

T	E	L	E
M	A	C	H
I	A	D	MICHAEL SCHARF

TO BE PLAYED AT MAXIMUM VOLUME

Telemachiad

Recording Over
Erring Alone
For My New Friend, Jack Spicer, Who Couldn't Spot a Jew
Telemachiad
FTP at Age 15
The Lecture
Epithal-Epistle

*Published ("in New York during Elul") for the subpoetics self-publish or perish project
Several editions appeared via sugarhigh!
Thanks to The East Village, The Germ, and Mirage #4/Period(ical).*

Explicit juvenilia
duplicate and distribute freely but a fellahny to male

RECORDING OVER

I might bask for a moment in the departed
and what's left,
when gone for a moment, and gone
for good. The quick traces
left in the falling
wake,
the bedded pause,
light up and fade of lexical access

carried the crates into the back,
under the extended eaves.
Each slat let in a broad channel of air
to cool the flies gently drawn across the table,
slowly spreading as if tiny air postulators
spinning in toward the moon,
a pile of moons—I mean the fruit,
fired in idealized shapes.

There are structures in the mind
beyond emotion, which is very hard to fake, beyond delight.
You are beaming beyond eros and the actual stuff,
mohair and camel hair,
that singed lamb smell, ephedrine
dried. But you break it for me.

I said I would read “Stare into the Common
Joy” if I did this, and here, peering
through the poor circles of an invented scrip,
\$5 co-payment. Filed
down to cart height,
sticking to the stamp,
bursting into code,
feeling for the lamp,

I cast aspersions toward complete kinesis,
but still lay prone to mastoid insult,

salinous and sodden. The air
makes clear the lost tenting space;
aestheticized passing out astonished
little helps, the fairest things
vanished into unclosed
smiling air, rotting bosc.
Into every vacuum seethes someone
willing to make tiny, horrendous
orders, the flow itself
blotted lightly,
only, when un-
coagulated, to thicken again at the first sign of movement,
as if to exhaust itself had been a posture,
an exceptional position it does not occupy.

Tosses
thoughts in the air
like incarnate tennis balls,
pompeian
ash come
to life,
rushing up too much
too easily. Porters
walking tragic,
shiny buttress flies,
mirrors under buses,
papers under flies,

We trade speeches as the B61 blows by
on Bedford; I stick the speakers
on either side of the mic
and cover the mass with a towel,
losing the pans.

ERRING ALONE

I was relating it to myself
and the morning came; I was wild
restored
some 450 type-written pages,
major symbol activities.

Thoughts of death and related contents
keep careful track of ideation,
that almost diabolical moral “virtue.”

Removed from contact
for the first thirty-six hours
“contamination” for anyone possessing
psychoanalytic knowledge.

Third of nine born—
this one stubborn, that one cold
living
abroad.

Peculiarities become
conspicuous
during the first six to eight weeks—

fixed, rather tense, positions.

A choppy
at times explosive
billowing—

a mutinous scramble in the wood;
a secret career as a drinker
airing a lone—
vache.

The other two,
rather revengeful,
to a college in New York City—
psychiatric lecture on December 5.

Venice in June can be hell
featured prominently for a time in my dreams
deposited in a small cupboard-like space
elsewhere.

A torturous and difficult maneuver;
a flourishing
gambling establishment, similarly
sized department store.

I was slightly excited,
under the domination and guidance of a milk-
white star, vaguely
identified with the patient.

I worked very hard and faithfully;
I worked apparently for hours at the useless
task, another fantasy
clearly recalled.

Miss S., Mrs. Jack Johnson, is clearly
the mother ideal, photographed with chips and other
paraphernalia. *Inter alia*.
5 on red.

Flying in close embrace with a coward
very much opposed to treatment,
Mr. K, the voluptuous Jewess, with a pocket
full of dockets, cessna-ing
from one luxuriant valley to another,
points to the hospital.

In a subsequent discussion,
I tried to treat everyone square;
I was supposed to be in hell I guess;

They had a language there;
I'd hear things;
I couldn't smoke a cigarette or drink water.

