

Week Three

11/10/00 Friday's Rock, Moby Polyphemus

I had in those days a yellow varnished pencil case of the kind commonly used by primary-school pupils, with a little lock and the customary ruler. At the end of this ruler I now carved a little manikin, about two inches long, with frock coat, top hat, and shiny black boots. I colored him black with ink, sawed him off the ruler, and put him in the pencil case, where I made him a little bed. I even made a coat for him out of a bit of wool. In the case I also placed a smooth, oblong blackish stone from the Rhine, which I had painted with water colors to look as though it were divided into an upper and lower half, and had long carried around in my trouser pocket. This was *his* stone. All this was a great secret. Secretly I took the case to the forbidden attic (forbidden because the floorboards were worm-eaten and rotten) and hid it with great satisfaction on one of the beams under the roof — no one must ever see it! I knew that not a soul would ever find it there. No one could discover my secret and destroy it. I felt safe, and the tormenting sense of being at odds with myself was gone. In all difficult situations, whenever I had done something wrong or my feelings had been hurt, or when my father's irritability or my mother's invalidism oppressed me, I thought of my carefully bedded-down and wrapped-up manikin and his smooth, prettily colored stone. From time to time — often at intervals of weeks — I secretly stole up to the attic when I could be certain that no one would see me. Then I clambered up on the beam, opened the case, and looked at my manikin and his stone. Each time I did this I placed in the case a little scroll of paper on which I had previously written something during school hours in a secret language of my own invention. The addition of a new scroll always had the character of a solemn ceremonial act. Unfortunately, I cannot remember what I wanted to communicate to the manikin. I only know that my "letters" constituted a kind of library for him. I fancy, though I cannot be certain that they may have consisted of sayings that particularly pleased me.

C.G. Jung
*Memories, Dreams,
Reflections*

Tonight, as I sit down to do my Rock Gazing Exercise, the air in the room seems to swell and grow heavy with damp. Even the visibility from one side of the room to the other feels as if it's changing, as if I were in a humid cave or even underwater. All of this seems to be pulsating out from a center, neither in the rock nor in me, but spiraling around some dynamic epicenter situated between us, like a gyroscope spinning on a string, whose overtones and harmonics determined not only the positions, but even the substance of everything in the room, including my physical body. This should be amazing, but it seems as if I am inured to amazement now, as if I had ingested it, and were assimilating it like a medicine or a food that was transforming my body in a reverse act of digestion, in which I was becoming the substance, instead of the substance becoming me. This tuning of the space between myself and the rock is no more vague than the sounding of a particular pitch is vague or the vibrations arising from a particular color, it has, if I may be so reckless as to say so, an entity like quality, and no sooner than I think this than from that very epicenter, a voice arises, an articulate speaker whose speech seems like subsea groaning, a whale-like exhalation that terrifies even as it paradoxically comforts. It speaks, this voice of Moby Polyphemous, and I am bound to hear.

Moby Polyphemous — I gather cold. I gather mute force. I am full of the visions of the massive impersonal processes of the universe. The eye that I have sees only one of two things — advantage or the need to escape. Under an avalanche of volcanic ash, I smother all aspirations for the delicate. Blunt, violent and uncompromising, I cannot be circumvented by reason. Reason is only one of my many spawns, a later, puny one. When the monster crept out of the lake and devoured the kinsmen, I was the stealth in his step, the knife in his bite. No human category can contain me. I scoff at the vaporous words around my feet, and dive below them, inexplicable.

R.D. (Replying, tremblingly, but finding my courage in the force of the very entity who now confronts me.) Lofty words, Monster, all of which I can place on a sheet of paper, fold, and slip into a common envelope.

Moby Polyphemous — Yes, but the envelope is vaster than the mind.

11/11/00 Saturday's Rock, Aesklepios, the Folly Master

There is a wild scramble to find masks, to tug and pull to get them on; and the ordeal mounts as gas fumes begin slowly to mix with darkness

and smoke. At last there is stillness, apart from the muffled breathing, some rasping, coughing, and traces of weeping.

Modris Ekstein
*Rites of Spring: The Great War
and the Birth of the Modern
Age*

“The revenants are multidimensional transmissions, who realize their bodies in your space/time vector by the reception or emission of multidimensional sounds.” These words drift through my consciousness, and immediately I find myself in a dark, stone chamber, at the end of a Nautilus spiral, where the sounds of subterranean running water mingle with the cries of animals. I feel something cold and metallic in my left hand, and look down to find that I am holding a button of some sort, not a shirt or a jacket button, but something antique looking, maybe from an old shoe or a pair of spats or gaiters. I have little time to ponder this, however, because the button, like a phone bud begins to pulse, and in the next instant emits speech.

Aesklepios, the Folly Master — Inside me is an immense black wall, from which thorns protrude — each thorn a sorrow or an aspiration. These sorrows and these aspirations are available to humans, but do not come from a human world. On each thorn hangs a mask. Some masks are as vast as mountains, planets, stars; others are massless and so ephemeral in time as to defy measurement. As you look at a mask, it’s features shift, grow fluid, melt, and assume bizarre new configurations. My voice can modulate to any mood.

