

MISHAPS, PERHAPS

by

CARL SOLOMON

Edited by
Mary Beach

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NOTE

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FLASH FOR CARL SOLOMON

by
Claude Pélieu

Faded smoke
mists

chasm commandos, geographic stores, police inflexions --- I know Carl for a long time, I met him on the St Stranger v/ Bob Kaufman, they dreamed of the exercise NAKED DEATH THROES as clearly as possible --- HERE, ELSEWHERE, NOWHERE (warmth, mildewed flesh) & this dead 1928 hand --- "GO ANYWHERE YOU'LL ALWAYS BE A TOURIST" says Carl Solomon --- Then came drainage, a body within the reach of every grimace in the Insane Asylum --- The Raw Flower "EVERY BASTARD" quenched his thirst at fountains of amo-nia at the time of the vein harvest, deformed syringes in the moist streets did not attract him, he was inside such a re/ality, in front of Doctor Schmack, Mr. Sharkskin Sleeve, in front of a Supermarket reality, he who slept in cemeteries, so near emptiness, he was in a new SPACE apparent to coppery colonies --- Carl Solomon swam in the Basin of Cramps, voluntarily subjected himself to electro-shocks, to secret lobotomies, between an earth & sky multiplication, Carl Solomon was there, before you, before me in the columns of the Examiner, caught in the old spasmodic web, caught in the greasy traps of police psychiatry --- The Smut Civil Servants evolve on the high seas --- Inquisitive fingers wash ashore on the Heart Strand --- The Theater of Tranquilizer Expedients brief us on Pilgrim State Hospital --- Albatross 23 doesn't answer anymore --- Carl Solomon smashed against the wall by the Old Beast's cough --- Carl Solomon asphyxiated by the infra-sexual cough of the Stable of Closed-Eyes ---

EYE = Edge of MOL & MORT ---

In a sky of brutality figitive stemens inhale bodies, invade useless words --- "IT IS BETTER TO CHEW GUM CONSTANTLY THAN TALK" says Carl Solomon, he who endured the torture of the damned, he who wrote very little because he was therapeutically betrayed, he who bore the Kosher-Catholico-Communist Conspiracy --- You were forced to give everything up Carl, even the fraternal Allen who imprisoned the wind --- Today you walk, you are standing sitting on both legs, you are "KORRECT" NORMAL (SIC) like the one who is actually the president ---

"ARE YOU GOING FISHING CARL?"

"OH GOOD I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING FISHING."

A virtuosity, tragic language does not exist, there is articulation or silence, images vomitted on the Art & Good Conduct Track, they are drill-machines moaning under the 17th of January material --- Carl, is Paris burning?
& LE BAR VERT?
GUYS & DOLLS?
BILLGRAY'S TROPICO?
TIKI BOY'S JAZZ CELLAR?
& THE HOT DOG PALACE?
& Brooklyn Carl? The Bronx? What are they? & the "FROTTEUSES"?
No one talks about Carl Solomon --- An altitude world makes our first death worthwhile, medical masks distort radioactive shoulders ---
Passionate gymnastics resettle on the Blue Track --- The small neo-glaucous, healthy Marxologists fold up their souls --- Hostility is growing, ONE MUST RESIST INSIDE A GRAY WALL — & nothing NOTHING --- very far away the Orange Guy caresses the specter of the Old Beast --- Carl, I know about needles tracking veins, when brainy bubbles set fire to a perfumed sex, I know the hospital, tranquilizers, morphine, psychoanalysis & literature are so many things offered by the Creed of the 17th of January to get along with our summary executions — WOULD YOU WEAR MY EYES? said BOM-KAUF --- These notes fertilize blank voices on ultraviolet weighing-machines — "I DIED A LONG TIME AGO", leitmotif tuned to waiting in the padded streets of fear --- The signatures of BLACK COLD tear up real newspapers like the wings of attraction at Coney Island --- Carl, you know that to rent or to sell man, man nuts on the gloves of his ambition of ashes --- WHO is "WHO" (?) --- Who shoved his prick in the Hour-glass of Fluid Time, before, after (?) --- A very, ordinary Head Phantom will sign the Hospital Schedule --- Is it possible not to come back (?) (is it necessary) to come back (?) --- To return to the optical tavern w/ the sanguinaries (it's really not very much (???)) --- We are transient animals, you understand --- Our jazzy execution, all underhanded keys are contradicted --- "THAT'S SOMETHING" said Bomkauf, sinister administrative thicknesses, Pilgrim State Hospital, Lexington, Bellevue, Cedars of Lebanon, LA FORCE, RODEZ, San Mateo, (gloomy names cajoled in the linings of the Old Beast) --- The witch-doctor coiled in the excrement of so-called patients arbitrarily cancel the evidence of the 17th of January --- Independent bruised flesh rots inside a gray wall --- Flesh busy bandaging the caught-in-the-act: TO LIVE --- Flesh heard inside flabby things --- What a night.' --- So what? to re/settle in devouring things?

Inside worn-out flesh? in Dead-Hand Zones? —: HERE / ELSEWHERE / NOWHERE, what is to be done w/ a soul? talking w/ flies, exorcizing Wool & Cotton conspiracies, sprinkling one's tail w/ salt, fucking the Pope? (& what next?) --- & you, him? me? some one? —

Faded smoke mists

in the silence of a little room Carl Solomon rains

yes he rains, he rains under the robes of summer, he rains under Negro tongues, he rains on Kerouac, on Ginsberg, on Kaufman, on Huncke, he rains on MOL & MORT, on Art & Murder, he rains on the velvet licence of the Blue Kid because he likes to fish for radioactive warts --- WHY DID NO ONE UNDERSTAND THAT HE WAS RAINING (?) — 'Daddy.' Mommy.' pederasts.'" says Carl ---Suave the Raw- protago amplifies the paranoia of a poet & caresses the proletarian sex of the Old Beast --- A long time ago I was I, Mr. I & Carl rained on Captain Echo --- The Pepper & Salt Peril held on a leash by Mrs. Sharkskin Sleeve --- Even William Burroughs had doubts about the Peony Kid, he told me so during the Encephalitis pink Middle West Night --- Spanish games in the gray rooms of "REST HOMES", Mr. Gringo's games on the Jewish Screen Avenida Luz --- In the silence of a little room Mr. Poor Thing sucks his thumb, paralyzed by his good health, plugged forever into the robot-surface --- Animal shadows --- "YOU WILL GET A RECTAL TREATMENT." shrieks Dr. Clap, "IF YOU READ BAUDELAIRE YOU WILL HAVE TEN ELECTROSHOCKS'" threatens Professor Dirty, "BESIDES WHO IS BAUDELAIRE?." Dr. Magpie you cover the Invisible Agents who sign abstract contracts on Mental Hygiene, under the IBM Fairy's fingernail your scapegoat scans the remains of a graduate-executioner: GOD.' & bodies streaked w/ fate take shelter in the shadow of civil war, ordinary people lengthen their range w/ a burst of shots, "FUCK YOU WORKERS.'" but Carl already knew that Mol & Mort strikes where she wishes & when she wishes, like a tourist, like a "FROTTEUSE" --- Bodies dissolve, the spirit cracks, & everything crumbles cell by cell, like the old junkie of the RUE TANGUE who digs w/ his fingers ---

It is daylight, Carl Solomon rains --- Yes

he is raining & his rain mixes w/ dead membranes, yes it is true it is daylight & Carl rains on scales, on poisoned bodies, on the gaunt diving-bells of the Insane Asylum, Carl rains on the gigantic pseudo-medical polyps, on

parodies of justice, on the super/conscience of incongruous healthy men,
Carl rains on the Negro clock in Grand Central, Carl rains on the
cowardly orgasms of the Kosher-Kid, Carl rains on the absent detective -
-- In the stores of a long time ago the Montana Specter --- Somewhere
the harvest of health --- "THE HEALTH OF POETS" --- Mort feeds on
soot --- A monument above live where man frisks his intestinal linings --
- THE RAIN MAN PALE & BLOATED W/ FEAR --- Carl rains on
books, on all books opened or closed, Carl rains on darkness, on
electrodes of the FBI, on scandalous clinches, on the coffins of
Cincinnati --- Those, who because of their genius have their brows
crowned w/ green noodles will go to Paradise w/ Captain Echo, eternally
they will dig the invisible fingers of spells ---The hospital world at the
speed of nuclear weddings --- Slicing the air of Chinatown an Angel
accosts us armed w/ big revolvers-aimed-Oswald-finger-bowls --- Dead
fingers will screw the soft tele phones into your flesh — "THE WRONG
SIDE IS WORTH THE RIGHT SIDE." said the Doctor while he scalped
his "PATIENT" --- The decors crumbled w/ our apologies, under the
skirts of chance Captain Blood picked up air --- "HE HAD SEEN THE
WIND" --- On the Demoniac Screen the rape of the Raisin Kid ---
Prophylactic & repetitive society --- Carl Solomon will obliterate you w/
rain --- Carl Solomon rains on bulging closets, yes he is rainingHe is
raining raining raining raining raining raining ---

N.Y.C.
May 66. L P.M.
Here Orange

Translated by Mary Beach

TO
MY
MOTHER

PILGRIM STATE HOSPITAL

One enters Pilgrim as though it is the death-house. One sits down in the ward and waits. 5 doctors approach, the patient weeps.

Shock treatment is prepared. One wakes dazed.

Allen comes, he says, "Don't argue with them, do as they say."

Time asserts itself again. You go home. You tire yourself out sleeping with women. Then you pause. You think, "You are a writer, you should do something again."

It is tiring to understand what they are saying to you, you talk about Nerval and you talk about Proust.

A young man comes up to you. He is of Arabian descent. He mentions Nasser and begins an anti-semitic diatribe.

Dr. Rath is a young man. Of Rumanian-Jewish descent. A background more brilliant than any doctor in the institution so far as I am concerned.

You mention Tristan Tzara to him and he understands what you mean. He works through group therapy. Patients come together and remorselessly cut each other to pieces. Fights break out during the course of the group therapy session.

"Solomon, you don't want to get well. You're just looking for a big dick." I fight back I knock the boy down. He screams, "I'll kill him even if they send me to Matteawan . "

He had disclosed to me in an earlier conversation that he knew Weinberg, slayer of Bodenheim. "Bodenheim was a boy," asserts Davis.

I disagree, not being quite sure of my facts.

Come back to Village years later and find Bodenheim's reputation as a man was quite good. Davis escaped from Pilgrim. I don't know what happened to him, hard-bitten and bitter, I have never forgotten that face. Dehumanized .

Confused him in my mind with Corso since both had reformatory qualities. Met Corso again --- changed my mind. Corso is a litterateur and a Catholic with a strong religious sense of right and wrong.

The tendency toward crime among the young men of my generation is impossible to surmount. We are all guttersnipes. Gratuitousness is the spirit of the age. Gide and Cocteau have made us what we are. The big dick or "BITE" if you prefer me to use Genet's French, this is all that matters. Make another man submit to you and you are God.

Ah.' Ludicrous ribaldry. Hein blowing his beautiful understand face to ruins with a bullet. Camus dead in an auto accident.

Of all things, Artaud becomes vogue ten years after his death as a ridiculous nut.

Berchtesgaden. The Fuehrer and his blond boys,

who is

this man Castro? Very late on the scene. New young Communist intellectuals in the Village, a new group, a new element very much involved in politics.

Why, I don't understand them. They are good men.

Kennedy seems quite human after all that has occurred. Maybe he will restore some kind of dignity to my life. He has begun already. He appointed a Jew to the Cabinet.

He himself is a Catholic, an enormous advance in democratic thinking on the part of the American public. Democracy versus Nihilism in daily life. Motivation or despair.

AGE: 36

Even as I said I had belief nobody would believe me and I would still have no belief.

Nobody knows what anybody else is talking about and all conversation, even war, is conducted merely for the sake of argument. Arguing at least lets us feel that truth, the slippery eel of an object, is open to contention and will be the reward of the stronger arguer. "I think," "You think"As if there were anything to think. I have never seen a thought, either a free or a censored thought and doubt whether any such things exist. But I have seen bodies, of all shapes and sizes in all sorts of positions and predicaments and would now define free thought as a body sitting on a park bench. While censored thought I would conceive of being a body in a straitjacket.