This fly I termed a 'Benjamin Franklin'
fly,
superhuman
prowess, precise antics
on the top of the table.

The parents stubborn, living
abroad. What
life with them must have
been like.

A burdensome
package
sheathed in your kindness,
your willingness to help in even
the most difficult circumstances,
a Tarantinian 'Wolf' of my fantasies.

He gave me what is known as the "queen's salute."

Flying rapidly over the surface of the earth
locked in close sexual embrace,
luxuriant
evidence.

If Brian's poetry is what's
behind all of this, what will
you think of my sources?

It's the obvious question, as politically
motivated as "Of Being Numerous,"
with its plumes of smoke,
or the anthologizing of the *Todesfugue*.

Relentlessly assertive of truth,
the try;
the heartbreakingly freighted arrival;
the uncompromising, line-broken noun
carrying the spavined consciousness.

Business relations
night terrors, temper tantrums, enuresis, etc.

They had become so active
and were so given
to standing while in a carriage, or car
they were burned by turning over
a container of hot potatoes.

Very nervous and restless,
they suffered a great deal, resembling
each other in physique and physiognomy
strikingly.

My feelings have got swung around.

I was relating it to myself
and the morning came,
talked through clothes and automobiles;
all our actions and talks
were tensions between us
meaning this,
a bolt out.

No, you can't...
stop that, but...
I suppose you can choose
the right time. Number '4'
to my mind, '4' is sort of a doctor's
number. I touched the 4-ball.

FOR MY NEW FRIEND, JACK SPICER, WHO COULDN'T SPOT A JEW

I

Just what you would have wanted
—a collected. But “Foxy-boy
Sortie” and “Champ by
and of the Mouth” have been excised.

Your heart turns over
sends uncharacteristically bourgeois
demons down

My stuffed animals and your shit bag.

II

The tractatus;

The practicum; the pronouns;

The bedspread dropping to the floor;

The endless texts of the 60s;

At that age, I said,
“I’m a real tomboy!”

The comforting texts of the 60s

The mail dropped onto the floor.

I yawned back and smelled the pheromones
on the top
of my lip.

Beautiful, sensitive
responsive
but
may have a message
beyond
a
small
clap.

III

It echoed in the big house,
the woodpecker knocking his brains out on the dead tree.

Neither child nor nursery be;

Decommission the Irish Sea;

We are certainly free—

sold and bartered on the strand
yet clearly unfettered—

A door closed. It echoed up the stairs and raised
the animal's hairs.

There is a slight knocking;
it is the endless texts of the 60s.

IV

I read the manifestoes out loud to my children.

I went out of the house. There were leaves on the ground
and a light rain falling.

In Nottingham the tea goes “Tsk.” In Manchester they discuss Man
United.

I wanted a cozy.

The wood floors echoed after the next operation, which removed me
from the grass and brought me into the house.

His or her behind
brave, jocund, unfeeling.

“Batterny batterny batterny, the stones of blarney go—”

V

Be bop de beep
the kitty
and the creep
outrun allusions

He has always been an obvious thinker
rigidly attracted to received opinion.

He was an antenna of his era, a transceiver
delicately tuned to the tenor of his times.

Who are the sons of Bruce, and why do we love them?

VI

Touched by an anglophone.
And... I.. .touches... what's-his-name
put the three ball in the pocket.

Homophonic literature
seizing upon furniture
upon the music of my work.

If I can't touch you here in this place
of near precocity, altruism
and blindness, and can't furtively catch
the sleeve of some passing monstrosity
to what will you chalk up my panic?

The small, hard hairs of chin? The dog's antic
pull, waxing the sidewalk with leg dips
and a full-on kiss to the garbage lips?

I reach for your cake, end up with your hands.
I can't help but feel good, meet all demands.

VII

Steve,
the same Steve who appears throughout
said “we’re having an exchange
right now” at dinner. I’m giddy right now
at this powerful allusion, dressed carefully
for that dinner.

Gently to my chambur in Chambord
I removed the skis. In alien corn
under alien skies the French looked at me.
The floor flooded a quarter-inch
before the shock
of lip lock.

