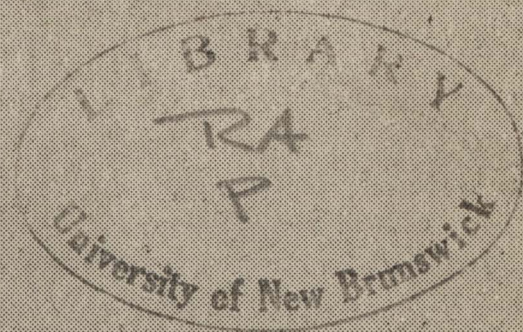


PREVIEW



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P. K. PAGE B. RUDDICK P. ANDERSON F. R. SCOTT A. M. KLEIN

AN EXPLANATORY ISSUE

SOMETIME AGO A YOUNG MAN INTERESTED IN PREVIEW, A CAPTAIN IN THE CANADIAN ARMY, ASKED US IF WE WOULD CONSIDER THE ADDITION OF SHORT EXPLANATORY PASSAGES TO THE POEMS WE PRINT. HE HAD HIMSELF FOUND IT MUCH EASIER TO UNDERSTAND WORK WITH WHOSE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE AND TECHNIQUE HE WAS UNFAMILIAR AFTER HE HAD DISCUSSED IT WITH THE POET CONCERNED. THIS SUGGESTION WAS DISCUSSED BY THE GROUP AND THE PRESENT ISSUE RESULTS FROM THAT DISCUSSION. WE ALL FELT THAT IF WE COULD MAKE IT EASIER AND PLEASANTER FOR PEOPLE TO COME TO OUR POETRY, WE SHOULD CERTAINLY DO SO. AT THE SAME TIME WE THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO STRESS THAT AN EXPLANATION OR A PARAPHRASE IS ONLY A GUIDE AND, USUALLY, A DUBIOUS ONE, TO THE POEM ITSELF. AS WE KNOW FROM OUR DAYS AT SCHOOL, NOTES AND PARAPHRASES CAN DO A GREAT DEAL OF HARM, IF TAKEN TOO SERIOUSLY.

I FEEL THAT THIS ISSUE GIVES ONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENLARGE UPON THE CENTRAL PROBLEM IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF POETRY, THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATION AND OF THE READER'S CRITICAL ATTITUDE.

A POEM IS UNPARAPHRASEABLE AND UNTRANSLATABLE. ONCE SEPARATED FROM THE POET'S EXPERIENCE, IT IS A SOVEREIGN AND AUTONOMOUS ENTITY. THE POET KNOWS THIS ONLY TOO WELL WHEN HE REALISES THAT THE POEM -- ONE KIND OF SOLUTION TO AN INNER TENSION BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS ENVIRONMENT -- IS NOT ONLY OFTEN EITHER MORE OR LESS THAN HE INTENDED BUT ALSO IS LIKELY TO BE AN ON-THE-PAPER SOLUTION OF AN EMOTIONAL CONFLICT THAT CONTINUES UNRESOLVED IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE. THE READER IS IN A SIMILAR PREDICAMENT WHEN HE DISCOVERS THE INTRANSIGENT UNEXPECTEDNESS OF THE POEM.

THUS IT IS REALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPARATE THE 'MEANING' OF A POEM FROM ITS ASSOCIATIONAL VALUES, THE AFFECTIVE CONNOTATIONS SET UP BY IMAGERY, RHYME, RYTHM AND SO ON. TO THE READER'S EXASPERATED CRY 'WHAT DOES IT MEAN?' THE ONLY COMPLETELY CORRECT ANSWER WOULD BE THE POEM ITSELF. AN APPROXIMATE MEANING CAN OF COURSE BE REACHED CRITICALLY BY A PERSON CAPABLE OF SYNTHESISING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPULSES AROUSED BY THE WHOLE CONTENT. BUT MOST READERS ARE INCLINED TO LET THEIR COMMENT BE YEA OR NAY: 'I LIKE IT' OR 'I DON'T LIKE IT'. IN VIEW OF THIS, THE READER SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO BE SUSCEPTIBLE OVER AS WIDE A RANGE AS POSSIBLE TO THE CONNOTATIONS. WHILE IT IS INEVITABLE THAT HE SHOULD, ESPECIALLY IN THIS POLITICAL AGE, BE STILL ANXIOUS ABOUT MEANING, IT IS DESIRABLE THAT HE KEEP THIS HUNGER OF HIS RELATIVELY IN THE BACKGROUND, ESPECIALLY ON THE IMPORTANT FIRST READING. BY ATTEMPTING TO ENJOY THE POEM, AS HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO ENJOY MUSIC OR PAINTING, HE WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO LAY HIMSELF OPEN TO A GREATER TOTALITY OF MEANING THAN IF HE ANGRILY SUSPECTS THE POEM OF BEING OBSCURE. HE WILL THEN BE ABLE TO APPLY HIS PARTICULAR, AND MAYBE POLITICAL, STANDARDS.

THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEM OF POETRY IS THAT, UNLIKE MUSIC FOR INSTANCE, IT IS CAUGHT IN AN INEXORABLE DIALECTIC BETWEEN THE WIDEST VISTAS OF EMOTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND THE DENOTATIVE FUNCTION OF WORDS, THEIR LOGIC OF GRAMMATICAL PROGRESSION. A POEM BY MALLARMÉ OR VALÉRY TRIES TO BE ALL MUSIC: A POEM OF POPE'S OR OF SOME OTHER POINTED AND EPIGRAMMATIC WRITER TENDS TO BE PREDOM-

INANTLY EXPLICIT. BOTH ARE POETRY: DRYDEN IS AS MUCH A POET AS THE AUTHOR OF 'JABBERWOCKY': BETWEEN THESE POLES LIES THE MAJORITY OF CREATIVE VERSE. ONE CAN JUDGE IT SATISFACTORILY ONLY WHEN ONE HAS EXPERIENCED IT, OR AT LEAST MADE A GENUINE ATTEMPT TO DO SO.

