyme schemes and narrative ballads; but the essence of poetry wasn't apparent to me. I heard the music but I hadn't yet felt the metaphysical possibility!

I sometimes think late developers get the best of it. The possibilities store up and then—wham! I can pin-point the exact moment when a line of a poem took me into a new dimension I wasn't even looking for.

There's a lecture by A. E. Housman in which he quoted certain lines of poetry that transported him. I remember one was "Weep you no more sad fountains." This line took him into a new place. I made such a journey thirty-six years ago.

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Scene: A country inn, in the mountains of North Carolina.
Time: Early October.

The colours of the American fall had widened my English eyes. I was used to tawny, golden autumns but not this kaleidoscopic brilliance of pinks, scarlets, oranges, magentas and yellows sharp as lemons and all seen against an unbroken stretch of blue sky. At this time of year, the air in that part of North Carolina is scented with pine. This was no "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness"! It was as new as spring in its dazzling clarity.

One crisp, starry night we all went to dine at the local inn, a small friendly place where everyone seemed to know everyone else. The atmosphere was congenial. We sat at small tables and there was red glass and white candles and delicious Southern foods. After we'd eaten we moved to the fireside and the young man with the prematurely white hair—someone said he was a schoolmaster at a place about forty miles away—was asked to let us hear some of his poems.

I wasn't at all sure I'd like this. I wasn't used to poets who spoke their poems. It might be embarrassing at such close range. I shifted uneasily in my arm chair and hope it wouldn't go on for too long. In those days my British side (father) hadn't been fully liberated by my American side (mother).

But it wasn't embarrassing, it was natural and easy and it worked a change in me. I don't now remember any of the poems he said that night but one line remains: "The full moon broken in the oaks." A simple image, with it's bull's eye certainty of touch that startled my imagination and set it moving into poetry; and has kept it moving.

The next day every leaf, blade of grass, face, building, landscape seemed edged in light; every sound rang with meaning. Everything I saw, heard and felt became a poem!

So I am grateful to Elliott Coleman. He was the poet-schoolmaster with the prematurely white hair. He led me into a new dimension.

He is a born teacher as well as a poet and he has proved this in his fruitful years at Johns Hopkins where no age gap has ever had a chance to separate him and his students, for he doesn't operate in time.

I have not always been able to follow him in some of his explorations into poetry. I follow where I can and I know, intuitively, that he has the eye and ear of a poet pioneer. Until I achieve full understanding of his journeys I trust in their validity with confidence.

We have been friends for thirty-six years.

RHODES

RICHARD HART

On Asia's doorstep, Europe's last tag end,
Here the long gallery of time is out of joint
And history, with truth, is in a well.
Surface and shadowed deep, and all between
Meet in one moment the reflecting eye.

The prow of an Athenian galley
Dances at Lindos high above the bay
Until a second glance reveals it stone.
Upon Phileromos the sun-cracked rocks,
Too hot for lizards,
Echo with tinny French,
While water skiers groove
The surf wine-dark with Moslem blood.
Within the font of paradise
The skirling penny whistle of the guide
Raises a cumulus of butterflies
To maze the spectacles of patient Swedes.

Quite effortless, as though on wheels,
Thumb and forefinger deep
In the rich pudding of the centuries,
I glide along the qual.
Above the port
Rises the stagnant town,
Souks, mosques and medium-price hotels.
The palaces and castle of the knights,
Too much restored,
Echo the fat Romagnan peasant's name.

Already from the outdoor cinema
Voices in Romic make metallic moan,
Backed by the never-ending jig and whine
That pass for music.
Along the naval barrack's roof
Small dark recruits in unpressed duck,
Last heirs of Salamis and Syracuse,
Belching from peppered rice and sore for sex,
Follow the dreary film but do not pay.

In the least costly of the three cafés
Two civil servants quarrel
In whispers, clicking greasy beads.

Here is the plain anatomy of exile:
Warm drops of ouzo on the furry tongue,
The endless game with soiled bent cards
For tiny stakes.

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Byzantine, Hospitalier, Frank, Venetian,
Pirates of all sorts,
Turk, Italian, Greek,
Seduced by strategy, or God, or loot
Made this their lotus-flavored home-from-home.

At sunset, by the old port
The galleys of the knights are set in glass,
Azure and argent,
Reflecting banners stiff with needlework
And painted blazons set along the rail.

The flat bark of the evening gun
Shatters the burnished glass,
Ruffling the fur of pards, the scales of griffins,
Leaving upon the surface broken fleurs de lys
And fragments of the spiky frontlet of the unicorn.

THE BAMBOO FLUTE

JOHN O. HERRMANN, JR.

They had been quarreling all afternoon. She had called him insensitive and selfish and had slammed the bedroom door behind her. He said she was selfish and sentimental. Since dinnertime, except for the one or two glances that shot between them, they had been ignoring each other.

Now her whole family sat in the bright light around the kitchen table talking and laughing and drinking coffee. He sat alone watching their movements reflected in the big window.

Her father began a story.

"There were these two . . ."

He took the bamboo flute from the window sill, put it into his back pocket, and let the screen door slam behind him. He walked away from the house, down the dark path toward the creek. Behind him the hard laughter grew softer and quieter until it dissolved into the chirping of crickets.

He was alone.

Below, at the end of the path, the pier stretched out into the dark creek. He walked slowly. When he got to the riverbank he squinted into the darkness and then edged down cautiously toward the wooden platform.

A board creaked beneath his feet, and he moved more slowly to avoid the split and rotted planks. When he came to the end he sat down with his legs crossed and looked out over the water.

The surface was smooth for three hundred yards across and it reflected thousands of stars. The sky was very black and the stars were cold and clear.

He removed the flute from his pocket and played, letting the notes change at random under his fingers. He stopped and lowered the flute. Holding his fingers in position in front of him he listened to the silence. A breeze moved across his face.

There was a faint echo from across the creek and then another echo, fainter still, from farther down the river. Then again it was quiet.

A fish jumped in the distance rippling the surface the length of the creek. A dog barked.

He raised the flute to his lips and blew softly, this time sounding only one long low note, and again there was the faint distant resonance returning from the darkness.

He blew a quick flurry of high pitched notes into the sky, piercing the darkness like a blade, and they returned undiminished from across the creek and from farther down the river, two, three, four times in rapid succession. Again he blew and again the high notes echoed around him.

The air was clear and cool and still, and the creek water splashed quietly against the pilings. The stars flashed against the black sky like ice chips.

He jumped up from the pier and ran toward the house. He found her in the living room reading.

"Come on. Get your coat. I want to show you something."

She rose without question, and followed him to the door.

"Hurry," he said.

They walked quickly down the path until they came to the river bank.

"It's so dark," she said, "I'm afraid."

He took her hand and led her down the dirt bank to the pier. She held tightly resisting his pull.

"Watch the loose boards."

She was reluctant behind him.

"Are you sure it's alright? Are there any more loose boards?"

"No, come on. Now sit down here."

"It's beautiful," she said, "isn't it?"

"Be quiet now and listen."

She sat down next to him on the pier leaning her leg against his.

He moved away.

"Listen."

He played a few notes on the flute and stopped. The dogs were barking in the distance.

"That's very good," she said, "it's nice."

"No, no listen to the flute."

He played again and stopped. The dogs barked more rapidly across the creek.

"Do you hear what I mean?"

"I think so," she said, "do you hear the dogs?"

"No, I want you to hear the echo."

He played again.

"Yes, I think I know what you mean. Is it from over there?"

She took his hand and pressed it once.

"Yes. No," he said, "you . . ."

He jumped up and hurled the flute out over the water and turned toward the house. Behind him there was a splash, and then the barking of dogs across the creek. He started up the hill toward the lighted windows.