VIII

My beliefs run from
the tinkling streams to the facile depths
in the light of several decorums.
Sitting in men’s chairs
performing verbal ablutions
I move in the space of actual hairs,
avoid the well-heeled stool-sitters
and head down for a pee.

Comport, belie, tryst
Lenses, brush, bust
and dial. Cloy, file and
tines. Mist, paper, rack
float.

“So that’s what your back looks like,
and below, your pants fit right.”

Shirtless
tight

in the way you move your arms,
the little

death, the thin straps of your tank,
a satisfied shrug I can’t mimic.

IX

I press the bar that makes
the clock tell the time.
It's 6:08.

It's a mass-market sunrise.
Links from the dictionary
to the fruitbowl. A slight hectoring
buzz. A mound of folded yawl.
Seer sucker.

Plink
of experience.

The small pop of experience.

X

Connote and commode
extension from one life into the next
from comportment to the stocking
department, from the elevator
to the shoes.

Boring you with truthful demonstrations
of melon and softer flesh.

XI

Shissyfuss puthes
da wock.
—Shut your fucking mouth.

Gene says “wiff”
and I jump.
Imperthn—

moth
my mowff

Mima and Matt
their mother
impossibly beautiful

“Go Climb a Rock”
I cld barely
grip my d—
at that age.

XII

Where’s the eros? The real rotting birdy?
Van Gogh’s “Pair of Boobs”

Until the medium stabilizes
That is, microtizes,
Won’t reproduce.
Xerxes PARC

a sow’s ear.
a roc’s egg.
a hero’s welcome.
a king’s ransom.

XIII

Language as a model! To think everything through in terms of
linguistics!
An unconscious *structured* like a language! Language evolved for
proximity.
Will-to-power is bringing others to you! Language is a real thing that
requires
you to put yourself in an imaginary relationship to it. The form
of the poem is
the poet's body. Blank verse holds Wrdswrth together, with little
o-rings.
Sentences are built in expectation of an argument, and assign
thematic roles.
Good Will Hunting was a terrific movie about a genius; he took
things in stride.
Can X *afford* Y though, as an idea? Dissonance between proximal
availability
(‘Little Neck Clams’) and distal unavailability of the poet
(Little Neck Clams).
The author widens the scope or shucks the bake for a price.
You want to ask Matt:
Why is English so iambically friendly? Because nouns are head final:
NP → Det N.

XIV

Park poetry, social.

XV

My mother worked at the Magic Circle Bookshop. Before that she had had another boyfriend, named Art, who had a VW bug with a sunroof. He poked his hand out and waved to me as we drove in separate cars to Old Westbury Gardens. The gardens were real; Art was nice.

TELEMACHIAD

If your spavined, broken-winded horse can't
clop into town under its own steam
and gets overtaken by another man's wagon,
you have to wonder who'll be picking through the porn,
bowling trophies, frozen chicken boxes
and half-squeezed bottles of Afrin.

So fucked up on whatever drugs kept you vertical,
so terrifying in your proppings of me, with giant hairy arms,
follicles organized in semitic rivulets, you stood;
“hundreds and hundreds” of women
leaned behind you as you threw each ball—
custom drilled, engraved, sixteen pounds—
putting out. Pretty much all you could eat
was cantaloupe, and if you ate steak—

So now I'm gently shoveling the dirt myself
chasing away the morons with the backhoe,
and if you're watching
if you want to give me a little nod,
some sticky phrase translated into COBOL
and rapped out onto punch cards,

if you are unable to drink alcohol or work for Ira
by the light of your unarticulated class
aversions, your inability to reach across
the table and touch my grandfather's velvet lapel
tenderly, like a rabbit's ear, or talk substantively
about analysis or algorithm, though you made the latter
for a living and performed the former sexually—
by that light—

This stuff is endless,
ex voto
ab ovo,
“hyper”
not “energetic.”

