St. John's Collegian

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THE WAKE

Darkness, within and without; and around Stover's house, along window and wall and roof and under the floor, the riverlike and hushed unending flow of the wind. Stover sat in his living room alone, and felt its smallness around him even in the dark, and felt the difference between the small room where the pieces of furniture, worn now, cheap when they had been new, crowded each other, and the endless rush of the wind against his house.... It was this season of the year, he remembered, when his son had been home on his last furlough. The same season, another year, a ruined year now, like all the others, scattered, swept along with all the others....Nowhere. Davy, his son, when he had been home that time, had said the house was like something guyed down with a light line. "Gosh, you'd think it would take off like a kite, the way this wind sounds." Stover was glad the boy had said that. It showed the communion between them, that it was there, no matter that Davy cared nothing for reading, for....Davy had liked to hold things in his hands, to tune and adjust pieces of equipment. He had been a scuffling boy, sometimes a brawler. And where might he be now....Nothing. Nowhere. Far away. Everything was far away. Vague. No matter anymore. Nothing for a long time.

The pain in his ear too, fading and gone. He had taken one of his sedative capsules a while back, and if he sat carefully, if he would be careful not to move now, sit like this for a while....Since now the pain, that had been a while back jolting him, jagged, sickening...it was far-off too, and there was only a sort of vague lump of dullness where it had been. Low and solemn now, not really unpleasant even, like the wind. And he thought of where the wind might have come from before it ever reached houses and towns, and where it would go after all the houses and fields and wilderness had been left behind. And Davy was lying in the darkness, far off, oh, and nobody could ever call him home again. The wind might be blowing there too, the same in Normandy as in Virginia, and Davy would be alone there, having the ultimate privacy.

Soon I'll need to get up and be around people again. Get up and go to work. Had to get to work on time, and pay the bills, and go through the motions of raising what was left of his family, go through the motions of pretending he was somebody competent to do that, and keep on with them, and so eventually he would be an old man. He was forty-six already, and there was nothing to do except keep on the job, and get through the days. Sometimes

CANEM CAMPUMQUE CANO

No dancing on the green today,
Nor walking on the grassy clay.
But if the sward must needs be trod,
Inspect each element of sod -
For excrement in tidy mounds
Adorns the once-aseptic grounds;
And wads of hair, half-eaten franks,
And paper plates lie there in ranks.
What mortal dares approach this plot,
This scene of overwhelming rot?
(Above in the empyrean heights,
The vultures, seeking dank delights,
Would rather keep their altitude
Than claim the stews below as food.)
But rest resigned; do not attack
The noble cynomaniac,
Who comes to show, and having showed,
Moves down his beblueribboned road.
Nor all your piety and wit
Can cancel out one piece of...it.

- Parslow

he had a midnight to morning shift, as now; sometimes one of the others. What he had to do was easy enough, for he knew the work from years of repeating the same tasks, and all he needed was some patience.

The cheap virtue. Who had called it that? Schopenhauer, maybe. Nietzche. Strange to think there had been a time when he would have known at once. Could have taken whichever book it was in, and opened the book to the page and paragraph. All of them, the philosophies, the poetries, in his bedroom now, in the cheap bookcase with the varnish that was blistered and peeling. That he had read once, and some of them many times, and studied, dreamed. A time when. Not any more. Far off, and no matter to him now, no matter either that once he had ....that all the books, what they meant, what he did about them, had been the justification. The *raison d'etre*. The right phrase? Once he would have known. No matter, now. The justification, against a menial job, low wages. His wife, back then, had been impressed with all that. With his convictions that property and prosperity were meaningless, and only the poetry and the philosophy were important. She had even been proud of him, in her dull way.

Tonight she was at Tuckett's Tavern, three miles out of town on the road to Richmond. He supposed she was. Maybe she was going to another place now. Anyway it used to be Tuckett's. Wherever it was, the place would be crowded, and lit with neon on the outside, and dim on the inside, booths, a jukebox making racket, beer, dancing. She would be sitting in a booth with one of her crowd, or else out on the floor dancing, dancing, dancing, to the string music from the jukebox. She was only a year or two--it was two--only that much younger than himself, but she had not grown tired and sad. She had become just plump enough, and from time to time she bought herself new dresses, charged them for him to pay for. And she had spirit and energy enough to dance and dance, but he needed to drag himself to work when time came for him to go on shift, and when he came off, he was sapped and done for.

One of the children in the second bedroom made a little low cry. Four children. He and Hilda had four left. All were girls. Davy had been their only boy. It was Evelyn who was complaining in her sleep. She would soon be sixteen. He waited. She was quiet. He relaxed then. She had gone back to sleep. Poor kids.

Sometimes he thought about the first few years after he and Hilda had been married. He could not recall any particular thing, but only the way and the feeling of back then, when things had been so cheerful and eager, and Dave had been a little boy. It was true, all that time was, even if he could not recall any specific thing to prove it, true and actual and genuine, and for that reason he would absolutely insist she had not essentially altered....His parents had disapproved of the marriage. They had said--his mother had said, Hilda was perhaps just a little bit common, and that no one they knew had ever been acquainted with her family. But they had not known her, and he had. And, certainly, Davy was proof they were wrong, for Davy had been a fine upstanding boy. Something she had said...."He has got the sweetest disposition of anybody I ever saw. And I know where he gets it from, too. He gets it from you, you old slowpoke. Davy takes after his Daddy. Junior Stover takes after his Daddy, yes he does, yum, yum." She had been proud of him. There was a time. Without actually comprehending, she had been impressed with him for declining to calculate and contend for a high salary job, and she had said she didn't mind one bit doing without some of that stuff that didn't matter anyway when you got right down to it,since he didn't think it mattered. She had said, I think an awful lot of ideals, and I'm just as glad as anything you have some.