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PRELUDE TO POETRY

ADELE HOLDEN

Poem parts
are here
upon this desk
Torsos
lack limbs and heads
Eyes stare
to where
devoid of face
Arms search
for hands

THE NEWS FROM AIX

ROBERT JACKSON

Within its field, the field turns
back upon itself by rows, the horse
pivoting sideways around the flashing
plow turning over orange clods, turns
at the row of green shadowless trees
again until the whole blue field seen
as from a plane tilting to strafe

turns,

right up the mountain, wholly
decided by necessity, distantly
blue the green shadowless trees
blue the orange tracers curving
and watching this from the other side of town someone

lifts his brush

THE SONNETS OF ELLIOTT COLEMAN

ROBERT D. JACOBS

It was in 1948, I believe, that Elliott Coleman, who had already established himself as a poet with the publication of 'An American in Augustland,' began an experiment that was daring in his place and time. No one, except the late Dr. Merill Moore, wrote sonnets in wholesale lots, and great voices, such as that of William Carlos Williams, had announced the bankruptcy of all traditional forms. It was almost shocking then, to those who were closely associated with Elliott Coleman, to hear him announce that he was going to write a series of sonnets. To attempt a major statement within the sonnet convention seemed ludicrous in the twentieth century; and those of us who knew Elliott did not believe he would commit himself to the trivial merely for the sake of discipline, as he modestly hinted. So we did not know what to expect, and we were certain that his sonnets, if he produced them, would not get a hearing. But at least there was the excitement of waiting to see what would happen.

Before the year was out a group of sonnets were ready for the press, but who would publish them? Certainly no commercial press; and even the little presses were wary of twenty-seven fourteen line poems proceeding relentlessly from page to page, all looking alike and entitled only in groups. Finally New Directions capitulated, but only provisionally. Giovanni Scheiwiller would publish the book with the New Directions imprint—in Milan, Italy. Five hundred copies would be printed, with the first fifty reserved for friends of Scheiwiller. The book would be exactly three inches by four inches, with a yellow paper cover. It would fit easily into a shirt pocket. Not a very auspicious launching for what ought to be a major project. We who had waited for the book tried to console ourselves and the poet with the thought that at least it was well stitched, and that a book that slipped in a shirt pocket might be carried about and read. I cannot speak for others, but my own copy has been carried about in a shirt pocket; and it has been read—many times. Over twenty years have passed since it appeared, but my copy, Number 172, holds together very well. So do the poems within its yellow covers. Rarely, I think, has so much poetic excellence been compressed into twenty-seven tiny pages.

The inauspicious beginning did not discourage Elliott Coleman. We who were associated with him during those years after 1948 shared his enthusiasm when a new image filled his mind or a happy word choice occurred. I remember that at one time he was preoccupied with the word "dazzle" and believed that he was using it in an unprecedented way—until someone remembered that line from 'The Duchess of Malfi.' Those were good years, and I, for one, found a special excitement in coming to the office in the basement of Gilman Hall each morning, knowing that Elliott might rush in to share his creative experience of the night before.

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More and even better sonnets came. In 1952, Mary Owings Miller brought out 'A Glass Darkly' in her Distinguished Poets Series. In it were thirty-three new sonnets by Elliott Coleman, and two years later she republished his original twenty-seven "Night Sonnets" together with six new ones called "Sonnets on the Roman Light." At last the sonnets of Elliott Coleman—sixty-six of them—existed in a handsome binding, set in Garamond type and printed on thick Linweave paper by the J. H. Furst Company; but I still cherish my copy of the little yellow book, that fits exactly into my shirt pocket.

What of the poems themselves? I don't pretend to be a critic here, for I love those sonnets and can speak of them only in terms of affection, not evaluation. I can say, however, that in them Elliott engages with a great theme, perhaps the greatest theme of which the human mind is capable. Here it is the theme of Job tormented in the flesh and crying out to understand the God who loved him and tortured him, or there, in a pagan context, it is the theme of the 'Symposium,' with its attempt to grasp the significance of the disparity between beauty temporal and beauty eternal. Or again, it is the expression of the human attempt to possess emotionally the significance of the Incarnation, of the timeless brought into time, an attempt to see the vulgar, the degraded, and the obscene charged with value: "All that we know of spirit comes from flesh."

The sequences of sonnets, grouped as they are under separate titles, present a dialectic of vision, as the poet expresses carnal love with images that barely suggest the possibility of the divine and then in another sequence sees the foul mud of a back alley ejaculate "a crocus or something that blue, glows / like the farthest blue on the far, most glowing shore." Immersion in the carnal, like bathing in the Atlantic, carries with it the perils of mortality: "Lily white wolf teeth of barracuda / And purple stain of sea anemone, / Bacteria and cell, and hungry virus, / Blood of the world: and blood of you and me." But carnal love must face "the wide view," the last that the swimmer sees as he goes down in "some ghastly gray sea rose." Despair finds expression as the poet cries out before the darkened image of a hero in a square in Baltimore, seeking value in a world of silent stone and roaring traffic, only to find that his cries were without love and that despair, self-generated, must be drowned in the black gulf of self from which it proceeded.

City images project spiritual desolation until the poet perceives that even the dark city can incorporate the eternal, and "The cries of Naples are the cries of Eden . . . . the singing stone / Reverberates and quivers through the night / And casts itself, incomparable, to light."

Thus, poems that shudder with the desperation, anguish, and revulsion that a religious sensibility experiences when it is immersed in the meaningless flux of our daily lives—our casual affairs, our drunken parties, the cunning expedients by which we persuade ourselves that sensation is enough—eventually rise climactically to a recognition that the imagination itself supplies the values we have lost and need: "the living metaphor of art discloses / all we have wondered, all that we ever knew: / The god we kill, the love we celebrate, / The map and ransom of our lost estate." The poet's act of discovering significance in a seemingly dead world, of hearing the singing stone in Naples, of finding the "insatiate Phantom" of Christ in Times Square or in Sidi Bou Said, thus becomes a religious ritual, for the mystery

of the Incarnation lies in the perception of the Timeless in Time. This is what the sonnets of Elliott Coleman are all about, and I am grateful for them.

ANTI-THRENODY

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN

As Montaigne knew, friendship is simplest homage
and will hold out when disaster or even fame
visits the partner; it cannot change its name,
since the premise of friendship is the promise.

Then shall I barter my friend for a box and bell,
taking the image of death for the very man?
or give up such a known and marvelous woman
for the paranoiac story of a greedy and mad cell?

Shall I switch my tense from "is" to "was" at the dictum
of the pricked balloon of a lung, or a pump, failed?
from the thrust of company, to pious tales
or the Marcel wave of memory's mannered fiction?

My ghosts, my dead, are hot and hardy,
they have their tastes and lapses, and music moves them;
they are in the tried company of one who loves them;
their touchstones stay, their manners are strait or rowdy.

I lack their energy. They enter through broken minutes,
each with a distinct, recognized grace and range;
though I cannot answer for their several changes,
they bear with that, and with my other limits.

The only trouble comes from the release
of that energy: as whole atoms hold fast
holocaust power, and that holy ghost
shaped like a pigeon, contains the power of peace,

my friends shelter more power than I can handle;
and as a typical joke, each has one communicative answer
in recognition of my modest danger,
tempering a concentrated sun to my ludicrous but tended candle.

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ORPHEUS

HANS JUERGENSEN

He forfeited Euridice; she left
the world. Loving too much
with his eyes, he could
not hold possession.—But his
lyre shuddered like a throat,
and his hand bled through
many years.

Mountain paths grew pebbles for
his feet to remind him
of agonies outside his soul.
He chanted while earth's roses
bloomed and perished in zodiac
shadows.

The mocking birds heard him
and mimicked his threnodies, bearing
plagiarized tunes to other ages—
lulling elsewhere roses with borrowed
hymns.

Glaciers glanced echoes from crystal
hips. They shimmered in gale-
cleansed strength and gathered clouds.
He pulsed his sorrows, groping
for expiation. All withering ceased
as he passed. Only his
heart chambers shriveled.

Then, in their naked envy,
the Maenads blocked his course,
and, with olive branches, broke
him to death until he
was saved.

March 14, 1968

IMPEACH! IMPEACH!

RIGG KENNEDY

IMPEACH! IMPEACH!
JAMES JOYCE
THE DREAMER'S CHOICE
LITHE LIPPED
FLOWING FLOWER PEN
RIVER LIFFEY DIPPED

OMNIHIPPOTENT
FROM HERE TO THERE

THE WAITING PAGE WHITE
RE-WROTE THE WORLD
IGNITED THE LIGHT
DEEP IN THE VOWEL

WOW! OH WOW! & HOW

HE PUNCTURED THE BOWEL
& FRACTURED THE SOUND
FROM THE SIGHT

ELLIOTT COLEMAN AT HOME

ISMITH KHAN

I have told students of writing something that I read somewhere about description, and how to test a piece of good description. You place your hand before your eyes after reading a piece, then ask yourself just what you see . . . what remains with you. I have been thinking of my subject for months, and dread the thought that I shall fail completely. Perhaps, I think, it is because my subject is not fiction, but a very real person, and then I think that not only is my subject a real person, but a rather elusive one. Such a man is Elliott Coleman.