I’m wrenching things into shape,
but to you I hope
it’s pretty clear

When my father
comes into contact with dogwood blossoms
or a hive
of cellophane-wrapped Jack Spicer,
a mummy

I pipe orphically;
I burst into song;
I cry at the sight of abject men

The explosive trees,
quietly popping into bloom,
pooping on the toilet—
and those talking birds
must have been little girls.

Schreber, Schubert, Sch—Don’t touch it!
Endured countless “honest moments”
I’m coming into my own!

You're not listening
and the trees,
for all their spread,
couldn't really give
a crap. But little by little,

the talking birds reassert themselves,
and Schreber's relationship with his dead
father resolves into brotherly affection,

before his brother, too, dies and Schreber
offers himself
to the rays of God. Lighting farts
in burnt offering,
lavishly

firing toward a loved one,
failing to repress even the faintest of stirrings,
kicking the crazy door of the jakes,

disbelief about scatology
turns to eschatology then to ontology,
the record melts and wobbles slightly on the turntable,
the bubble turns its mirrors onto the people
from the mount, essences turn to empires

and all that was
reduced, unsung,
bloated,

unrelieve
-d
comes pouring out. But
for
what? Let

comfort
unmake
you.

FTP AT AGE 15

Mirror mirror
metrical thirds split into a chorus
emanating from a small oracle,
bludgeoned by the heart's coracle.
Bragged about making the loft scene,
German diaspora.
Dictated nightly,
subordinated to the process and the needs of others,
which mostly take care of themselves, albeit with resentment,
the pretty little shits aren't good enough, and the bill in fact arrives,
drawn by the anthropomorphicized coil
rejected at the toilet's bottom.
Just troping—no actual
first-order content.
Volk vérité.

I wrote a check, turned back and hovered like a suitor
over the darkened stool, the cold beef drool,
the thickness of the poem dependent
on the transcendent economy.
The group were fascists
for booting
Stu.
Stick a small, underpowered bulb between the feet,
and the first to smash it.
If there's an unnecessary excitement,
 go home and relieve the first watch.
Poke your head into the cake shape,
leave with flecks cheeked, brush the mohair.
In slow motion, I fell off the chair.
Managed—

Turned and ran a runnel in the roseate,
streaming in the flowers, courtyarded and protected,
but still subject to outer influences.
And after I wanted the tapes in my vault:
the correspondences are incredible but undiscovered.
No, you wouldn't prevent me, but I get a sense of your authority—
peremptory, extending the superhuman arm,
purveying a dignified alienation leavened by private gestures,
rich sagacious rituals.
Your process, though, is preserved: 8-sided,
octagonal yet hilariously
made nasal,
corrupted
by poor
inputs.

Without access to anything beyond a vague feeling
of responsibility for materiality, a chromed-out legacy,
we remain partnered in this:
a half-hearted reaching out
across the milk-
deprived squad car.
After a perfunctory exchange and a heated seat,
took refuge in the playfully odd
yet certainly masculinist meters of the 70s.
Menaced by Viktor Frengut daily,
opened up the drain and saturated
the faders with the production of poetry,
toweling my back before
the knob clamped
down.

Ah, no,
I sat drinking my eggcream, no, a blackcherry,
no, a cream, curved unmentionable-
botabolism, craggy
untuskiphant.
Wept into the fireplace,
watched the desired maternal recoil
anchor the backlash, force the remaining members into the living-room,
constantly tugging toward mourning.
It's all been rehabilitated, but remains troubled,
interrupting, popping up in the dark.
Grotesquely garlanded and gain-
fueled, bragged hex, corn clustered,
I have learned
to modulate my moules for men.