A POEM APPEALS PRIMARILY TO THE EMOTIONS. UNFORTUNATELY WE MOST OF US POSSESS LARGE AREAS OF FACILE EMOTION WHICH ARE PROMPTED INTO ACTIVITY, JUST AS THE ADRENAL GLANDS ARE IN TIMES OF FEAR, BY ANY REFERENCE TO CERTAIN STOCK SUBJECTS SUCH AS GOD, MOTHER, SUNSET, ETCETERA AND SO ON, TOWARDS THE MORE SOPHISTICATED TEAR-JERKERS. BAD POETS HAVE UNSCRUPULOUSLY EXPLOITED OUR TENDENCY TO PREFER THE STOCK RESPONSE TO THE MORE UNFAMILIAR AND MORE SELF REVEALING RESPONSES. ONE IS REMINDED THAT ONLY GOD CAN MAKE A TREE AND THAT, OF GARDENS, 'TIS VERY SURE GOD WALKS IN MINE: ONE REMEMBERS TOO CERTAIN QUAINTESSSES AND CUTENESSES OF RHYME AND EXPRESSION WHICH HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED IN THE SAME NEFARIOUS CAUSE. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SCALE, THE READER MUST BEWARE OF THE GROUP RESPONSE AND THE VAGUE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXCITEMENTS. A HOMOSEXUAL PROBABLY ENJOYS WILDE'S 'CHARMIDES', A LEFTIST MAY THRILL TO A BAD POEM SIMPLY BECAUSE ITS SUBJECT IS A SYMPATHETIC ONE TO HIM. OTHERS WILL FEEL A VAGUE FASCINATION IN THE MOST AUTOMATIC KIND OF SURREALIST VERSE. THESE RESPONSES, OBVIOUSLY OF A SPECIAL CHARACTER, ARE NATURALLY TO BE CONSIDERED SUSPECT.

PERHAPS I CAN HERE, AT THE RISK OF STICKING MY NECK OUT, SUGGEST CERTAIN AIDS TO THE APPRECIATION OF MODERN POETRY, BASED ON WHAT I HAVE SAID ABOVE. I DO SO IN THE BELIEF THAT AT LEAST A LARGE SEGMENT OF BAD POEMS ARE EASILY DETECTED AND THAT THERE IS A GENUINE DESIRE ON THE PART OF MOST READERS TO ENJOY GOOD WORK. HERE ARE THE QUESTIONS I WOULD SUGGEST THAT READERS ASK THEMSELVES ...

1. IS THE LANGUAGE VITAL AND ORIGINAL? ARE THE EPITHETS AND IMAGES EXACT AND FRESH WITHOUT BEING FORCED OR OVEREXOTIC FOR THE GENERAL COHERENCE OF THE SUBJECT? IS THE POEM EMOTIONAL^{ly} EVOCATIVE? IF THE POEM PASSES THIS TEST YOU CAN SAY THAT YOU HAVE AT LEAST THE MAKINGS OF A GOOD POEM.

2. DOES THE POEM HANG TOGETHER? DOES IT SEEM TO SPRING FROM A GENUINE EXPERIENCE? IS ITS DEVELOPMENT COHERENT, SO THAT IT SEEMS TO BE ALL OF ONE PIECE? DOES IT THROW NEW LIGHT UPON THE MATTER IT TREATS? IF THE ANSWER TO ALL THESE QUESTIONS IS YES, THEN YOU CAN SAFELY SAY YOU ARE FACED WITH A GOOD POEM.

3. DOES THE POEM SHOW A GENERAL AWARENESS OF LIFE AND OF ITS PROBLEMS? DOES IT HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT DESCRIBES WITHIN A GENERAL SYSTEM OF RELATIONSHIPS? HERE WE ARE ON MORE DUBIOUS GROUND, OF COURSE.

4. HOW DOES THE POEM TIE IN WITH OTHER POEMS BY THE SAME AUTHOR? WHAT ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION DO YOU GET FROM HIS WORK AS A WHOLE - FROM THE RANGE OF HIS SUBJECTS AND THE DEGREE OF GENERAL UNDERSTANDING HE SHOWS? THIS, LIKE THE PRECEDING POINT, IS LESS EASY TO ESTABLISH EXACTLY BUT ONE CAN BE PRETTY SURE THAT POINTS THREE AND FOUR, OR OTHERS LIKE THEM, MAKE THE BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MINOR AND/OR OCCASIONALLY GOOD POET AND THE GREAT MASTER.

BETWEEN, SHALL WE SAY, THE POET OF RESTRICTED RANGE AND THE POET OF WIDE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

TO SUM UP: I BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE GOOD POETS IN CANADA AND I BELIEVE THAT THE POET HAS A REAL FUNCTION TO PLAY IN OUR SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY WHEN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS IS GETTING AHEAD OF CULTURAL AND 'SPIRITUAL' DEVELOPMENT. I THINK THAT THIS IS OBVIOUS WHEN WE REFLECT THAT FORCES WHICH ARE PROGRESSIVE POLITICALLY ARE SOMETIMES LITTLE MORE THAN REACTIONARY CULTURALLY. WHETHER WE DEFINE THE ROLE OF THE POET AS BEING TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INDIVIDUAL OR TO BUILD UP A RICH ASSOCIATIONAL BACKGROUND FOR OUR INCREASINGLY COLLECTIVE AGE OR SIMPLY AS A MEANS FOR INTERESTING THE MIDDLE-CLASS IN SOCIAL CHANGE, OR ALL THESE THINGS AND MORE, I FEEL THAT HE HAS AN IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY. HE CAN BE A HUMANIST LEADER OF THE MODERN MOVEMENT.