R.D. — If you change constantly, and perhaps infinitely, what need have we to pay you any mind, or save for you a name? You are like nothing, and your many voices become like noises in the leaves, innumerable tongues that flap and fret all day, their phrases void of all articulation.

Aesklepios, the Folly Master — Note that I am a rock, and not a leaf, a single shape, a hardness that remains impregnable. It’s not that I am empty. I am full. But not with you nor with any individual. If you set yourself beside this thing I am, I will appear as the plenum and you as the void. To know this in the hardness of your bones is to live in the durable fortress of my joy.

Brief as this dialog has been, it shakes me. Chiefly, I think because of the timber of the voice, it has a strange choring quality, as if two voices were sounding, not quite in unison, but — if this is acoustically possible — as if the pair were mirror images of one another, almost, but not quite vibrating in perfect synchronization. To translate this voice into a visual, one might imagine two — yes, yes, — now I can see it, too — it is like two snakes or vines, one of orange and green and the other of blue and red, the complimentary colors lining up to create an almost jarring neon vibration as the strands intertwine. Now I get the impression that the communication — whatever “meaning” the spoken words might have in English — is really a transmission of some sort, a reverberation not only toning and overtoning through the room, but through me as well, while at the same time remaining encoded in the rock, frozen there, and awaiting my touch or my gaze to release its transforming pulse. There are jumbles of odors associated with this, too. No, no, not jumbles, more like spirals, as if something reptoid and primitive were indestructibly alive in this space, this time. I look again at the little stone, no longer the antique button, sleeping so innocently in my hand, and for an instant, my whole being is swept away and set down in some kind of stone temple, or even an entire temple complex. I am pressed down helplessly, splayed across a black marble or granite slab, an obsidian knife hovering above me, pointed at my larynx. The blood from this wound is speech, it’s last word: joy.

11/12/00 Sunday's Rock, Fergus's Druid Dreamstone

Quite separately from the dolmen, power inherent in upright great stones was recognized. Man had already found experimentally that in fact stone did store psychic power rather better than trees and that each stone gave an effect of personality . . . {} . . . That entrance itself comes to be a crucial and dramatic symbol. In its earlier birth-chamber form it is the place of spiritual rebirth, as we have seen, and this thought developed into a place of tests and initiations, and so long tunnels of stones develop, mazes for the soul, little buildings to test the young in these grades. Sometimes these are the mazes of the soul's wanderings after death. The thought of birth is still there in the narrow, twisted exits.

Ross Nichols
The Book of Druidry

I have been doing a lot of pacing, today, not back and forth, but rather in serpentine patterns, stooping up and down as I go, as if I am underground following some tunnel whose sides whisper to me of countless human obsessions, any of which I might claim as my own, but few of which I have ever experienced — in this lifetime, anyway, at least until this moment. What kind of obsessions? The usual ones of course: for food, for sex, for power, which come capering out from the permeable walls of my tunnel in their myriad permutations. But there are others too, let's call them artistic or even spiritual obsessions, useless perhaps in the course of the specie's evolutionary development, but goading enough to displace the others, the urge to make certain sounds, to say certain words, to step this way or that way, trumping even biological imperatives. I am hell bent to discover what effect these activities might have on my body, my mind, the room. It is pure curiosity, powerful because it is so pure, I suppose, a process which continues to quicken and deepen, changing tempo from time to time, but constantly building to an intensity, that does not exhaust, but rather invigorates me. It is like falling, releasing one's self from gravity's ever present oppression, but without the fear of falling. It is like floating, then, a state where one is alert to what might happen, but does not have the slightest premonition or judgement about it. Nor does this intense curiosity lead to any kind of franticness. On the contrary, as these obsessive acts evolve, I

become successively calmer, at last reaching a state where my dancing, speaking, chanting have merged into this floating or whispering meditation, a bird in flight, although, paradoxically, I remain underground. Finally, I reach a point of dynamic stasis, as if opposing winds, perfectly matched, bore me aloft, not with air, but with speech, and it is with a shuddering kind of ecstatic terror or bliss that I hear:

F.D.D. — Where I have gone, you must go, but not by remaining who you are now. There is a bird who follows the mirrors of rivers, who has flown everywhere, who has been so buffeted by winds that his feathers are displaced or snatched away. This bird is old, but made wise, not by age, but by wide travel. The bird's eyes can see under water and into stones, like the eyes of one who flies inside a dream. The bird is a scavenger, a raven, neither mated nor traveling in flocks, but all alone. I am that raven and I am a stone. I sit on your shoulder and croak into your ear: "Here is the passageway to understanding." And then I laugh and caw and clench my talons, sending a trickling of blood across your back, and picking your mind to pieces by my mocking.

R.D. — Mock all you want. I am your rest and perch.