Gone now; after it the phase when she liked to say just because he thought he had so much fancy education was no reason to go out of his way to be shiftless. It would be just as easy for him to get a decent respectable job as the one he had where they had to live in a cheap rented house and worry about bills. And he had answered that he Goddamned well didn't thing it was worth the bother to get what she called a respectable job. And that the bills would be all right if she would stop buying the Halloween costumes she took for attractive clothes, for lack of better taste. Oh God. But that phase had also ended. The rage, the quarrels, petered out to bickering, eventually to nothing. She did what she would, and he had, at first no will, later no inclination, to say anything about it.

All that time now, when she had been young, and he also, the later time of fury and wild accusations, taunts, scattered now, lost. What became of people?....And even so, he held out that somewhere she was essentially the same as in those early years. Something like an echo of it, the old fair flash and gayety--not gayety, actually, but anyway, gentleness--the last few days of Davy's furlough, and a short space of time after Davy had gone. He had seen again how she had walked and spoken so long ago, when they had been a young married couple. When he himself had just been discharged from the other war. For a while back then they had been desperately poor, and yet it had been such a fine time. Avalon. They had been beachcombers, but they had been on a magic island.

Davy would have been twenty-one years old this year. Stover himself had been that age the year he had got married. He and Hilda had lived in the same town, in Portsmouth, but they had never met until after he had come home from the army. They had moved to this town from Portsmouth, since he had got work here, and Davy had been born here, learned to walk, had grown up, and Evelyn and the other three girls had come, and he had gone through the rotation of shifts on the job, the daylight, the four to twelve, the midnight to morning, and gone through them, and repeated them. This week he had the twelve to eight, the graveyard shift. He thought ahead to how slack and depressed he would be when he came off the job at eight tomorrow morning. Old, drained. Sometimes he thought he must be the oldest man in all the world. And oh Davy, Davy.

Now he moved his hand slowly and slowly toward the table lamp, and pulled the cord. Dave's face looked at him from its frame on the table. Davison Stover, Junior, and all young, grave, and friendly, turned a little away just to the world the way he used to hold his head. People had often said Davy looked like him. He mused now on how Davy's face was blocky and serious, like his own, Davy's hair also short and thick and black. And they had been the same build, after Davy had got his growth. Neither one tall, nor yet little enough to be called Shorty; both slow-walking, broad in the chest. His own hair was gray now. And in the picture, Davy was somehow different at the mouth, and his eyes had got a hard straight look. Hilda's eyes were sometimes hard that way. The boy looked tough, but it was only a friendly capable toughness, and he never had spoken smartly to his father, the way the girls sometimes did.

He remembered when they had got this picture made. It had been during Dave's last furlough, when he was on his way to the port of embarkation. Dave had never liked to be photographed, but since they had no picture of him at all...."Well, hell, Dad," Davy said that afternoon. "How come you want to insist? I'd feel like a monkey sitting in front of a camera."

"Come on. It won't take long. Anyway, I don't suppose it'll be a new feeling for you, hey?" He punched at Dave awkwardly, and hoped Dave would get up and come along.

And in fact, he did get up, and turned off the radio, and they walked down to the studio. Stover was pleased. Dave was hardly ever at home, and he had caught him during one of the short times he happened to be in the house. The photographer took

three poses. When the proofs came, all three were good, but one, one, had speared him, and Hilda herself had gone on about how good it was.

Then, five months later, the telegram had come, and Hilda had wanted to send that picture to the newspaper. He had refused absolutely. He gazed at it now. Darkling I listen, and for many a time. All things gone, crumbled and broken and scattered, but some...Caught somewhere, detained, no matter that they were tattered and useless, caught the way things are sometimes on a tree bough or a strand of barbed wire, and held there in spite of the insistent steady winds...

Dave was tearing around a good deal that last furlough. As for himself, he had been on the daylight shift then, and he left the house at seven each morning to be at work on time, since he walked. Usually he was working overtime then, because of the war, and by the time he got home from work, Dave would be gone for the night again. But a couple of times, as he was leaving the house in the morning, he had met Dave who was just getting home. One time Dave got out of a Richmond taxicab; the other time, some girls and some other servicemen had brought him in a car.

Both times Dave was drunk, and Stover, through his annoyance and embarrassment to see his son intoxicated, had been glad. For he remembered his own army time and the necessity to get drunk. He had been glad, but deeper than that, it seemed to him that his very heart must break, for Davison was young, and tough in a decent friendly way, and drunk at seven o'clock in the morning. The boy had been talkative, and had stayed at the front-yard gate after the others had driven away, and told his father about this and that in the army. But Stover was on his way to work, and he had to keep on down the sidewalk while Dave went in the house.

When he came home for dinner at noon, Dave was still asleep. He had taken off only his shoes and socks and shirt, and lay sprawled on top of the covers. Late flies buzzed in the room. Dave's shirt lay on the floor, for Hilda hadn't got around to cleaning up the house. He saw how brown and solid the boy's biceps were, how they stretched the sleeves of his white skivvy shirt.