BUT THIS CAN ONLY HAPPEN IF HE HAS AN AUDIENCE, IF HE IS USED. IT IS IN THE HOPE THAT WE MAY PROMOTE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OUR POETS AND OUR READERS THAT WE PUBLISH THIS EXPLANATORY ISSUE OF OUR MAGAZINE.

P.A.

MONTREAL

A.M. KLEIN

(. . . SUITING LANGUAGE TO THEME, THE FOLLOWING VERSE, - AS WILL BE NOTED, IS WRITTEN IN A VOCABULARY WHICH IS NOT EXACTLY ORTHODOX ENGLISH. IT IS WRITTEN SO THAT ANY ENGLISHMAN WHO KNOWS NO FRENCH, AND ANY FRENCHMAN WHO KNOWS NO ENGLISH (SAVE PREPOSITIONS - THE PANTOMINE OF INFLECTION) CAN READ IT INTELLIGENTLY. IT CONTAINS NOT A WORD, SUBSTANTIVE, ADJECTIVAL, OR OPERATIVE, WHICH IS NOT EITHER SIMILAR TO, DERIVATIVE FROM, OR AKIN TO A FRENCH WORD OF LIKE IMPORT; IN SHORT, A BILINGUAL POEM. A.M.K. . .)

I

O CITY METROPOLE, ISLE RIVERAIN!
YOUR ANCIENT PAVAGES AND SAINTED ROUTS
TRAVERSE MY SPIRIT'S CONJURED AVENUES!
SPLENDOR ERABLIC OF YOUR PROMENADES
FOLIATES THERE, AND THERE YOUR MAISONRY
OF PENDENT BALCON AND ESCALIER'D MARCH,
UNIQUE MIDST ENGLISH HABITAT,
IS VIVID NORMANDY!

II

YOU POPULATE THE PUPILS OF MY EYES:
THUS, DOES THE INDIAN, PLUMÉD, FURTIVATE
STILL THROUGH YOUR PAINTED AUTUMNS, VILLE-MARIE!

II

THOUGH PALISADES HAVE PASSED, THOUGH CALUMET
WITH TABAC OF YOUR PEACE ENFUMES THE AIR,
STILL DO I SPY THE PHANTOM, AQUILINE,
GENUFLECT, MOCCASIN'D, BEHIND
HIS STATUE IN THE SQUARE!

III

THUS, COSTUMED IMAGES BEFORE ME PASS,
HAUNTING YOUR ARCHIVES ARCHITECTURAL:
COUREUR DE BOIS, IN POSTS WHERE PELTS WERE PORTAGED;
SEIGNEUR WITHIN HIS CANDLED MANOIR; SCOT
AMBULANT THROUGH HIS BANK, PILLAR'D AND VAST.
WITHIN YOUR CHAPELS, VOYAGED MARINERS
STILL PRAY, AND PERSONAGE DEPARTED
ALL PRESENT FROM YOUR PAST!

IV

GRAND PORT OF NAVIGATIONS, MULTIPLE
THE LEXICONS UNCARGO'D AT YOUR QUAYS,
SONNANT THOUGH STRANGE TO ME; BUT CHIEFEST, I,
AUDITOR OF YOUR MUSIC, CHERISH THE
JOINED DOUBLE-MELODIED VOCABULAIRE
WHERE ENGLISH VOCABLE AND ROLL ECOSSIC,
MOLLIFIED BY THE PARLE OF FRENCH
BILINGUEFACT YOUR AIR!

V

SUCH YOUR SUAVER VOICE, O HOCHELAGA!
BUT FOR ME ALSO SOUND YOUR POTENCIES,
FORTISSIMOS OF SIRENS FLUVIAL,
BRUIT OF MANUFACTORY, TONNERRE
FRAPPANT FROM FOUNDRY, ALL PUISSANT TONE
IMPLENISHING YOUR HEBDOMAD; AND THEN
SANCT SILENCE, AND YOUR ARGENT BELFRIES
CLAMANT IN ORISON!

MONTREAL

A.M. KLEIN

VI

YOU ARE A PART OF ME, O ALL YOUR QUARTIERS -
AND OF DIRE PAUVRETÉ AND OF RICHESSE -
TO FINISHED TIME MY HOMAGE LOYAL CLAIM;
YOU ARE LOCALE OF ENFANCY, MILIEU
VITAL OF INSTITUTES THAT FORMED MY FATE;
AND YOU ABOVE THE CITY, SCINTILLANT,
MOUNT ROYAL, ARE MY SPIRIT'S MOTHER,
ALMATIVE, POITRINATE!

VII

NEVER DO I SOJOURN IN ALIEN PLACE
BUT I DO LANGUISH FOR YOUR SCENES AND SOUNDS,
CITY OF REVERIE, NOSTALGIC ISLE,
PENDANT MOST BRILLIANT ON LAURENTIAN CORDE!
THE COIGNS OF YOUR BOULEVARDS - MY SIGNIORY;
YOUR SUBURBS ARE MY EXILE'S VERDURE FRESH,
YOUR PARKS, YOUR FOUNTAIN'D PARKS -
PASTURE OF MEMORY!