F.D.D. — And I have a map of mirrors in my brain, which thread their way like rivers to the sea.

11/13/00 Monday's Rock, Sandro Lingam

We should not assume that the quest is an easy task or that it is without danger. This is where the idea of initiation emerges. The hero can never succeed unless he is helped, *guided*, by a superior being — human or divine — or by a spiritual entity cloaked in a variety of appearances. This theme is widespread and often tied to shamanic initiation. Within the ecstatic trance phenomenon that is the journey of the apprentice shaman in the Otherworld, the neophyte is always watched over by a master who shows him the way and helps him avoid falling into the dreadful snares of the phantasmagorical universe. If he did not have this surveillance, this "help," the apprentice shaman could not successfully conclude his wandering and in all likelihood would not return from his journey but would instead sink into madness or death.

Jean Markale
L'amour courtois
English translation: Jon
Graham

I had no sooner lifted Sandro Lingam from the cocoon of his protective envelope, then the whole room, including my body, bursts into flame. But since I was flame touching flame, I am therefore invulnerable to flame's lacerating madness. What has happened? For what might have been moments or hours, I was completely consumed in the conflagration of the present, yet some process using my body and mind for its fuel was able to burn these words into my consciousness, while that same meme-fire left its residues on my computer screen: hence this text. But whether what I am writing here is the record of an actual experience, or whether experience disappears like the burnt substance in the process of its fulmination, I cannot say. At one point, a young woman, a girl almost, amazingly congealed her flame from the general holocaust. She was dressed in a weird outfit, like a nun from the middle ages, and she was laughing titteringly, while flapping her arms as if she were trying to launch herself into flight. "Why are we burning?" I asked her, desperate to know. She shrieked with laughter, then bubbled forth a reply that astounded me: "We are burning the heresy of invented time." I wanted to question her further, but her form dissolved again in the masses of flame. That was when I realized, I was sexually aroused. Aroused? 'This hasn't happened for awhile,' I thought. 'But by a nun?' Then I said aloud to no one at all but the bristling happy flames, "This is fun." I had no sooner spoken, then all the flames fell into whispering embers, embers whose dying breath gave birth to speech.

Sandro Lingam — You say I am innocence, the *fol de rol* of youth. *Fa! La!* here am I, emptied of everything but longing, crying over unspilt milk. Please! The longing in me is older than the world. My love is unrequited, as you call it, because it is that very love, which is constantly creating, no, *singing into existence*, what little of reality we know. I represent *Joven!* Translation: *youthful ardor*, which takes this small, predictable world in hand, and makes it gaze back on the mystery. You are so worldly wise, or so you think, but in the instant of your awe, you turn from the luminous splendor and repeat: "This is beyond me. I will seek to fulfill myself. I want boundaries to who I am, not measureless love." Yes, I come from the country named the land of yes, so yes, I am alone, always alone, but always creating from my loneliness that new light which might love my awesome

brightness. The lines that grace the surface of my sphere are lines whose motions round into an egg, and from that egg all future worlds evolve.

R.D. — Now you seem old and wise, no longer young. Your quaint naïveté and purity corrupted by the old addictive dream, the dream of love fulfilled — which cannot be.

Sandro Lingam — You see what you have trained yourself to see. Where you see hopelessness and old addictions, I see the bubbling spring of new creation.

R.D. — That may be, but my thirsting for that spring is tempered by the wisdom its cup brings.

Looking back over the words that have arrived this evening in conjunction with my Rock Gazing at Sandro Lingam, I see distinctly that there are two texts here yearning to join as one: the nun in flames, the cynic in love. And I sense, not so clearly, that if such an event did occur, a very precious, perhaps even crucial, space now separating them, however thinly, would be annihilated. I think of the silly rhyme that concluded this section last week, and the space speaks its double name: Innocence and Uncertainty.

11/14/00 Tuesday's Rock, Serenity Pitt, the Zen Master

As for the details of heaven's form and the way it works and changes, this is incomprehensible even to angels. Some of this can be conceptualized by means of the form of all the parts of the human body, surveyed and analyzed by someone both precise and wise. . .

Just how incomprehensible this form is, how impossible to sort out, one may roughly gather simply from the nerve fibers that connect each and every part. Their nature, the way they work and change in the brain never is visible, for the countless elements involved are so interwoven that, taken together, they look like a pliant, continuous mass.

