THE FLOATING BEAR

a newsletter

issue #5

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NINE STAGES OF A JOURNEY FROM CALEDONIA TO HARPERS FERRY

I

fourteen amish folk
on a greyhound bus
one
peach fuzz on his chin &
big floppy banana fingers
watches me cautiously as
i squeeze my rucksack
out the bus door
& hunch into it on the highway

II

on such a grey morning
no towhees whistling in the mountain laurel
just a chainsaw
on the other side of the valley
raccoon rum which you always hear
& on the moss
my bootsoles
which don't know any better
III

morning fire
this cherry birch burns smoky
ashes float into the coffee water
now pour in coffee powder
pream
big yellow spoonfuls
lace it with three star hennessey
sit on a stone & slurp it
the rim of the tin pail too hot
sit on a stone slurping brandy coffee
smoking camel cigarettes
if i haul ass today
i'll cross the maryland line

IV.

plenty of deer droppings along here
& the wads that owls barf up
made of fur & mouse bones
& sometimes if you look in among
the blackberry brambles you'll startle
turtles
beaks smeared with berry juice
looking surprised exasperated &
unrepentant

V

what could be grander than
brandy after supper &
reading trollope in my sleeping bag
& listen to some old coon
he's been eating frogs
& now he comes up to crunch the chicken bones
i left for him

VI

come on boy
down thru turners gap
cross the creek on wobbly rocks &
a rotten log
socks wet
come on boy
follow the telephone wire
up to the fire tower on
lambs knoll
out of breath up here
drop the pack & mosey around
smoking
some kid shot a hawk up here
with his twenty two
his eyes are all gone now
stinks up here
come on boy
three more miles down the mountain
to bear spring cabin

VII

rest today at
bear spring cabin
hunting mushrooms in the rain
whom can i envy

VIII

cramptons gap
& a plaque beside the highway
where jacksons corps bivouacked
snored & farted all nite
before the battle of south mountain
every nite the spiders spin cobwebs
across the trail
which catch in my eyes & mouth
as i swing along the spine of south mountain

IX

chiggers in the greenbriar
a mile & a half with no trail
me lunging thru tangles of greenbriar
guessing which way for an hour
coming out at last on a shelf of rock
among pitch pines
high above the potomac
where i sit hunting ticks inside my socks
if i look up the river
over the charlestown bridge
i can just see where
the shenandoah meets the potomac
among rocks
& harpers ferry
where there are
table cloths on the tables in the hotel

-- John Thomas
MY BIRD

all morning tramping thru
woods
very grey & silent march
weather
frogs still slept in mud at the bottom of
little gunpowder river
mice slept swaying in nests of
trash
in cleft of cherry birch tree
quiet
me fourteen years old & all morning
tramping
kicking leaves & chewing on
walnuts
in my hip pocket the penguin collection of arthur machen's
stories

when i heard that shriek i looked up instantly
the bird
flapped across open space of grey sky just
overhead
long neck & long pointed mouth
no bird
i had ever seen before & i felt scared but
chosen

nineteen years old before i ever told about
that
& then i made the usual mistake--told my dear
mother
& after i drew my bird for her mother
chirped
oh that one & she got out her big
book
the birds of western pennsylvania &
showed me
that one jack oh that one is a pileated
woodpecker
she had my bird in her damned book she had
bought
at stewart's department store
& if
i had never hated her before i did
then

--John Thomas
Diane,

Just now in whatever fit of desperation, blind self-justification, or whatever, I got into some thought re/ The Bear...mainly, as to what specific outing we can make...as especially some constant insistence...e.g. what we think our roles ought to be, &c. Who we think we are. Literally, some continuous appraisal of our selves, society (or I shd say "societies", having been with H, H, & G last night & seeing, finally, the disposition of what I myself cd find terror in. The Junk World, i.e., the complete shadow people...Ugg).

But how to get in most constantly...and with the most force. As the newsletter shd only exist from some point where it is ultimately realized and consistently available...for all our that. How to?!