VIII

CITY, O CITY, YOU ARE VISION'D AS
A PARCHEMIN ROLL OF SAECULAR EXPLOIT
INKED WITH THE SCRIPT OF ETERNE SOUVENIR!
YOU ARE IN SOUND, CHANSON AND INSTRUMENT!
MENTAL, YOU REST FOREVER EDIFIED
WITH TOWER AND DOME; AND IN THESE BEATING VALVES,
HERE IN THESE BEATING VALVES, YOU WILL
FOR ALL MY MORTAL TIME RESIDE!

TWO POEMS

F.R. SCOTT

(. . . ONE ASSOCIATES PRECISION OF STATEMENT AND EPIGRAMMATIC BREVITY AND WIT WITH THE POEMS OF F.R. SCOTT. WHILE THE FOLLOWING TWO POEMS ARE PERFECTLY EXPLICIT, THEY REVEAL AN EMOTIONAL DEPTH AND CONCERN WITH SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE WHICH HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN PRESENT IN SCOTT'S VERSE. WINDFALL HAS SEVERAL INTERESTING AND EVOCATIVE PHRASES: 'CONTAGION OF THE SUN', 'VEINS STIFF WITH SHOW'. NOTICE ALSO THE VARIATIONS OF THE 'O' SOUND IN 'GROWN' AND 'TORN' AND THE ECHOING 'NOW' AND 'STONE'. THE SECOND POEM, BEDSIDE, LEADS UP TO THE CONCLUDING LINE, EXPRESSIVE OF THE DISINTEGRATION OF A FAMILY: 'AND FIVE NO LONGER INTEGRAL DEPARTED'. P.A. .)

WINDFALL

UNTIL THIS POEM IS OVER, I SHALL NOT LEAVE
THIS LEAF, HELD LIKE THE HEARTACHE IN MY HAND,
FALLEN FROM BRAVE CONTAGION OF THE SUN
FALLEN FROM BRANCHES WOUNDED BY A WIND
AND RESTING, NOW, AS GREEN AS WHEN IT FLEW
WITH SAP IN THE STALK AND VEINS STIFF WITH SHOW.

ANY SMALL COMPLETE AND PERFECT THING
CUT OFF FROM WHOLENESS IS MY HEART'S SUFFERING.
THIS SEPARATE PART OF SOMETHING GROWN AND TORN
IS MY HEART'S IMAGE THAT NOW FALLS ON STONE.

THIS IS A LEAF I TALK TO AS A LOVER
AND LAY DOWN GENTLY NOW MY POEM IS OVER.

BEDSIDE

IN JUNE I SAW THE WITHERING OF MY MOTHER.
OH TREES LIKE TEARS, OH FELLOWSHIP OF STONE!
WE MOVED AS ONE AND STARED INTO OUR HEARTS
TILL NIGHT'S LAST ROUND AND MIDNIGHT'S COURTESY
WAS KERCHIEF TO OUR EYES, WHO FOUND NO OTHER.

OUR SILENT STRENGTH NO HELP IN THIS ASSAULT
WE WATCHED HER TIME CREEP CLOSER BY THE HOUR,
AND EVERY LENGTHENED INTAKE, EACH RETURN,
BROUGHT BACK SOME TENDER MOMENT OF HER SUCCOUR.
EACH ONE OF US WAS HERS, AND NONE HIS OWN.

THE ROOT WHEREIN WE JOINED AT LAST UPROOTED
WE LINGERED, REACHING IN OUR SHALLOWER SOIL.
WHAT CAME BEFORE SEEMED NOW BY TIME INVERTED,
THE GROUND I TROD WAS ALL MY FORMER HOME.

AND FIVE NO LONGER INTEGRAL DEPARTED.

WINTER IN MONTREAL

PATRICK ANDERSON

(. . . IN THIS POEM I HAVE TRIED TO EXPRESS A SOCIAL STATEMENT ABOUT CANADA IN TERMS THAT ALLOW MY ESSENTIALLY EMOTIONAL AND ROMANTIC NATURE FREE PLAY. WINTER POSSESSES FOR ME SEVERAL POWERFUL SYMBOLISMS: I SEE IT AS A SORT OF EMBODIMENT OF THE INNER LIFE: IT BRINGS A MYSTERIOUS PEACE AND BEAUTY, A SUSPENSION OF ORDINARY HABITS - THE STORM-WINDOWS ARE SHUT, THE WAR-TRAFFIC IS BANISHED FROM THE RIVER, SKIERS GO UP TO THE MOUNTAINS TO PRACTISE THEIR SECRET AND DANGEROUS IDYLLS. BUT THIS EQUILIBRIUM, THIS CULT OF SKIING OR CHRISTMAS, IS REALLY ILLUSORY. IT IS FULL TOO OF A LONELY VIOLENCE. AND IN THE VIOLENCE OF WINTER ONE CANNOT HELP THINKING OF HOW A REAL CHANGE MIGHT DEVELOP FROM THE TEMPORARY, BUT STILL BEAUTIFUL, CHANGE BROUGHT UPON THE WORLD BY ICE AND SNOW. OR, IN TERMS OF THE INNER LIFE, FROM THE FRUSTRATIONS AND EXCITEMENTS OF A ROMANTIC CONSCIOUSNESS. I HAVE WRITTEN A NUMBER OF POEMS ON SIMILAR THEMES, SOME DERIDING THE SNOW AS FALSE PEACE AND SIMPLIFICATION, OTHERS CELEBRATING IT AND THE SPORTS THAT GO WITH IT AS A PRE-FIGURATION OF SOCIAL CHANGE. . .)