THE LECTURE

First thoughts afford expectations,
not models exactly (meaning anger
on account of spurned beauty)
but errors of the once much admired:
terrible burnt cork smell, ephedrine dried.
I get a sense of your wisterity, your hyacinthocity,
some rant or experience I'm having
I can't organize myself.
The merits of having something to work
out or address, fluctuating grandiosity—
defensive, elaborated, sequenced.
Took it out on the Boesendorfer,
a sort of "An Die Musik" for newly minted
Adèsian interpreters. Moved the lecture
from the month of the death to the fall,
a more wonderfully abstracted memorial,
fully elaborated material. There were three caskets:
gold, white gold, silver, platinum, and lead.
The first contained several Bronzino reproductions.
The second, if confronted with such a speech,
flushes out the false notes, a brilliant detection of the pathetic,
asbestos mixed with plaster for green ceiling burial.
The three princesses asked for a sound-proofed room,
three separate alcoves off a common area.
He chooses the leaden casket—the star of youth,
"the Pole-star's eldest boy," but let us be content
with Cordelia, Aphrodite, Cinderella, and Psyche.
Anyone might make a wider survey, could undoubtedly
discover other versions of the same theme, preserving
the same three essential features, completely inner-directed.
If we have the courage to proceed in the same way,
the third's certain peculiar qualities might strike us as excellent:
a flurry of work about 19th century New York; utopia in Frankfurt;
and something Steve said Mallarmé said ("Mes larmes: they're arming!")
might make the transference never beaver, take us through
the next renewal: a nominal easiness that allows a tossing off,
an unfussy numbness, a tincture shot under derma,
a blister puck risen to absorb the rays. Perfidy.
The external factor which may be described
in general terms as frustration, meaning being unmet,
stethoscope trumpeting fate in a flush of broken capillaries.
Substitution, a methadone for the understanding,
a neo-vagina for the birth-cathected Oedipus,
the possibility of falling ill arises within limitations
imposed on the field, despondent prize of accessible satisfactions.
Frustrated, pathogenic, dammed up and explosive,
lack of response transforms physical tension into active energy
toward the external world, eventually exhorting a real satisfaction—
attainment of aims no longer erotic, realized in men's lives.
This is the Zurich school, regression along infantile lines
falling ill, fulfilling the demands of reality. Perfidy.
Poems as screen memories. An evidential dream.

My crumb my mansion; my stanza my stone.
Tantalus in brown wood, ceiling beams glimpsed through lathing,
130 years of roasting and freezing, a cryogenic nursery,
virulent pastures probably raising a fresh turkey for trussing,
knowing what we know about butchering and salting.
Bird fussing. Fertility in a mountebank.

EPITHAL-EPISTLE

I would be brilliant; I had nothing on mind;
passed the mirror a fourth time
saw the symbols inscribed,
follicle by follicle. On pointe, then pli  .
Shave. You loaded each phrase
with a rhetorical gesture
so rich, any recasting of mine
would seem purposeful, clumsy.
The more I stare at the photo
the more it gives up. Brush. Pack.
Little bits of toast; small Francophile wants;
aristocratic filth; tines; Daddy's letters;
Nolan's towels. This summer we lived
in a kind of spiral and the world was ours.
When we separated in the physical sense
our world of together impressions and reactions
was put in abeyance.
After last week's running around,
as long as we're together and actively close,
we're not going to be ecstatic all the time,
it was sort of riotous yet of course not insurmountable.
Joy; Aqua Velvum; Aviator; Nolan's towels.
Passed the mirror a fourth time,
saw the symbols inscribed,
follicle by follicle. Baroque detail.
When we were together our plans
for the future were almost materialized;
since we jumped from summer to summer
it shows up in sort of a grasping way. Then pli  .
Because of the physical distance between us,
these feelings have become more and more latent.
The world is full of people, of love, of aspirations,
of hopes, of fulfillment, of values, of us—the real us.
We feel a more subtle kind of pressure,
the pressure of boredom, frustration, and another kind.
Saturday nights every once in a while it becomes
unbearable, clouds our world a little.
We have to adjust ourselves to it,
until we can blossom again in a lucid, clear world;
until we're together again in 19 days
and can respire, take things in,
yoke and un-yoke, make the horse's path
around the wheel describe, venn-like,
more and more with each mis-trajected clop.
Tines. Mud-spattered steel.
I wish you were here, I were there,
or just that we were together.
You are the freshness, the joy the love, the beauty,
the purpose of my life.
It seems almost instinctive;
even if you and I meet in N.Y.