What I'm trying to do now... see, I'm letting you in on my latest con... is just to sit around the house and grow flabby around the waist, watch the news programs and take walks. I don't know why you should call it a con but it probably is.

The dadaists thought they had something with suicide. I have something much greater with non-suicide. Try nonsuicide. The big kick here is when somebody else commits suicide and you don't. I have a number of these little gimmicks lying around the house. Like non-maladjustment, non-defeat, non-rebellion, non-beatness, and non-hipness.

I read the newspaper items on various types of nonconformists having legal difficulties with great relish as I have no legal difficulties. The world came to an end for me a long time ago. I bequeath to posterity my discarded comas and hallucinations. And that God (?) nobody will ever again (forever) scream the screams I have screamed or weep the tears already wept. Hold on, there will soon be new tears to weep and new screams to scream. There will be screamers as long as the world goes on and there must always have been screamers in the past.

Hey, literary public, how many one-eyed whores do you want me to screw in the eye? I was Leutreamont a long time ago and now am only a psychiatrically disabled ex-ice-cream salesman whose life history can be figured out by nobody. I get tired thinking of all the bums I have transcended, of all the cretins I have out-punned, of all the penetrating exegeses I have spun out to deaf mutes. Have a heart, even if they're gonna put a stake through it some day (see Guy Wernham trans.).

Didn't Ginsberg and I go through all that nonsense about Dostoievsky some fifteen years ago and then it was about three hundred years old. What do you want me to say? Moo? Goo? Or moo goo guy pan?

A DIABOLIST

Perversity in all forms appeals to those who desire a new reality. The quintessence of evil suddenly seems desirable because you are bored with "What's new?" and "How do you do?" Of all poets, the perverts seem most interesting.

Turn of the ball game. Do something odd. Run a bath and stay in for three hours, or talk to an odd-looking man you meet on the street. Then you are on the path of what certain writers call the marvelous. The end is dementia praecox. What you have been seeking is absolut-ly dementia, a seclusion room by yourself or a strait-jacket all your own. This because you desired to turn things around to make the ugly beautiful. Such alchemy is not a pretense and is not limited to one writer. It is domain on which any daring individual may trespass. It has existed for many centuries. And the unusual says Lautréamont is to be found in the banal. The extraordinary is to be found where you sit. I cannot break the fascination with this view of life, call it the bright orange view as opposed to the grey view.

This is better than a hobby; it is almost the equivalent of a religion.

I shall make up a dream I never dreamed and you may explore it for significance. I was sitting on a beach; a dog came up to me and licked my leg; a fat boy came by; he wanted to play ball. It seems that we played ball for years. Then the dream ended. What a silly dream.'

Sometimes the diabolist regrets his sins against nature and dreams of gods or reality. But reality persists in being boring.

Who can understand my odd nature. My passion for the absurd or the prank. I live for these things. I have traveled and travel is a flop so far as I am concerned. Wherever you go you are a tourist, that is to say some sucker to the odd denizens of the place. Give me my home, my imagination and my dreams.

It is almost as though the "real" world were an asylum and the unreal world is a super-asylum... for those who have gone insane in the outer madhouse and been placed in this outer void. It is a place where those who don't know they are insane are placed. Those who know they are ill are outside consulting psychiatrists. Pilgrim is the sort of place you leave by asserting that the correct date is actually the date and the correct man is actually the president. There is a definite letdown in being released... you feel upon leaving the Insane Asylum as though you are entering the Sane Asylum.

This all is a task too difficult to describe once you have attained this dimension. It is like hearing the inaudible... seeing the invisible.

THE ABYSS (A story of philosophy and mental illness)

I wasn't sure which it was this reality or the other one. And then there were so many realities, the reality of Frank in the clothes-room and the reality of the dandies in Paris. Each one riding his own drunken boat. And I am buffeted between these separate worlds and cannot explain the relationship between them except through a wild stare. There is Sam's reality, Sam whom I met in another madhouse, Sam and his marijuana, and the supermarket shopping reality of my mother who rescued me from this madhouse. Nothing seems to add up and still I have gone on all these years, laughing and happy despite each wacky impasse or change. I suppose I am lost though temporarily at least found, and talking to you. And it is not so terrible to be lost, let me assure you, escaping from nuthouses, sleeping in cemeteries, selling icecream, being alternately a good guy and a bad guy. The only trouble is that it all happened in a vacuum and nobody knows where I was or why it all happened. Thank God at least (you do call on somebody) that the violence of my emotions has been tempered by either time or the tran-quilizing pills they gave me. There are no more hallucinations, no more voices, no more pressure on top of the head and behind the ears, no more shouting on my part.

TORTURES OF THE DAMNED

Preamble

This is not a last word. Nor is it a first word. It is not even a cough. It is not even a murmur. But let us be straight with each other, you are afraid of me and I am afraid of you, all coughs, yawns, and polite smiles to the contrary. You are afraid of me because you know that if you are smaller, less athletic, less apt than I am I may attack you and you will have no recourse but to let out a weak cry: "Help." I know that if you are bolder, bigger, or uglier than I am, the slightest dissenting remark about politics, sex, religion, or art will put your hand around my throat or your toe to my groin.

Chapter 1... The Sullivanians and Others

Once I sought help from this brand of psychiatry. As I remember, the doctor was vague and sympathetic. While seeing him, I read Reisman and thought much about status problems. He had me turned on for a while. Under his gentle hand, I turned from a BETE NOIRE to a fashion plate. However, he ultimately betrayed me. He wondered why I was taking him quite so seriously. Therapy ended with a violent dispute about irrationality. Under his guidance, I was one week a Zen Buddhist, the next week a Socialist. Perhaps he loves me still, I do not know as I no longer see him. Unprecedented success with women seemed the main end-product of this form of therapy. Since I stopped seeing him I have been somewhat unsuccessful. I don't know what it was. Perhaps he cast an aura about me that fell off when I stopped paying him. Then came the hospital doctors, in great variety. These were for the most part pill-pushers. I remember one who called me "Charles" which is not my name. However, they were kind enough not to detain me for the rest of my life. Hypnotists, spiritualists, and tarot fortune-tellers, also literary critics and poets have been my advisers concerning the most intimate matters. I feel that I am doing well when the Black Muslim standing on L2nd St. smiles at me for buying a copy of "Elijah Speaks".

ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER DOLLAR... AFTER THE BEAT GENERATION

The New York Mets symbolize for me the spirit of the sixties.
They are the latter-day beatniks of baseball.

In the fifties we had Spillane, now we have Ian Fleming. Which is gorier, I can't say.

Is Genet still a jailbird?

Civil Rights demonstrations have superceded Bird Parker and Dizzy Gillespie in Negro Folklore.

Psychoanalysis is good for some people, not for me. I prefer tranquilizers.

Never having mastered the mambo, I am now baffled by the twist and the frug.

My Idea of the perfect portrait of Apollinaire would be an apple poised in mid-air.

Most of the poets I meet nowadays are trade school graduates.

One of Allen Ginsberg's first comments about me was, "large reading, I suppose."

What followed was a description of Burroughs, Kerouac, Huncke, several others.

Yes, in mental hospitals patients still dance and dream hazily about the nurses.

Others discuss anything from Artaud to Schweitzer and Oleg Cassini and some still wave their rumps.

Dirty words create a feeling of surprise in one, that is all.

Obscenity soon becomes boring.

WALTZ YOUR WAY TO FREEDOM (Memoir of mental illness)

I am free again... that means well again. Against a background of newspaper COUPS D'ETAT, pop art, and unreadable poetry one makes one's way into the Real realm where one may comfortably park under a tree reading a copy of Mad Comics in comparative safety. Now that I am on the outside I wonder about the sick ones I knew and where they are and what individual manifestos they are writing. At the hospital dance, miscegenation danced side by side with bad grammar.

There is no issue in this business of madness and sanity, so there is nothing to fight about. Only individuals with a thousand separate answers. Dropped here and there on a Douanier Rousseau vista of open country.

The century of fantastic art must produce a fantastic audience and fantastic sensibilities.

I am now fairly up to date again, and I can recall the hospital staff with some familiarity and affection. Yes, affection. There are some fighters and the fight goes on in these places continually. I imagine it depends on the stage of rehabilitation that you are in to determine whether you are a fighter or cooperative.

The culture tells one to fight, fight, fight. Yet, in the hospital you are better off if you walk away from a fight. There it is that you learn not to fight, to learn the lesson of understanding rather than the lesson of fighting.

>From the land of the Hivinizikis back to America.

I stood on the ward and pointed at the moon and told one of my simpleminded cronies that there was a man in the moon.

SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE BEATNIK

It is most important now to change the smell of the beatnik. Instead of using, for example, the word "shit" so often in their poems, I suggest that they tactfully substitute the word "roses" wherever the other word occurs .

This is a small adjustment.

It is just as AVANT GARDE so art will suffer no loss.

Instead of saying "MERDE" they will be saying "A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose." Just as AVANT GARDE, you see, with considerable improvement in the effect created.

ARTAUD

I witnessed an Artaud reading in 19⁷, the year before Artaud's death in Rodez¹ in 19⁸. Artaud was being described by a small circle of Paris admirers, some in very high places in the arts, as being a genius who had extended Rimbaud's vision of the poet seer. His name was even described by one admirer, known as "The Alchemist", as Arthur Rimbaud without the HUR in Arthur and without the RIMB in Rimbaud. And this man later made a case for Artaud as being, literally, the reincarnation of Rimbaud and spiritually his descendant. Other admirers were AndrS Gide and Jean Louis Barrault. Gide made a case for Artaud as an existentialist man of despair, and Barrault had been influenced by Artaud on the theater. Artaud's is a tenuous case, an ambiguous one in

that he has been highly esteemed by almost everyone of note in the arts and yet widely banned and condemned by legal authorities.

* Je suis mort à Rodez sous l'électrochoc"

To me his case, his destiny has been the cause of considerable confusion since one knows that by accepting his theories one puts one's body in the social frying pan and by rejecting him you are going through life with blinders on. He is certainly the leading critic I have ever read of social hypocrisy and for this became known as a "Damned" poet. He was a junkie, a lunatic and had pursued his peculiar turn of thought so far that he had even rebelled against surrealism which itself is supposed to be rebellion against society deriving from a rebellion a-against the "rebel", Anatole France, who had been considered too lucid, too rational, by the early dadaists. And where does all this rebellion against rebellion lead but surely into one of many large nuthouses which are continually being constructed all over this country and others in the name of that mystical cause "Mental Health".

The book by Artaud which impressed me most was his VAN GOGH written in 19⁴⁸ in which he condemns all forms of psychiatry, and thereby all organized authority, since all countries practise psychiatry including the socialist wonderland. In it, he claims that every lunatic, everyone marked and branded, and believe me all lunatics are really marked and branded, is a person of superior lucidity whose insights society thinks disturbing to it. This book impressed me when I read it in 19⁴⁸, the year, of Truman's upset victory over Dewey. I was still in the school system at that time and the intellectual students, by these I mean the ones who weren't in favor of basketball and who read a book now and then which wasn't on the compulsory reading list, were mostly interested in either Marxism and folksongs or, in the advanced echelons, in Freud or Wilhelm Reich. Now I was interested in Artaud, who to me was a symbol of real rebellion truly inheriting the name.

To illustrate the mood of the student body in college at that time, I should state that I walked into a classroom carrying a copy of Baudelaire and was immediately latched upon by a girl English major who seemed to think I was actually Baudelaire in person. Shortly after this I was deposited in a nut factory where I was shocked into a renunciation of all my reading, etc., etc. What books remained to me after I had been shocked then, were later stolen from me by various local hoodlums and I was soon thrown into another more savage nuthouse.

The case of the so-called lunatic opened up by Artaud and no other writer is really the case of Socrates, who was condemned to death for being what, in his day was considered "bright", that is to say not stupid. I say that we live in a generation of charlatanry, propaganda and corruption, and that there is no room for an honest man on either side of the Iron Curtain.

THE CLASS OF '48

It was a bizarre group. Decadent in many ways, I thought. They seemed to feel that the war was over and that they would never be faced with any major challenges again. They are still with me. I meet them here and there, in the New School, in a mental hospital, on U2nd Street, in a bar. They were called then "The Silent Generation", later on "The Beat Generation". They were the precursors of the rock n' roll youngsters, but somehow neither sane enough nor mad enough, too young to have been in the war and too old to be Cold War products, a between-wars group.