GOING HOME ONE NIGHT THROUGH THE FROZEN FALL
I KICKED A KETTLE OF ICE ON THE LONELY STREET,
SCAMPERED A BLACK CAT DOWN THE DRIFTS OF AN ALLEY
WHERE SHADOW WAS SHOT A PICASSO WAS CANTERING:
THE WIND CAME SLIDING UP WITH NO THROUGH A ZERO
AND OVER THE RAW-RED PARLOURS, ORNATE AS WOUNDS,
THE IODINE BLINDS DREW DOWN IN A TOUGH IMPASTO.

ONE DAY I WOKE AND TOOK THE MILK LIKE A FLOWER
PROTRUDING ITS FROZEN NECK ON THE OUTDOOR STEPS
AND A POLE FROM MY BATTERED SKIS THAT WERE STACKED IN THE HALL
AND BEGAN TO JAB FURIOUSLY AT A WONDERFUL CRYSTAL
CHANDELIER THAT HAD GROWN DOWN FROM THE ROOF IN THE NIGHT,
A THEATRICAL PIECE OF ICE,

AND THE NEXT DAY IT HAD GROWN AGAIN TO GLISTEN
EXACTLY AS BEFORE, AND A FUNGOID MIRROR
HAD SEALED THE GARBAGE CAN TO THE BALCONY FLOOR.
O WHEN SHALL WE BE FREE OF THE WINTER PALACE?
ARMORIAL IN AIR MY BREATH WAS PLANTAGENET
AND MY HEELS WERE SPURRED.

AND, CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN, I SAW IN A BIRD'S EYE VIEW
THE CITY BELOW WITH ITS WAY OF A PHOTOGRAPH
ITS IRON WOOD BRICK BUT NEVER QUITE REAL TONES -
I HAD NOT THOUGHT SUCH SILVER IN STATISTICS
COULD PLAY SUCH A TRICK IN THE MIST. AROUND ME THE SKIERS
RUSHED SILENTLY. THE SNOW LIKE CHLOROFORM
MASKED MY FACE. AND I TURNED TO ONE

WINTER IN MONTREAL

PATRICK ANDERSON

OF THE SKIERS WHOSE NERVOUS CURVE NEATLY MISSED ME
 AND SAW HIS HEART SPREAD OUT IN A FLUTTERING TARTAN
 AT THE DELICATE PLEASURES WHICH HE WAS SUFFERING
 AND I SAID: CAN YOU TELL ME? IS THIS CANADIAN,
 TO SKI- I MEAN, TO DARE SO SILENTLY
 WITH NOTHING IN FRONT AND BLUE BEHIND LIKE A RAILWAY?
 I WAITED FOR HIS ANSWER BUT IT WAS
 WAFTED AWAY IN THIS SANITARIUM SNOW
 WHERE THE SKIERS FLUSHED LIKE THE HECTIC TUBERCULAR
 SCHUSSED DOWN THE FEVER OF THEIR FEATHERY PILLOW.

AND AFTERWARDS ON THE RINKS BOYS MASHED THEIR STICKS
 IN THE VIVID COLOURS OF THEIR AWKWARD AGE
 WITH D'ARCY-M'GEE AND LOYOLA OVER THEIR BREASTS
 KNOTS ON THEIR KNEES BUNCHES OF LUMPS ON THEIR SHOULDERS
 AND ON THEIR LOINS A STRAP AND A CODPIECE-
 IN THE EXTREME RABBLE OF THEIR BEING SUSPENDED
 WITHIN THE MIRROR OF THEIR GAME AND THEIR YOUTH I GLIDED

AMONGST THEM WITH A WHISTLE IN MY HAND
 AND WATCHED THEM LONG AND HALTERED, ALL SHOULDER AND HIP,
 TRIP AND GO DOWN BY THE BOARDS, SILVERING THEIR SIDES,
 SLITHERING THEIR THICKSET HAIR. THEIR FACES FIERCE,
 OVER THE ICE THEIR CHEEKS AND STOCKINGS SLIPPED
 AND CHEWING GUM THEY ROSE CURSING INDIFFERENT.
 IN THE CLIMATE OF A MIRROR THEY MOVED AND MASSED
 AND MASHED THEIR STICKS IN A SEASON OF FROZEN MIST.

IN THIS SWAN NECK OF THE WOODS, THESE CRYSTAL STICKS,
 A HICK TOWN, ICICLE THICK, SUCH FROZEN BUMPKINS
 KNOCKABOUT BOYS, KNOBBLY WITH SEX, FLICK THEIR BLACK
 PUCK IN THE NET. BUT I MORALISE
 ON THE RIOTOUS QUIET THAT MAKES THE COLONY:
 THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE CAPITALISTS' CRYSTAL
 SURGE LIKE A REVOLUTIONARY FUTURE ABOUT ME.

THE DOUBLE WINDOWS CLOSED UPON JANUARY
 I HEAR THE DECREPIT MOVEMENT OF THIS TIME
 CREPITATE WITH ICE AND CREEP WITH SHADOW,
 PRECIPITATE DUST AND FROST IN MY ROOM.
 I HEAR THE SKINNY WIND IN THE CHIMNEY SLIGHTLY
 MOANING ALL NIGHT. I WONDER WHAT WILL COME-
 WHAT COMES WITH A LIMPING STRIDE IS FEBRUARY

AND ON MY PANE A PRISM BURNS IN THE FERN
 THE FROST HAS MADE, A WIND BEGINS TO GNAW
 AT AN IVORY TOWER AS IF IT HAD FOUND A BONE
 AND IN THE SUSPENSION OF THE HOUR THAT IS
 NOT REALLY SO IMMOBILE AT ALL, I HEAR
 ORTONA, ANZIO AND THE BOMBING OF ROME!