Emanuel Swedenborg

Heaven and Hell

English translation George F.
Dole

I have spent the day, as the saying goes, “putting my affairs in order”, a euphemism in my case for arranging and filing bills that I do not have the financial wherewithal to pay. The extension of my life beyond the boundary conditions set by my doctors is beginning to be a real financial hardship. God forbid, I should, like my cat, Diva, survive my supposed demise, and return hale, hardy and penniless from that undiscovered country, rising from the tomb of Lazarus only to descend into the crater of bankruptcy. Soon, I may be forced to start selling off the furniture. This background information would have no bearing on the Rock Gazing Exercises, except that it has put me in a rather petulant mood to start, and when I remove Serenity Pitt from his snug little envelope, I am feeling anything but serene. I look at the rock, trying to recall the geographical features that I had identified last Tuesday and at first everything seems normal — if I can dare to call normal what has become for me a kind of confederate paper scrip engraved with monochrome images of the people, places and events that everyone else seems to take so seriously. But then as my gaze begins to waver and defocalize, the rock seems to be composed of very fine layers of glaze, each layer alive and holding some dimension of time every bit as real as the one promoted by the TV newscasters, and the layers are drawing me into themselves, spiraling me down in the sweetest, most languid journey, where I gradually become aware that each layer is a quality, or individual species of light, all wrapped around a core of some kind that I am now journeying to with ever more gripping inevitability. A mélange of the most astonishing colors go streaming by as I move into that center, their smears sometimes slowing enough for me to see people and animals and places that are unfamiliar to me, as if my eyes were raindrops, streaking through innumerable other streaks of rain, and yet, and yet, all of these beings — for even the places, especially the places, have a centralizing intelligence embedded in them that make them entities, and not mere processes, happenings with a focal point of self-awareness — all of these beings, I can see are deformed in some way, injured or deviating from their original divine pattern, and all are struggling to return to it. But their struggle to return is deforming them even more. That is my dilemma exactly, but what to do? I had no sooner conceived of that question, when the swirling spinning layers begin to emit a sound, smooth, like the tideline turning its razor of foam in a calm bay golden at sunset. I was, after my day of fret over money, both calmed and enthralled.

‘This voice,’ a creamy baritone, ‘is,’ I think, as I began to melt into it, ‘the very essence of peace.’

S.P. — Even serenity moves. Suppose that I were to tell you that the unchanging is so packed with potential that it bulges and breaks with the slightest touch of perception. When you perceive anything or anyone, even an “enlightened master,” you prompt the equivalent of a solar flare, whose plasma-storm envelops your perception. Perceived and perceiver are wrapped in a loop of fire, a fire that sometimes excites and sometimes calms. On a perfectly smooth, a perfectly polished wall, which extends for millions of miles in all directions, is the tiniest chink where the tiniest grain of sand contains within its mite the infinite light. Your job is to crawl across the smooth stone wall, that hard, impregnable polish of opinion, and find this single gap in all your habits, through which the voice of God is whispering.

R.D. — How can I find this most amazing dot?

S.P. — Not by indulging in a greedy search. The pit moves on the surface of the rock, seeking its twin imbedded in your surface. When whisper matches whisperer sorrow ends. This is the meeting of the friend and Friend.

R.D. — I feel as if a great disintegration is taking place inside my hardened head. It is as if a rock dissolved to sand, and all the grains were scattered by the winds, a billion specs of light destroyed by light.

S.P. — Refrain from histrionics. Those specs are tears, the bits of thought dissolving in some fear. Wait for a moment, feel the storm descend. Be practical. Get clothed. Get fed. Question the belly first, observe its pain, and then decide if I am still your friend.

11/15/00 Wednesday's Rock, Grace Maryanka

I know before anyone else what is going to happen. I will not tell people beforehand. I know what my fountain pen needs in order to write well. I understand my fountain pen. I know its habits, and therefore I can invent a better one. I will invent a better one because I feel what is needed. I do not like to press, but a fountain pen likes pressure . . . I have to press. I will invent a fountain pen without pressure. The pressure of a fountain pen does not give beauty to writing, and therefore there should be no pressure. Pressure prevents

writing . . . I want people to work in order to perfect themselves, and I will therefore write with this fountain pen. I like perfecting things.

Vaslav Nijinsky
The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky:
Unexpurgated Edition
English Translation from the
Russian by Kyril Fitzlyon

The visions I am having in conjunction with the Rock Gazing Exercises — visions? — oh, these are far more involving than internal visual escapades alone, fleshed out as they are with auditory, tactile, taste and smell sensations — the visions I am having are leaving me far more than breathless, they are also leaving me brainless. All day long, I sit on the couch, in a happy stupor, Diva on my lap, and nothing behind the eyebrows. The sounds from the neighborhood, the passing cars, the wind in the trees, the chirpings of birds and squirrels, even the usually annoying Country Western blare that my next door neighbor sometimes infects the air with as he drunkenly and interminably works on his vast collection of junked cars and boats, all of the usual diarrhea-rama of modern life here in my Houston suburb washes over me like music, currents of sound that make currents in my head, or currents of light undulating across the ceiling, walls, floors, as if I were under water, lolling back and forth like one of those creatures in the deep ocean trenches, which manufacture their own light, feeding on the dark drift of things, happy, as the slightly mixed-metaphor might go, as a clam. Rock Gazing is simply a part of that drift, and at twilight, I drift back to my “rumpus” room, its back windows, like the transparent walls of a bathysphere, looking out on a murk filigreed by a screen of nearly barren trees. Here, I sit at my little desk, and remove Grace from her envelope. She is beautiful. I love her. Is it any wonder that I can hear her speak?