Will any new influences ever jar them and me from their perpetual rut? From the boring indifference and insufficiently bleak pessimism that has been their heritage. I doubt whether anything ever will. Endless experimentation with the senses, endless metaphysical rambling. I am back in the Bronx, among the moulding influences. On the subway twice a week, I pass and can see the High School I graduated from, James Monroe, and am recalled to the early heroic, pre-decadent days of my generation. When we were busy with scrap drives, orienting ourselves toward being public-minded citizens rather than hopped-up, disoriented nuts. The reaction was a hatred of regimentation, and when the reaction set in it was bitter and fatal to some. Perhaps, now that the fifties are forgotten, another reaction will set in, in the interests of self-preservation and order. The nihilistic period is past. The time for sincere creativity, I think is here.

ANTI-TOTALITARIAN MANIFESTO FOR EVERGREEN REVIEW

(after 5 years imprisonment for yelling at my mother)

Every psychiatrist is a prick. Literature and psychiatry are incompatible. These people are sophists. Conrad believes in evil; Freud

doesn't. Freud is hor-shit as Reich, his collaborator's imprisonment in Lew-isburg proves. Sullivan was a paranoid. Do I have to pay these European refugee birds and their American competitors, the Sullivanians, to keep from being put into a straitjacket, to keep from --- Aw shit they are keeping me in a bughouse accused of paranoia because I refuse to pay the pettifogging fucks. They are quacks. Admit it publicly. The handmaiden of timid librarians --- 10 years of these cocksuckers. Drop dead to every American Psychoanalytic Review. They're just phonies. No Ginsberg isn't mad.

Carl Solomon

And I'm not either. Long live infinity. Long live Ginsberg. Viennese prurient bourgeois crap. Friendly reader in your other-directed household, the "Irrational Man" is your friend. Join me in my fight for freedom. Down with every mush-mouthed author who pays lip-service to an unproven "Science" with a paraphernalia of worthless medicines and contraptions which cost lives --- because it is stylish. It's stylish because they have loot and the patients don't. It's the new Gestapo. I never did nothing wrong. You read my article --- so I like Isou and Artaud. Why the fuck am I being held. I shit in your mouth. VTVE LAUTREAMONT. I'm just a nice boy. Why don't you the American Public get me out if it's such a nice country?

A FEW NOTES ON WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING TO MY SOUL

God, the Devil, and at least half a dozen angels figure strongly in what has been occurring over the last several years. Against a background of rising Castroism, several battles between heavenly angels and horny devils have been fought and won, of course, by the legions of paradise. A lot of booze has been drunk, a lot of salvation army hymns have been sung, several acts of sodomy have been committed and a number of floozies have been in and out of love with me, as their hungry stomachs dictated. We cannot do without this earthly parody of heavenly infernal combat, so let us at least our blintzes in silence.

A NOTE ON THE REAL ALLEN GINSBERG

I feel this clown before your eyes is merely a double. The real Allen Ginsberg... LE GRAND ALLEN GINSBERG ...had been raised on Madagascar and spoke only Malgache. I remember his always wearing knickers. The man before your eyes we shall refer to hereafter as LE PETIT ALLEN GINSBERG. Yes, I remember clearly now, in the early days of the beatnik generation when we first formed the conception of the marvelous poetic renaissance that followed, living in Chinese restaurants and harassed by the police... he wore knickers and I wore leotards.

To the future, to the past, and to all the days in-between I dedicate the reading of these literary documents.

FOR JACK KEROUAC

Some years ago, I yearned for pancakes in a place where there wasn't even toilet paper.

I complained about this fact to Jack Kerouac, by mail.

I received a letter in reply telling me about a new brand of pancake mix known, coincidentally, as HUNGRY JACK.

He wasn't spoofing me because I have now seen over TV commercials advertising just this brand, HUNGRY JACK.

I should now like to take a moment to praise this man for honesty and sharp powers of observation.

A PLEA FOR ZERO "Honesty is the best fallacy"

I believe in the zero of zero of zero Because I want to be without ideology.

I am only a man among messiahs

And have been deceived by Stalin, by Isou, by Reich.

Only by Artaud are we not deceived,

By the idea that language is merely gabble,

That one would do better to chew gum perpetually than to talk.

LIFE IS A NIGHTMARE

If you don't believe that life is a nightmare,

Start living and see for yourself.
Life is only not a nightmare
When you are too young to know or to care about death,
sex, and business.

L'ETRANGER

Stop your attempt to reroute me toward "reality". I live only because I
am afraid of the Infinite. We live primarily because we don't want to die.
THE ONLY IMPORTANT THING IS YOUR HEALTH.

NIGHT THEORIES

Night theories vanish in acts of adultery.
Daylight seeps in and Filipino jugglers seep out.
The daytime friend supplants the nighttime thug.
No more parts to play. Here acts of bravery count very little.

Seeing the obelisk in broad daylight.
No fist through the window.

BEHIND THE TIMES

Nobody Tells Me the Truth Any More

In this dour day
Of tranquilizing pills
Diarrhea
The white negro
The criticism of criticism
The ideological split between Peking and Moscow
And Parataxic Distorsions
I am at a loss to find
Any personal truth
And am left with
A philosophic relativism
Which renders me utterly incapable of
Expressing myself
With any degree of honesty

This honesty which had been
My primary characteristic as a boy
And which had me far afield in my search
For truth.
Of such stuff is intellectual tragedy made.

STRINGING THEM ALONG

Naturally, quite naturally, I have not been mad But merely a prophet,
without profit motive,
Thinking such thoughts, performing such deeds,
Uttering such prophecies, which the times demanded, Utterly without
restraint, because I was so constrained
----- by my insights which occurred
When I brought the full force of my powerful
Intellect upon the deeds of the day
And moulded them
Into my own picture of reality
Which has no bearing upon your picture of reality Or the picture of
reality of Arthur Miller Whom I have been said to resemble.
<3 class="sigil_not_in_toc">

RELATIONSHIPS

I am utterly unconcerned with the necessity for producing offspring
And have no need for happiness which is the primary obsession of our
day
Are you happy?
Being of Jewish descent and
consequently
Unhappy of visage
I have no need for such contentments
As produce the gleaming smile
And the sonorous voice.

THE DELINQUENTS

The delinquents
To me are horrible creatures
Standing on street corners

And carrying knives
And inspiring terror in the heart of the casual passerby.
We are not at all friendly
And I avoid
Such illiterate confrères
Feeling that my gift for language
Entitles me to other rewards
Than are theirs
For which I thank my teachers
And my early editors.

ONE OF THOSE ARTSY-CRAFTSY BROADS

I expected it. I came into the State Hospital to get a rest. I'd been smoking too heavily and working too hard. She met me on the lower landing. A little slip of a girl, Irish or German, and looking very school-marm, in a chaste green uniform and with a white blouse. "Carl," she said, "I want you to read this." I looked at the slim volume of poems she was handing me. Suddenly, I felt dirty. The title was "SONGS OF A PSYCHOTIC". I meant to say, "Why put me in that category, Miss?" But I didn't. I took it, I didn't read it and slipped it beneath my pillow. The next day it was missing. She came in and acted flustered, "Do you have the book, Carl?"

"Somebody hyped it," I said.

"But but, I paid 2 dollars for it," she whined.

"I'm sorry lady, it just isn't."

.....

It turned up the next day --- in the hands of Ferdy, a fellow-patient who was a chimney-sweep on the outside.

The artsy-craftsy-Broad got it back.

I breathed more freely.

What if I'd lost it? What if she really put me down?

Why, I wouldn't be considered a happy man and I'd lose my parole card.

A narrow escape.

1

"Je suis mort à Rodez sous l'électrochoc.

SCALE OF OBSERVATION

She's a patient in a mental institution and beginning to suspect it. Crippled offspring of cannibal mother nature. She sought asylum here from the interminable pounding of a hostile universe.

The billboard read: "Welcome --- You are Entering Forever, pop. 15,99^Q --- There is no Way Out. So she slipped in backwards and made believe she was really going the other way.

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

(pro-song of an American homosexual)

Sex is lovely
All homosexual love is delightful
I love to drink
I love dark nights out among
fairies --- The thrill of it
all
What boy will present himself
in the gorgeous nude?

Oh, orange moors and your
midwestern accent (I too will vote Fascist)

I loved to play with my lead soldiers as a boy; I remember the Marine Johnson. The soldiers which my father, who too was a soldier presented (oh the lovely knights (their battleaxes.)
I too loved war.
How I enjoy the taste of scum. I remember wanting to suck out scum bags in the East River as a boy of 14.

SEX AT 20 IN AMERICA

For Allen

Frivolity 8th Street

Around the time I was 20, I took to wearing my Mother's scarfs and I began to play the role of a tall dark-haired Jewish girl. It was a lot of fun. After studying my Mother in the nude, sneakily, I learned to act very effeminate. Then I started picking up boys. I'd been yearning to do this

all my life, ever since I first played the passive role in homosexual intercourse at the age of 12 and learned it wasn't supposed to be done. My two favorite boy friends I now remember. Lee Keene (who had a 9 inch penis) who I picked up in Tony Becino's in New Orleans and Bob Arnold, 12 years old (I was 20 at the time).

I had learned, in the whore-houses of Europe, just what prostitution was and what were the main stimuli in sex through conversation with the young prostitutes who (as a sailor.) it was my function to have intercourse with.

I remember Odette Belmaure, who told me that in spite of her French patriotism, and she was a real French woman, the boys that she preferred were the Germans. Sex is apart from nationality or the BOURGEOIS social role that we are raised in. Her preference seemed logical to me, in spite of my superficial (before I turned gay) City College role of being a dialectical materialist and "anti-fascist". What happens in the headlines is not so important as what really happened behind the scenes and this --- away from teachers and professional bullshit artists in class with their medals was what I was beginning to find out about. I too believed in the SUPERMAN. I couldn't understand what they (who drove me into madhouses twice) thought --- I have never yet seen an attractive psychoanalyst and all their words don't make up for difference nor all their therapies keep me from coquettishly wiggling my shapely Jewish -- - like Bath-Sheba or Rachel in face of the handsome and warlike Philistines --- her husband was a dentist --- ass when I see a blond boy of 12 I mean by calling me "Kalmon" and reproaching me for this practice. I much prefer the name of Monique. Bob, a runaway from school 14 years old had an 8 inch penis when erect and I used to enjoy having this forced into my buttocks with the aid of vaseline.

FORWARD TO "JUNKIE"

Junkie by William Seward Burroughs was originally entitled JUNK and was written under the pseudonum of William Lee. First presented for publication in the early "50s, it aroused some interest among hard-cover publishers but was brought out as one of the earliest paperbacks of the newly emerging Ace Books.

Since that time, Burroughs has become famous here and abroad as an avant-garde novelist and short story writer, writing under his own name. His novel THE NAKED LUNCH has been brought out by City Lights. THE SOFT MACHINE and THE TICKET THAT EXPLODED have

been published in Paris by Olympia Press with much attendant scandal. And a new novel NOVA EXPRESS, will soon be brought out by Grove.

In Norman Mailer's ADVERTISEMENTS FOR MYSELF, Burroughs is referred to as the American Jean Genet. His second novel, QUEER, remains unpublished in this country and abroad.

Behind the "beat" renaissance in mid-Twentieth Century America, which shocked the sensibilities of some and gave new expression to others, William Burroughs remains a seldom seen but by now legendary figure. In 1960, unlike 1950, he has innumerable imitators and would-be imitators. His early creed of Junk as a way of life has seeped into the youth of today to the point of becoming a major national problem.

In JUNKIE he is factual. This is his earlier mode. In his more recent work, he ventures into the surrealistic and imaginative. THE NEW YORK POST, in writing of his subject matter, fantasies (homosexual), and experiments in technique, finds him verging sometimes on the infantile and the schizoid.

In life, he is a peculiar kind of adventurer, seeking out what is unusual or unexplored in our sensibilities or in our way of living. Pursuing what is increasingly hard to find, the unknown, Burroughs has not yet become redundant and his curiosity is not yet exhausted. In this respect he is unlike many other so-called avant-gardists and poets who once experimented but then reclined on their couches and ruefully admitted that there was nothing new under the sun.