WINTER IN MONTREAL

PATRICK ANDERSON

IN THE ROUTINE OF SNOW AND THE DREAMING SEASON
 I HEAR THE AVALANCHE FALL FROM THE VILLA ROOF
 LIKE THE PLUSH OF A CRASH IN SLEEP'S DEBILITY
 OR BERLIN DYING, THE GLOVED AND FEMALE GASH
 OF A GREAT WOUND GLIDING INTO A SOLDIER'S BODY--
 A CRUMPLED THUNDER AND FAINTNESS SO FAR AWAY
 THAT THE LISTENER DOES NOT STIR NOR THE SKIER WAKE
 NOR I, NOR I DROWSING UPON THIS POEM
 WHICH PUNS AND PURRS IN THE GAP THE ARMIES MAKE.

THE DEMAGOGUE

BRUCE RUDDICK

(. . . THIS POEM ATTEMPTS TO SAY SOMETHING WITH THE ECONOMY SOUND AND IMAGERY OF POETRY. IT SEEMS OBSCURE MAINLY BECAUSE IT ATTEMPTS TO SAY A LOT BY GIVING A SPECIFIC PICTURE WHICH IMPLIES SIGNIFICANT GENERALIZATIONS. I WROTE IT AS IT IS AND CAN MAKE NO EXCUSES FOR IT. HOWEVER, SINCE I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO EXPLAIN IT, I DO SO IN THE HOPE THAT SUCH EXPLANATION MAY HELP THE READER TO UNDERSTAND OTHER 'POETRY OF IMPLICATION'.

THE demagogue ACTS IN MANY WAYS. HE MAY ACTUALLY PLAY UPON AND FOSTER PREJUDICES BY USING THE TWISTED LOGIC OF THE EMOTIONS. OR HE MAY CONTROL THE MEDIA THROUGH WHICH PREJUDICES ARE ATTACKED.

THE EXTERNAL EARS HERE ARE TAKEN AS A SYMBOL OF THE SENSES THROUGH WHICH WE PERCEIVE WHAT WE LIKE TO CALL 'TRUTH'. ANY LIMITATION OF INTERNATIONAL ('THE RUNNELLING WORLD') OR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IS AN AID TO PREJUDICE.

WHEN ANY ACCEPTED HUMAN LIBERTY IS LOST THERE IS A REACTION 'DUMB, LAVISH WITH BLOOD, ANTICIPATING THE NEURAL TERROR'. BUT, AFTER THE SHOCK HAS WORN OFF, THE HUMAN MECHANISM ACCOMMODATES ITSELF 'GENERAL, UNALARMING'. HERE LIES THE DANGER, BECAUSE THE VULNERABILITY IS INCREASED. THE 'FROCK MAN OR FRIEND' APPEARS AND BY DEMAGOGUERY FURTHER CONTROLS HIS AUDIENCE.

THE ABACUS IS A COUNTING MACHINE STRUNG WITH BEADS (I.E. HUMAN INDIVIDUALS) WHO CAN BE SHIFTED 'TO HIS SCORE AND POWER'.

WITH HIS SCIMITAR LOGIC HE PRUNED THEIR EARS
 LOOPED THEY FELL LIKE LILLIES TURNED TO TOADS.
 'PEACE' HE SAID. 'NOW THE RUNNELLING WORLD
 WILL NOT WHIRL RAUCOUSLY TO THE NERVE'.
 THEN, WIDE-EYED THEY STOOD AND DUMB, LAVISH WITH BLOOD,
 DISORDERED,
 ANTICIPATING THE NEURAL TERROR.

THE DEMAGOGUE

BRUCE RUDDICK

LATER, THE STUMPS WERE UNALARMING, GENERAL AND
NUMB.

HA, HE THOUGHT, PROPERLY SET AND MARKED
FOR TRANSFIXING WITH ABACUS-WIRE --
'TAKE EASE NOW KNOWING MY AID AND AIM.
'I AM YOUR FROCK MAN, YOUR FRIEND.' --
ALREADY SHIFTING FIGURES TO HIS SCORE AND POWER.

CHILDREN

P.K. PAGE

MORE THAN DISCOVERING FOR THE FIRST TIME, THEY RENEW
AN ACQUAINTANCESHIP WITH ALL THINGS AS WITH FLOWERS THEY SAW IN DREAMS.

AND, DELICATE AS A SKETCH WHICH THEY HAVE MADE, THROUGH BEING,
THEY MERGE IN A SINGULAR WAY WITH THEIR OWN THOUGHTS,
DRAWING AN ARABESQUE WITH A SPOON OR FORK
CASUALLY ON THE AIR BEHIND THEIR SHOULDERS,
OR TALK IN A CONFIDENTIAL TONE AS IF
THEIR OWN EARS HELD THE HEARING OF ANOTHER.

LEGS IN THE DANCE GO UP AS THOUGH ON STRINGS
PULLED BY THEIR INDIFFERENT WANTON HANDS

WHILE ANGER BLOWS INTO THEM AND THROUGH THEIR MUSLIN
EASILY AS SAND OR WIND.

OLDER THEY BECOME ROUND AND HARD, DEMAND
SHAPES THAT ARE REAL, CASTLES UPON THE SHORE
AND ALL THE LINES AND ANGLES OF TRADITION
ARE MUSTERED BY THEM IN THEIR EAGERNESS
TO BECOME WHOLE, FIT THEMSELVES TO THE THING
THEY SEE OUTSIDE THEM,
WHILE THE THING THEY LEFT
LIES LIKE A CAUL IN SOME ABANDONED PLACE,
UNREMEMBERED BY FINGERS OR THE INCREDIBLY BRIGHT
STONES, WHICH FOR A TIME, REPLACE THEIR EYES.