Grace Maryanka — There are things, *mon cher*, that strike deep and leave scars. The wounds heal, *mais* there is always a little memory of pain, a little redness to commemorate blood loss, a white welt whiter than the skin beneath. I have felt this pain. It is the pain of losing a child. This is true, is it not? You see it in your self, *non*? *Porquoi* do you assume that a certain ruggedness is obtained only through battling the seas, that only through some physical conflict *avec les elements* can one mature in the struggle for existence. *Pauvre enfant!* Those wars mean little. The subtle is what hurts

— the steps of *la* dance perfect gone slightly awry, a misplaced cry within the perfect poem. Refinement is earned by risking death, not for a hunk of flesh to stuff the flesh, but for the shaping breath of a delicate song. This is the artist's way. The way of the warrior— the warrior who must always fight, even while winning, and so, and by so winning, lose a little more.
Non?

R.D. — Perfection is the conception of the imperfect, the delicate sensibility of the flawed. One thinks of those too fragile to be scuffed by the mean rotations of the world, withdrawing in art from life to find a pillow.

G.M. — Your blather is so boorish, so banal! Come! Come! The physical is but a crude shell. *Ecoutez, mon cheri!* I am a rock, but I know more than hardness, more than breathing. The perfection that I cherish wears bright scars.

When Grace falls silent, I am holding the rock, looking at it, my back slightly away from the chair, my forearms pressed slightly against the edge of the desk, my head a bit tilted to the right — in the “fascinated” pose, one might say — when I realize that the pose is more permanent than the poser, and that countless human beings in countless iterations of space and time have assumed just this attitude, and that, in fact, every position that my body assumes is no more than a fluid vessel channeling fluidity, and then comes that feeling of the cessation again. But the cessation exactly of what? Not the stream of poses or the stream of emotions and thoughts, which accompany the poses. For my breath, or my body-being that was once breath, still rises and falls in a motion that exactly matches the motion of these tiny filaments, streaming through the space around me. And yet, and yet, the incarnate me, the mobile incarnate me, has stopped, has ceased to be. Now I have entered the interstice of the the everlasting dead, little slits in my skin, perhaps between the fingers and the toes, perhaps on my back and abdomen, absorbing a starry and preserving balsam that suspends my body, like a great white corpse, in the aquarium of the room. The lampfish of the soft flickerings from the street lights swim through the meshes of barren branches, and submerge my body. I am drowned. I slip Grace gently back into her envelope, knowing that she is the current that guides my current, flowing in a graceful dance, which unfolds before me, and gives shape to this ocean's tremulous dark.

11/16/00 Thursday's Rock, Giles Nagual

If you have a chance to cross the threshold, to let its creatures and cacti speak directly to you, leaf through this book before you go and after you return. Read it by campfire light at night, or when you get stuck below a rocky overhang that summer day when a sudden downpour forces you to head for cover. Savor it as you sit beneath a saguaro cactus, eating the succulent fruit, hearing the breeze make music as it blows through the cactus spines — a living thumb piano. And use this book as a wellspring for reflection, to remind all of us human mortals that there are other lives on the face of this earth which enrich our own.

*The Natural History of the
Sonoran Desert*
Edited by Steven J. Phillips and
Patricia Wentworth Comus

GurRorrrrrrimmm. Gurrurh. Garurh. Grha. HmMMM? The magic of his quartz crystal and his lacquerware bowl from Xuefeng seemed not to be working. The drill was slowing down, and it was damned hard to see why, what with the blood flow, and the fact that the little magnifying shaving mirror he had affixed to the trailer's ceiling by a screw hook and a length of monofilament fishing line kept twisting-twisting out of view of his one good eye. His replica Colt Peacemaker squirt gun was doing a pretty good job of irrigating the semi-circular wound, but each spritz revealed a more and more alarming result. *Gevalt!* Enough already. Was this third try going to have to be aborted too? He had carefully used the *exacto* to slice and peel away a flap of skin, so that the drill wouldn't maul and wad the covering layers of epidermis (his second failed attempt at the procedure had produced *that* insight). But he either couldn't hold his hands steady enough or apply an even enough pressure to the drill in the off angle he was forced to grip the thing or else his lack of binocular vision was making it impossible to — *oy, dreck!* but wasn't it was always something, and the something in this instance was going dreadfully awry. Plus, the distraction of Bullet yipping like hell from being locked in the Double R Bar's tiny bathroom, the wonder dog's primal instincts no doubt aroused by the hot smell of blood, was not helping with his concentration. HmMMM? Perhaps the skull was maybe a little thicker on one side, owing to a build up of scar tissue from his old head wound. Red Beach, Incheon, may God Bless you Lt. Baldomero Lopez, still