As for his junk habit, he has gone off and gone back and taken a variety of cures with different amounts of success. One cure, in England, under a Dr. Dent, resulted in an article written by Burroughs in a scientific quarterly.

Burroughs is a Harvard graduate, has pursued a variety of occupations, is the father of two children, and is the scion of a wealthy family.

One of the more lurid incidents in his past was the accidental shooting of his wife in a "William Tell" experiment... demonstrating his marksmanship by attempting to shoot a champagne glass off her head and killing her in the process. For this, in Mexico City, in about 1950, he was acquitted.

In one form or another, under one guise or another, his character and personality seem to have had reflections in fictional characters in the writings of his protege, Jack Kerouac. This is particularly evident in the character of Dennison in Kerouac's first novel, THE TOWN AND THE CITY, and also in that of Bull Balloon in DR.SAX.

His politics are a bit hazy. We can seldom make out whether he is fighting against real conspiracies or imaginary ones. In *IN SEARCH OF YAGE*, he appears at times to be a liberal or even a radical, and the reputation he acquired in recent years in Paris seems to situate him more or less on the left. Most of the time, Burroughs appears to be too self-preoccupied to show much sustained interest in any political camp.

NOTE FROM THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

It's all very nice.
Nobody can bother me anymore.
Parrots are appreciated.
Spengler, Spandril cavorting around us.
Nothing wrong on the nether side.
I'm just inhabiting a post atomic heaven.
I was never wrong I was never right
All blows are past
Everybody is husky and friendly.
This is like being back in the cradle again. Sade, you never had it so good Iautramont we never made it like this.

THE YOUNG MAN WHO WENT AWAY (a story of rehabilitation by released mental patient)

The young man who went away came back well. It was a divine occurrence.
There was new dream energy in him. Lester said "Well, you look well." He pondered the precipice. After frittering away six years in fixation upon his appearance, he seemed timid and disconcerted by others' impressions. The invisible wall between the real and the unreal bound him. He gagged and dwelled on his sorrows.
"But nothing real has been the trouble."
He'd stolen a sandwich twelve years before and they'd nagged him and the publicity had been terrible, nevertheless he would try to write again. "All devils come home," he added.
Lester led the way down to the pool.
They swam, ate, and talked to girls in the part of the club which was for sitting.
A homosexual problem.

"Is that all," said Lester, "well, don't think about it and you'll go back to work again. Think of all the living you have ahead of you. "

Living in the past, he reeked of it, and nothing new could enter his world.

The sea was still there, you could make it aboard ship.

Go to Tangier, go to Europe.

Not that you've been everywhere. There is still Haiti, you've never been there. Why not study voodoo? Bring ghosts back to life.

A thin filament of reality remained. The world that is. Nothing in the head, but the world that is.

The astronaut gave him a kick.

It was now 1962.

In the 17 years since the end of the war what had occurred?

Nothing to make us impatient. Nothing ever true. Just a time song of bohemia in the land of grace.

A new strange face on the landscape. Khrushchev. And Castro. These the two new important strangers. A strange revolution in Cuba. And a purge in the Kremlin. Stalin and Batista passed on. Eisenhower and Roosevelt had passed it to Truman and Hoover had passed it to Roosevelt.

Really the fate of nations means nothing.

Power is only temporal.

Cordula came. A new girl on a New Year's Eve. Unhappy. Older than me,

He goes on. Changes and the same landscape.

End

LETTER TO GOVERNOR ROCKEFELLER

My dear Governor Rockefeller,

I am a patient who is awaiting official release from Pilgrim State Hospital. I am now on convalescent care.

I want to register a complaint against the totalitarian know-nothings prevailing in this State among the general population.

I returned to this benighted country from France in 19⁴⁸ and was promptly attacked as crazy in immediate milieu for reading Baudelaire, wearing sandals and talking French. I have been given insulin shock treatment and electric shock treatment for no reason that is apparent to me except that I do a little translation and reading. I was deprived of my union book by the National Maritime Union for having been a member of the Communist Party in the early forties when I was 15 years old.

This and countless other abuses in the interests of illiteracy and I am sure, indirectly, in the interest of Stalinist anti-modernism have been perpetrated on me by the boring squares who seem to be the same in all countries whether Russia, Yugo, or the United States. I plan to leave for the Carpathian Alps when I am given my official release, that is to say permission to re-enter this degenerate community. In the Carpathian Alps I will settle down with a few other initiates and read Kropotkin while evading the cold gaze of Ana Pauker. I am content that I am the American Mayakovsky and have been all but suicided by the society (read Van Gogh "The Man Suicided By Society" by Antonin Artaud). As a lover of the arts as myself, what do you suggest in the way of rehabilitation, re-orientation, etc.? I believe I have a great deal to contribute to society. In what way can my great talents be utilized? I am wasting away in an uncreative milieu, a quasi-criminal milieu and being treated like a parasite by my conformist but bountiful family which also MADLY still regards me as a communist because I left home at seventeen when I was still that. I have no personal resources. And I have no interest in any commercial outlets. The poem HOWL was written in my honor by my friend and fellow patient at the New York Psychiatric Institute, Allen Ginsberg. As far as my own writing is concerned, read "Afterthoughts of a Shock Patient" in the anthology THE BEAT GENERATION AND THE ANGRY YOUNG MEN. I need little magazine attention or attention of some kind. Do you have any magazine connections that could use a dark horse contributor?

Your friend,

Carl W. Solomon

Sun.,Feb.25,1962

DANISH IMPASSE

Announcement of an impending match between two of the more renowned chess-masters would create a wave of popular enthusiasm that invariably culminated in the presentation of the event as an outdoor pageant, staged in one of the enormous suburban stadia. Local politicians made capital of these occasions and ingratiated themselves with the electorate by designating them as public work and school holidays; café, golf-links, brothels, bakeries shut temporarily as their patrons crowded into the bunting-decked grandstands and urged on to victory the "PIECES" of Dagore, Rozenzweig, Josky, or some other titan.

"ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR - DAGORE, DAGORE, DAGORE.", they would chant in unison, returning late at night, with rings of sweat and filth around their eyes, to the freshly reopened cafés to croak hoarsely, "OF COURSE I WAS

THERE: WELL, TO JOSKY:"

In this manner, a nation maintaining the usual ratio of tradesmen to intellectuals, of coquettes to schoolboys, of cockchafers to walrus, of chess-players to pedestrians, experienced what was surely a golden age of chess. Week after week, bodies full of delightful Dionysian imperfections lent themselves eagerly to the disembodied Apollonian schemes of the chess-masters, possessed of a passion to dance, to chant, to roar, to the azure rhythms of Dagore, of Josky, on a football-field broken into squares, amid living pawns and living horses prey to distemper and the equestrian excesses of living knights in exquisite armour — which gratified the masters and flattered the fellaheen.

The day of an afternoon match, the maintenance gang would arrive at the stadium at ten A.M. to hoist the pennons. Then, these earnest fellows, themselves aficionados, would test the amplifying system, murmuring soft monosyllables into the speaker, and begin retrimming the regular little lawns that were to constitute the green squares, whitewashing painstakingly the intervening squares to produce the standard scrubbed chess-board effect, each square 15' by 15', alternating green and white. The crowd soon arrived, excepting no one and including a few fawning émigrés. When every seat in the grandstand had been occupied, the band played a march and the pieces of the two armies advanced onto the field from separate entrances in a slow cortège, the horses of the knights much too bridled with their armour of their own to shy, the other pieces stepping forward deliberately in perfect cadence until all the squares of the four end rows were filled.

Barely an instant before the march was to begin, the two masters, unnoticed, drove up to opposite sides of the stadium in black limousines and climbed private staircases within the walls to reach the roofed, enclosed, little masters' cages which faced one another across the board. Seated in his tiny cage, a master could review his minions. Below, culled from the ranks of patrician youth, each of the pieces represented a figure corresponding to his actual position in the societal hierarchy. There was no place here for an arrivist: he who played the knight on the chess-field was accorded quite naturally the tempered obeisance due a knight when he appeared at the gaming-table or at the christening of a new dreadnaught. On the green and white squares, reputations were not made

but were silently acknowledged. The white queen in her ermine and the black queen in her caracul appeared as the irreverent belles of the haut-monde here as on the ballroom floor. The master, who was glimpsed only fleetingly through the bars of his cage, was never even then very clearly limned, so efficiently did the bars refract vision. He whispered his commands to an orderly who barked them into the amplifying microphone at the proper time and sent them booming across the stadium to the piece in question, to the possessed young pawn of noble birth, who, feeling himself a devoted servant of the God of his fathers, would act accordingly, "KING'S PAWN TO KING FOUR."

Measuring his steps, twelve to the square, he would traverse the green square, adjacent and stop in the center of the white. Black's move. The fingers of the rotund rook would tighten around the handle of his mace in blood-thirsty zeal.

"QUEEN'S KNIGHT TO KING FIVE. TAKE PAWN."

The crowd in the grandstands keened theatrically as the white pawn of noble birth stood his ground for eight barren seconds against the black knight, favorite of the rival queen, who galloped across a white square and swerved diagonally to displace him, red oriflamme fluttering about his lance, black shield raised to cover his visor. The band struck up a threnody as the pawn, simulating the death agonies, fell to the ground clutching his throat, to rise and trudge off the field a moment later, inconsolable, attended by the several pages who had been posed on the sidelines. The black knight brought his mount to a standstill in the center of the captured square, raised his lance, lowered his visor. Never was anyone aware that the master, Rozenzweig or Josky, licked his lower lip meditatively when this occurred.

And, in his dressing-room, the young pawn would play the disappointed lover. Having stripped himself of his cuirass, he would fling it dejectedly across the room into a pile of oily rags, perhaps upsetting an ash-tray en route, and might then finger his parts in despair — having failed to win a queen by reaching the other side of the board. So seldom did one liberate a queen in a game played by masters. For a moment the pawn might doubt — then he would go off to a salon to attend a late afternoon cocktail party, the white queen forgotten, head full of Josephine.

Meanwhile, on the field, the match grew more complex. The moves of each of the various pieces were accompanied by a leitmotif, generally quite appropriate. The rook, as rooks must, moved by vertical and

horizontal lunges and was represented, usually, by a squat, noted gourmand who scampered forward or wheeled sideways. A key move — king's rook to king's knight seven. TAKE KNIGHT.' Waving his mace in the air, black hairs bristling on his bare forearms, the white rook rushed forward ferociously, half tripping on his accoutrements, to a series of dissonant chords, and, with a barbaric shriek, grasped the reins of the knight's horse to feign a mighty blow. The black knight slid gently from his saddle to the ground, spurs awry. The pages rushed to his assistance to be waved off. He rose, unassisted, and led his horse off the board to isolated cries of approval. The rook had "SHOWN HIS METTLE." Many pieces were eliminated in a more discreet fashion. Worst of all, of course, was to be "KILLED" by a rook, which was sheer butchery more suitable to an abattoir than to a chess-board. Yet, there had never been a single knight, bishop, pawn — or queen — who had not been willing to "DIE" for a master in the spirit of the game. Interrogated afterward, most pieces affirmed that they had found in the experience a peerless purgative.

The conclusion of the game, be it through checkmate (the king is dead) or stalemate, touched off no demonstration and perpetuated no controversy. The equation had been balanced to perfection, whatever its terms, and the master departed by the private entrance, rolling away in his black limousine, while the spectators returned to the city in trams and motorcycles. The tires of the black limousine gripped the macadam, the motor purred along the Transcontinental Highway, and the master, childlike and beatific, slept as he was conveyed by his chauffeur through the night.

Josky slept, Dagore slept, Rozenzweig slept, impervious to the war convulsing the continent.

In the course of one of these "VACATIONS", as he liked to refer to his naps, Josky dreamed of a fantastic and disturbing game in which the black queen was represented by a tall Negro TAPETTE and the black pawns by pickaninnies who performed soft-shoe dances upon moving into new squares. Awakening with a start, he wagged his head furiously from side to side and called to his chauffeur, demanding the previous day's newspaper so that he could peruse the regular type for a few moments to clear his brain of the SOTTISE. Finding the newspaper in the cache beside the dashboard the chauffeur, Jean-Jacques, handed it back to his master. Josky read disinterestedly until he came upon the page devoted to chess news. There, above a dispatch from Copenhagen,

where he was scheduled to play next week, he read in heavy, black type: RIZZUTO, CELEBRATED PAWN, TRAINS FOR MATCH.

