

84-01

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS AS ANTITHESIS

I. POSIT:

Come away from Patmos.
Leave that state of dreams;
of trance encounter.
Part the mist
that surrounds the island
Enter, revealed,
translated, alive
into this world, now.

Think of Glory.
Think of Grace.
Wonder how not even one heretic
can fit on the head of a pin.
Tell me of how Luther
must face incorporation
into the Catholic scheme
of salvation by Grace.

The mind fills with visions
of needle eyes and camels
and Jesus the man.
As God's power lies in contradiction
our whole lives contradict
our professed belief.

As we genuflect
at the altar of belief,
we despair of contact.
We traffic in intermediates,
go-betweens, agents
and "attorneys"
to plea-bargain
and state our case.
Are there no words
you have for Him?
On bended knee,
you do no better
than a recitation
on Santa's knee
of desires.

II. QUESTION:

Who has scourged us
from our Temple
and dispossessed us;
left us slugs:
exposed to elements?
Are three days enough
to rebuild?

Thesis.	Antithesis.	Synthesis.
Christ.	Antichrist.	?

How will you resolve
this trichotomy
of saints and sinners?
Father's legacy;
mother's love
offer the clue
(kingdom's keys)
to the divine
androgynous answer.

Have you not already
made your descent
into this hellish state
on earth
where your body
is never content
and your mind has forgotten
how it arrived?

Does your house have
an upper room?
When the fire descended,
all were prepared
to receive the flaming seed
and be pregnant with the child
of their own awareness.
They were delivered
from the fear
of their own potential.
Ungrounded,
most would face
incineration
unable to speak:
tongueless.

quickly

"I come ~~suddenly~~."
was said.
Where is your John the Baptist
surrogate
to prepare the place
of neo-genesis?
Will you part a Red Sea
of sexual belief
enough for the seed
to pass and find
the soil dry and receptive?
Pharoah rules the Lower Kingdom
of misspent power
and equivocation.
Make him wear the double crown
as upper and lower accept
their interdependence.

Has the import of a harlot
being the first to see Christ as
revivified Principle
reappear after "death"
been lost on you?
"Touch me not!", he told Mary
for to grasp the Truth
is surely fatal.
I would say, "Die, and know!".

Speculate
on Assumption.
Assume power.
Leave no trace of body
transfigured
synthesis of embodiment
in seamless garments
still resembling flesh.
You will not disappear.
The refiner's fire
leaves no dross, no ash.

III. CALCULUS:

Fill in the letters--
Tetragrammaton--
YHWH
and dare to say it.
Father the consonants,
mother the vowels
with ghostly aspiration
you have more than three
perhaps less.
Nothing is sealed
but by us.

We seal away
our face and image;
prefer imagination
to image-ing.

Fantasy and phantasm are the dissipation
of that faculty by which all is created
in the exact image of its ideal concept.
Build true to the blueprint.

We trust gender
to explain generative.

The creation of a third body only mimics
the reality of the creative process that
is outside any time-frame developmental
action. If there was an original sin it
was the externalization of the feminine
outside the masculine as a rib.

We use emotive force
to infer love.

Like interference or static, the emotive
force filters love. I propose something
beyond opposites that allows their very
appearance and can be used as a vocabulary
for emotional communication. Love supported
Judas in his work and embraced him. Nature
abhors a vacuum so fill it!

We leave God
on His throne.

We surround Him with minions and red tape
channels of approach created in our image
of Him. Thus, you would speak to Mary
(the fictional mother) or to Jesus (the
son concept) rather than to Him. There is
the feeling that fragments of the whole
are more approachable.

We made God a Father
so that in our minds
we remain children.
No response ability.
Feet are the symbols
of understanding
(annoint them with oil and tears)
ours have been bound since childhood
in a swaddling of fear
of standing as symbols, living.

IV. REQUEST:

Have the goods manifest
on board your vessel
distracted you?
You knew the course
when you set sail.
When tool uses man
what has each become?
Take command.

What was denied
three times that night
but Peter's own power
personified?
Knowing, you can't go back
into darkness
of denial.
I think and therefore deny
my existence?
I AM THAT I AM
is the Hebrew koan key
to all the above
and below.