Hilda left the funny papers in the rocking chair and fried some eggs for his lunch. She washed a plate and cup, and found a clean fork for him. All the time he was eating, he hoped Dave would wake up, but his dinner hour was over, and he had to hurry back. When he came in again a few minutes after four, Dave was gone, and Hilda said when he asked, It so happened she didn't have the slightest notion where.

But the day following that, when Davy's delay en route had only four days left, he came home and Dave walked out on the front porch to meet him. He said Hello to Dave, and went on inside to get some aspirins, since his ear had started banging again. But the box was empty. He asked Hilda if she had got more at the grocery, and she said she had forgotten the blamed things.

"You got a headache, Dad?"

"Oh, it's just that old ear of his, Junior. The one he complains about, you remember how he used to go on about it. I guess you don't, though. I guess you didn't hear him say anything about it since you been home. He probably thinks he's something if he doesn't say anything about--"

"I'll go get a box for you."

"No," he said quickly. "Not now. It's all right." While Dave was around, he wanted him to stay. Also, he did not want little services done for him. "Anyway, let's drink a cup of coffee first."

"Yeah, he can wait for those old aspirins. You said just a minute ago you wanted some coffee, Junior." She turned on the gas under the percolator, and washed three cups. "And I might as well drink me a cup myself. Say, that was a pretty wild time at Tuckett's last night, wasn't it? You see me dancing that fast piece?"

"I--saw you."

"I thought you'd come over and set with us. I wasn't sure you saw me, I was about to yell at you when you started to leave with your bunch, but you'd done gone. It sure did get wild in there for a while."

"You think so."

"Oh, you left before the best part of it started. I don't guess it was so wild at that while you were there, but after you left, boy! That fellow--. I mean, the folks I was with, one of them passed a compliment about you. I wanted you to come over so I could introduce you to him, and ....What's the matter?"

The boy was watching her.

"Well, all right, so what? I like to have a good time as much as anybody. As much as you do yourself. And he never will go out with me, so if he won't I'll go by myself. I certainly will."

"Yes. By all means, then." He looked at the piled dirty dishes in the sink. "That coffee fresh?"

"Why, it's right fresh, Junior. It's what was left over from breakfast, and it saves making it new, just to heat it up again."

He took the percolator as she talked and dumped the coffee from it into the sink.

"Why, we always drink it that way, Junior," she said. "It saves making it new every time, and what with coffee being rationed and everything, it saves using so much coffee, if you don't make a new potful every time. You been having it that way ever since you got home and you never noticed."

He scalded the pot under the hot-water tap and made a fresh potful. "I like coffee. I don't like bilge-water."

"Oh, is that so?" She turned and left and went to sit on the front porch.

Dave with his hands in his pockets stared at the coffee pot. He turned to his father. "What say we go down to the cafe and get supper? You and me. Oh, come on. I went to the picture studio with you. We can get your aspirins down there too."

Then from that time, Dave stayed with him whenever he was not working. On each of those last four days, he and Dave met at the mill gate at noon so that they could eat lunch together in the cafe. In the evenings they sat on the front porch together, or in the town's little park, and at supper time back to the cafe. Dave wanted to pay for all the meals but Stover also wanted to pay for each one. They settled by taking turns. The cafe food was welcome, after Hilda's cooking.

Dave wanted him to see a doctor about his ear, and learned how the trouble had been caused. During the Argonne battle, mud had been jammed into it by a shellburst. He had heard the shell coming, but he hadn't had the spirit to get down quick. Still it had done nothing except drive mud into his ear. He refrained from telling Dave he had been too exhausted to get down when he had heard the shell. He didn't want Dave to know things like that. The injury had not taken effect until some years later. Before the boom of the second war, the money cost for an operation had been too much. The pain was severe only now and then anyway, although at those times it was hell. "Couldn't you have got credit with the doctors, couldn't you?"

"I suppose . But it doesn't really have anything to do with me. If you start thinking about accidental things, you'll get snarled up with them worse than you were before."

Dave seemed to be thinking that over.

One of those times, late one afternoon, at supper, his friend Andrews who was his boss at the mill, came in for cigarettes, and came over to their table. "Dave sure grew into a fine boy, Stover," he said. "Where you stationed, son?"

Dave had remarked that people continually asked him where he was stationed. But he answered Andrews pleasantly, and explained he was going to a port of embarkation.

"Going over, huh," Andrews said. He looked disturbed. Right away he spoke again. "Say, Stover, how about you and your boy and Hilda coming to supper at my house tomorrow night? Wife and I would like to have you over."

Stover looked at him, and at Dave. If Andrews had asked only him and Dave. "I'd like to, myself," Dave was saying smoothly. "But I'll be leaving in the morning." Then Stover also declined the invitation. He had known Dave was leaving, but now that it had actually been said, it was almost as bad as finding out.