And beneath: "RIZZUTO, BY ALL ODDS THE MOST SCINTILLATING PAWN TO APPEAR IN WHAT HAS BEEN THUS FAR A DRAB, WARTIME SEASON, IS TRAINING VIGOROUSLY AT THE SPA FOR HIS PERFORMANCE AT THE STADIUM NEXT WEEK. THIS OCCASION, PROVIDED BY A MATCH BETWEEN THE MASTERS JOSKY AND BJORNSEN, PROMISES TO BE THE MIGHTY MITE'S GREATEST TRIUMPH. HIS PIROUETTES, HIS GRIMACES, WERE OBSERVED APPROVINGLY BY THIS REPORTER YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND HE WILL STATE WITH-

OUT EQUIVOCATION THAT RIZZUTO IS, EVEN AT THIS INSTANT, AT THE VERY PEAK OF CONDITION. HIS LEAPS... "

Somewhere on his itinerary, Josky had been warned that the young aristocrats had gone far off to war and had been replaced in the pageant by professional actors. But vaudevillian

He peered through the bars of his cage at the grandstand. All about little groups of men and women seemed to be playing cards, ignoring the two armies which were already arrayed on the field.

A fragment of conversation from the nearby seats reached his ears: "I AM COWED BY TALL WOMEN."

White uniformed program vendors circulated among the card players, hawking biographies and pictures of the pieces. Anxiously, Josky looked toward his men. Affixed to their coats of mail were large yellow numbers. The master recoiled.

"WHAT IS...," he began, pointing at the tiny midget who was hopping about and shadow-boxing like a pugilist in the queen's pawn square.

"THAT'S PUGGY RIZZUTO, OF COURSE, THE FAMOUS PAWN," interrupted his orderly. "YOU'RE FORTUNATE TO HAVE HIM ON YOUR SIDE. "

"INDEED FLATTERED," replied Josky.

The match began. A gambit.

"QUEEN'S PAWN TO QUEEN FOUR."

Rizzuto performed a somersault which carried him to the edge of the white square. And another which carried him into the white square. And another. And another. And another over into the green square. He rose, he fell again — this time standing on his head, without the help of his hands, for three full minutes. On his feet once more, he bowed and nodded to the crowd, which had burst into furious applause. Pennies

showered down on the field from the grandstand. Rizzuto left his square, chasing about to pick up the coins. At last he returned to his position, waved to the crowd again, and waited for Bjornsen's reply to Josky's gambit.

"QUEEN'S PAWN TO QUEEN THREE."

From the opposite side of the board, a bespangled, unshaven little fellow who was more dwarf than midget, tumbled out of his square, attempting a somersault, only to fall prostrate, face to the turf, with one short leg still bent and thrust up into the air like a broken antenna. The crowd hooted, booed, hissed, finally hurled several crumpled programs and a pop-bottle onto the board. One of the programs struck the shamefaced pawn just as he was rising and he fell again, this time rubbing his face in the soil most vigorously, far longer than appeared necessary. The grandstand, won over by this protracted bit of self-humiliation, shook with laughter and the dwarf too, was rewarded with a guerdon of coins.

Josky, meanwhile, had been fascinated by the hum of the portable radios that a considerable number of the spectators had brought to the match. He heard one, from the seats nearby, more clearly than the others. It was tuned to a Jutland station which was carrying the broadcast of a match in that city between Rozenzweig and Olaf-sen. In the background of the announcer's voice there was a familiar hum, that of innumerable portable radios. How many? He began to count them. Six. Seven. Eight. Suddenly outraged, he contrived a move whereby he would sacrifice the queen's pawn, Rizzuto. Perhaps a bit of malice, a bit of dream, a bit of war...

Several moves later, "QUEEN'S PAWN TO QUEEN SIX."

Only when the enemy knight came charging down upon him did Rizzuto realize that he had been "TRICKED" by the master. He staggered about his square in bewilderment. "TRICKED." Never before, in the year of war, had he failed to reach the eighth square. Never before had a master dared to deny him a queen.' He stared pleadingly at the grandstand, arms outstretched in supplication. A murmur of resentment rose from the crowd, grew, and became a terrible din. Rizzuto, now surly, shoulders resentfully hunched, stalked slowly out of his square; suddenly, he turned to thumb his nose defiantly at Josky in the masters' cage. Three burly spectators leaped over the railing onto the board, ran to Rizzuto amid raucous cheers, lifted him to their shoulders, and carried him back to the square from which he had been so deceitfully cast. Vindicated, the pawn Rizzuto planted his feet firmly apart, once more facing the foe. His

claque bellowed its approval. Josky would be forced to substitute another move.

The grandstand brandished pop bottles threateningly, heaping obscenities upon the master. Another moment of delay and he would surely be bombarded there in his pillbox — a bottle racing through the bars, before very long, to brain him. A bit of malice, a bit of war.

Yielding at the last moment to the Minister of Education's insistence that he play blindfolded against the local hero, Olafsen, Rozenzweig sat stiffly in the masters' cage of the stadium near Jutland, lost in consideration of his next move. The wind that had caressed his cheek suddenly shifted again, but it did not, as it had before, carry to him the catcalls of the children and the hum of the portable radios. He could not see the time-signal on the scoreboard clock and came to suspect that he had delayed the game inordinately. He envisaged an audience chafing impatiently in muted anticipation, and he flexed his fingers nervously. His eyes ached beneath the blindfold. He recalled the incident at Stockholm. He had learned, by this time, to distinguish silence from solitude. On the pretext of attending to his aching eyes, he removed the blindfold gingerly and stared out upon an empty stadium. His eyes unaccustomed to the sun, he blinked twice. His opponent had fled. A vicious trick. On all the seats were strewn peanut shells. Evidently they were becoming more skilled at leaving the stadium noiselessly...

Toward evening, a lone maintenance had returned to the stadium to sweep the grandstand of peanut-shells and cigarette butts prior to locking the gates. Whistling as he maneuvered his great broom, he glanced by chance at the field where he was surprised to recognize the ungainly figure of Rozenzweig. When a lesser man, under similar circumstances, would have dashed the board to the ground, Rozenzweig knelt to the grass of a green square and wept.

The sweeper yelled down across the empty field, his voice echoing in the galleries, "OLD YIDDISH FOOL."

Hastily, the masters convened and decided to return the royal game to the chess clubs, abandoning the stadia to the clamoring Spanish bullfighters, the Cambodian gladiators, the Cuban jai-lai players, the visiting American football stars, and the touring Israeli volleyball team, which had threatened to meet all comers.

NOTE: AN ANIMATED CHESS-MATCH OF THE TYPE DESCRIBED ABOVE TOOK PLACE IN HOLLAND DURING THE YEARS BEFORE THE WAR, BETWEEN AKIBA RUBENSTEIN AND EMANUEL LASKER. SIMILAR MATCHES HAVE BEEN

PLAYED ELSEWHERE, NOTABLE AT THE CHICAGO'S WORLD'S FAIR. AFTER HIS MATCH WITH LASKER, RUBENSTEIN BECAME SO ANNOYED WITH THE INCOMPETENCE OF EUROPEAN WAITERS THAT HE RETIRED FROM INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION. AT PRESENT, SO THE REPORT GOES, HE HAS CONFINED HIMSELF TO HIS BEDROOM IN BRUSSELS, WHERE HE FEELS THAT HE HAS COME UPON THE "end" OF CHESS, HAVING REACHED THE POINT WHERE ALL MOVES ARE PREDETERMINED.

MEANWHILE THE WORLD OF CHESS REMAINS A MATRIARC HATE WHERE THE POWER OF THE QUEEN (ORIGINALLY THE PRIME MINISTER) REIGNS SUPREME AND THE DEFENSE OF AN IMPOTENT KING CONTINUES AS A TEDIOUS NECESSITY.

THE LUNATIC AND MODERN ART
("Le Seul Vrai Langage Est Incompréhensible")
...Artaud, CI-GIT

With the theories of Antonin Artaud, not his earlier works like THE THEATER AND ITS DOUBLE, but with his later post-psychotic works like VAN GOGH, THE MAN SUICIDED BY SOCIETY, the artist as a productive member of society is thrown overboard and Artaud-le-momo (or Artaud the Nut) emerges as hero of art and letters. Sub-normality and sub-reality are the theme and tone of the late Artaud and his followers. For Artaud and for Genet and even, to an extent, for Michaux, and for the Lettrists, neologisms, screams, belches, and the passing of wind are substituted for the written word.

Ridiculous as all this sounds, it has actually existed as a post-war trend in painting as well as in literature (in the ART BRUT of Dubuffet and others.) Call it latter-day Dada and you are well.

There is actually a literary tradition to back up this sort of thing. If you are a poet who had read late Artaud and wishes playfully to experiment, you are apt to be bound up in a straitjacket by the nearest psychiatrist and given no credit for your research until you get a scholarly article on the subject published in the Partisan Review.

Dada is dangerous today because the police, among others, don't understand what it's all about (being readers of the News and not of the Partisan, let alone of The Evergreen Review, or even of Poetry or even of Time) and probably mistake you for the dumbell you are attempting satirically to mimic.

To avant-garde poets, nay, extremely avant-garde poets, let me state that the FLICS of 196[^] shoot first and do exegesis later.

For all of Ginsberg's fun-loving tone in HOWL (which was written for the author of this article) and for all of Kerouac's and Lamantia's and Corso's fun-lovingness, let me state that I am not serious and have never been serious about anti-literature.

I was first of all a student of English at Brooklyn College when a mild "PING-PONG OF THE ABYSS" episode occurred at the N.Y.

Psychiatric Institute in 1949, and renounced all that to make good grades and to start over. But so intrigued were my local fans with the fun of going into a hospital and asking for a lobotomy that they forced me into the absurd role of lunatic-saint again and I could never get my much yearned for degree. Now I am released from a much more terrifying hospital and can't get a job or a degree (so much time has been lost, I am now 35 and hardly an enfant terrible.)

The upsetting fact is that I am a writer and not a paranoiac and go by Mann, Proust, and Eliot more than I do Artaud.

Somehow the legend of my "INFIRMITY" built up, is still building up, it is by this time documented by Dept, of Mental Hygiene records, fingerprints and photographs.

I am quite willing to renounce Dada, sub-normality, etc. but the ridiculous Art vs. Society war still rages in the pages of the Evergreen Review and elsewhere and I can't seem to get a hearing.

This is a situation that Kafka would have handled well.

Am I to renounce literature and hope for a job as a messenger boy with weak nerves?

I would love to. But I can't get it. I am still rejected at this time by job placement personnel who regard me as too intellectual.

The Bureaucracy, here, in Russia, and in the Neutralist countries, demands identification. Who are you? Where were you on such and such a date? Do you love your mother? Your fingernails show dirt. Your breath is bad. Do you like girls?

And I have lost my credentials. I liked a girl but she left me for another man. Was she of good character? I thought so in the beginning.

REPORT FROM THE ASYLUM

Afterthoughts of a Shock Patient

A book that is accepted, at the moment, as the definitive work on shock-therapy concludes with the astonishing admission that the curative agent

in shock-treatment "REMAINS A MYSTERY SHROUDED WITHIN A MYSTERY."¹ This confession of ignorance (and it is extended to both insulin and electric shock therapies), by two of the men who actually place the electrodes on the heads of mental patients at one of our psychiatric hospitals, certainly opens this field of inquiry to the sensitive layman as well as to the technician. The testimony that follows is that of an eye-witness, one who has undergone insulin shock treatment and has slept through fifty comas.

One may begin with amusement at the hashish-smokers and their conception of the sublime. They, who at the very most, have been HIGH consider themselves (quite properly) to be persons of EMINENCE and archimandrates of a HIGH Church. A patient emerging from an insulin coma, however, cannot help being a confirmed democrat. There can be no hierarchization of different levels of transcendency when they are induced by an intravenously-injected animal secretion, the very purpose of which is to bombard insulin-space with neutrons of glucose-time until space vanishes like a frightened child and one awakens terrified to find oneself bound fast by a restraining-sheet (wholly supererogatory to the patient, since, in the waking state, spaceless, mobility seems inconceivable). The ingenuousness of the hashishins is stupendous. It is as though the Insulin Man were to call his drug by a pet name and spend days thrashing out the differences between GONE POT and NOWHERE POT.

