



*Divers to Dive:
A Pandemic
Dream
Journal #3*

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Sunday 12/4/20

There are spiders all over this house in the springtime. Creeping. Creeping like depression, fleeing like joy, I loathe spiders, but I hate crabs more, their sideways movement, it's too literal, too Roman, crabs, like a writer, scribbling in the margins, making furtive stabs at getting it down, just in case you notice yourself doing it, and break the spell, what is the worst spider, a spider with a cap or a bold marking is the worst spider, the worst spider is the spider that announces itself: spider. The worst, is, and the best, also. What is the time of a spider, what is the aeon of a dove? I have often wondered these things, animal time, moth time, larval time, time is inflicted on all beings in time, blind, senseless, or no. Anus time, Artaud would say, intestinal time, womb time, you're all a bunch of fucking magicians and only this is real, he would say, forcing a calcified finger into his body, a rotten member, I am a rotten member of any group I have ever been part of, what the fuck are these, spiders.

Monday 13/4/20

A solitary golfer, up behind Acre, practicing his swing. Blue tits on the feeder. The smell of tomato plants. Ravilious's painting of cyclamen and tomatoes in the greenhouse at Firle, 1935. Those amazing picnics that Roland Penrose would throw. Lee Miller's fantastic cookbook. Alan Watts' life was changed when he first visited France as a young man. Mine too. Chogyam Trungpa, a teacher of crazy wisdom, drove his Porsche into a toy shop in Peebles while off his head on cocaine. People said that when Trungpa spoke, often raving drunk, that it wasn't so much about the dharma, as it was the dharma itself. There is an amazing video on YouTube with Trungpa and Krishnamurti in conversation, though when I say 'in conversation', Trungpa just sits there and manifests it, silently, while Krishnamurti neurotically babbles

on and attempts to fill every possible silence with nonsense. Trungpa occasionally grunts or laughs and at one point says, “but there is no observer”. But there is no observer.

Tuesday 14/4/20

At the garden, I look up, to see the first swallow of the season, a few days later than usual. Normally the first swallows arrive in Maryhill over the Easter weekend, but it’s always such a joy to greet them after their travels. Was it the naturalist Gilbert White who thought, or more honestly, wanted to believe, that swallows hibernated in the bottoms of ponds and rivers over the winter? Truly, he couldn’t bear that they went away.

Wednesday 15/4/20

Dreamt that my old Sufi master and a stripper I used to know in Texas called Miss Rockwear made an apocalyptic video cassette that they posted through my door that featured them in a secret location in the Highlands where they were gonna sit out an imminent asteroid strike that would kill most of the world.

I was initiated into a particular Sufi sect that used to meet at the Islamic Centre at St Georges Cross, in Glasgow, many moons ago. In order to initiate you, you have to find someone who is part of a particular lineage, which they then transmit to you via meditation. This particular master then taught me how to do the meditation myself and it was mind-blowing. Every time I did it I would get a mad hard-on and feel like I was going to come, and then one time I actually did come, using no hands, but just this mad mediation technique, but when I told my

Sufi master, privately, what had been happening during my meditations, he went pale, shook his head, said oh dear several times, and then made me promise that I would stop doing it immediately. Needless to say, I never went back. But they must have cut me off, anyway, because it sure doesn't work like it used to.

Thursday 16/4/20

I once had the notion that the artist Hans Bellmer's disarranged bodies were closest to that weirdly erotic 'smear' sound that contemporary pop makes, like that weird section in Shakira's "She Wolf", and that the erotic was itself a disarranging, a taking apart and a reconstruction of the body, and according to the desire of language, too, which is always to re-array, and to disarray, to disarticulate. Eroticism as the disarticulation of the performance of the social. But then I saw a dunnoek picking a competitor's seed from a female's vagina before pumping her full of his own, and I got over it.