It struck me also that one specific way into Life, which is what the mimeo sheet was to represent, at least for me. An attempt to get in on the very rhythms of my self...&/, of course, in whatever blank community we aspire to, as peers(?), or at least contemporaries. That rhythm, as such, or as I feel it somehow, as not been kept.

I wd say perhaps excerpts, quotes, steals, &c., from some pertinent matter would at least pull in some things that might give at least a de facto existence to all the shit we know & use & reject each minute. As letters giving situations...pure banalities, &c. wd give a sense of place...as well as the literature, which, after all, we will come to anyway. I mean I wd enjoy, for instance, some comments from whatever literate peoples we know (hardly confining to Poets &c) on whatever is closest. As Jimmy Waring & Nick or Remy might give you some idea. I mean about anything available in their/our world. That has made some kind of noticeable lump in that same place. Instant reviews, paragraphs on religion, obscure facts noticed in readings, trips to niagra. God, it's huge where we are...our insistence shd not be limited to a formal area of emotional response that, as I sd, is going to be available(in a short time) to whoever got the price of some book. But what that book wont have is where we are! As yr story of vampires in your house, or that communal life there, &c. Baldly, Incidents too (or incident, anyway) shd be gotten in the thing. Not formal incident but whatever & wherever the thing is or where, at least, we ran into it.

Koi
"OUT SHOW WINDOW AND WE'RE PROUD OF IT."

The Solemen Accountants are jumping ship, sir..All of them, sir..
In the last skimp surplus, sir..'Room for one more outside,
sir' they said and plunged Seventh Teen Age Future Molotov
Cocktails..Last seen swimming desperately in sewage..
Allies wait on knives..Valiant Crown drew a short 22
and Heavy Commitments..The Carribean swelled to a roar..
A Negro snapped the advantages..Street Gangs Uranian born up
from a headline of penniless migrants in the face of appalling
conditions:"Out Show Room and We're Proud of it."
Her Fourth Grade Class screamed in terror when I looked at
the dogs and I looked at the pavement..decided the pavement
was safer..

Stale streets of yesterday policement back from shadows to embrace
his assailant..pretty familiar.

Talk to my medium..Remember my medium of appalling
conditions?:

Suicide by teen ager..ice food..same day..Blue Note wherever you
go..Dietary delusion of death in Tanganyika or was it?
Only this should have been obvious from Her Fourth Grade Class:
Only live animals have Write Door.. .distant.....
secure it firmly with steak sized chunks of cripple drug
and throw in a Liz replica synthesized from cabbage..

Who was Rape and Idleness? Anyone over homicide big enough
to take Punishment Wisconsin..Milwaukee convicted of later and
lesser crimes pudgy and not pretty..The Words included assault
murder stratosphere and his feet devoid of reality

Will Hollywood never learn?

Unimaginable disaster...Royal Knights Ten Age Future Time

-- William Burroughs
June 21 1960 Present Time Pre-Sent Time
Cargo American Express
London England

Dear Allen:

There is no thing to fear. Vaya adalante. Look. Listen. Hear. Your AYUASKA consciousness is more valid than "Normal Consciousness?" Whose "Normal Consciousness?" Why return to? Why are you surprised to see me? You are following in my steps. I know thee way. And yes know the area better than you I think. Tried more than once to tell you to communicate what I know. You did not or could not listen. "You can not show to anyone what he has not seen". Brion Gysin for Hassan Sabbah. Listen now? Take the enclosed copy of this letter. Cut along the lines. Rearrange putting section one by section three and section two by section four. Now read aloud and you will hear My Voice. Whose voice? Listen. Cut and rearrange in any combination. Read aloud. I can not choose but hear. Don't think about it. Don't theorize. Try it. Do the same with your poems. With any poems any prose. Try it. You want "Help". Here it is. Pick it up on it. And always remember. "Nothing Is True.
Everything is permitted" Last Words of Hassan Sabbah The Old Man Of The Mountain.