Be Lazarus.
You ressurect the world
each time you open eyes
on the scene
just reconstructed.
No one said if Lazarus
found his body fit him
in his ~~own~~ awareness. ~~at~~
Don't you feel cramped at times?

V. POPULUS:

"Jesus, the Lone Ranger
twelve Tonto^xs by his side;
the Stars show us
where he was born,
the Stripes the way he died."
-The Passage.

"Meanwhile, in the heart of town,
the Devil dresses up,
he keeps his nails clean--
-> d'ya think he'd be a boogiemán?"
-Buffy Ste-Marie.

"It's **CLEAR** as Crystal Cathedral crystal
it's **CLEAR** that you believe in..."
-The Passage.

VI. STRUCTURE:

Even the angels are ranked:
Nine choirs and three
heirarchies.

A. Counsellors.

-perpetual adoration
infinite reception
of His Glory.

1. Seraphim:

Michael leads:
defeater of Lucifer;
scourge; warrior.

2. Cherubim:

Jophiel leads:
protector of Eden
with flaming sword.

3. Thrones:
Justice and Majesty
of God.

B. Governors:

-communicators and go-betweenes
for A and C.

1. Dominions:

Zadkiel leads:
stayed the hand of Abraham
against his son.

2. Virtues:

Haniel leads.
Three theological
four cardinal
against the deadly seven.

3. Powers:

Raphael leads:
stirred the waters
of Bethesda;
conquers devils.

C. Messengers:

-deign to speak to us.

1. Principalities:

Chamael leads:
wrestler with Jacob;
Jesus' cup-bearer.

2. Archangels:

Uriel leads:
guarded the tomb;
appeared on the road
to Emmaus;
flame and light of God.

3. Angels.

Generic.

Call on all levels.
Use all powers
represented.

84-01

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS AS ANTITHESIS

I think of Glory
and I think of Grace
and wonder ~~is~~ how not even one
heretic can fit on pin head.

God's power is in his contradiction.
The mind fills with visions
of needle eyes and camels
and Jesus the man.

restructure

We each of us genuflect
at our altar,
~~despairing, dichotomous,~~
with our list of Santa⁴wants.

*vague
bring in kneel*

History is littered
with the corpses of Principles
that pretended to be plans
for the Temple of Man.

*Rebuild
the temple in
3 days.*

And the mystic mistake
is in the belief
of outside extras:
-ordinary, -sensory, -terrestrial.

So what is left
after the refiner's fire?
Grace and Glory,
angels dancing on pins--
as the mind perishes
under its own symbolic sword.

1/16/84

Samy Byford

84-02

LESSONING

"With a gun for a lover
and a shot for the pain at hand."
-Sisters of Mercy.

Teach me tonight
how to be correct.
I crave instruction
-al sex.

Teach me technique:
feet flat, wrists up.
Play me--key of G
no sharps,
no signature.

Tune me up,
greased and oiled,
new sparks
and power train;
flats flapping.

Show me:
the selection of drug,
(poppers and pearls;
crystal with cruelty)
locale and partner;
(alleys and addicts;
bars with boys)
politics, polyglot,
and polyglut;
(stance and statement;
jewels with jade).

Show us all.
We're all in our places
with dull sagging faces.

somehow the "rhyminess
and jewel references
are excretionally com
and take away from
the message- rewrite
this looking at the
rest of the poem,
which is done quite
well.

1/21/84

FAÇADE

be specific

Sometimes the sophistication I slather on fails to satisfy needs; to dispel fears; to help me.

never really defined

An image more suggestive of wall-building

That's not its purpose.

Ballpark?
SIN
OUT

Daedalus made his maze to keep something in; to keep others out; to confuse and confound.

Minotaur - the manima man anim

vague

So what will Ariadne give me? What core will be found at my center?

Deconstruction is not possible. There is no unlearning. The elemental underlies; bleeds through; seeps, colors, and perfuses the complex or compound (no prisoners).

How can he need to know this?

So think enrichment, burnishing and meta-structures.

be specific

Besides, this Jericho falls so easily to the right Joshua.