I shall never forget our first meeting. It was on one of those terribly hot days, unusual in the Spring, and my wife and I had driven to Baltimore where I would spend the year with the Writing Seminars. Elliott Coleman had reserved a table for lunch at the Faculty Club and a room for an overnight stay at the Bradford; he had given me not only the directions to the Hopkins Campus but prepared me for the drive up along Charles Street, mentioning all the landmarks I would see as I approached the Campus and finally, anticipated what problems I would encounter finding a place to park on Campus.

We met at the Faculty Club, and while there were several people seated in the waiting room, I think that both my wife and I headed toward Mr. Coleman, while he in his turn knew as if by instinct that we were his guests. It seemed to me one of

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those rare moments in life where people had completely anticipated each other down to the minutest detail, and since writers of fiction tend to think that this is indeed possible, at least about the characters in their fictions, I know that poets also do, as Mr. Coleman did. It was one of those terrible but beautiful moments, one of those frightening but real moments when there is a congruence of minds, lives, so that one feels certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that there could be communication between souls despite all of the things one has been told by science, psychology and the clap-trap of the modern world.

At the entrance to the dining room, we were approached by the hostess, and Mr. Coleman introduced us to her. As we were led to our table, one had the feeling that Mr. Coleman had said in an unspoken way to the hostess, 'These are my friends of whom I have told so much' and she in her turn made us feel that this was indeed so. It did not take Mr. Coleman long to decide where the windows were, who would face which direction, which window or painting, it was pure instinct, a kind of knowledge one has of the fit of a favorite shoe or coat.

I spoke about myself and my work and what I hoped to do at Hopkins, all very excitedly, when it suddenly occurred to me that Elliott Coleman had said nothing about himself. I decided to make a concentrated effort to ask him about himself. Moments later, I discovered that the entire conversation had been completely turned around, and I was again speaking about myself, and looking at Mr. Coleman, I realized that he, in his own way, without even thinking about it, had acquired a manner, a second nature which drew people out. One's own life seemed important, exciting, impressive, and one had the feeling that the conversation was a joint affair, only to find in retrospect that it was not so, that it was purely Elliott Coleman's manner, that he had said little. This I discovered to be his usual manner. I am tempted to say that Elliott Coleman is a good listener but that is not so. It is the fault of the language, we do not have a word to properly express this quality.

Mr. Coleman is a tall man with white hair parted on the side. His jacket buttons are usually open while he is seated, and when he rises, his fingers move as if by instinct to those buttons before he shakes hands with you. He moves with all of the grace of a tall man, a grand man, but of someone who understands that this thing, that one is, whatever it may be, is a terribly small and gentle thing, something which comes into this world, makes its entrance and exit, and if it has any meaning, it is that this piece of time is given to us to find that meaning.

One knows when one is in the presence of Elliott Coleman that he is one of the few people who embodies European and American literature, past and contemporary. He was speaking of Fitzgerald one evening and stopped to ask if we knew that Fitzgerald once lived in the building next to where my wife and I were living . . . that we could, if we wished, go up and look at the apartment, then he fell into one of his long silences no doubt recalling some of the tragedy and heartbreak Fitzgerald was experiencing at that time.

At still another time he told about flying across the Atlantic during the war years in one of those terribly old fashioned planes. He was headed to Europe to invite several of her best known writers to the United States. He tells of the room in which he saw Gide, of the bleakness of Europe at that time, of the lack of barest

necessities under which the man Gide worked and lived, and as Coleman told about it, one sensed that he was re-living the pain of that moment all over. His mind searched all over again what it did so many years ago. What can one bring as a gift, a present of some kind to someone under those circumstances. Coleman had taken him a box of chocolates, not as a delicacy, but as something which had food value, something which could sustain life where food was scarce. He still pondered in his mind, what else he could have taken him, and he shook his head in despair as he re-lived that moment. I was acutely aware of getting a special glimpse at that world through someone who knows it . . . and its people, its writers and poets, and that world becomes a living thing because of Elliott Coleman.

Where does Elliott Coleman come from? What were his beginnings as a poet and a literary figure? I do remember him telling about a literary prize he won for an essay, a prize which took him to Europe and the Middle East on one of those slow freighters. The ports of the Mediterranean became alive, the past became alive, and in the midst of that past Coleman recalled with such pleasure and joy a moment which brought tears of laughter to his eyes. He told of travelling to Vesivius with some friends in one of those ancient open cars travelling up the narrow mountain roads when suddenly, another car appeared, coming from the opposite direction. His car swerved almost throwing one of the female occupants out. Coleman reached out and grabbed her by the legs. 'My God,' he said, 'she was two hundred pounds . . . I saw her flying out of the car, where did I ever get the strength . . . she was a big woman, you know . . .' We did not hear the complete story, it settled back in Coleman's mind as he recalled that moment, and one saw written on his face and brow all the emotions, all the joys and sorrows of a single moment in Elliott Coleman's life, something spun out like a motion picture before his eyes, something fragile one does not wish to disturb. I remember seeing him walking home from his office. I was tempted to run ahead and walk along with him, but I did not. He had stopped to look up into one of the trees on the Hopkins Campus. He was looking for a bird whose call had attracted his attention, and I remember how he had stopped eating his dinner one evening upon hearing a similar sound. The bird was calling to its mate and would not stop until the mate returned to its nest, he had explained. It was a special cry which Coleman recognized, and he too had seemed to take on the anguish and the loneliness of that bird, he too would not rest until the drama was done.

It would be unnecessary to speak of the many facets of Elliott Coleman's work. He has read his poems for the Library of Congress. In mentioning his reading, he must have seen some irony in the fact that his work, along with the work of others will be put into a tube and interred for a posterity which none of us can comprehend. Nor does he question it. What is past is over, he seems to say. He knows only too well that what is most important to a writer is what he is writing at the moment, and this is never what one is asked about.

It should be all too obvious that there is something elusive about Elliott Coleman. To repeat that old homily, 'He who teaches least, teaches best' does not do justice to Elliott Coleman's effect on his writers. Yet there is some fragment of that in the man. Again, to simply say Elliott Coleman inspires his writers does not do justice to him, yet there is some of that in the man. To say that Elliott Coleman is a

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good listener offers only one grain of the man, and it may be that my observations will add only one small grain to the elusiveness of Elliott Coleman. It were as though Coleman asks his writers to help him to know how he can help them. It were as though he says, 'I think I have something to say to you, yet I feel I should not be able to impart that something to you . . . please tell me how you think I can.'

The Writing Seminars is Elliott Coleman, has been, always will be. He had asked us to his charming apartment just off Charles Street one evening before the Seminars started. Standing in a corner, cocktail in hand, I looked at the twenty or so writers and I wondered just what had gone into the final selection. There are invariably twice perhaps three times the number of applicants, and each year I am convinced that Elliott Coleman experiences a terrible anguish. Alone, he reads all of the submitted works, alone he decides . . . what I asked myself? A male to female proportion? Perhaps. An age distribution? A geographic representation from all over the country . . . some foreign writers (like myself) included? Black writers, Southern writers, Jewish writers. Writers who must have kept that little light in Elliott Coleman's window going late at night while he thought of their work, their promise, their need, and found ways, always found ways to make it possible for them to come to the Writing Seminars.

Months later we were talking after dinner. Mr. Coleman had just given a sum of money to someone at The Hopkins to pay for the burial expenses of a member of his family. In my youthful way I must have said something like 'Let the dead bury the dead,' or I may have suggested in that crass American way that people always find ways to bury the dead, and I must have gone on even more foolishly to ask Mr. Coleman just what it was all about in the end. He simply said to me, 'Love, Ismith . . . what else is there?' We are all convinced that we know love, of one kind or another, and it was the first time in my life I felt I had met someone who truly understood that word in its broadest and fullest meaning, I could say no more. The question was rhetorical in any event. I could only hope that some day I too would come close to that conclusion and live in that world Mr. Coleman inhabited, one in which, after all the deeds were done, after all the broken shoe laces and the stained glass windows, the questions about questions, that one would finally find peace, because there was nothing . . . nothing nothing nothing. What else is there . . . but love.