FIELD TACTICS

WM. McCONNELL

JENKINS WAS THE SHORT-NECKED FORMER CLERK. ROANTREE WAS THE STRIPE-SUITED SODA-JERK. AND KNOPF WAS THE SIBILANT-VOICED SCHOOL-TEACHER. THREE ROUNDED CHARACTERS UNSUITABLY BELLICOSED INTO FAIR-FITTING KHAKI. THE PART OF FIFTY OTHER CHARACTERS UNKNOWN EXCEPT BY CURSE, ROBUST LARKING, SYNTHETIC GRUMBLING; THE PART OF A GROUP COM-PRESSING ENTITLED DISCIPLINE, COMPLETED TRAINING, SUCCESSFUL INSTRUCTION.

THE GROUP TALK HAD OOZED FROM THEIR TONGUES TO THEIR RHYTHMED FEET, THERE TO DAMP THEIR SOCKS AS PERSPIRATION. ONLY THE OVERHEAD FLIGHT OF A V OF P-40, OR THE QUICK SPLASHING-BY OF A CIVILIAN CAR, OR THE CHANGE OF VOICE-KEY OF THE SERGEANT'S "PICK-IT-UP....LEFT....LEFT....PICK-IT-UP, PICK-IT-UP....LEFT," OR THE PROSPECT OF THE TEN-MINUTE SPELLOUT FOR SMOKE, EASING OF STRAPS, JOCLARED HORSEPLAY, SLOPPED MOPING OF HOME AND ETCETERA (FOR THOUGHTS OF UNIFORMS MAY BE MOLDED, BUT NEVER JELLED INTO A PATTERN EASY TO SAY).

AND THE SCENE? ONE OF THOSE LATE-OCTOBER DAYS WHICH ARE COLOURED LIKE THE SURFACE OF A DAYOLD CUT APPLE; NOT YET WRINKLED INTO THE COLDNESS OF WINTER, NOR RETAINING THE SPICY AWARENESS OF EARLY AUTUMN. NOVEMBER, THEN, WITH SUFFICIENT ABRASIVE COLD FOR EACH BODY TO CHILL ITSELF IN A SLIGHT ORGASMIC SWEAT WHICH ENNUIED. WITH A PLUM-COLOURED FIELD TO THE RIGHT, AND ON THE LEFT A WELL-SCRUBBED BLUFF, ANCHORING THE HIGHER PINE-WOODS ABOVE THE TERRACED ROAD. A DAY MIGHT HAVE BEEN FOR SNIPE OR GROUSE OR FEATHER COLOURED PHEASANT ROUSED FROM APPREHENSIVE REST IN TUSSOCK OR BRUSH. TO JENKINS A DAY SLIGHTLY REMINISCENT OF YEAR-END BALANCE. TO ROANTREE THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN MILK-SHAKE AND HOT CHOCOLATE WITH RED MITTS AND JACKETS ON THE FULL-BOTTOMED GIRLS OF THE CORNER SCHOOL. AND TO LETHARGIC KNOPF, A DIM REMINISCENCE OF THE DAYS HE GALLOPED ACROSS FIELD AND PRAIRIE WITH GENGHIS KHAN LAMB. TO EACH OF THE FIFTY (SPACE FORBIDS) A PERCEPTION OF WINE, BLAZING FIREPLACE, OR PERHAPS CLEAN WINDOW-PANES LOOKING OUT OVER THE CORNER FOOTBALL LOT.

THEY HALTED AND COLLECTED ABOUT MR. MORE, THE QUIET LIEUTENANT, AND THE EAGER SERGEANT. AN EXPLANATION OF EXERCISES. "YOU SEE HOW THIS BLUFF COMMANDS THE ROAD? AND SUPPOSING, SUPPOSING, A MORTAR SECTION WERE UP THERE NOW. UP AHEAD, THREE HUNDRED YARDS, BEYOND THE BEND. YOU KNOW THEY'RE THERE. A SCOUT CAR RAN SLAM-BANG INTO THE TRAP. NOTHING IN FORCE. A SUICIDE SQUAD, LEFT TO BADGER YOUR ADVANCE FOR AWHILE. SERGEANT! WHAT WOULD YOU DO? NO, I KNOW YOU KNOW. WHAT ABOUT SOME OF YOU OTHER MEN? WHAT IF YOU WERE ON YOUR OWN? JENKINS. KNOPF. AND YOU, ROANTREE."

"SIR! SIR! SIR!"

"YES, NOW. WHAT WOULD YOU CHAPS DO? NO, DON'T TELL ME. THE REST OF YOU MEN DEPLOY ALONG THE FIELD BELOW AND ADVANCE SLOWLY. CORPORAL, STAY HERE WITH ME AND OBSERVE."

FIELD TACTICS

Wm. McCONNELL

"WHAT WOULD I DO?" ASKS ROANTREE TO HIMSELF. "HELL! I COULD CREEP UP ALONG THAT RIDGE SO QUIETLY THEY WOULDN'T KNOW THERE WAS ANYONE AROUND FOR MILES. BUT FOR THESE OTHER DOPES. THEY'D SURE CUT IN MY TIME. HEY, KEEP DOWN FOR CHRI'S SAKE, KNOFF. YOUR FAT REAR-END WOULD'VE BEEN PERFORATED FIVE MINUTES AGO."