He had considered speaking to Dave about things. But anything to be said about some of them, he saw, could only be an explanation, a defense. Anything he would talk about in that line would only be some irrelevancy anyway, with nothing to do with him finally, as the ear injury had nothing to do with himl pain was only a pointless adjunct. It was desirable to keep decent silence. He would have talked about other things also, and said some kind of words to Davy to counsel him or give him courage, or, if that was a stuffy idea, give him some way of looking at things that would enable him to be amused by them. But he put this thought away with the other. Whatever he meant by courage, by amusement, it was not something that could be transferred from one to another....Presently, he discovered his conviction that there was no occasion for him to say anything to Dave. And so his despair passed away, and it was replaced by most solid pride that this was the boy, out of all the possibilities, who was his son. And he thought he was luckier than any man at all.

That last afternoon, after Andrews had shaken Dave's hand and left, they finished their supper, and paid the lady at the cash register, and went out into the beginning of twilight together. Hilda was coming toward them down the sidewalk.

She was dressed in such a way that she was unfamiliar. Instead of a sleazy housedress, or a dancing costume, she had on a plain skirt and blouse, and a jacket. "Where you-all going?"

"No place in particular," he told her.

"Well....uh...if you want to.... I mean if you will..if you could..." She was twisting one foot about. He noticed her shoes were white and damp. She had only recently polished them. "I mean if you don't aim to go anywhere," she said, "why don't you come on back to the house? Because I fixed a big nice supper, and I wanted to get here before you ate, but it took me so long--and I worked so fast, sure enough, and--. But I guess you-all had supper already. I bet you had something nice, huh?"

"Oh--not so much," Dave said. "What did you fix?" They had both had steaks.

"Why, sure," Stover said. "What did you cook?"

The house was shining. She had cleaned every room and waxed every piece of furniture. All the dishes were stacked away, and the coffee pot that was once sticky and stained, glittered. She had made Evelyn and the other three girls put on their best dresses, and before they sat down, they brought Dave a present. He unwrapped it, and it was a billfolder. "Look inside," they said.

It contained a five dollar bill.

The four girls giggled. "That's from us. The billfolder's from them."

"I happened to be downtown today and I just happened to see it," Hilda said. "It looked right nice, I thought I might as well get it. I--" she glanced at Stover. "I had to charge it."

"Looks pretty nice," he said. He saw he would have spoiled things if he said it was all right she had charged it.

She had roasted a chicken for supper, and with it she had six different vegetables. Afterwards, there was a cake. After supper, they sat in the living room.

Later, in bed, he lay awake and saw the light grow against the windowpanes, and thought of how strange it would be if he turned to her now, if they joined with each other. He could believe, it had been so long, he had forgotten their tricks, their suggestions and alternatives, the things they had used to think of and perfect. She had used to insist that some of the things he wanted were immoral.

And later, during the quarrel time, she had accused him...But now, if he....He declined to use a special occasion as an opportunity. Towards full daylight, she woke and tiptoed into Dave's room. "I thought he might of got the cover off him," she said when she returned and saw that he was awake. "And it was." She giggled. "He always used to kick it off."

He had told Andrews he wanted that day off. The girls also stayed home from school. Dave's belongings were packed into his gray-green duffel bag.

They were at the station. Hilda said she wanted a piece of pie and a cup of coffee, and urged Dave to come on in and have one with her, but Dave stayed on the platform. The two men stood together on the platform during the fragment of time that was left.

The train arrived. People got off and got on. Hilda ran from the lunchroom still holding a piece of pie in her hand, and hugged Dave with her free arm. She kissed him. He said goodbye to the girls, who told him in return goodbye, and they giggled at him because he had meringue from the pie on his mouth. He brushed it off, and shook hands with his father, and got on the train.

In the time after that, Hilda always got up ahead of him and had his breakfast ready. At noon, she always had a good meal ready for him. The house stayed clean, and she kept herself neat. A few times, the telephone rang, but each time she said to the caller she was sorry but it so happened she was busy. She crocheted a mat for Dave's photograph. They visited the Andrews family, who lived a few blocks away. Andrews and his wife and child came to see them now and then. Hilda baked cookies to serve. When his ear gave him a spell once, she stayed up all night to keep a hot poultice on it, and the next morning called a doctor, who prescribed capsules for him. But the pain left him alone after that, and he didn't need the capsules. He enjoyed now, in a way, the mill and the men who worked there with him. He was an electrician in the mill's powerhouse. He went to work, and the time passed before he knew it, and when he came off shift, he was hardly tired at all.

And he did admit finally it was going to be sustained. The night after she had met them on the sidewalk had not been a special occasion. Things really were possible, and rediscovering, both of them mature now, tried and deepened....The girls brightened, and spoke to him respectfully, and hardly ever bickered with each other anymore. Thanksgiving; and soon Christmas; they began to make plans for Christmas.

Sometime in the winter, the telegram came. That day, Hilda walked to and fro and wrung her hands, and now and then made a harsh noise. Stover could only sit in his chair, without a word. Mrs. Andrews came in a few times to be with Hilda. But presently Hilda went downtown and bought herself a new dress, green satin with a wide silver belt, and two lucky-charm bracelets, and when Mrs. Andrews called the next time, Hilda was not in. Mrs. Andrews bothered him for a few minutes, and she went away then, and he was left alone, and he was grateful for that much.

Davy's picture, and the telegram, killed in action, Normandy, the War Department regrets to inform you. Absalom, Absalom, oh my Absalom, would God I had died for thee, oh Absalom, my son, my son.

The wind, continual, on and on around his house, against and under the puny house where he lived. He looked toward the photograph, without will to focus his eyes. Evelyn in the second bedroom complained again in her sleep. In the drawer of the table, locked, he had Dave's letters, along with the telegram. To have the body brought back. Sometime.