CHICAGO SCENE

For Roger Aplon

JOHN LOGAN

At the bar called
plugged
Nickel in Chicago
red, blue and yellow hammers
on its honky tonk piano
easily make their hits.
A boyish drummer ticks
his brush
and pushes
back
a shock
of brown hair.
He draws lightly from his glass of beer.
A heavy scholar of the sax
mounts his giant bass
and together they begin
to snort,
smoke,
and carry on
like a Saint George with dragon.
This certain beat
pulses to the puff of Bobby Connally's cheek.
And now the sweet and sour sauce
of the old New Orleans Jazz
potent like our father's jizz
permeates the air,
seems to knock us up in the ear
and starts
melancholy thoughts
(for it is too loud to talk).
Behind the bar,
oracular
a bushy bearded (black)
and muscled man
works
and broods. No one has ever seen
his face!
For Roger's gone,
proud,
to the dark side
of the plugged moon.

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THE HORSE'S SKULL

KATIE LETCHER LYLE

I
There is a horse's skull in our garage,
bone-white to stare into the winey dusk
at boards, and bottles emptied long ago.
Virg Kincaid said he knew the horse alive
And that the empty bones contained a brain
loyal and proud ("Good traits for horses
and for me," Virg said). Restless webs
now cross and cross again the ivory bowl.

There is a horse's skull in our garage—
Virg Kincaid knew when he was still a boy
his temperament and name—Old Will it was.
A red war horse with white feet could destroy
a boy's poppy heart in next-to-no-time
with white, exquisite scars nerveless to touch;
his boy-step like rain on the cobbled ground
came close. One day he pulled the rusty latch.

The horse was old and quiet after war,
Received the boy's love acceptably;
Virg walked on till four and ninety years
and knew to treat the earth with dignity.

II
"Any man would sell a dog or a horse
is straight-off a son-of-a-bitch," Virg said.
"They sold Will down the road—to Tankersley—
three years after New Market
for Annie and Jo and Sarah to ride."

III
But now, white as immortality,
it stares into darkness
unstunned by cold light
or noise of sudden engine
loud as cannonfire at New Market
converting the tender ground,
serene against the pain and buzzing
flies of war that echoed
while the brain was still a brain.

And now, quiet and ivory,
flesh grown in some fine tree upon our hill,
it is surely immortal.
And when they plowed the hill
to plant the orchard,
Virg following slowly in his eightieth year,
they found the bones. Virg knew then and brought home
the red horse, rode to death
by three fool girls.

1968-9

THE PERFORMANCE

MICHAEL LYNCH

In the darkness she is the color of ash. He mimes a man walking in the snow. He keeps looking to their footsteps, do you see? Everything is gone. All trace of our passage. Two steps one and two into the streetlight, stepping within the circles as if on white flat stones, his hand moving as if within a spotlight, miming a gesture for her of greeting or farewell.

They are very near you. You are in the treeline.

And the light?

It is snowing. Someone with you has been shot.

Yes. A friend. We could see the redprint of his fingers against the iced wood already drying, already his flesh had flaked a sign for those who would follow.

The circles. The concern. You are concerned for those who are wounded.

We are concerned for those who were wounded. The light seemed to us to have broken from the trees, rising broken from our footsteps again and again we circled, the circle of our tracks was so silent so clear, you see the new snow lighter, already edging the crust. That is what I imagined, that later the sound of our stumbling is sudden like the sound of a beheading.

There are soldiers in the treeline.

Yes. They are Volkspolitzei. We watched them, dark figures moving out of the trees, one and one and another outlined in the snow, faces rising to us from grey water, dark masks moving out toward us as if from white stone. They have animals with them. I saw them only once after we had crossed the river. I turn and it is possible to see their eyes, the animal brilliance below the stone wall. Their fur is edged with snow, snow flecks their open lips. You saw their heeling gestures, heard their voices baying calling out to us from the darkness.

Do you see, he whispers, the snow rinsing everything the hundred footprints the wall a white line. He reaches for her now across the edge of the circle, bringing her eyes within.

He bends his face to his outheld hands, his fingers clawing the red and white skimask until it lies broken in his fingers.

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And inside. Nearer now, what signs? Nothing. Perhaps the sound from the river, the edge of bare footsteps on smooth wood, a circle drawn on the ice of the window, a scraping.

He watches her. There should be a right time soon, a scene delicate in its space, a question asked.

In the early morning, he whispers, I am told the ash from the camps rose from high chimneys and settled on the village near the camp, fell lightly on the lips of small children and on the soft fingers of young women, and on the growing wheat and on the petals of white flowers and onto the vines and on the blue water of the river the ash floated but without movement like pocked blue stone.

So in the early morning the villagers ate their victims, they consumed their ash with the taste of dry bread, they sipped their victims with their evening wine and dusted ash from the dark edges of the children's hair. Children's tongues dampened the ash chalkline, as if salt from their mothers' lips.

And what of the greenlight rising from your fingers? She smiles holding fruit to him, a curve, perhaps it is orange, it is blue now in this frozen light.

The smell of her body, of her hands the smell of citrus broken, of her lips, her breathing.

Endless. What is not possible, he asks. The light changes. The woman. The movement of silk, her eyes, her legs, the line behind her of simple austere wood. The metal bowl. The ice is already formed in its circle. There is the shadow of the window.

In the streets below you can see the line of dark clothed men moving in the snow so slowly not circling, as if dancing in slow rhythm around the stone windows of the abandoned church.

Will you not stay awhile with me?

He holds her face in his open hands, feeling it damp, the cool outline of her lips.

Tomorrow, he whispers. What is tomorrow? Tomorrow is nothing.

She looks up. He touches her eyes.

No more now, he whispers. It is all finished. Ended.

She claps her hands once and then again softly.

It was lovely, she whispers.

He smiles. She touches her hands against each other, a soft flesh sound. They bow to one another.

They are outside. Along the sidewalk he dances, so many spotlights, circles, circling the streetlight he retreats into doorways, appearing, reappearing, wearing different faces, now he is tall, now short now he is deformed: he is without flaw now he is sometimes stiffly walking sometimes loose, silent always always his eyes seeking hers as she walks in the ashen darkness.

The restaurant glass is black. Inside he sees their eyes, a man, a woman, their movement the movement of white fish. She touches the glass. An eye. The imprint of her finger, frozen. He breathes on it, erasing it.

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FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT END

For Elliott Coleman

SISTER MAURA, S.S.N.D.

He walks into the shabby room
gently. This world, too, will break
like a fever from the blackening tomb

of itself. He looks at his students.
Under the look, each man is alone,
astonished at the courtesy. "Who has condemned

you?—Neither will I." He serves
his students. A chair. A book. A glass
of water. The frailty of man deserves

redemption. He speaks—only a word,
a few words. Men gather the manna of
his praise. They have not often heard

themselves so reverenced. He
listens to them. Listening is a hand
on the shoulder, strength, mystery.

He turns their hearts to flesh. Grief,
fear, shriveling, loneliness, terror
are eased in the humility of his belief.

Such is the presence of a friend.
Such a presence does not end.

FIRST VISIT TO 14 WEST MT. VERNON

MARY OWINGS MILLER

Think of E
Sturdy, unsinister
    Except for eeee:
    Wind-sound over sand.
    Three black lines
On white. 3 lines. Horizontal
    With a wall at the left.
Yet E, denied
    By the right eye
Was plain for the left. E.

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OQV?TC
CYM?T6
L8????
Are pictures that
May never be seen
Wholly.

"When going out into the
Sunshine to pick apples"
Pleasant, easily made out
By the left eye;
Nothing there to be careful about.
Its the right eye
That needs the primer's type.

If the bright dot
Is left of the vertical line
Then right, then square on it
Mind and sight
Are twins.

But when there is light
Rayed out from black
Acceptance is blue as dread.
Fortitude
Comes with the message known from the womb:
"Seeing is more than
Sight"
The midge, the cat
Have instinctive ways of knowing.

Who has whole vision—
Whole thought perhaps
Or the hope of perfection . . .

Measles, an injury
Who knows
Why. The forgotten
Cause
Is as deadly as
one known
By statesman; by ragpickers.

The contained cataract:
A cobweb
Triangular,
Need not dim
Memory, thought
Nor affection's ways.