The difference between hashish and insulin is in many ways similar to a difference between surrealism and magic. The one is affective and is administered by the subject himself ; the other is violently resisted by the subject (since this substance offers not even the most perverse form of satisfactions); it is forcibly administered in the dead of night by white-clad, impersonal creatures who tear the subject from his bed, carry him screaming into an elevator, strap him to another bed on another floor, and who recall him from his REVERIE (a purely polemic term employed in writing DOWN the hashishin). Thus, insulin come as a succubus, is effective, suggests grace.

In this respect, the paranoid phantasies released by hashish lack substantiality and are of the nature of automatic writing or gratuitous acts. In the case of insulin shock therapy, one finds oneself presented with a complete symbolism of paranoia, beginning with the rude awakening and the enormous hypodermic needle, continuing through the dietary restrictions imposed upon patients receiving shock, and ending with the lapses of memory and the temporary physical disfigurement.

Early in the treatment, which consists of fifty hypoglycemic comas, I reacted in a highly paranoid manner and mocked the doctors by accusing them of AMPUTATING my brain. Of course, my illness was such that I was perpetually joking (having presented myself to the hospital upon reaching my majority, I had requested immediate electrocution since I was now of age — how serious was this request, I have no way of knowing — and was discharged as cured exactly nine months later, the day before Christmas).

Nevertheless, I noted similar paranoid responses on the part of other patients in shock.

For those of us acquainted with Kafka, an identification with K. became inevitable. Slowly, however, the identification with K. and with similar characters came to imply far more than we Kafkians had ever dreamed. We knew it to be true that we had been abducted for the most absurd of reasons: for spending hours at a time in the family shower, for plotting to kill a soldier, for hurling refuse at a lecturer. And, in this particular, the text had been followed quite literally. The need for a revision of the Kafkian perspective arose, however, when the bureaucracy suddenly revealed itself as benevolent. We had not been dragged to a vacant lot and murdered, but had been dragged to a Garden of Earthly Delights and had there been fed (there were exceptions and there is a certain small percentage of fatalities resulting from shock, making the parallel to grace even more obvious.) This impression arose, somehow, from the very nature of the subjective coma.

Upon being strapped into my insulin bed, I would at once break off my usual stream of puns and hysterical chatter. I would stare at the bulge I made beneath the canvas restraining sheet, and my body, insulin-packed, would become to me an enormous concrete pun with infinite levels of association, and thereby, a means of surmounting association with things, much as the verbal puns had surmounted the meaning of words. And beneath this wrathful anticipation of world-destruction lay a vague fear of the consequences.

The coma soon confirms all of the patient's fears. What began as a drugged sleep soon changes organically and becomes one of the millions of psychophysical universes through which he must pass, before being awakened by his dose of glucose. And he cannot become accustomed to these things. Each coma is utterly incomparable to that of the previous day. Lacking a time-sense and inhabiting all of these universes at one and the same time, my condition was one of omnipresence, of being everywhere at no time. Hence, of being nowhere. Hence, of inhabiting

that Void of which Antonin Artaud had screamed (I had been conditioned in illness by classical surrealism.)

Invariably, I emerged from the comas bawling like an infant and flapping my arms crazily (after they had been unfastened), screaming, "EAT." or, "HELP."

The nurses and doctors would ignore me, letting me flap about until my whole aching body and my aching mind (which felt as if it had been sprained) pulled themselves by their bootstraps out of the void of terror and, suddenly, attained a perfectly disciplined silence. This, of course, won the admiration of the dispensers of grace, who then decided that I was eminently worth saving and promptly brought me my breakfast tray and a glucose aperitif. And in this manner, item by item, the bureaucracy of the hospital presents the insulin MAUDIT with a world of delightful objects all made of sugar — and gradually wins his undying allegiance. If we are not deceived by appearances we will see clearly that it is the entire world of things which imposes itself upon the would-be MAUDIT and eventually becomes the object of his idolatry.

All told, the atmosphere of the insulin-ward was one in which, to the sick, miracles appeared to be occurring constantly. And, most traumatic of all, they were concrete miracles. For example, I am reminded of the day I went into a coma free of crab-lice and emerged thoroughly infested (the sheets are sterilized daily). I had caught the lice in somebody else's coma, since these states of unconsciousness are concrete and are left lying about the universe even after they have been vacated by the original occupant. And this was so credited by one of my fellow patients that he refused to submit to the needle the next day out of fear of venturing into one of my old comas and infesting himself. He believed that I had lied and that I had crabs for some time, having caught them in some previous coma.

Meanwhile, on that following day, I was revived from my coma intravenously by an Egyptian resident psychiatrist, who then, very brusquely, ordered the nurses to wrap the sheets around me a bit tighter lest I should free myself prematurely: I shrieked, "AMENHOTIP.¹"

And there was the day a young patient who had given the impression of being virtually illiterate, receiving his intravenous glucose (one is revived from a deep coma in this manner), and then gave ample evidence that he had become thoroughly acquainted with the works of Jacob Boehme in the course of his coma. Simone de Beauvoir, in her book on her travels in America, expresses her consternation upon finding that a

member of the editorial board of PARTISAN REVIEW once openly admitted to being ignorant of the writings of Boehme.

Shortly after my mummification and defiance of Amen-hotip, I encountered what appeared to be a new patient, to whom I mumbled amiably, "I'M KIRILOV." He mumbled in reply "I'M MYSHKIN." The cadence of the surreal was never challenged; not one of us would dare assume responsibility for a breach of the unity which each hallucination required.

These collective phantasies in which we dreamed each others' dreams contributed to the terror created by contact with the flat, unpredictable insulin void, which had not yet been rendered entirely felicitous (as it was to be later) by the persistent benevolence of man and glucose, and from which all sorts of incredible horrors might yet spring.

The concomitants of therapeutic purgation were, for me, a rather thoroughly atomized amnesia (produced by an insulin convulsion of a rare type and occurring in not more than 2% of cases) and a burgeoning obesity caused by the heavy consumption of glucose. Much later in my treatment, when intensive psychotherapy had replaced insulin, both of these phenomena came to assume places of great importance in the pattern of my reorientation. As my illness had often been verbalized, the first effect of the amnesia was to create a verbal and ideational aphasia, from which resulted an unspoken panic. I had quite simply forgotten the name of my universe, though it was also true that this name rested on the tip of my tongue throughout the amnesiac period. All ideas and all sense of the object had been lost temporarily, and what remained was a state of conscious ideational absence which can only be defined in clinical terms — as amnesia.² I had been handed, by skilled and provident men, the very concrete void I'd sought. During this period, I had gained sixty pounds, and upon consulting a mirror, I was confronted with the dual inability to recognize myself or to remember what I had looked like prior to treatment, prior to reaching my majority.

When I had recovered from my amnesia sufficiently to find my way about, I was permitted to leave the hospital on Sundays, in the company of a relative of whom I would take immediate leave. My relatives on these occasions seemed entirely oblivious to any change in my behavior or physique. Generally, still rather hazy, I would be escorted by an old neurotic friend to a homosexual bar where, I would be informed, I had formerly passed much time. However, the most appalling situations would arise at this point, since, in my corpulent forgetfulness, I no longer remotely resembled a BUTCH fairy or ROUGH TRADE. I had lost all

facility with GAY argot and was incapable of producing any erotic response to the objects proffered me.

Almost imperceptibly, however, the process of object-selection began once more in all realms of activity, and gained momentum.

I amazed my friends in a restaurant one Sunday afternoon by insisting that the waiter remove an entrée with which I had been dissatisfied and that he replace it with another. And even greater was their incredulity when they witnessed my abrupt handling of a beggar, this having been the first time that I had ever rejected a request for alms.

"The yearning infinite recoils For terrible is earth"

---Melville, L'ENVOI

At about this time, I wrote a sort of manifesto, called MANIFEST, which is a most pertinent artifact:

Corsica is an island situated off the coast of Sardinia. Its capital is Ajaccio and it is here that Napoleon Bonaparte was born. Though it is a part of

the French Empire, Corsica is not part of the mainland. It is an island. As Capri is an island, and Malta. It is not attached to the European mainland. I am in a position to insist upon this point. There is a body of water separating the two, and it is known as the Mediterranean Sea. This is borne out by the maps now in use. I brook no contradiction. If I am challenged on this point, the world will rush to my assistance in one way or another. What I have just written is a standing challenge to all the forces of evil, of idiocy, of irrelevance, of death, of silence, of vacancy, of transcendency, etc. And I rest secure in the knowledge that my challenge will never be accepted by that SCUM to whom I've addressed it. I've spent considerable time in the clutches of the LOON and I've waited for this opportunity to avenge myself by humiliating the void.

Thank you for your kind attention.

--- A VEHEMENT ADULT

As the business of selection became increasingly complex, I appeared to develop an unprecedented (for me) suavity in operating within clearly defined limits. Madness had presented itself as an irrelevancy, and I was now busily engaged in assigning values of comparative relevance to all objects within my reach.

My total rejection of psychiatry, which had, after coma, become a final adulation, now passed into a third phase — one of constructive criticism. I became aware of the peripheral obtuseness and the administrative dogmatism of the hospital bureaucracy. My first impulse was to condemn; later, I perfected means of maneuvering freely within the

clumsy structure of ward politics. To illustrate, my reading matter had been kept under surveillance for quite some time, and I had at last perfected a means of keeping AU COURANT without unnecessarily alarming the nurses and attendants. I had smuggled several issues of HOUND AND HORN into my ward on the pretext that it was a field-and-stream magazine. I had read Hoch and Kalinowski's SHOCK THERAPY (a top secret manual of arms at the hospital) quite openly, after I had put it in the dust-jacket of Anna Balakian's LITERARY ORIGINS OF SURREALISM. Oddly enough, I hadn't thought it necessary to take such pains with Trotsky's PERMANENT REVOLUTION and had become rudely aware of the entire body politic I had so long neglected when, one evening, I was sharply attacked by the Head Nurse of the ward for "communism". He had slipped behind me on little cat feet and had been reading the book over my shoulder. The psychiatric ineptitude of the official lower echelons became incredible when, one week before Hallow-e'en, it was announced to the patients that a masquerade ball would be held on the appropriate date, that attendance was to be mandatory, and that a prize would be given to the patient wearing the "best" costume. Whereupon, the patients, among whom there was a high spirit of competition, threw themselves precipitously into the work of creating what, for each, promised to be the most striking disguise. The work of sewing, tearing, dyeing, etc., was done in Occupational Therapy, where, at the disposal of all, were an infinite variety of paints, gadgets and fabrics. Supervising all this furious activity was a pedagogic harpy, who had been assigned as Occupational Therapist to see that we didn't destroy any of the implements in the shop (she tried to persuade me to attend the masquerade made up as a dog). Furiously we labored, competing with one another even in regard to speed of accomplishment, fashioning disguised phalluses, swords, spears, scars for our faces, enormous cysts for our heads. When Hallowe'en Night arrived we were led, dazed and semiamnesiac, into the small gymnasium that served as a dance floor. Insidious tensions intruded themselves as the time for the awarding of the prize approached. Finally, the Social Therapists seated themselves in the center of the polished floor and ordered us to parade past them in a great circle; one of the nurses sat at a piano and played a march; to the strains of the music, we stepped forward to present our respective embodied idealizations to the judges. There were several Hamlets, a Lear, a grotesque Mr. Hyde, a doctor; there were many cases of transvestism; a young man obsessed with the idea that he was an inanimate object had come as an electric-

lamp, brightly lit, complete with shade; a boy who had filled his head to the point of bursting with baseball lore had come as a "Brooklyn Bum", in derby and tatters. Suddenly the music stopped; the judges had chosen a winner, rejecting the others; we never learned who the winner had been, so chaotic was the scene that followed. There was a groan of deep torment from the entire group (each feeling that his dream had been condemned). Phantasmal shapes flung themselves about in despair. The nurses and Social Therapists spent the next hour in consoling the losers. Thus I progressed, after my series of fifty comas had ended, and finally reached my normal weight of 180 lbs. and my true sexual orientation: adult heterosexuality (which became my true sexual orientation only after the basic androgynous death-wish had been re-directed). It is probably true, however, that my case is atypical and that the great majority of such transformations are not quite as thorough-going, and in some cases, fail to materialize at all. There were those patients who were completely unmoved by the experience of the coma, and who found that it did nothing more than to stimulate their appetites. And there were those Kafkians who remained confirmed paranoiacs to the bitter end. I should like to quote a passage from an article by the French poet, Antonin Artaud, published posthumously in the February, 19⁹ issue of LES TEMPS MODERNES. Artaud had undergone both electric and insulin shock therapies during his period of confinement which lasted nine years and terminated with his death in March 19⁸.