He moved his head carefully, and found that the motion brought no twinge at all now. Good. The capsules had taken effect. He was ready to go to work. The graveyard shift. He got up and went to the bedroom where the girls slept. He straightened the dirty counterpane over Evelyn.

And this was what it had come to. All the books and the determination,

Shakespeare, Lucretius, Whitehead, and others, the thinking and the excitement, the proudness not to contend. Andrews once, looking at the books in the cheap bookcase, had said he had a lot of respect for an educated man. Andrews also had confided to him how he too had wanted things, and failed with them. Fellowship there; and once he had seen, probably always had seen, had been able to tell in their faces, that all the other people....Presently Andrews had got on his nerves, and the man's wife, her solicitousness. Not to contend, and work the angles. Evelyn had drooled on her pillow. Only to sit still now. Perceive, no response. That was the good way. Next to the best. Andrews and all of them, beaten. And the best way--not even to perceive. After all, Davy was only a fraction of the general matter. A whole lifetime. All of it, finally, had turned out to be something that had nothing to do with him. For all of it a final sedative, anesthetic, blankness, presently. Reprieve. Davy had a permanent furlough.

He went to the kitchen and in the darkness found his lunchbox. Home is where you can find things in the dark. Home is where you hang yourself. Where the bedclothes were stale, and crusted dishes stayed stacked in the sink. It would pass.

He would have to hurry now to keep from being late to work. He buckled his lunchbox cover down, and turned off the light on the living room table. He left the front door unlocked, since he had the only key and Hilda would be getting back sometime. "You shut up," she had said. A very long time ago. "You sit around and mope, and I don't say anything about it. All right then, I'll go out and have a good time by myself." To Tuckett's. Anywhere. Dancing meant as much as anything else. The general thing, the lifetime. Dancing and dancing and dancing, or the keeping silent. However, he'd better not hear of her bringing anybody to the house, where he had to pay the rent.

He shut the front gate behind him and turned up his collar against the wind. No moon tonight. And this part of the town had no streetlights. Only the wind; and he tramped on away from the house to go to work.

James Ballard

WHAT'S SAUCE FOR HOMER IS MEED FOR THE FRESHMEN

Book I

Sing, goddess, the intrepidity of St. John's sons. The plan that to these sons honor might have accorded. How the plan unwrought was and many fled, and of the undaunted few that held to their meed of honor.

Who then among the gods brought forth the plan, and who its frustration? The son of Zeus and of Hera, even Ares, ever hungering after the scraped knuckles and outraged oaths of men. He was it who appeared unto The Scribe and said to him; "Ye sons of St. John's, even Freshmen, wherefore art the gods on eternal Olympus sore displeased? Wherefore do they afflict ye grievous with declensions of Greek and propositions of Euclid? Hear now, and know. On this hallowed campus there exist objects of history in number as unto the bastard sons of Zeus, and of sanctity even as unto the gods. And this it is that displeasures them, for none is the mortal that may put up a thing as unto the gods. Even The Cannon, kin to Francis Scott Key. Of valiant spirit are the generation of your predecessors which stole from the Bell of McDowell - (which is to King William's-land as Helios is to the planets) the clapper which makes its silvery throated peals to peal; voiding it thereby of undue sacrosancity. Honored are they whose godlike dauntlessness have caused windows to shatter and ceilings to fall. And as leper is unwith a nose so are you unwith meed of honor."

Thus spake he and like the Mist did vanish, leaving only a puddle of blood and a half-chewed thigh bone to show that he was even there.

Now then did the Freshmen call to council their numbers, and rose the scribe and spake he the word that Ares had spake and sate him down.

Now rose the son of Nestor's son, even The Deacon, and he it was that augered an auger. Obeisance toward the library made he, and in lack of wine or hecatomb, an hundred times he spat on the ground the stuff of his digestion. And in supplication did chant;

"meaning of Meaning,
knowledge of Knowledge,
virtue of Virtue..."

and vibrating in ecstasy like the string of a lyre, spake he in brevity uncommon in Freshmen, "The Cannon has got to go!"

And he sate.

Like Stentorian chorus then did a mighty cry go up from the horde, and dialectical gibberish was gibbered. Then did Bacchus appear by the side of The Wielder of The Great Wrench, and he did cause the host to be smitten into silence with his tongue and quiet reigned like unto the Womb but with sore heavier breathing than therein. Then in somber council were plans of war made for the well-greaved Freshmen to claim their meed of honor.

Book XXIV

Now all the other hope-bearing men did return to rest and some to make libations multitudinous and some to ponder the Riddle of the Conjugation. Only The Scribe was not holden of sweet rest nor libation nor pondery; rather was he pondering in his heart how he could procure the splendid instruments of war wherewith to claim their meed. And then did Athene appear to his side in the guise of an urge to micturate, and whilst he stood thus divested of the dignity, was the simple truth able to assert itself.

Thus was it that he called to his side the sharp-witted Nut-Bearer, even he of the four eyes; and with speed of fleet-footed Dream did they steal forth to procure the tools wherewith honor might be forged, and not without success did they return.