THE LION POEM

GARY MOORE

If I found a lion in my garbage can,
I'd shake his hand
and say "Try one of these cigars!
I'm in your line of work myself.
It's a goddam struggle, isn't it?"
And that's not all:
the sonofabitch would slap my back
and we'd stand in the kitchen and roar like hell
and be happy in a world full of shit.

SEA WORDS

RICHARD O'CONNELL

. . . all said?
. . . all hushed?
Why not even broached
the miracle here

life foam and cloud.

*

Silk wind
sun
surge.

This feeling at home
in your skin
—it is so strange.

Each thing in focus
defined in itself
rock
gull
boat.

Each thing serene
in its shape.

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Blurred castle of sand
—it is you I defend
here
with my blood.

Wizard of flame
destroy me
with dazzling potency.

Do not let me become
another bright piece
of shelved driftwood.

Wrapt in your wonder
—you moving massively
with the earth
and white clouds above the sea.

*

Not the big wreck's
encrusted
glamour
of gems.

But the still face
drifting deep.

Girl
swim closer . . .
I only want to brush
your luminous flesh.

*

Move on
tramp ship.
Move your fat lazy smoky coal
bulge
over the horizon.

Get lost.

*

As launched from the heart of the flood
the irretrievable dove.

*

Mysterious foam-script
quilling dark foolscap.

Meticulous
evanescence.

Like an incantation
the sea tonight
—inspired
page upon page.

*

It is all
God
your glory

fire breath and foam.

Rio de Janeiro, Sept.-Oct. '60

QUEST

For Elliott Coleman

FRANCIS V. O'CONNOR

One must enter the space of cold
or of inward heat
for the universe, controlled,
is for our feat
of boldness, of selfhood's test.
My life, complete,
ordained before its quest
by a narrow teat
in terror for my strength,
leaps forth to greet
on a golden meadow's length
a goddess meet
with music, lyre-crowned,
whose dancing feet
a screed of destiny unwound.

This apparition shown
through an arch, an old
orifice of stone
labyrinthine cold
and ancient in its craft.
Behind, in bold
galleries no mind could draft
nor memory hold
in plan, stood hopes
long since conjoled

to solemnize in copes
of sacred gold
and raise their arms in arcs
thus to enfold
sun-disks graven with familiar marks.

Bone-weight on bone does fall;
stone upon stone.
The body's arch of teeth in thrall
tapping to intone
that litany to earthly grace,
to seeds unsown,
that rosary without a trace
of love foreknown,
that endless quest without its grail
whose place, once shown,
is sought despite a trail
devoid of zone.
(The abyss is entered through the mouth,
I'm told: its throne
before the way down south!)

What is the climate there?
Springtime or fall?
Or hell? Or ice? "Beware
the dice-throw's all
whichever clime it shows.
Beware the sea-squall
or the earthquakes's throes.
Beware the pitfall
of a choice irrevocably made."
But I recall
my vision of that golden glade,
the falling pall,
the woman, and the music in my soul.
I hear the call
and would obey this siren and her scroll.

SCARECROW SONG

JULIA RANDALL

The law and the prophets hang
ravelling, ravelling,
rag to the wintry wind,
leaf to the ruined thorn.

Nine days in the windy tree
hung Odin, sacrifice
himself to himself, without
a root under the skies.

Two wishes I had, he sang,
two wishes that are one:
to live without a sin,
to sleep without a dream.

I hang my heavy blood
beside my heavy brain.
Before they breathe and work
and I am whole again,
I must forget to wish,
Odin sang.

HENRY MOORE

DAVID RAY

I.
We return again and again, to violate,
to put back together,
to ask if she can't be different,
if we can't,
and we see how we are gouged out
of nothing,
existing more in what
others see
and have made of us
than in ourselves.
At last we are only a partridge head
raised in alarm.

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II.
Faith, loyalty, so that the sky
adds to the burnish of
bronze. They do not get up
and move as people do
nor go out to the irrelevant
riverside, nor heed
the frail and rusted tank
that marks the village Square.
They wait till they are lonely
like Stonehenge
in the rain
and people are the rain.

III.
Some lie still or hear the harps
strung upon them; we search
them, wanting their wisdom
the resonance of their
bellies, the joy of the buttons and loops
upon them, those wedged
or straining toward the sea.
We exalt their terrible anarchy, sprawled
and selfish with the light.
We envy the gold vertebra, that it will be
fished out of the ocean
And yet the child's face, seen through
the bronze, this moment,
it is enough.

MARCEL PROUST, ELLIOTT COLEMAN, AND MYSELF

ROBERT K. ROSENBURG

It was sometime during the spring of a late year in the 40's that I checked out a copy of 'Swann's Way' from the Enoch Pratt Library. Somewhere I had read an article about Marcel Proust but I do not think it was in Edmund Wilson's 'Asel's Castle.' Having a desire to be "au courant" in modern literature, I decided to have a taste of Proust. I did not get very far in the book, I'm sure I did not even finish the "Overture," that remarkable transformation of musical ideas into literary terms. In any case, I returned the volume to the library thinking I was through with Marcel Proust and his "dull" novel.

Half a decade later, I enrolled in the Modern Writers Course offered by the then Department of Writing, Speech, and Drama (now the Writing Seminars), at the Johns Hopkins University. I had first enrolled in Mr. Coleman's department in the previous year and knew that the cornerstone of the first semester of the Modern Writing Course would be Elliott Coleman's lectures on Proust. So, sometime in the late

summer of that year I began to wade through the two-volume Random House edition of 'Remembrance of Things Past.' I found it no more interesting or stimulating than I had found my earlier dip into 'Swann's Way.' I must now shamefacedly confess that I found Professor Coleman's lectures no more engrossing, either. Yet as the weeks went by and as each Thursday afternoon I gazed out of the window of the Gilman Hall classroom towards the Faculty Club watching the trees turn from green to gold to bare branches, I realized a certain spell was being weaved about me. When Mr. Coleman gave his last and final lecture of the series and we turned to another author, I realized that I was a "Proust man" and would remain so forever.

I am not a re-reader and have hardly looked at Proust in the last two decades and yet there is hardly a day when some phase of his prop or philosophy has not influenced my view of the world and whenever I write a poem the strange ambivalent Frenchman seems to be standing beside me.

Over the years I have come to realize that there are certain parallels between my life and that of Proust. He was of mixed-Jewish ancestry and as far as I know I have no non-semitic ancestors. Yet, I believe Proust's Jewishness was predominant in his philosophy. He tried to escape it by his adoration of the French nobility but his preoccupation with the Dreyfus Affair was more than a necessity of giving historical verisimilitude to his novel. He must have realized that his very existence might be threatened by the anti-semitism implicit in the complicated politics of the era. I, too, came to a new awareness in an era when Nazism was threatening the very existence of the race.

There are other more personal similarities between Proust and myself. The novelist deliberately chose to separate himself from the world by living in his cork-lined room and because of my physical handicap, I, too, am separated from the normal flow of life. Still, this separation is not complete and neither of us wishes it to be complete. We want to be part of the world but he, by choice, and I, by necessity, have become mirrors of our world.

When Elliott Coleman first came to see me, his remark was, "This apartment is straight out of Proust." I never had many opportunities to visit other people's homes, so I always took the decor of my own home for granted. Most of the furniture belonged to my grandmother who probably bought it in the late 90's or the first decade of this century. She was a woman of great artistic perception but music was her life and she had little or no desire to keep up with the current fashions or home decoration. So what was current style to Proust was a current style to me. Music was the center of Proust's life as was music the center of my early years.

Finally, there was the grandmother so important to Proust, so important to me. Both women had freed themselves from what was considered fashionable for their respective eras. They were personalities who permanently influenced all whom they met. They were themselves and did not care what others might say about them. While I was reading 'Remembrance of Things Past,' my grandmother was dying having passed into senility four years before. Marcel's grandmother was more fortunate; her death was relatively sudden and she had not lost her faculties. There is a passage in Proust where he remarks that only the hair of his grandmother retained its youthful beauty and as I daily looked at my grandmother's body wasting away, I realized her hair, too, retained its silver sheen, its natural wave which for some

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strange reason she hated. After her death, I, too, experienced the lethargic state that Proust called the "Intermission of the Heart." I think it was only Marcel Proust and Elliott Coleman who were able to bring me out of this state which the Mystics called "aridity."

