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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

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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 unclose

smiling air, rotting bosc.

Into every vacuum seethes someone

willing to make tiny, horrendous

orders, the flow itself

blotted lightly,

only, when un-

coagged, 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,

pompeiian

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 Tarantinan ‘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

clop.

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.

Qently 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 plié.

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 plié.

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 whelm even the slightest pressure toward closing,

Your surprising ampleness

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-erections, 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.