Then whilst Helios was floating in his cup by the stream of Ocean, now did the brave-hearted Freshmen converge upon the god-offending relic, even The Cannon, and swiftly did Wielder of the Great Wrench set himself to violating the bolts which held the meed to its concrete couch. Of these there were eight, and of them did seven allow reluctant removal, but he who had wrought The Cannon, even Hephaistos the lame, contrived that the eighth bolt should budge not.

Horrified Minutes ran swiftly by. The while a company of the Freshmen horde belabored the doors to the Silver-throated Bell. Three Gordian-like hinges were there, and of these did two succumb to the lever's persuasion. But the third moved not. And the door did stoutly defy the Freshmen onslaught. Then did he of the abundant perphrasis, even he of the Great Axe, attack at the hinge, committing unspeakable outrage against the door and his gods. But the door yielded not. Nor did the gods.

The while greivous tried cannon men faced the dread spectre of defeat. Verily was the plan unstrung, for warned by the herald of the sore wroth Hephaistos, the Watchman, even Tootsie, fosterling son of velvet-breasted Night did lumber towards the field of contention. And Stentor did lend him voice to cry, "Hey wadaya doin' dere?" And as a tower of sand doth dissolve before the wave, so did the horde dissolve before the call. Full tail did they turn. Full far did they run.

But the wielder of the Great Wrench fled not. He entangled in his weapon was become, unable to rise. By his side did a few noble men of good courage remain, ever ready to shelter him with shields of nonchalance against the piercing darts of vituperation, even curses. And many such did smite them on the ears beside the head.

Sated now with the manifest decimation of the ranks, even of the Freshmen, now did Watchman, even Tootsie, turn his peregrinations. Of vented spleen was he.

Now then did Athene by the Scribe appear, "Out on it, verily now, mindeth the men attacking the silver-throated Bell. For no whit, lest they be warned will they escape the wrath of Watchman, even Tootsie." Thus spake she and did wrap The Scribe in a nox-

ious cloak of miasmic mist and set him down within earshot of the threatened men. Spake he: "Withdraw, flee, avaunt ...commeth the Watchman!" Without reck they withdrew, fleed, avaunted. Outwitted was the Watchman, foiled was he. Even unto frustration.

O goddess, thus hast thou sung, the intrepidity of St. John's sons. Even now are they ruth riffen, heinous remorse fills full their breast beside the nipple. Unstrung their plan, eyes of bright valour bemisted by foul failure. Yet doth the issue stand. Yet is the honour unproven. Yet does their meed point with sullen arrogance in its time-worn direction, a displeasure to gods, a symbol of defeat to Freshmen. How long? How long?

-Sandek

IMAGINATION

Persons of the Dialogue: *Students, Huntington, Stanton*

The Scene: *The Coffee Shoppe*

Huntington: Hello, Stanton, what did you think of tonight's lecture?
Stanton: It has left me a little confused. For somehow I cannot accept the notion of fancy and imagination being the same thing. Can you conceive of it?
Huntington: Well, I must confe es that
Huntington: Well, I must confess that I missed the lecture tonight and it has been quite a while since I have speculated on this particular problem. But perhaps if you will tell me what imagination is and what fancy is, we will together be able to see whether they are the same.
Stanton: Always, Huntington, when I have a problem I am able to find some satisfaction in discussing it with you, but somehow I can never get a concrete answer. This time I hope that you will be able to tell me without doubt what I want to know.
Huntington: O, Stanton, why is it that you must always have a definite black and white fact? I will tell you at the start that I can probably not give it to you. If you will be satisfied with an appraisal of the factors and an idea of what their relationship might be, then will I be glad to speak with you. But if you will be satisfied with nothing less than a textbook definition then I am afraid I can be of no service to you and you will have to search elsewhere. Now then, will you be content with what I have to offer or do you think you would be better satisfied if you asked one of the sophists in the sophistorial?
Stanton: How can you ask me that when you know how I distrust the sophists? Although I will not be fully satisfied by what you will show me, I am sure that I will be nearer to a decision than I am now.
Huntington: At the start I say that I promise nothing; but let us get on. First of all shall we see what is fancy and what is imagination?
Stanton: Yes, Huntington, let us.
Huntington: Just what would you say is the nature of imagination?
Stanton: Imagination, I would say is the power to see things which are not really there.
Huntington: Then if you were to see a house and you imagined that there were people in it....it would follow that people were not really there.
Stanton: Not of necessity.
Huntington: Then surely imagination is not a power to see things only which are not there. But on the other hand is it a power to see only that which is there?
Stanton: But that would be knowledge, not imagination.
Huntington: Then what would you say imagination is?
Stanton: Then I would say that imagination is the power to see what may be there.
Huntington: And in order to see what may be there you must have a "there" into which to look.
Stanton: Yes, that is right.
Huntington: And if imagination searches into an established "there" then you would say that it works with some discipline?
Stanton: Yes, I would say that.
Huntington: Then we can say that we have decided upon certain qualities of imagination. Namely that it is a disciplined power by which we can look into something and see what may be there.
Stanton: Yes, that is right! Now we know what imagination is!
Huntington: Take it easy, Stanton. We are far from knowing that. All we know is some of the qualities of imagination. Now what can you tell me about fancy?
Stanton: Well fancy is free. It is unrelated pictures of things that do not exist.
Huntington: And if it is free is it disciplined?
Stanton: Assuredly not.
Huntington: And does fancy look into a definite thing?
Stanton: No, indeed. Because it sees things which do not exist anywhere.
Huntington: Then we can assume that fancy and imagination are not alike.
Stanton: But I have been told by the lecturer that fancy and imagination are the same thing. Perhaps he meant that they are the same because fancy might be considered prior to imagination as some people consider intuition prior to logic.
Huntington: Then if we consider fancy necessarily prior to imagination then the one could not exist without the other and we might consider them parts of the same whole?
Stanton: Yes. Or fancy a component of imagination the whole.
Huntington: Yes. But if we consider fancy and imagination as parts of the same entirety then what shall we call the entirety? And on the other hand, if fancy is to be supposed a part of imagination then what shall we call that portion of imagination which is not fancy?
Stanton: O, Huntington, I might have known it! You have answered my question with a question and I am still in the dark.