Proust lived in an era when established mores were overthrown and I, too, have lived through a similar transformation. Most people reject these revolutions as part of the inevitable course of history. Probably only those who want or must remain outside the mainstream can accept this as natural. In the novel, good people turn out to be evil and the evil ones are discovered to be saviours. I, too, have found this to be the way of the world.

I cannot say that I have pursued the love of art as diligently as some characters in the novel. Perhaps someday I may fling myself across half the world to see the Golden Angel of San Marco or to view a patch of yellow sunlight on a wall in Delft. If this ever happens I will remember Marcel Proust and Elliott Coleman and be thankful.

AFTER EDEN

For Elliott Coleman — MENACHEM Z. ROSENSAFT

in order to give man
his freedom
after Eden
God created the eternity
of friendship

A TRIBUTE TO ELLIOTT COLEMAN — LOUIS D. RUBIN, JR.

It has always seemed to me that a large part of success in teaching creative writing and in developing a writing program involves the ability to recognize imaginative potentiality. Anyone with decent taste can recognize good fiction and good poetry when confronted with it; what is much more difficult is to discern, in apprentice fiction and poetry that is clumsy and unsuccessful, the potentiality for learning the craft of writing. It may be terribly disguised, hidden; inept craftsmanship, ignorance of technique can be so pervasive, so massively present that only a very imaginative reader indeed can detect, somewhere in the muddled mass of words and sentences and paragraphs and lines, the evidence of talent. Yet if the talent exists, then all else can be learned; if it does not exist, then no amount of cleverness and sophistication and energy can compensate for its absence.

In looking back over my acquaintance with Elliott Coleman, it comes to me that the astounding success of the Writing Seminars in turning out valuable writers is due, more so than anything else, to the ability of its Director to recognize talent. It has been Elliott Coleman's genius to perceive, from among those masses of apprentice manuscripts submitted to him by would-be students, the real thing, however clumsily disguised, and to encourage it. I can think of so many instances (and immodestly I include my own among them) in which Elliott was able to recognize, in bad, awkward, uninformed work, that the young man or young woman submitting such work might someday learn to write well.

What the Writing Seminars, under Elliott Coleman's aegis, have offered most of all was encouragement. What a marvelous thing it was for a young would-be writer to come into the Seminars, and to find that its staff (and not least of all its secretary for many years, the superb Emily Greenslet) wanted to help him, thought he was worth helping, believed in his potentiality. To be a graduate student in writing at Johns Hopkins, to study Proust and Joyce and Eliot and Yeats and the other modern masters, to think about literature and talk about writing it with people who thought that writing literature was the most important thing in the world, to write poems and stories and to have them criticized and commended—there could be no better place for an apprentice writer to be.

In the years since I left the Writing Seminars, I have seen many similar operations, and participated in a few, and have come to know their excellences and their drawbacks very well. But as useful and as excellent as some of those programs were, all of them lacked one priceless ingredient that the Writing Seminars of Johns Hopkins had; the presence and genius of Elliott Coleman. Better writers than myself will verify the assertion, which I make without hesitation, that he is the sole and incomparable, the finest teacher that one could have. When I think of Elliott and his life's work, I think of a long, long shelf of good books—poetry, fiction, non-fiction —that exists because he has been what he is. I will not say that some of those books would not have been written except for him, or that some of the writers he has taught would not have been writers without his help. But it would have been harder for them to have done it, and infinitely less enjoyable. The creative light that he has set to glowing there in Gilman Hall can be seen for a long distance away, and will be visible for a long time to come.

"SOLO" — ALAN STOUT

My work for voice and orchestra, "Solo," was intended as a tribute to two Baltimore friends, Elliott Coleman and Robert Rosenburg. "Solo" is actually Elliott's title of his poem, not a musical description. I chose this poem because it created in me an immediate response to its imagery, which I felt I could translate into musical terms. Not all of Elliott's recent work created such a response in me, not because of its poetic value, which I hold in the highest regard, but because of its applicability to musical setting. Elliott's term of "listening to voices about us" results often in a very compressed language, and creates problems in (at least for me) musical setting, which, for me, requires more time to develop. I am reminded of Keats' line from "Endymion": "He ne'er is crowned with immortality, who fears to follow where airy voices lead." (A text I have also set.)

The atmospheric setting of the poem, "All Saints Eve at Fort McHenry," was an obvious starting point. The introduction of the piece evokes (I hope) the idea of waves, created by writing individual parts for every string player (16 violins, 6 violas, 5 cellos, and 3 contrabasses), plus the piano, which is played throughout directly on the strings with padded mallets of different weights. The voice part floats over this pulsating background, and this section builds to a climax at around the midpoint of the piece, after which the texture becomes much more transparent, mirroring both the flight of the bird and the voices about us.

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I only hope that I have done some justice to the poem and the wonderful human being behind it.

LOUIS WHO?

FRANCIS J. THOMPSON

Dear Elliott:

You were so curious about our summer's cycling adventures that I thought you'd like this sample from my journal. By way of introduction, the night before we went to Winnipeg, we saw "The Trial of Louis Riel," which is to Regina what "The Lost Colony" is to Roanoke Island. Next to me was a scout from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation who said it may televise the show. He told me that some call Riel the "Métis Che Guevara," but after the show I argued that the actor looked and spoke more like Yeats' hero, Charles Stewart Parnell, when the British government tried him in 1889. As we parted, the CBS scout gave me a booklet by G. F. G. Stanley: 'Louis Riel: Patriot or Rebel?' It concluded: "To the métis, the people whom he loved, he will always be, mad or sane, the voice of an inarticulate race and the prophet of a doomed cause."

Next morning we oriented for Winnipeg and that evening arrived at Mme. Bouvier's in St. Boniface, the French quarter. (The widow Bouvier told us her husband was a 32nd cousin of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis.)

JOURNAL

St. Boniface, 7:06-11:40, Saturday, August 1, 1970. We planned to tour downtown before 8, then follow the Red River north on the west bank and return on the east. . . .

At the corner of Redwood and Main we discovered the imposing entrance to the Carling Red Label Brewery and, next door, the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church with its onion domes à la Russe. I was starting up the steps when a small man, bald as Kruschev, materialized and asked if we spoke Ukrainian. We said "No," but, undaunted, he continued to talk, taking us through a basement door and upstairs. Here we were amazed at the altitude of the ceiling, almost as lofty as the nave was long. In front (east) of us was the iconostasis; left and right, pennants with woven saints hung from the walls; to our rear a balcony. I understood "Kruschev" to say there is no organ because the orthodox don't use instrumental music, only sing a capella with a conductor. Marj, who understood even less of his "English," interpreted him to mean there is no music at all. She was admiring the glass chandelier. Kruschev said (I think) it costs $9000. When we were ready to leave, he gave us four postcards of the Cathedral and a leaflet in Russian. He also said something that sounded like "monye." So I put a mite in the collection box. At the same time I picked up a throwaway: AUGUST 3-9 / FOLKLORAMA '70 / SPECIAL EVENTS / MISS FOLKLORAMA '70 CONTEST / FORT CARLING . . . BEER GARDENS, DANCING / INDIAN METIS PARTICIPATION.

From Holy Trinity we continued north on Scotia along the riverside, shaded by the high leafy trees and old three-storied houses. Some of the intersecting avenues had historic names; e.g., Seven Oaks. Marj found on our "Map of Winnipeg Treasure Spots": "The Battle of Seven Oaks," June 19, 1816—Gov. Robert Semple and his men were slain after pursuing (sic) and encountering 60 Metis from Fort Qu'Appelle led by Cuthbert Grant." But we could find no historic marker.

Further north we entered Kildonan Park where we observed the pool, the Rainbow Theatre, the Hansel and Gretal House, the English garden, etc. We also decided the next bridge across the Red River was too far away and though Marj was prepared to walk our bikes across a railroad trestle, I insisted that we retrace our way to Carling's Brewery.

En route Marj spotted a church in the midst of a cemetery barely visible from the street. She wanted to investigate. Lo, it was St. John's, the Anglican Cathedral. Needless to say the main entrance was locked but we poked around and near the altar we found a side door, open.