Thinking of old Lazarus today, and what he got up to after Jesus rose him from the dead, which was Jesus's major balls-up, let's face facts (along with his other major balls-up, the raising of the son of the widow of Nain), because by doing so he gave away the fact that if God willed it he could bring anyone back to life, and the concomitant realisation that in that case God does not will it, in fact God likes death just as it is, invented it, in fact, Himself, and chooses not to end suffering, even when it is demonstrably in his power to do so, which is a demiurge, truly, and not a true God. But anyway, the story of old Lazarus after he woke from the dead is a stone cold trail as far as the Gospels go, but there is a story that poor Lazarus was pushed out to sea in a leaky boat by the Jews with the hope that he would drown (which sound uncannily similar to the legend of the Wandering Jew) and but the boat actually makes it all the way to Cyprus where he becomes a bishop and after

thirty years dies there, again (only this time God doesn't give a toss), and is buried on the island. There was another story where he and his sisters Mary and Martha Magdalene made a miraculous crossing of the Mediterranean, whereupon Lazarus became the first bishop of Marseilles. The three of them are reportedly buried together in Provence. Either way, it seems he is always setting out. The cathedral of the little town of Autun is dedicated to Saint Lazarus, and his remains were for a long time on display there (where are they now, back to their wanderings, I would guess). The cathedral is one of the most remarkable works of art, and the perfect sepulchre for the man who came back, with its wonderful stone carvings, most all of which were done by just one man, across ten years, in the twelfth century, an artist name of Gislebertus, who signs his name at the feet of Christ on the Final Judgement of the west tympanum: Gislebertus Hoc Fecit. Gislebertus Made This. Lazarus!

Friday 17/4/20

I'm thinking of the most memorable lines from my youth, things that people said that really stuck with me. And I have a hands-down favourite. I mean, my brother, to this day, comes out with absolute diamonds, and I'm thinking of the catchphrases that we associated with kids in Airdrie, like "don't start me", with this guy Alan McCubinn, who would pretend to be seconds away from going completely mental whenever challenged but who was never seen actually going mental. What the fuck happened to that guy. Drew Gracie, that's a name that just came into my mind, he had such big feet that when we tried to break into this old mansion by climbing from the fire escape across the old stone window ledges, his big banana feet caused him to fall off, luckily into a pile of sand that workmen were using, but he started crying once he was halfway along the ledge anyway so I had lost respect for him and didn't care when he fell off. Thinking of these weird

intimations of the sacred too, I remember his girlfriend, who I think lived in a care home, or was bewitched, or something like that, said she had fallen off a rope swing and “almost ruptured” herself and I remember being thrilled and horrified at this word I had never heard before. What goes on in the body. But the favourite line of my childhood. I think I might have used it in almost every novel I have ever written. It was my friend Andrew, a very eccentric and phenomenally smart friend who was kind of a mad model for some of the guys in Chinese Moon, in my first novel, This Is Memorial Device, in a way, he was being picked on at school, inevitably, and he had burst into tears, and when he explained his tears afterwards, he had said that “the more intellectual amongst us also tend to be the most highly strung”. He must have been thirteen years old. Thank you, wonderful ghost of my past.

Saturday 18/4/20

TEX

An island, a suspended land mass, green, lush roots of plants carry through underneath it like worms or wormholes, dangling. As I approach what seemed to be a mountain is revealed as a camel’s hump, a very glyph-like camel. Closer still the ‘island’ becomes a stage like in the theatre with the camel dead centre. As we zoom closer in on the stage there is a lush thick purple velvet curtain, partially raised, and clipped and held up on either side by mischievous looking halfmoons. Behind the curtain I can make out a very pale sun rise, white flecked with pink rose hues and the sun too seems wormy or tentacled and would appear to be the opening itself onto yet another ‘wormhole’. I am given a word, vague – theatre, teatro, teagla, something that combines the idea of theatrical tears, like crying over a theatrical performance. A sound – a lonesome tone heard, a bell on a mountain.

I am considering my Forties tonight. So I ranked my decades:

70s 10/10

80s 8/10

90s 6/10

2000s 8/10

2010s 10/10

My Forties were as good as the 70s, in my mind, despite madness and heartache and trouble, which in the 70s there was little of, for me. Right now, and the 1970s, are my two homes. I had to cross the 90s and the early 2000s to get here. What is it that Raymond Carver writes in his “Late Fragment”? “To call myself beloved, to feel myself/beloved on the Earth.” This, exactly that.