LISTEN TO MY LAST WORDS ANY WORLD. LISTEN ALL YOU BOARDS SYNDICATES AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE EARTH. AND YOU POWER POWERS BEHIND WHAT FILTH DEALS CONSUMATED IN WHAT LAVATORY TO TAKE WHAT IS NOT YOURS. TO SELL THE GROUND FROM UNBORN FEET. LISTEN. WHAT I HAVE TO SAY IS FOR ALL MEN EVERYWHERE. I REPEAT FOR ALL. NO ONE IS EXCLUDED. FREE TO ALL WHO PAY. FREE TO ALL WHO PAIN PAY.

WHAT SCARED YOU ALL INTO TIME? WHAT SCARED YOU ALL INTO YOUR BODIES? INTO SHIT FOREVER? DO YOU WANT TO STAY THERE FOREVER?
THEN LISTEN TO THE LAST WORDS OF HASSAN SABBAH. LISTEN LOOK OR SHIT FOREVER. LISTEN LOOK OR SHIT FOREVER. WHAT SCARED YOU INTO TIME? INTO BODY? INTO SHIT? I WILL TELL YOU. THE WORD. THE-THEE WORD. IN THEE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD. SCARED YOU ALL INTO SHIT FOREVER. COME OUT FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE TIME WORD THE FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE BODY WORD THEE FOREVER. COME OUT OF THE SHIT WORD THE FOREVER. ALL OUT OF TIME AND INTO SPACE. FOREVER. THERE IS NO THING TO FEAR. THERE IS NO THING IN SPACE. THAT IS ALL ALL ALL HASSAN SABBAB. THERE IS NO WORD TO FEAR. THERE IS NO WORD.
THAT IS ALL ALL HASSAN SABBAB. IF YOU I CANCEL ALL YOUR WORDS FOREVER. AND THE WORDS OF HASSAN SABBAB I AS ALSO CANCEL. ACROSS ALL YOUR SKIES SEE THE SILENT WRITING OF BRION GYSIN HASSAN SABBAB.

THE WRITING OF SPACE. THE WRITING OF SILENCE.

AMIGOS MUCHACHOS A TRAVES TO TODOS SUS CIIELOS VEA LA ESCRITURA SILENCIOSA DE BRION GYSIN HASSAN SABBAB. LA ESCRITURA DE SILENCE LA ESCRITURA DE ESPACIO. ESO ES TODO TODO TODO HASSAN SABBAB

VEA VEA VEA
When will you return? The Cut Up Method is explained in MINUTES TO GO. Which is already out in the States. I will send you a copy but where to? George Whitman says to look up his old friend Silvester de Castro in Panama City. Connected with the municipal symphony and the University. Hasta Al Vista Amigo.

Best
William Burroughs
For Hassan Sabbah

For Hassan Sabbah

PS. NO ONE IN HIS SENSES WOULD TRUST "THE UNIVERSE". SWEPT WITH CON THE MILLIONS STOOD UNDER THE SIGNS. WHO EVER PAID OFF A MARK A GOOK AN APE A HUMAN ANIMAL? NO BODY EXCEPT HASSAN SABBAH

NEW FLICK IN TOWN

got past thinking he/s imitating someone imitating him & you/re in it ... moiled emotions, torn-up people, they want to know all about it or they don/t but they do. marvelous photography -- does what the eye does while the mind fucks up -- looks at tits, asses, jiggles, or an old indian standing there. dialog very very good in places, the man is competent as all hell -- almost approaches some of bergman/s lovely flatnesses.

the people are the most, she/ll drive you nuts if she never has before, and the old pros swing better than ever. the young cowboy, incredible, i/m glad i didn/t recognize him. what else? tender love scenes, drunk drunk scenes ( but real! like we used to say ), a movement and form to be moving with a in, & if the philosophy screws up, well he ain/t shakepere, but he tries damned hard. see it!

aquarian

NOTICE

Loose change shd be sent for postage &c.

Allen Ginsberg's Kaddish (City Lights) shd be out any day now; also Charles Olson's The Distances (Grove) & Ed Marshall's Hellen (Auerhahn).