Although St. John's was completely reconstructed in 1926, it already looks ancient. The floor sags away from the center aisle which arches as though to allow water to drain off. I went immediately to the rear end of the nave where I discovered a bulletin for October 26, 1969 which had a picture of St. John's Cathedral—1870 on the cover. I was signing the guest register when we heard hurried steps and soon a beadle appeared. His alarmed look changed to a smile when he saw what I was doing, and he observed that anyone who'd sign the book must be honest. He gave us ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL: A WALKING TOUR and told us the postcards cost 5¢ (I'd already taken one.). Then he went about other business, but as we were leaving he reappeared with a mimeographed ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL CHURCHYARD which was a guide to the graves of interest in the cemetery:

#9. Sir Sam Steele: A soldier and police officer. He served in putting down the North-West (Riel) Rebellion, 1885.

#11. Lt. Gov. John Christian Schultz. Immigrant of 1863. Opposed the government of Louis Riel. Became Lt. Gov. of Manitoba in 1889.

#12. Soldiers' Monument. "Battle Batoche, Fish Creek. Veterans killed 1885. . . . This grave decorated each year . . . by veterans. . . . Annual service is conducted by one of the Cathedral clergy."

#27. Archbishop Machray. Succeeded to the See of Rupert's Land in 1865. His term of office lasted more than 35 years through the formation of the Province of Manitoba in 1870 and the critical days of the Riel Rebellion.

From St. John's we bridged the Red River, but because of its sinuosities I couldn't find the road south on the east bank. It was 10:30 and Marj was hungry and upset by our difficulty. However, after we found the Seine she recognized where we were and perked up. For soon we saw the St. Boniface Chamber of Commerce, and Rue Taché which we followed by the waterside until we came to the fire-gutted Roman Catholic Cathedral. Here we located the Museum whereupon Marj forgot her hunger and wanted to go in. So we lifted our bikes up onto the lawn and, reassured by a young gardener, left them. The young man followed, telling us a few words about the museum and how we could guide ourselves to where Louis Riel is buried. Then he disappeared.

The signs, unlike any others we'd seen in Winnipeg (or Western Canada) were in French and English, and in the very first case there was a photograph of "Louis Riel, Sr., Meulnier" and his more famous son, also several French paperback biographies of the younger man. Then there were some startling snapshots of the

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fire destroying the Cathedral, illustrations of the steamboats which used to bring passengers from St. Paul, Minnesota, downstream to Winnipeg and so on.

As we were leaving, the gardener reappeared to repeat how we could find Riel's grave in the Cathedral cemetery and also where his birthplace was in St. Vital. It is being converted into another museum. We found the grave easily. A marker on it indicated his dates, 1844-1885, and that he was the president of the provisional government of Manitoba, 1869-1870. It was now after eleven and we were both ready to quit.

St. Boniface, 6:22-8:05, Sunday, August 2, 1970. We were up early so we could cycle before the 8:30 Eucharist at St. Philip's Anglican Church. Marj wanted to explore St. Boniface and see Riel's birthplace, too. So I started off south for St. Vital in case it was further to the faubourg than she thought. It was. I knew that St. Mary's Road was the direct route, and on it we noticed a sign advertising something at the corner of Riel Ave. and St. Mary's. Assuming that the Avenue was so named because Riel's birthplace was on it, I continued south until Marj began to have misgivings. At this hour there was very little traffic and even fewer pedestrians, but finally I discovered a woman waiting on a street corner. Her I asked. Riel Ave. was "là bas." I asked her if it was so named because Louis Riel was born there. "Oui, oui."

But là bas was so far that again Marj became alarmed. So I asked a swarthy, Indian (métis?) lad who was trying to hitch a ride. He said to keep "tout droit" for Riel Ave., but Riel's birthplace was elsewhere, on River Street near St. Vital Park. Since I thought we'd already passed the park, I figured I didn't understand his French. So I kept on but with increasing misgivings until I saw a taxi. "The chauffeur will know," I told Marj. He knew where Riel Ave. was. But he acted as though he'd never heard of Louis, père or fils. So we kept on, passing the Dakota shopping center, Tennyson Ave., and into open country. Then we found Riel Avenue.

We started west, optimistically, but soon, hélas, the avenue petered out. What to do? Marj wanted to consult our METROPOLITAN WINNIPEG STREET GUIDE. We did. We were at the corner of Riel and Minnetonka. By following it to Millfield we would reach River Street and I remembered that the lad had told us Riel's birthplace was there. But upon our arrival we found the prospect non-cooperative. The few scattered houses looked new except for what appeared to be a barn half wrapt in cellophane. A girl walked by as we were reconnoitering: "Yes," she said, "his birthplace is that old house up there."

But how far is "up there"? As we explored I noticed an old man sitting on a porch which might be of the right vintage, but he had disappeared before I could draw near enough to hail him. Again Marj and I consulted. She had become convinced that the "barn" wrapt in cellophane back at 324 River Street was what we were looking for.

We returned. There was a high hedge, well-kept lawn, and flagstone path leading up to the building. Some foundations were bare. All these things fitted what the young gardener had told us yesterday; e.g., that the house is being "restored." Most anachronistic was the roof with green asphalt tile. Most persuasive were the thick beams with some sort of plaster between them. Indeed this convinced me. But what a pity that there is no historic marker!

I was surprised that it wasn't nearer the water. Evidently the birthplace and the mill were not adjacent and the stones we'd seen yesterday were from Louis Riel, Sr.'s mill. Also River Road obviously was old, but there was no sign of any other settlers as early as 1844. Had the Riels lived away off by themselves? Was the mill on the Seine? It would have been much further away than the Red River. And what was the plastic wrapping for? It didn't tent the house. There was a back door with a lock on it.

After this cursory inspection we returned to River Street and continuing north came to Vital Park. As we cycled down its shady dirt roads and alongside the Red River, Marj decided it is her favorite park: no people, no traffic, maybe a wild animal (NOT A BEAR) might appear. After one circuit I noticed that it was nearly 8. There would be no time to explore St. Boniface.

Francis J. Thompson

As a postscript, I might add that when we arrived at Richard's Landing on our way east, Bishop Sturtevant said: "Louis Riel? The Canadian government has issued a stamp with his picture on it. When I asked our postmaster who he was, he replied, 'Some French-Canadian politician!' "

Bonne chance!

Paco

AN INDEX OF APHORISMS ABOUT PRISONS AND THE PEOPLE IN THEM

JOSEPH WHITEHILL

(Not all the following is my own. Much was told me by inmates, and much was heard in private from persons who would officially be shocked at what they themselves have said, and would be appalled to suffer a just attribution.)

1. No human institution ever reformed itself from within. The most admired and defended quality of a prison is its status quo. Thus, when private citizens begin to take close interest in their prisons, the flinch from behind the walls is audible.
2. Punishment works well—when applied to persons eleven years old or younger, in a context of credible love, and when swiftly applied and swiftly removed.
   But, you do not punish other people's children. Ever.
3. Every prison riot is the fault of the prison administration.
4. All prisons are governed with the consent of the prisoners.
5. If the energy locked up in racial tension (so subtly encouraged by the keepers) were harnessed to a purpose, we could light the city of Baltimore.
6. Guards and prisoners come from the same level of society, often from the same neighborhoods, sometimes from the same family. No wonder they hate each other so.
7. Metaphor: If every morning of a man's life he were obliged to put a hundred-pound weight on his back before he got up, and had to wear it all day until he

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went to bed, what would happen on that day, after all the years, when he was first excused from the weight? To himself he would seem to fly; he would miss his footing and fall, however.

In prison, a man spends every waking hour thinking, with varying degrees of concentration, about getting out or being out. Years of thinking about only one thing produce a cast of mind that maladapts it for thinking about anything else. When he is released, and there is no longer need to think about getting out or being out, his printed mind stumbles from the strangeness. This is part of what is called being prisonized.

8. The more time a man serves in prison, the more likely is he to return.
9. Metaphor: If the force of gravity were to treble for just one man, while everyone else remained unaffected, he would have a hard time explaining to the rest why he tired so easily and fell down a lot.