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Caught by the River

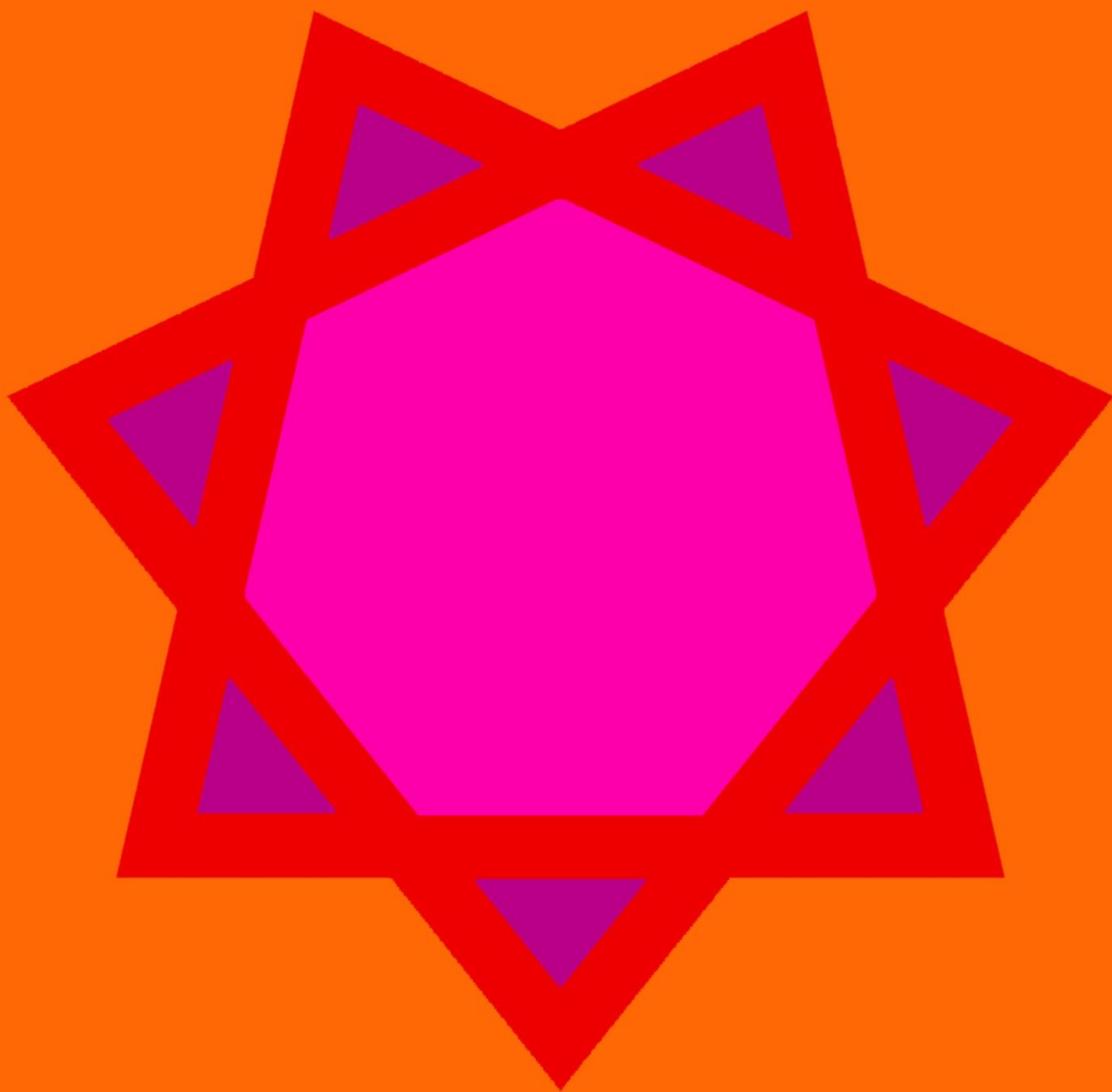


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ROCKWEAR