Arnold L. Markowitz

THE ABBEY OF THELEME

The Inscription on the Gate

Here enter not
Smug Hypocrites,
holy loons,
bigots,
sham-Abrahams
imposters of the cloth,
mealy-mouthed humbugs,
holier-than-thou baboons,
lip-service lubbers,
smell-feast picaroons,
sneaks,
mischief-makers,
colporteure of lies.

Being foul you would befoul
Man, woman, beast, or fowl.
The vileness of your ways
Would sully my sweet lays,
Owls--and your own black cowl,
Being foul, you would befoul.

Defenders of dishonest pleas,
clerks,
barristers,
attorneys who make freemen slaves
Canon Law pettifoggers,
censors,
Pharisees,
Judges,
assessors,
arbitrators,
referees who blithly doom good people to untimely graves.

Tangle, wrangle, brangle
We loathe, from any angle.
Our aim is joy and sport,
Time's swift, youth's fleet, life's short,
You, go and disentangle
Tangle, wrangle, brangle!

Curmudgeon,
loan shark,
muckworm,
hunks,
bloodsucking usurer,
extortioner,
pennystint,
lawsuit-chasing crimps,
lickgolds,
harpyclaws,

crunchfists,
jaundiced zealots of the mint.

Those grim and grisly faces
Bear all the ravaged traces
Of hidebound avarice;
We cannot stomach this.
Banish from all blithe places
Those grim and grisly faces.

Churls,
sour boors,
invidious fools
old, jealous brabblers,
scolds,
grumblers,
soreheads,
sulkers,
badgers bred in schools of hate,
ghosts of maleperts,
firebrand's ghouls, fiercer than wolves at bay.

Those not to enter the Abbey are divided into four groups. These groups may be classified in the following way: (1) hypocrites, (2) the malicious, (3) the avaricious, and (4) the hateful.

1. The class of hypocrites seems to be made up almost exclusively of monks. The regulations of the Abbey make it clear that the refuse and excrement of society are not wanted. The Abbey does not welcome those who come because they cannot do anything else and are useless to everyone. Gargantua states his opinion of monks quite succinctly. "Do you know the peremptory reason why humanity eschews monks?" he asks. "I'll tell you: it's because they eat the turds of the world, or, if you prefer, because they fatten upon the sins of men. That is pretty disgusting! ...So help one God, if they pray for us, do you know why? Because they're terrified of losing their white bread and savory stews.... Take the ape. Can you explain why a monkey is invariably scoffed and teased? Well, then, understand why monks are invariably given wide room by old and young. The monkey does not watch the house like a dog, draw the plow like the ox, yield milk like the cow or give wool like the sheep, nor, let me add, bear burdens like the horse. What, pray, does he do? He spills shit over everything and befouls it: there lies the reason for the mockery and beatings we allot him." Aside from the fact that many monks are the excrement of society (Gargantua said, "I mean lazy-time-serving monklets.") this passage makes it clear that these very excremental monks are thrown by their motives into the disgusting light of growing fat on the sins of the world. Their hypocritical condition would lead them to have a quick eye for the sins of others (spilling their shit over everything) and to be unable to contemplate the integrity and goodness in men that transcends their petty sins. Their eyes are fixed upon the excrement of the soul in a way that rivets their attention upon the vile clay of men's being and blocks their recognition to that part of man which is like God.

2. The class of the malicious is peopled by those who use their power to injure other men unjustly - judges, lawyers, assessors. The members of this class are, in a later part of the book, called "cannibals, a monstrous African race with faces like dogs, who bark instead of laugh." Whereas those in the first class are lacking in self respect, these seem to lack a respect for the rights of other men. They are devoid of a moral sense. They use other men as cannibals use their victims, as means of their own gain. When they laugh (and they only laugh "at", never "with") they laugh at the stupidity of men. They are convinced that man is a thing of no worth, because all men exist for their sakes, and they know that they themselves are worth nothing. They are cynics.

3. The avaricious are typified for Rabelais by Crassus, the Roman consul, whose ruling passion was the love of money, and "who smiled but once in his life." The avaricious, therefore, are also the agelasts - haters of laughter. They are, for the most part, too concerned with possession of something exterior and foreign to their true nature to even notice the men about them, except in a semi-conscious way. Their "grisly faces" betoken some grim pursuit of their trifling goal.