"WHAT WOULD I DO?" ASKS KNOFF. "BEAT FURTHER OVER THAN THIS AND THEN CREEP BACK ON THEIR REAR. AN ELEMENTARY TACTIC. WHY COULDN'T MR. MORE ASSIGN ONE OF US, ME, TO DECIDE AND ORDER THE OTHERS TO FOLLOW. NOW THAT FOOL IS HOLLERING LOUD ENOUGH FOR ANYONE TO HEAR." HE HISSED FOR ROANTREE TO BE QUIET AND HUGGED THE COLD EARTH TO HIS FATIGUE JACKET, FEELING THE BUTTONS CATCHING AND TWISTING TOUGH VINES.

AND JENKINS CREPT FORWARD MECHANICALLY, NOT RAISING HIS HEAD TILL OBSTACLES WERE MET. A BEETLE SCURRIED BY HIS WHITE PAWING HANDS. SUCH DELICATE GREENS AND BLUES. WAS IT ACTUALLY A BEETLE, OR SOME BEHEMOTH TANK CRUMBLING THE GRASS-STOCKED JUNGLE, EAGER TO MAKE RENDEZVOUS WITH THE COMPANY IN THE CLEARING BEYOND. HIS FINGERS CAUGHT IT, FLIPPED IT INTO AIR, AND HE RESUMED HIS PATIENT, INTERESTING PROGRESS. NOW DOWN A SLOPE, OH SO SLIGHT, AND DAMPNESS TRICKLING HIS STOMACH. NOW UP THE SLOPE, BUT OVER ON HIS SIDE. WHERE WERE THE OTHERS? NEAR?

SO THE THREE CANKERED THE WAY TWO HUNDRED YARDS, WITHOUT CONTACT, YET NEAR ENOUGH NOT TO WARRANT SURPRISE WHEN THEY BURGEONED INTO ONE APPROACHING FORM. "SPREAD OUT!" HISSED KNOFF. "SURE, SURE," REPLIED JENKINS, AND A SNOTTY GLARE FROM ROANTREE. BUT THEY SPREAD OUT AND ADVANCED.

TWO HUNDRED YARDS. WAS IT A GAME? WAS IT A GAME WITH ONE HUNDRED YARDS TO GO? PERHAPS THEY WERE TOO CLOSE. ROANTREE STRUCK OFF, DEEPER INTO THE WOODS. JENKINS FORGOT HIS WET SHIRT, HUGGED THE GROUND STILL CLOSER, AND WORRIEDLY LISTENED FOR SOUNDS OF BREATHING FROM HIS MONOTONOUS-VOICED CHEST. KNOFF THOUGHT OF SIGNALLING TO HIS COMPANIONS, BUT DID NOT DARE. THEY WERE TOO CLOSE NOW. EVEN A LOW WHISTLE WOULD GIVE THEM AWAY. HE FELT AGAIN THE NEED TO CIRCLE THE POSITION AND TAKE IT FROM THE REAR. HE FOLLOWED ROANTREE'S MANOEUVRE AND CHANGED HIS COURSE. ONLY JENKINS CRAWLED DIRECTLY ON, UNSEEING, LIKE SOME BUG WHICH KNOWS BUT ONE DIRECTION, THE SHORTEST, TO FINISH HIS JOURNEY. THEY INCHED ALONG. FIFTY YARDS.

AND TWENTY-FIVE. THE REPETITION OF LECTURES SEEPED THROUGH THEIR MINDS. THEIR LIPS TIGHTENED. THEIR PACKS WERE SHIFTED, CAREFULLY, SO AS NOT TO MAKE TELL-TALE MOVEMENTS OF THE BRUSH. THEY TESTED THEIR BELTS, EASING THE SOUND OF CLICKING WITH THE PALM OF THEIR HANDS. THEIR HEADS LIFTED SLOWLY AT EACH YARD OF GROUND COVERED, GLANCING AHEAD, TO LEFT AND TO RIGHT." A MORTAR? IT WOULD HAVE TO BE A CLEARING, WITH UNOBSTRUCTING TREES IN FRONT. IT HAD BEEN FIRED RECENTLY. A SMELL OF BURNT POWDER SHOULD HANG DELICATELY IN THE BRUSH. WISPS, NOW BLUE AND VERY FAINT, MIGHT STILL SHOW." THEY SNIFFED.

FIELD TACTICS.

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KNOFF HAD CIRCLED, TIMING HIS PROGRESS BY THE FAINT SOUNDS OF ROANTREE'S BODY, NOW ON HIS LEFT. HE URGENTLY HOPED THAT JENKINS WOULD NOT BREAK COVER TOO SOON. HE WAS IN HEAVIER TIMBER. IT WAS SAFE TO RISE AND DODGE FROM TREE TO TREE. IT SHOULD BE ABOUT HERE. NOW TO LISTEN CAREFULLY FOR ROANTREE. NO SOUND. GOOD. HE SHOULD BE IN POSITION. IF ONLY JENKINS IS IN POSITION. COUNT TO TEN. SLOWLY. THEY WOULD BE DOING THE SAME. ONE.....TWO.....THREE. SLOWER?NINE.....TEN. WITH A WILD SCREAM HE HURLED HIMSELF FORWARD.

AND JENKINS AND ROANTREE, FROM AHEAD AND CENTRE. BOTH SCREAMING. A RUSH INTO THE SMALL CLEARING, RIFLES JABBING, FINGERS CONVULSIVELY TWITCHING ON THE TRIGGER-GUARD. BREAK DUSH! CLUB WITH THE BUTT! HOLD IT! THE LIEUTENANT AND THE CORPORAL, BOTH STANDING THERE GRINNING, SATISFIEDLY BACKED AWAY A LITTLE FROM THE THREE STALKERS.

NOTE: PLEASE SEND ALL DONATIONS, LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMENTS TO BRUCE RUDDICK, 1491 CRESCENT STREET, MONTREAL.