this one fragment you missed — *Semper Fi!* The eye patch was getting soggy, and the good eye was blurred with red. Could it be that these physical manifestations of memories alone, how Bergsonian! were causing the bit to bite more deeply, like the whole country with Reagan in the saddle, to the right? Whatever it was, he was afraid that if he continued, he might break through and cut too deeply. Ah, then, far from releasing pressure and allowing cranial blood-flow to increase, ah, then, ah, instead of returning to *Gan Eden*, yes, back to that wondrous time in infancy when the brain was learning and growing at such a prodigious rate, and attaining, or re-attaining, as it were, that new-born condition of enlightenment, instead, instead, *oy*, he would be giving himself a lobotomy. GurRorrrrrrimmm.. Garrah. Grah. Grhr. No. No. Better it would be to stop. Call Talks-a-Lot, *Oy Vay!* And get some help over here before he did himself permanent harm. Another rev or two, and he could be making himself a high grade imbecile. Wouldn't do to have to cancel his membership in Mensa. As his sticky scarlet index finger reached for the wall phone, still the old rotary style, modeled in paint-specked 70's brown, the blood flowing pretty good now, in his eyes, down his face, on the sage and pan-burned surface of the Formica topped 50's drop-down trailer-table, he could see, through the red blur, those little anti-Semitic vandals from the other side of Paradise Estates, hanging around the Silverado again. Were they planning another graffiti alteration to his truck signage?

Hiram Jinks, Cpt. U.S.M.C., ret.
Plumbing, Small Appliance Repair, Landscape Maintenance
And Private Investigation
(602) 777 9588

— the neatly hand-lettered advertisement defaced by the spray-painted epithet: “Old Fart,” which could not be removed without also effacing the important underlying message. “Oysvorf!” He yelled through the grease and dust clotted Venetians, Get the hell out of here you little bastards! May you crap blood and piss! *A kaporeh* should possess your souls!” They laughed. But ignored him, singing their usual taunt:

I'm Captain Jinks of the horse marines,
I feed my horses corn and beans,
And sport young ladies in their teens,
'Tho a Captain in the Army!
Poot!

How fucking original! (Poot.) Ah. That's better. Just as his master, Xuefeng, the wondrous *flaneur* of Taipei, instructed him: "A tiny bubble of laughter arises from inside. Why don't you let it go?" Of course the release in this case might be less gastro-intestinal-spiritual, than just a giddiness due to his blood loss and this lop-sided new gouge in his head. When he finished dialing, he was relieved, (poot) when the voice on the other end laconically said;

"How. May I help you?"

"Tonto! Toot sweet get your Apache ass over here, I 'm trying the procedure again, and could definitely use a hand."

"Ah, l'idée fixe de la béance!"

"To hell with your Lacanian *megillah!*"

"What wampum Kemo Sabe give red man to get crack out of jam?"

"May you grow a wooden tongue! This time I've almost got it through, but the drill has started in a little screwjigged, and the blood it is . . .

"Holy smoke, Hi! You're gonna kill yourself with this trepanation fixation! You know as well as I do that all this springs, as the Seminar makes quite clear, from the mirror stage, when the child discovers the fundamental rupture between man and nature, and must then deviate into the mutilated imago to keep from confronting the fact that the gap is d . . .

"Damn it to hell with you, you dirty *farshinkener*, there's no time for your frogified psycho-linguistic-cockamamy. I'm spouting a gusher here, and hostiles are prowlin' round the perimeter. We gotta do something fast!"

"What daya mean "we" white man." Rejoined the voice, deadpan. Then came a snurt of laughter.

"Just get the hell over here. And that pronto."

"That's me all over, Hi Jinks, 'Pronto Tonto."

“And watch your damned step when you come in, I’m thinking the floor might be slippery.”

The cessation is expanding, moving through my whole brain and body so that each cell, each molecule and atom seems like a desert paving of tiny, tightly packed stones, each stone crystallizing, and in its crystallization, pulling everything in my life, my body, my disintegrating marriage, my craterous finances into a kind of shining void. It’s disconcerting, but far from unpleasant. To the extent that there is any sensation at all, it is the sensation of soaring, condor-like almost, so far above earth or anything else that only the freedom of the wind, which I am inside of, and therefore do not feel its motion, bears me aloft, aloft, aloft — far out into a luminous space, where I am eventually pulled into an immense revolving spiral and drawn into the fiery core of a being whose body and intelligence is composed of an inconceivably vast, yet still intimate, nuclear flux. Wherever this hereness is and however enormous its luminosity, it is a desert, all energy and nothing green, and yet . . . and yet . . . there is this voice, ancient and tricksterish, composed of what kind of matter I cannot say, the voice of the cessation.

Giles Nagual — You should write a disclaimer that these words are for entertainment purposes only, not for enlightenment. That would change your whole perspective. Next to Mind with a capital M, what is it that your mind could comprehend? It’s touching, almost amusing to watch you struggle. Here is my advice. Take what comes without complaint. Or if you must complain, do it with flare. Laugh when you can, when you can’t, cry. Don’t waste time thinking about why things are the way they are. View yourself, all events, and all people impersonally. Things are stranger than you can ever suppose. Your job is not only to act, but to be intrigued.

