

CHAPTER FOUR

STRAIGHT A'S

Darling, it is so pathetic, the lengths we go to, dissembling our dislikes and our fantasies. What approach can the genius claim to exhibit her best faculties when women are barred from the gates de facto? No entrance to paradise à cause d'innate inferiority. But, may I please be so bold to ask, what are we so inferior at, and to who, forthwith, for what? I have never seen nor heard of any man capable of the daily feats of survival of the merely average female. Men are fragile in ways that women are raised to abhor in themselves.

To think, only yesterday I was lounging in a bubble bath, what a fantastic phantasmagorical thought. It will be months before I can indulge myself like that again. I can't imagine what possesses me to travel this way. What sort of hunger? An unconscious drive, Daly's wanderlust, a character flaw or a simple-minded fascination with the unknown? Well, perhaps there is no one answer, perhaps being a confirmed monotheist, I keep trying to reduce everything to the mystic comfort of oneness. I'm clearly not a reductionist merely possessed of an uncontrollable spiritual tidiness, compulsive good housekeeping.

Jacqui is a pantheist, one of those broadminded individuals who, seeing spirits everywhere, allows for independent consciousness in practically every thing. I wish you had been there to hear all she had to say, especially the things she said about men.

Oh, darling, if you could see me smiling. I am teasing you. I have not left home and been converted to first class feminism. No, but we were two sides of the same coin, different sorts of adventuresses. Her unknown territory was personal relationships, the self definition of womanhood (as opposed, I'm sure you understand, to the definitions imposed) and myself, my territory, social responsibility, the oblige of noblesse. The blindingly white lit path to enlightenment has rainbow roads various beyond human sense ability. I imagine Jacqui walks on ultra violet while I stroll along on infrared.

Isn't life grand?

And you? Your path?

Blue. The blue of heaven, the blue of ocean waters, the blue of jazz melancholy, the radiant blue of a summer's night. The blue of your eyes, the blue that makes you a hero in all men's eyes. And how grand of you to love me adventuring outside the well trod transparencies. I am filled with gratitude.

"I like movies. What religion was for my mother, movies were for me and Justina. Movie stars replaced the gods. A sample of a Hollywood pantheon -

Spencer Tracy might be Zeus; Elizabeth Taylor, Hera; Apollo, Belmondo; Athena, Bonnie Bedelia; Mercury Rooney; Venus, Brigitte Bardot or Moreau but definitely French. Movie morality replaced ethics. We believed that someday discord would magically dissolve into a fading happy end. It was our way of coping with sadness and errant emptiness, our way to get beyond despair.

"I begin the time. I was born with a knowingness and experience reconfirmed and slowly built sense into consciousness. I begin all the time. Life makes sense to me when I am driving events from the moveable logics of my understanding. I can conceive of no resolution in life beyond the sexual merging into wholeness and humility. Orgasm and birth replicate the origin of the world speeded up, all the power of original creation condense into moments and months of sensation. They are there to be known, honored. Honor origins or you will be obsessed with endings. come until coming is no longer unfamiliar but a graceful expression of your inner more soul essence. Some mystics make conscious ending their goal, but others teach conscious beginning. "Honor thy father and mother" means honor the beginning of life, the generative acts. I begin as well as end my time.

"I was very good in school. I was the second smartest girl in my class. I read a lot. I wasn't much interested in sex. I was raised in a mostly sexless household, presumably my father was doing it all over town, but not at my house and you know what I think? Now that I know more about men, quite a bit about men, actually. I think he was probably impotent most of the time. He was a drinker, a heavy drinker, whiskey with a beer chaser drinker. He wasn't connected with his emotions, he was sentimental. He was physical, not sensual. He was unaware of the tactile possibilities of relationship.

"I imagine he came quickly. He had probably been in love when he was young and got shafted. Par for the course, We all get shafted. It's a potential initiation. It's supposed to tell us to stop focusing on the person and concentrate on the acts, on the love. Maybe if I get drunk enough I can figure out how to explain what I mean. Anyway, he was crushed by something heavy. His budding sensuality froze, disappeared tight into a knot in his heart. The knot created tension. Drinking and sex were his ways of loosening his knot, his unacknowledged fear of his terminal, absolute inferiority.

"Legends varied but mostly agreed on the point that, though he conceived often, Jack rarely made love. Nevertheless in our neighborhood he was perceived as a veritable stud. Who does a Catholic man who comes too fast go to, to confess his truth to? His priest? Hardly. His wife? His lovers? His men friends? No, the situation was impossible and intolerable and yet continued down the length of his days.

"I escaped into books. The more I read, the more I knew there was to know. The more I knew, the more horrified I became. Books are generally about good and

evil, they have to be, they have to refer to something. Communication requires common reference points that make sense to people. A story, like a graph, must be plotted within constructed axes. A story will presuppose a set of values, space and time, forward and backward, creation and disintegration, good and bad. Axes are constructed according to the chosen values, this resulting graph becomes the background, referent so the writer can construct continuums. We like our plottings to make sense, to go somewhere, to have a shape of some sort. Senses work in three dimensions. Written language exists in a two dimensional field reality on the page but seven (or more) within the mentimagination. The writer's job is to interpret the world, squish it, into two dimensional forms as the most faithful to the seven (or more) as possible. Never mind that actuality is infinitely dimensional, writers dare not admit to an awareness of the dimensions they leave out lest their renderings be declared false. Representations are therefore represented as complete. When people come to believe in the two dimensional reality, life imitates art.

"Used to be no one trusted written words, everyone knew that they were partial, false, human, progeny of the few who could never be trusted anyway, the few who couldn't support themselves, perhaps not even survive without the aiding and abutment of the fewest of the few, the rich who are ever blithely compelled to benefit themselves. When written language first published itself into the arena of the actual, it was common sense to mistrust written words. Raw experience, unclaimed, unowned by any language was still familiar. Lingua franca, considered a living entity, was the common verbiage. Think of it! One language for the rich, the right, the high, the mighty, the church, the state. Another language for life, for throbbing, thriller ecstasy, thudding disenchanting pain, the glorious suspense of eating, the sensuous craving to fuck, piss, shit, sing. Then printing, popular revolutions, middle class culture, education, books, newspapers, vernacular literacy. Special interest tongues are not living tongues. They are symbolic ciphers used by self aggrandizing structures, to dig their greedy claws into fine fibered freedom, to shred spider web truths, to construct towers of concrete babble impervious to life.

"It's too late now, far, far too late, to begin again, to say, "No, this language doesn't belong to me, it is spoken for, there is no frank and honest lingua unless we can bend ourselves, our words, closer to the truth of our experiences, unless we can reclaim this land called language."

"We ain't got time for that now! Language takes centuries to evolve. How clever the few, how very clever the fewest of the few, how very, very clever we will have be to take control of our fate, to live by our own definitions, to live life and not the dry boned symbology of formal linguistically determined existence.

"I read a lot."

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