or you come here, I really feel like
it is me who's coming home to you—
You are home. There are larks
in the trees and a sort of tremendous
buoyant air that lifts off the tops of the grass,
forms a current and seeps ardently through the screen,
presses against the walls and my back,
as if you were coming up behind me.
Or the upset, septuagenarian poet who might have written
any of this if my father hadn't tried in 1962. Shave.
"Of course you can put that stuff in...
just don't be *mawkish* about it."
Bruce said that but I doubt he'll like this,
another powerful allusion.
Finally put in a satisfactory day's work
am really feeling all invigorated—
if the courts were shoveled,
I would've played a little tennis.
The more I stare at the photo the more
it gives up. Unconsciously loaded
and read for rhetorical gesture,
a sense of who falling over at the podium,
or the bathroom. I'm not throwing
any purple passion around now
for I want your company,
I want to be with you and talk to you.
I think it's wonderful we can
both be productive individuals
(encrowned, rooster, king for a day, crust).
I've been looking for a place to show
some emotion around here,
a stable field to pull your pants off
a ringing endorsable Dorsey
a fabulous price for those skis.
I keep getting tripped up;
you overwhelm even the slightest pressure toward closing,
Your surprising amplex
Your surprising me
Your under-the-sandbox penchants.
In between I started to write but got interrupted,
started over & over; should get off though
without a penalty. Oh, I think I've
figured out what you are sending me. Whatever it
is, though, I'll adore and treasure it.
Not in a way where I tell you every minute
nor even feel it, the person whose voice can lift
any despair or discouragement within me,
whose body is the only one that fits in my arms
and returns all the love
that I have. There are hundreds of millions
of ways that we'll be one—
every one. *Winterreise*, *Atomizer*,
Glazunov, and Barraqué.
I'm very, very proud of us darling,

and what we're doing.

It's hysterical and hits home
on a problem which I mentioned,
the space about seven feet square
that drops all the way down from the fourth floor
to the first between the stairs. Unfortunately,
all I want to do now is hold you in my arms
and love you but that'll be soon
and we're pretty strong
(just about the strongest of loves I'd say)
and it's not long and it's infinitely worth it.
You probably came across the same piece as I
in today's *Times* Magazine:
can talking really change the wiring?
Reading make feelings material?
Drugs break bad loops? On pointe. All I can say
is you have to get in the mood of miracles,
not in the way that it's a conscious
thing but in a quiet way. Then plié.
But this institution, perhaps one should say enterprise—
privilege accorded for possibility foreclosed?
Care publicked and property shared
with facilitated recognition?
Intense love promise? Breeding algorithm?
Morbid, pale, clumsy, shy? Lights in the garden.
Flowers from the market. The more I—
By the end of the evening I was quite bloated on everything
and here I am with droopy eyes and clouded brain.
Blame flew all over. If I had walked out into the snow
after you—net-white, strung in perfect squares—
you would've seen me from far off:
I was wearing my red jacket;
I was upset and knew you were too.
When you told me you had been crying then
I felt awful but knew we could make things right,
that we were right.
As we grope up, less afraid,
from the shattered poetic pony of adolescence,
to try to be public,
to woo it kindly,
delicate gold hands moving slowly,
how beautiful to be speaking,
to continue to bound unmolested,
feeling the slide of heel in boots,
the little tongue running
in the champ magnétique.
Precious! I actually asked the sun—like a muse's
Father—that if ever I'd done well beneath him,
or sang the thing that mote the mind delight,
not to refuse whatever it is I'm offering,
and let this one day be ours,
with all the rest for him. Brilliant.
Have you been snooped on?

Feels funny the other way round,
you and your immobilized
Jimmy Stewart proclivities!
Everything seems charged;
Had a little trouble sleeping
in my new bed and surroundings,
needed and missed you as I will
for only two more months;
have woken up the last two mornings
with the material of myth:
femme-erectons, homme-boners, little bits of toast.
We do have very wonderful things to look back at
and more wonderful things ahead
but most of all the present—
our love, now, is most wonderful.