R.D. — What about love?

Giles Nagual — What about it? Give up the thought that you, or anyone or anything is inherently lovable, and you may, just may, find something worth your interest, if not your care.

R.D. — Your words seem wise, but not so entertaining.

Supposing there were a Mensa for flies, and that some mutation of nanotechnology had endowed the curious one on the blood blotched *vant* of the Double R Bar trailer to pause a moment from his repast of blessed elixir, in order to see, multiplied in his compound wondrous peepers, the scene that was taking place around him. He might have viewed a paradise of these scarlet symposia: red pools, red sopped towels, red splotches, red splatters, red drips, and in the midst of this, a red man with a red Geronimo head bandana and a brace of ebony braids, leaning over another man, his, the fly's, good shepherd, who is the source of these still waters. Inexplicably, the red man with the braids would be applying the auger of a drill — which he has fecked from a little lacquerware bowl housing a rose quartz crystal on the faux-pebble-topped table — applying IT, as we say, to the head of the fly's Great Lord. The Great Lord's combover would be dagwooding now like top feathers or startled porcupine quills from either side of the crimson spring, as, above the arched and astonished fuzzy eyebrows, the auger grinds its way to gory glory. Along with this sight, our genius fly might hear, *under* the Ror-Rorim-Grrr-Garrahraing of the drill, *deeper* than the incessant muffled yipping of a dog, *below* a flourish of English, Yiddish and Athabaskan cursing, *subtler* than the little pootings of his Lord's nervous flatulence, the gurgling sounds of this wine-dark nectar, running under the bone of the wounded Lord's skull, where its bubbles are pressed out through the newly made slit. This was the sound of emergence, the impersonal voice that told of his Provider's apotheosis, the final snap of bone that spoke a triumphant *Selah*. And he might have wondered, our little fly, what words could there possibly be in the little, now blood besotted, ITAG (International Trepanation Advocacy Group) pamphlet which could possibly have inspired his Savior to such a sacrifice, enduring so much avoidable suffering, for him, yes, only for him, an eye on the wall, a blood drinker, a dung eater, the merest speck of a fly. Surely he thinks, our fly, Greater Love hath no man, than to drill a hole in the head of his friend. He might have also seen, our little watcher and listener, near the crystal-housing lacquerware bowl on the faux-pebbled table, a stack of mail, its nether envelopes sponging red through their paper pores. There would be an envelope from a gas company dunning for the refill of a propane tank. There would be a request from an animal rights group urging that the recipient urgently act to stop Koreans from eating dogs. There would be a mailer from the RNC for the Victory Fund they said they needed to push Reagan's V.P "over the top" in his quest to continue The Great Communicator's patriotic legacy. But none of these

sponges, adept as they would be at soaking up his Lord's life blood and *guelt*, could conceivably make for the Bleeding God a new highway through the bloody world. But there was one epistle, a black satiny one, with gold letters, whose enclosed treasure was certainly worthy of a God's attention. And those gold letters said *Le Dottore, L'Auberge de Sedona, Az.*

When this brief dialog bookended by its oddball interludes has ended, I come shudderingly back down into my body, 'this condor-meat,' I am thinking, as I look stupefied, at my two cupped hands and the little rock they are holding. What are they but one sun cradling another? Then a drop of moisture, I can't see from where, falls into the midst of that great desert cauldron, as, ringsome on the aquawaste, the lost pip of the drip loops spirals round spiraled spiralings.

Interregnum: Third Week's Summary

Interest in developing a 3D atlas of the human brain *vis à vis* its function in processing chronology has received surprisingly little attention considering the enormous potential such research has for humans trapped in unfortunate time sequences. Because little is currently known about the anatomical structures of the brain involved in these processes, our research team has therefore focused our initial efforts on identifying regions of interest (ROIs) in multiple brains, starting with ROI identification in one brain.

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The process of reviewing reviews, of creating personas and analyzing them seems a dizzying descent into a cauldron, a cauldron where all of the carefully separated, dissected and diced ingredients now boil together. I was right to try to make rules. The lists form a wall defending the awareness from chaos. Three weeks only — and the mind is already a roiling mess! The rocks, as I hold them, seem so cohesive, so intact, and yet they give rise to a process, and are themselves born from a process, in which cohesiveness is an illusion, a process of disintegration or formation happening too slowly for the senses to capture. But in the mind, which is quick, too quick, the processes that seemed so static, so controlled, granulate, flow, bubble, evaporate and never seem to congeal.

The personas, created by the rule of splitting points-of-view, have a tone, an attitude. They attack and belittle me with their assumed wider vistas of perception. They tell me how little I know about myself. And I fight back. I try to challenge them. I keep trying to remind them that they are only rocks, only words, only the creatures of my own searching. But my arguments are futile. The creations are bigger than their creator. Does this mean that humans also have grown larger than their God? The process of expanding awareness spawns blasphemies.