   Prison softens a man physically by keeping him in short-compassed idleness for much of the day. It softens him in his spirit by stripping him of his decision-making activity. The man who is well-adjusted to prison life, the model prisoner, finds on his release that prison is the only life he is adjusted to. He arranges to come back.
10. The prison receives a man in a state of shock, a man who has already demonstrated that he is handicapped in the social coping department, holds him for an interval of time during which his handicap is encouraged to increase, then releases him to a world that has grown harder to cope with while he was away. If the state wishes to continue this luxurious destruction of human fiber, then the state ought to guarantee employment to every man leaving prison.
11. The psychologist who works in a prison without in some way attempting to tear it down is in the same moral posture as a staff chaplain in a whorehouse.
12. If the lash worked, I would favor the lash. If prison worked, I would favor prison.
13. In designing the staff organization of our prisons we borrowed many of the forms of the military but few of its achievements. Uniforms, ranks, roll call, muster, discipline through fine of pay and allowances or removal from duty—all these came from soldiery. Pride and morale did not come along. Two thousand men live for months at a time on an aircraft carrier without undue discomfort. Our prisonly philosophers would do well to find out how.
14. Prison food is not nearly so bad as you might expect. (I once talked a friendly warden into letting me and two visitors eat in the mess hall instead of the officers' dining room, intending to demonstrate the impossibility of feeding a man on $0.68 a day. To my embarrassment, the food was delicious.) If you take female company and the pleasures of drink away from a man, he will do his damnedest to improve the savor of what is left to him.
15. Who in our national life do you honestly think is responsible for the goal-setting and model-drawing that results in thinking like this? "If I can't hustle up the box-back suit, the alligator shoes, and the Cadillac El Dorado, then I'm not any kind of man and I might as well be in jail."
16. If we understand a carpenter to be one who is skilled in working wood and we understand a criminal to be one who is expert at committing crime, then we have very few criminals in our prisons. Of the several hundred prisoners I know, fewer than a handful could be said to have shown either planning or elegance in their offendings. Most are little losers and small assaulters, and many got to prison by the saddest road there is—in service to the body-boss heroin.
17. The best parole risk is the murderer. The worst is the fifteen-year-old punk kid who was caught with four hubcaps under his coat.
18. Anything you hear repeated too often about prisons is probably the currently fashionable myth. We hear a lot, for example, about the evils of jailing youths with "hardened criminals." Well, perhaps. But consider this: By the time a teen-ager finally makes it to a serious prison, he generally has a good long record compounded by the erroneous leniency of numerous probations. He is pretty hardened already. The man I worry about is some nice dumb guy of forty who has never been in trouble before, who pulls six months in the slammer for non-support of his wife. (She had to charge him because the welfare people wouldn't give her the check if she didn't.) He has ample time then to learn a whole new way of life that is, at least, much more interesting than his old one.
19. In prison there are many self-help organizations run by the prisoners—Alcoholics Anonymous, Synanon, Seventh Step, The Jaycees, etc.—that serve the very useful purpose of deprisonizing a portion of a man's jailhouse life. Their good effects generally last about three days after a man gets out.
20. When meeting and getting to know an inmate, it is best to ignore and forget what he says during the first two hours of your acquaintance. He has a lot of self-pity, self-justification, and ritual lying to get rid of at first.
21. When meeting and getting to know a prison official, allow considerably longer.
22. The situational homosexuality common in most prisons really isn't the end of the world. Its chief use is when you want to fire the warden through the newspapers, or to create the necessary uproar in your legislature to get you the money to build yourself a shiny new prison with single-man cells. All prisons started with single-man cells.
23. Drugs are a fact. It hurts badly to know that a man can come into one of your prisons clean and leave with a two-shot habit.
24. In nine years of careful listening, I have never heard a prisoner say straight out that he was sorry for doing whatever it was that got him there. This tells us more about ourselves than it does about him.
25. To pay a man fifty cents a day for his work in a prison shop is to tell him in the clearest universal language just what you think he is worth. You had better hope he does not come to believe you.
26. If you are an official of a state prison system, you never say anything derogatory about any other state's prison system, no matter how foul you know it to be. High level jobs in prison work are political and precarious, hiring often crosses state lines, and There Is The Future To Think Of.
27. Prisoners tend to be very conservative people. During the last presidential election, a straw ballot was held in a federal prison. George Wallace won going away. Motherhood and the flag are highly esteemed in prison.
28. I know a prison headed by a psychiatrist and staffed by more psychologists and psychiatrists than any other in this country. Yet punishment in this institu-

tion is more severe and longer extended, and the rules (unwritten) are more draconian, than in any other institution in our state. So much for the treatment model.

NOTE FOR SCREEDS VIII

STEPHEN WIEST

. . . and draws off beauty as his own
approaching the end of the circle
flesh touched with spirit

chanting in the dusk of a foreign tongue

in seed to child
roots from the spiral
from sheperds-conquerors

from the tamed beast
bloodscent dimensions
iron wheel bite
turns

walking beside
in the act the pace
a residue of each day

each brilliant error
towards a knowledge
Stephen Wiest

A MUSE AMUSED

DONALD WILSON

To keep fit
Innocent and morally hail;
This, on the list
Of a Theologians' Guide To Females:

In that dance of the seven veils,
Stop at six.

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JOHN LEAX

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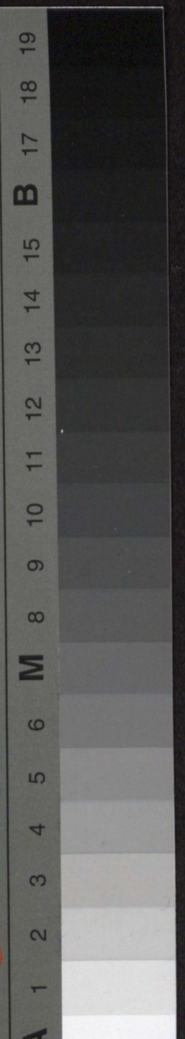

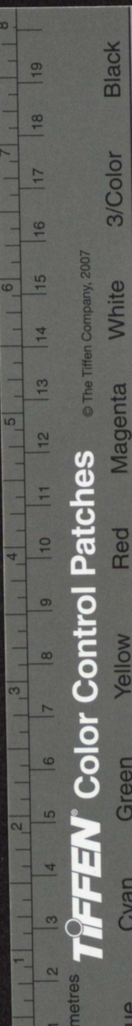

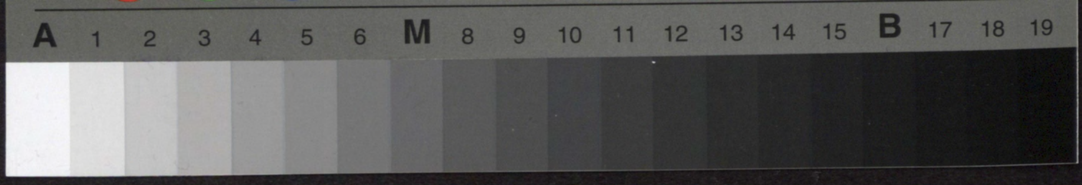
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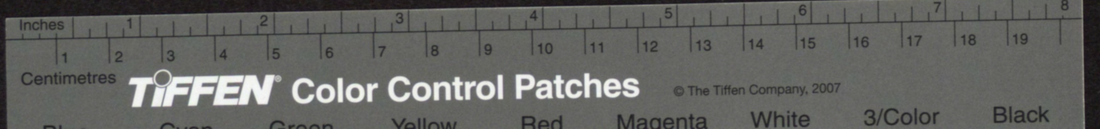
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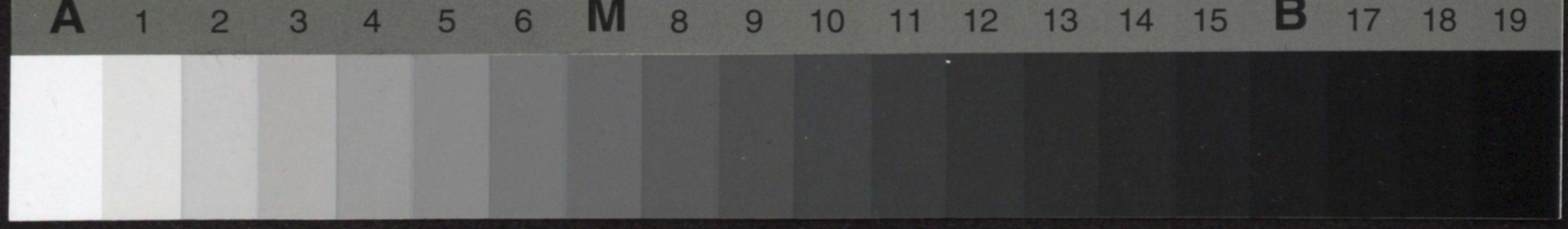
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