"I died at Rodez under electro-shock. I say died. Legally and medically died. Electro-shock coma lasts fifteen minutes. A half an hour or more and then the patient breathes. But one hour after the shock I still had not awakened and had stopped breathing. Surprised at my abnormal rigidity, an attendant had gone to get the physician in charge, who after auscultation found no more signs of life in me.

"I have my personal memories of my death at that moment, but it is not upon them that I base my accusation.

"I limit myself to the details furnished me by Dr. Jean Dequeker, a young intern at the Rodez asylum, who had them from the lips of Dr. FerdiSre himself.

"And the latter asserts that he believed me dead that day, and that he had already summoned two asylum guards to instruct them on the removal of my corpse to the morgue, since an hour and a half after shock I still had not come to.

"And it seems that at the very moment the attendants appeared to remove my body, it quivered slightly, after which I was suddenly wide awake.

"Personally I have a different recollection of the affair.

"But I kept this recollection to myself, and secret, until the day Dr. Jean Dequeker confirmed it to me on the outside.

"And this recollection is that everything Dr. Jean Dequeker told me, I had seen, not this side of the world, but the other ..."

What he describes above was the experience of us all, but with Artaud and so many others, it stopped short and became the permanent level of existence: the absence of myth represented by the brief "death" was accepted as the culminating, all-embracing myth. Artaud went on to write, in his essay on Van Gogh, that a lunatic

"is a man who has preferred to become what is socially understood as mad rather than forfeit a certain superior idea of human honor"

and to write further that

"a vicious society has invented psychiatry to defend itself from the investigations of certain superior lucid minds whose intuitive powers were disturbing to

and that

"every psychiatrist is a low-down son-of-a-bitch. "

In Paris, quite outrageously, this heart-rendingly skewed essay written by a grievously ill man was honored with a Prix Sainte-Beuve and was underwritten by several of the most distinguished French critics.

I HAVE A SMALL MIND AND I MEAN TO USE IT.

The sentence above epitomizes the real lesson of insulin, that of tragedy, and it was neither written nor would it have been understood by Artaud, who remains (he wrote that **THE DEAD CONTINUE TO REVOLVE AROUND THEIR CORPSES**) a sublime comic figure, one who averted his eyes from the specter of reality, one who never admitted to having dimensions or sex, and who was incapable of recognizing his own mortality. (in the list of comic figures of our time we can include the homosexual.)

My release from the hospital was followed by a period of headlong and vindictive commitment to substance, a period which continues, which is full of tactical and syntactical retreats and rapid reversals of opinion. It is obvious by this time, though, that the changes of opinion are becoming less frequent, that the truculent drive toward compulsive readjustment, toward the "acting out" of one's adjustment, has been dissipated. My attitude toward the magic I've witnessed is similar to that of the African student I met a month ago, who told me that his uncle had been a witch-doctor. He had seen his uncle turn into a cat before his eyes. He had

simply thrown the uncle-cat a scrap of meat, hadn't been particularly impressed by the magic (though conceding its validity), and had come to America to acquire the political and technological skills with which to modernize his country upon his return.

For the ailing intellect, there can be great danger in the poetizing of the coma-void. Only when it is hopelessly distorted and its concrete nature disguised can it serve as material for myth-making. To confront the coma full-face, one must adhere to factual detail and this procedure need not prove deadening. On the contrary, the real coma administers a fillip to one's debilitated thinking processes. Jarry's debraining-machine was not the surgeon's scalpel but was contained within his own cranium. It was to place the coma thus in context that I undertook this examination of its architectonics.

FURTHER AFTERTHOUGHTS OF A SHOCK PATIENT

At our house, we have frankfurters PEDERASTE.

Frankfurters PEDERASTE consist of corn niblets, pimentos, and frankfurters sliced fine and fried.

Of course, we brook no contradictions.

We eat quietly, discussing the war when we feel impelled to do so. "I think they'll win," says she.

I ignore her remark and go on eating, knowing that if I dispute this point the world will rush to her assistance .

We've accepted the tragic.

Meanwhile, at an Automat table on U2nd Street, a hashishin finishes his coffee and stretches wearily, sighing, "Life's a drag."

The gang of deaf-mutes at the adjacent table, having read his lips and misinterpreted COMME TOUJOURS, elects a delegate to reprimand the boor.

The delegate accosts the hashishin. He is the most articulate of the mutes and speaks, at best, in a spastic manner.

"They — aaaa want you — aaaa to apologize — aaaa."

His chest swells. He's proud of his little speech.

The hashishin opens an eye and grimaces, "Too much."

A skeptical instant and the delegate conveys the hashishin's APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA to his comrades, each deafer than the other. Stealthily, three of them rise and slip out of the cafeteria. They've already conferred. No gestures, but a glance. With dispatch, the delegate strides back to the hashishin's table.

"They — aaaa aren't satisfied — aaaa.' Go outside — aaaa and face — aaaa them like a man — aaaa."

In a subway-car, three hashishins sit eating tarts.

All at once, the door between the car and its neighbor bursts open, spewing forth forty deaf-mutes, all jubilant. They converge on the hashishins. The hashishins cast about, frantically seeking succor. The legitimate passengers in the car ignore them, staring stolidly at the advertisements. A station.' Like a herd of bison, the mutes snatch the tarts from the hands of the hashishins and rush through the opening door out onto the platform, laughing silently.

later in the day, the depredations of the mutes, who desire a senseless society, increase.

Dinner gone, I busy myself with my translations, while she tosses in bed violently, waiting for me to retire. Generally, we're both asleep by eight o'clock.

I am translating Rimbaud. After hissing, "JE SUIS UN NEGRE," he rants on the screech, "JE est UN AUTRE." Refusing to be taken in by an infant of nineteen, I translate. "You're another." She tosses.

No such thing as prophetic humor.

A young hashishin visits the leader of the hashishins at his apartment, seeking more hashish.

The leader of the hashishins tells him, "I don't push no hash no more. I push blossoms now."

The Italian war-cripples riot in Rome, trampling bipeds, plutocrats in space, beneath their crutches, parallelling, in a special way, the riots in England following the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, when the citizenry burned the Pope, plutocrat in time, in effigy, over their eight purloined days. The dogs insist upon having their days and a world in which to roam, to boot.

The dugs of the heroes of Bataan grow longer, requiring bigger and bigger brassières to contain them.

I pause in my translation of Rimbaud to think of my wife, whom I hear tossing in the bed behind me.

With her in mind, I re-peruse a news dispatch which intimates that the heroes of Bataan have, as a result of nutritional disorders suffered at the time, sprouted breasts within the year, breasts which secrete.

I think of Napoleon Bonaparte, who had left Ajaccio a slim and virile youth only to acquire feminine characteristics upon attaining the heights at Austerlitz.

I had rejected heroism the year before; I breathe deeply, eternally grateful.

The mammaries of the heroes of Bataan grow longer and longer.

"DEREGLEMENTS DES SEXES," ray text seems to read. I find it exceedingly difficult to get on with the translation.

I'm thinking of her as she continues to rustle in the sheets behind me, trying to lure me into bed.

What can be clearer? Eliot, snickering over his footbath at the dugs of the sissy seer, Tlserlas.

I attempt to return to my Rimbaud, both hero and seer, ever overweening — did HE wear a brassière?

I snicker at the tits of the heroes of Bataan, and get on, at last, with the translation, thankful that I am a man and not a woman.

Meanwhile, the breasts of the heroes of Bataan grow longer and longer, but the nipples remain the same, secreting no more, no less, than ever.

Who wants to be weaned by a hero of Bataan?

Outside in the falling dusk, a falling "transient" wraps his body in an evening newspaper's front page, which is entirely black, but for a tiny headline sacrosanct in white, "YANKS WIN.' 7-1". He throws himself to the ground, behind the park benches. He falls asleep easily. Passersby avert their gaze, suspecting or hoping that he is dead.

Time to retire. I put the translation aside, undress and walk to the bed on tip-toe. She awaits me with open arms.

"Has baby finished with his nasty writing? "

I pause on the verge of dream, hesitant.

My dream, too, will be functional, eminently livable. I continue.

1

Hoch & Kalinowski, SHOCK THERAPY

2

So great was the sense of tangible loss that I later insisted upon an electroencephalographic examination, to reassure myself that no organic damage had resulted from the convulsion.

LETTER TO DR. RATH

My Dear Dr. Rath,

It goes without saying that madmen are really mad. As you may or may not know, when I first entered Pilgrim, it was through the back door of the psyche more or less. The domination that I felt was not that of the hospital, society or authority, but that of the gonest patients.

Psychologically, spiritually, even physically, the hierarchy seemed reversed. I broke with the guidance of my friends, the doctor, the writers, because psychologically I became aware that night was real and not day (see this as clarity or obscurity.) I did this because more and more I had noticed the tendency on the part of the professionals (we shall call my friends in whose rational vision I had lost faith THE PROFESSIONALS) to confess sham in their social world, to say, "All right Flaubert, but those boys, even though they're mad, they really have powers — the elemental powers." Their tendency to apotheosize the primitive. The contemporary writer or painter feels secure in so far as he basks in the approval of the Bantus. How could I respect them — well, I say now that I was mistaken. It was a nauseating vision and a completely homosexual one. And it is wrong to disapprove of homosexual vision. Yet in modern times, homosexual writing, in all countries reaches the bestial level (Genet, Williams, Bowles, Burroughs) and preoccupies itself more with the carnal aspect of what had always been conceived of as a philosophic attitude. Instead of yearning for immortality as Plato did, the modern homosexual philosophers yearned for death, violent if possible. Carnality obscured clarity and the contemporary bourgeois classes lack self-esteem. They become stilted and create a fantastically stratified society to substitute for the existence of a real power or authority. They can't curb delinquents, they can't curb the Mafia, the French can't crush the Arabs, their children don't respect them anymore, they are obliged to make pacts with the Communists in wartime — so they create the illusion of other-directed conformity to substitute for the old individualist ideal in bourgeois thinking. Since our society doesn't exist anymore, we had better make out like it does by all imitating one another. He who does not imitate is lost, he who is lost does not exist, because we are creating the illusion that we all exist in a kind of mirror reflecting mirror togetherness. Naturally it is rather difficult to respect a society which pretends it exists or to respect yourself if you are a member or a symbol of it. The stilted imitativeness of the other-directed archtypes, the men in the grey flannel suits, the population of WHITE COLLAR or THE LONELY CROWD — The lonely ones are really looking around for someone to imitate (consider — the man in the grey flannel suit — he is in advertising where the hero used to be an inventive or eccentric im-pressario bursting with ideas), this stiltedness is obviously less of a force capable of winning and holding respect than any old Bantu or madman, free-swinging, etc. When you exist in the eyes of the other-directed, your existence is a precarious one, particularly

when in the streets or in a madhouse — because these professionals, in their other-directedness, with their grey flannel suits, try to look only at one another, pretending that the delinquent toying with his zip-gun or the Arab fondling his knife (i could name others, but I shan't because you've already heard of some such types from — enough said) don't exist, and are certainly not a substitute for the old fashioned executive type who could promise you law-and-order. So you have the picture, a society which can't defend itself from its internal or external enemies finding a temporary solution only in conformity — not in religiousness but in conformity. The reason why I surrendered other-directed status was that I felt its weaknesses. These people (the professionals) can't defend themselves from the forces destroying their own society — what a weak faith my faith was. Ortega's Revolt of the Masses is about it. The social structure is weak. My working with interpersonal relations was no defense against THE STREET, where interpersonal relations are not recognized, where people exist in namelessness and facelessness, presenting only primitive masks — some people. The situation has nothing to do with politics.