As I feared, the personas have also escaped their envelopes, subtly interacting with one another. For example, on Friday, November 10th, M.

Polyphemus declaims “I smother all aspirations for the delicate.” But he seems to be refuted five days later, on Wednesday, November 15th, by Grace Maryanka, when she says “*Porquoi* do you assume that a certain ruggedness is obtained only through battling high seas . . . The subtle is what hurts.” These contaminations are not confined to this instance. They have spread to other personas, other days. On Saturday, November 11th, Aesklepios refers to an “immense black wall,” and three days hence, on the 14th, S. Pitt compares the search for truth to a chink in the habits of our awareness, that is to say, to a “perfectly smooth, perfectly polished wall.” Also S. Pitt tells me: “Don’t be so histrionic.” And isn’t this a phrase more suited to the Aesklepion healer/actor than to an austere Quaker? And further, on November 13th, S. Lingam speaks of his “youthful ardor” as an attribute “which takes this small, predictable world in hand,” his metaphor clearly echoing the quotation from Julian of Norwich’s *Showings*, referred to by the Dreamstone on Sunday, November 6th — “and in this, he showed me something small, no bigger than a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand.” Finally, on Thursday, November 16th, the dialog between my own persona and G. Nagual, the old desert sorcerer, seems to obliquely reference all of the stones. He speaks of “entertainment” (Aesklepios), of “struggle” (M. Polyphemus), of “style” (Grace Maryanka), of “practicality” (Serenity Pitt), and of “dreams” (Fergus’s Druid Dreamstone). While I counter with talk of “love” (Sandro Lingam).

Perhaps the personas have come to represent, not only the days of the week and the stones, but also the seven cornerstones of my perception:

- Entertainment
- Struggle
- Style
- Practicality
- Dream
- Love

The seventh, of course, is magic, which mysteriously wraps them all.

But this is too neat. What are these cornerstones but words, and the worst kinds of words at that, mere nominalizations which disguise themselves as nouns, as things, as stones, but are in reality roiling processes. The cauldron keeps making magma of the rocks, while the mind, with its lists

and rules, keeps trying to solidify the gruel. Yet the cauldron itself is melting in the flames.

Suddenly I have the feeling that the whole point of some of these excursions into the minutia of a self-evolving text is to teach me something about the limits of my ordinary understanding of words. The convolutions, the isolations of particular words, the placement of the same words or metaphors in different contexts, the permutations of time itself, all seem to be pushing my mind to the outer boundaries of what I formerly considered as a “legible” reality. A number of great parallel — what did the quote call them? — “Regions of Interest” have arisen in my life: the viewing of rocks, the obsession with the nation’s corrupted politics, my fantasizing about the possibility of the legacy of Sandro Lieto, my postpubescent literary aspirations, the complications arising from my various bodily symptoms — asthma, impotence, incontinence — , my fast-disintegrating marriage, and, perhaps the most important of them all, the seeming return of my once-dead cat, Diva. All of these ROIs are competing fiercely for my attention. So much so that I have scarcely had time to consider the progress of my brain tumor and my zooming forward towards the abyss of physical death. The doctors have warned me of the possibility, no, the certainty, of certain disintegrations in neural functioning, the inevitability of an onslaught of various agnosias, *viz.*, the loss of the ability to recognize objects, people, sounds, shapes or smells. They have even threatened me with the specter of agraphia — the loss of the ability to read or write. But none of these prognosticated catastrophes have yet manifested themselves. On the contrary, I now can perceive objects in other seemingly private dimensions of reality and bring them into our consensus one. Plus, far from being rendered insensible to the writing or reading of text, I have now acquired an almost morbid sensitivity to words. Whereas before, words slid over my consciousness, without really touching my programmed perceptions, now they bristle from corners of existence that were previously unknown to me, lighting my way into areas of the psyche that promise, if not wisdom, at least an escape. Moreover, I now have two trips to contemplate: one to Phoenix, and the other to Alpharetta, Georgia. So instead of worrying about dying, I am wondering if I should leave food out for Diva or hire someone to come in and care for her while I am away. Today, I looked into the mirror and I saw, for a moment, not a person, but a kind of netting. I seemed to have become that sheet of holes I created in an earlier aborted Awareness Exercise, held together by the sheerest filaments of tissue, with each hole swimming with visions of people and places that seem foreign to

this place, this time, this life. Yet, somehow these foreign incursions are as familiar to me as my own skin. Every day I study one of the seven rocks. Every day I write. Every day I sit on the couch and watch a mute TV, reading the signs of the times from wordless gestures. The country is all in a tizzy about the undecided presidential election. But if they saw what I am seeing, and heard what I am hearing, their uncertainty would explode into abject terror. And yet, and yet . . . every day I grow more accustomed to chaos. And every day, as I read the signs of disintegration, I grow more and more serene.