4. Those in the class of the hateful are called misanthropes after the example of Timon the misanthrope, an Athenian, who, in consequence of the ingratitude he experienced, and the disappointments he suffered, from his early friends and companions, secluded himself from the world, admitting only one or two persons into his company. These people are those who are so soured and embittered against their fellows that they despise and refuse to admit to themselves their need of being honored by other men. In their haughtiness they think themselves superior to all men, but in despising honor they also despise what is honored among men - which is virtue. Even worse, they finally become habituated in the war of hate within them and despise even their natural inclination to peace.

But enter here
Men of goodly parts,
Gallants,
noble gentlemen,
come proud,
come wise,
come gay,
mellow,
courteous,
true sophisticate,
come worldling,
come good fellow.

Comrades, companions, friends,
Assemble from the ends
Of earth in this fair place
Where all is mirth and grace.
Felicity here blends
Comrades, companions, friends.
Nimble-witted scholars of the Holy Gospel

The Holy word of God
Shall never be downtrod
Here in this holy place,
If all deem reason grace,
And use for staff and rod
The Holy Word of God.

Ladies fair of eminent degree,
flowers of loveliness,
angels of harmony,
respendent,
proud,
yet of the rarest modesty.

1. Those gentlemen are welcomed to the Abbey who possess the attributes contrary to those of hypocrisy, malice, avarice and hate: Namely, self respect, respect for the rights of others (a moral sense), generosity and friendliness. The four latter attributes are indespensable to those who contemplate practicing the Art of Living, the subject matter of which is Honour, Praise and Pleasure. The attributes are arranged in a descending scale of necessity. The first, self-respect, is most necessary. The hypocritical man is in no way fitted for the life of Honour. He whose very life is a lie cannot even respect his own judgement. Respect for the rights of others is slightly less necessary but also indespensable. A man must have not only self-respect but a sense of justice before he can honour others wisely. Before he can praise he must be generous of spirit and ungrudging of honour when it is due. He must be friendly if he is to attain to Pleasure or Felicity, since this third part of the Art of Living is attainable only in his relations to other men.

2. The expounders of the Gospel are laughing mediators between men and women. They are priests who offer up the wine of comic wisdom to God and who instruct the young men and women in the "new Faith of Pantagruelism." Not that Pantagruelism supplants traditional Christianity. On the contrary, it is based upon it. It has already been shown how Pantagruelism depends on a trust in the omnipotence of God. The importance of Christ will be pointed out in the last section of the paper. The scholars, then, act as mediators in the war of male and female. They are primarily the teachers of sexual peace.

3. Women are the natural complement of men. The state of marriage is proper to natural felicity. Therefore, women who are "angels of harmony" are

an essential part of the Abbey.

The Life of Honor and its goal.

1. The only rule of the Abbey is: *Do what thou wilt.* There is the important assumption that "men who are free, well-born, well-bred, conversant in honest company, have by nature an Instinct and Spur, which always prompteth them to virtuous actions and withdraweth them from vice; and this they style Honour." Honour, insofar as it is an inclination, is a motion in the human soul the end of which is being praised. The end of true Honour is being praised by one who bestows praise justly. Thus, true Honour presupposes a respect for the person honoring. This seems to mean that honoring (or respecting - which is a silent honoring) precedes being honored. Another way of stating the definition of Honour is to call it the desire of pleasing those whom one respects. Now this desire of pleasing is an inclination towards peace, for pleasing and displeasing and being displeased is a state of war. Therefore, peace is the goal of Honour. Furthermore, it will be seen that once again the principle "war is the parent of all good things" is to be applied. The method of Thelemite Honour is Emulation. This is a rivalry by which all wish to excel in doing what they see will please one another. More precisely, it is an imitation by which all wish to become more like those whom they respect, and in which a friendly sort of rivalry or war leads to virtue and peace.

All Abbeys are preparatory for some future state of beatitude. The state of marriage, the crown upon natural virtue and the completion of natural felicity, is presented as the state of beatitude for which the Abbey of Theleme prepares its young monks and nuns. The young Knight honors most and wishes most to please the young Lady who has chosen him. It is said about the time of departure that "when the time came for a man to leave the Abbey (either at his parents' request or for some other reason) he took with him one of the ladies - the particular one who had chosen him for her knight- and they were married. And though they had lived in devotion and friendship at Theleme, their marriage relations proved even more tender and agreeable. Indeed to the end of their lives they loved one another as they had on the day of their wedding."

2. Friar John and the anagogical level.

Referring back to the point made some pages back that the excremental and procreative functions are combined in the use of the most heavenly part of the body, we now invoke it as a slight but significant token that the state of marriage is not the happiest state for all men. It seems that Friar John, the Abbot of Theleme, is one of these men for whom the state of marriage is slavery and the state of chastity freedom. At the end of the Fifth Book when he is inspired in the presence of the Holy Bottle (the wine of which prompts men to utter truth) Friar John sings:

Better drain a cup of shame
Than to play the wedding-game,
Better wallow in the mud
Than spill hymeneal blood.
Never shall a wife rob me
Of my treasured liberty,
Whom earth's loftiest commander,
Pompey, Caesar, Alexander
Would not find apt to behave
Like a bondsman and a slave.

It seems that we must remember the state of war begun by the sin by which "Adam and Eve disobeyed the commandment of the Lord their God: mortality was their punishment. By death the magnificent mould in which Man was fashioned vanished into the dust of oblivion." We must say that Friar John is seeking some more glorious harmony, peace between God and his soul, and some more glorious Emulation, the Emulation of Christ.

Stewart McRaney