I like things here at home because it provides me with a certain measure of safety. Can you find time to reply?

Carl Solomon

I WAS A COMMUNIST YOUTH

It was during the war. Red movements were flourishing everywhere. On the City College campus in 1944, when I began college, there were at least five hundred supporters of the American Communist Party out of a student body of a couple of thousand. Such was the educational environment of the war generation. We were raised under these slogans: Win the war, destroy fascism. After the war full employment and the "century of the common man".

Fascism was the most hated philosophy of all time. Hitler and Mussolini and Tojo were seen as the most significant tyrants of history.

Moods have changed and time has brought about a difference in us all. After the war, America was to break with her wartime allies and they were to grapple on the battlefields of Korea. The great disillusion was to come.

But there I stood, fifteen years old full of the propaganda of the day. My travels brought me to Europe and to the West Indies and I had a glimpse of the world that the war a-against fascism had created.

I cannot say that it was or is a world that was sympathetic to ideas of return to the old order or a world which wanted to preserve the free enterprise system.

What I saw in Cuba in 19*+5 was a preview of what was to come in the late fifties.

What I saw in Yugoslavia in 19^5 was the Partisans, wearing red stars on their arms.

I saw much the same thing, to a lesser degree in France, Italy, and Greece.

Only in America and from America came the slogan: Freedom. The slogan freedom meant white supremacy and the suppression of every movement for human hope on the face of the planet. So the cold war began.

The men. like Franco of Spain, whom we had been taught to hate, we were now told were our allies in a struggle against the "Eastern Bloc". Men like Dimitrov of Bulgaria who had had the courage to defy fascism during the Thirties, we were told now were our enemies, a group of cowardly tyrants.

Who knows what his opinions are amid such nonsense.

THE ENTRANCE OF THE GRAND GLADIOLA

Man Servant: gnathosputrad

Doctor : jol

First Baseman: lokfag

Young Bum enters with whistle :

Jesus : oli oli jefere Marshall Foch: Cool it, man.

Results of Contest

Joyce Greenfield 1st prize

Betty Matheson 2nd prize

Nina Destroy 3rd prize

Now look at these three lovely girls. Wouldn't you want to take one of them home with you?

Pak II Sung at the microscope looking for fleas.

THE BUGHOUSE

ACT I

Duchess: Fuck you, cocksucker, you're a prick.'

Communist: I want politics, I have hope.

Ginsberg: Shut up you illiterate shit.

Carl Solomon: Give me money or give me Proust. Er, ahem, sweet sir, I have no money in the bank.

Psychiatrist #1 (Gentile): That is irrelevant.

Psychiatrist: Ab-normal.

G.I.: When's chow?

Merchant Marine: You had a good home when you left. Left right, left right.

Garveyite: Sit down, white shit.

ACT II

Scene (a western ridge) discovered: Truman Capote and Gerd Jack Stern, hip poet, in conference over a movie script.

Stern: Now, man.

Capote: Baroque was the word I used.

Stern: Now man.

Capote: Baroque, don't you know what the word means?

Stern: It's kind of square.

ACT III Allen Ginsberg's Apartment on the Lower East Side

Peter Orlovsky: Now Carl, that you're out of the hospital maybe you can do a little writin'

Carl Solomon: Well, I'm fed.

Alexander Trocchi: I think you'd like this collage it's very interesting.

ACT IV Two lesbians petting

I

ACT V Office of the Director

Director's flunky: Have you heard? The director committed suicide. The FBI had discovered he was a Communist spy.

Assistant Director: Delightful, now I can have his job.

ACT VI Martin Bohrman's home in Argentina

Martin: This is good brew, (he drinks a foaming mug of beer.)

THE METALLIC POET
(Fragments)

DEDANS L'ASILE PARMIS DES FOUS

Voids, misery, beatniks, exiles, I have become so redundant since my first little experiment in Dada. The audience demanded a repeat performance so enthralled were all the little termites with my first romantic gesture. Kirilov in the form of Carl Solomon continues to thrill you with his death-defying antics. Rigaut said "Suicide is a vocation." When I was a little boy I never knew what I should become. Every profession or real role seems a tomb. Trotsky, Tshombe, Lumumba, Job. Gratuitous acts Zen and Vitalism. Hipsters, Jesuits and Abbot and Costello. Look, I will explain the whole thing to you. The paramount fact is that I am bored with the colorlessness of everything. So we made a hero of Willie Sutton during the Fifties. Heh, heh. Remember the Mad Bomber. The basketball scandal. Christine Jorgenson. We have to find something somewhere. The whole world is closing in, nothing new in anything. We are being bored out of existence. Point two. Ginsberg is nuts and everybody is secretly nuts. Not one damned thing since I was born apparently has had any significance. Wasn't World War Two a bore. Why do you want to read this? So I'm some type of schizophrenic who lies on the floor of a ward and smokes cigarettes made of newspapers and Cayuga State Tobacco. I layed off sex for six years and while I was doing so the San Remo vanished as a point of reference. Now I'm thirty-three and exactly the same. The same detached appearance.

FOR CAMUS

We read you when we were younger.
We forgot about you when we were older. Gide knew you as a young man.
We know you as a dead person.
Who were you?
The young trouble the old;
The old trouble the tigers;
The tigers trouble the lambs
The mind troubles the body.
PUT AN APPLE IN YOUR MOUTH AND JUMP INTO A FIRE That
is Existentialist suicide.

Dear Ronald:

There are a number of people with whom I want no further trouble: Allen Ginsberg, yourself, all the fairies I have ever met and dope fiends and stupid litterateurs. Also psychotics and neurotics and the beatific fools. All goils unsatisfactory to me in sex. Village types primarily. Also psychoanalysts and unfriendly intellectuals of all types. Also I want no red herring. I happen to be happier as a Communist. I want only to be left alone with Communist ideals. Only as a member of the Communist Party was I happy.

MARRIAGE

In marriage, the partners should be loyal to one another, but that is hard to accept today. Shortly after Florence and I married, I met Selma at a bar. Selma wanted only one thing, to be perverse. She flirted with me and I succumbed.

My wife was out at a ceramics class.

Selma wanted to come up to see my place, our place.

She came up and peremptorily removed her skirt. We wanted to have sexual intercourse but couldn't, so great was the fear of transgressing against the marriage law. We clutched each other hastily and Selma quickly put on her skirt again for fear Florence would return.

I have seen SELMA occasionally but there remains a barrier between us, the hostile face of my wife. Shortly after that my wife left me — but it wasn't so pleasant for me as the entire community seemed to blame me for the breakup of the marriage.

I believe that people should be mated for purposes of sexual compatibility and not for other reasons.

AN EXHILERATING PROFESSION

I became a writer very early in life but achieved no degree of recognition until my twenties when I became affiliated with a group of young men who thought I was very talented. My talents lasted five years until they told me that I was no longer talented. I went mad with disappointment. However through my madness my talents reached full bloom and I can now speak to you again.

Rock n' Roll.

This dance or music reached full prominence at one point in my illness.

I

experienced NOTHING of it except as a peripheral activity that was going on while I was trying to recontact my "friends".

Stavrogin —, several years ago, early in my career, there were a number of people who thought themselves to be this character from one of Dostoievsky's novels —: they no longer think so and have forgotten they have ever read Dostoievsky, if they ever really had.

Tranquilizers seem to me to be the best solution for sleepless nights. As well as for the other problems of nervousness and despair. One must learn to take it easy.

Dear Allen —

Cher grand poète.

J'ai lu vos vers et ils me semblent parfaits. Vous avez expérimenté sur des lignes longues et petites pour TROUVER la ligne — médiocre. Vous l'avez trouvée — Salutations.'

Votre humble esclave, Solomon le Brave.

signé

Mr. X.S.

(Xavier Solomon)

I was taking a walk When I began to balk / The truth was I didn't know
how to TALK —

Ce sont mes vers.

J'utilise — parfois le vers libre.

Eh, eh.

Xavier Solomon

COMMUNISM AND THE TEA-CUP

I was preparing my tea.

It had a rusty color.

I put the spoon in my mouth.

It tasted metallic.

"COMMUNISM", roared a voice.

I shook. The spoon tore through my teeth.

Poor fellow, I got up.

I walked off disappointed at not being able to finish my tea

ANTI PLAY

FOX

TROT

BEER

Fox: Do you like grouse?

Trot: Yes. Everybody is talking about beer. Beer: I'm fat.

Fox: How about a little Olive?

Trot: Where's the uptown scene?

Beer: Carl was shot downtown.

Fox: Who followed him uptown?

Trot: I protest,

There was no exorcism.

Curtain

Dear Allen:

YOMOLKA and all I have escaped from the lunatic rathole which your perverted old auntie antics drove me into. You and your mother entered my life at a certain point. Carrying with you your entourage of HUNCKE, BURROUGHS, KEROUAC, CARR and CASSIDY I even know BILL GAINS by this time — CORSO has become my brother under the lousy skin — Who was PAUL BOWLES to me before I met you? And ANATOLE and DELMORE and JAIME and HENRY? This craft of poetry (as it is officially known) is parasitic and we live off another's hat.

I will try to obtain your address from LEROI JONES to mail this missive. I may be in the Sahara by the next time you are home. Good luck. All is forgotten. Why the Sahara? Because I am a Saharist. Why? No dandruff. Nothing but the excelsior of the foreign breeze. The paraplegic rejoices at my Disneyesque face and so the carnival has begun again. Mummified we face the Republicans again, their pubic hairs all a-blossom.

On our foreheads are the scars of incisions. WHY the tomb? Why the tomb? WHY am I ready for the tomb? My friend Norman Weiselberg has just interrupted with a telephone call so I'll close.

VIDE

The dangerous hole known as the void

Where the mummy talks of the bold And you can't ever your insights
hoid
The boid was trilling
And I was lyin' near an elephant They took my baggage and said I wasn't
screwing
What's wrong with my ass I meant
I had the strongest ass in Paris so far as I gnu When I was a Jew I taught
I wuz an intellectual

THE HOMOSEXUAL MINK

The homosexual mink was making it with others
Until they gave him "treatment" and he began making it with ghosts
The homosexual mink was named Farrar
And he made it with dogs until they told
him he should make it with hogs.
He began sitting on logs and wearing strange neckties Until they told
him he'd better begin making it with frogs.
He never had a job but a friend named Bob.
And he had a mob.
Farrar was telling the truth, he'd been quite a homosexual mink in his
youth.
Until he'd made a telephone call in that booth.
Then his tail grew frayed and he never got laid
And so it was he grew up to be an old maid.

THE EDUCATION OF CARL GOY

Chapter One 701 Prospect Avenue
Chapter Two Years Abroad the Mast
(interest in j'm'enfout-isme)
Chapter Three Madness
Chapter Four Encounter with Allen Ginsberg Marital bliss period as
literature
Chapter Five Downfall — the hero of HOWL
Chapter Six resurrection by loyal mother. Begins autobiographical novel.
THE EDUCATION OF CARL GOY subtitled DEMENTIA PRAECOX
IN THE ARTS

CHAPTER ONE

I was born in a red house or at least there I first became aware of my self as a being on this planet with a future destiny ahead. My father was named Moe, my mother Anne.

I lit my first cigarette at twenty-one since I had now become of age to smoke.

At fifteen I had a certain interest in the arts.

My favorite author was Saroyan.

At Prospect Avenue my greatest interests were baseball and fishing.

Moe and I were at the Polo Grounds or at the Yankee Stadium regularly.

I remember all the great Yankee teams of the 30s.

I liked the Cincinnati team of 39 — Derringer and Walters etc.

Gehrig was my favorite player.

We waited on that horrible war. Amid talk of Hampton and Gillespie, we thought we would be beaten to death or ostracized. In full view of the audience we thought of hell.

Ginsberg for his crimes and I for my mummery. Hair, dandruff, decadent fertility.

He began talks on Holmes, Cannastra, Kerouac, Lucien, Burroughs, others began speaking of stigmata of the damned. I spoke of Nijinsky, the Marines at Vladivostok and Fanny Hurst.

Terror, excruciating terror.



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