Barry Rypard

84-04

LET'S TALK

Let's talk about **SINS**.
Not the nasty seven
but the little ones
that keep us good boys
out of heaven.

Change context.
Unload religious value.

Let's talk management.
That is, how I run
my life
ragged,
and so crammed
with activity
that what I don't do
becomes more interesting.

COMMIT:

Unpardonable crimes
called cool decorum.
You know--

Def.: Behaviour calculated to be effective
in maintaining social standing.

My list:

- A. The split-second glance:
Showing no interest,
evaluating,
judging,
accepting--look again;
rejecting--flush.
- B. The scales of interest:
The muscle index,
facial quotient,
monetary factor,
social rating,
a ladder?;
a snake?

60-78

C. The useful vocabulary:
I'm resting right now,
maybe later,
I work tomorrow,
it's time for a shower--
besides, I never take
numbers.

OMIT:

The phone call from David
that disturbed my sleep.
Did he use the crisis
number I gave him?
Not even the threat
of suicide
seems fresh.

Toll a bell,
Lulabel--
a lullaby
on that broad way
to hell.

ERASE:

All the numbers
I never dial
needing more new people
to agree
that I'm hot.
Say that word--HOT.
Say it again, man--HOT!
Everyone in this room
SAY I'M HOT!!
That's better.
I feel better,
back together,
unassailable.

So let's talk lifestyle,
and buzz the words
up that pole
and salute them!
This is Berlitz
total immersion
in ourselves.

I want better.
I want you and I
as living non-issues:
no crosses;
no chips.

So let's talk change;
no let's not--
let's change.

2/12/84

84-05

2:15 A.M.

Look for me
in the dark places
my insistent hungers
unsatisfied.

Light starves shadow;
keeps me in the dark places.
Half-light; half-truth.
Image imitates
imagination
in alleys.

POSE:

Blindfolded, with hands
bound behind me,
all attention
is on knife-point.
All tension
exciting me harder.

What is the tensile strength
of skin?

What is the breaking point
of cool?

? > This sex softly operates
with sharp instruments.

FLEX:

My lip is bleeding and it's
a distraction as I try to
concentrate on sucking the
dick I can barely see but
desire above all else be-
cause of what I have created
out of the shadows attached
to it.

There is a voice too and I
use the loaded catch phrases
it growls in whispers to
support the solidity of my
fantasy that this is the
man, the expert who can keep
me drunk on dreams of his
power as I suck him dry.

I collapse against rough
brick, breathless, watching
his re-entry, watching the
edges of his hidden torso
hoping they don't become too
sharp and cut me off.

Undone, I flex my wrists and
hear "Thanks" and smell
post-coital leather turn to
cologne and leave me still
starving, still needy for a
meal that tastes as good as
it smells, that fills the
bottomless belly.

DEPOSE:

Analysis spoils shadows.
Images regroup.
I'm ready for one more
unable to refuse
another helping.

Look for me
in the dark places
where I feed.

2/19/84

84-06

PLAGUE TIME

A.

Articulator.
Singular.

When it started
I was at the front
lines. I witnessed
our first case
diagnosed.

It was easy.
Boozer,
drug-user,
self-abuser.

When, for the fifth time
they wished to crack
him open
along the dotted line
he said, "No
let me go."
and he went--
in two hours.

I.

Identifier.
Personal.

As statistics stacked
the bodies on marble
I grew more fearful.

Most were still
the punks, the pawns;
pushers and the pushed.

I saw a teen consumed
in a purple passion
of cancer
in one month
no organ spared.

No more sex for me.

D.

Deceiver.
Constant.

Wondering if pleasure is proportional to danger I understand too well the self-destruct signals I get and actually relish as I become more active, more versatile than ever before.

I reassure myself that there is safety in my choosing not to do certain things I like and that the social/economic stratum in which I move is an island reinforced by the fact that no one I know personally is yet stricken.

And yet the circle of strangulation closes on friends of friends and a dragnet seems drawn around me as the prettier, wealthier, more famous among us check in and don't check out.

What is this incapacity to call back numbers and close the circle of contact and why do we need that constant assurance that we still have it as if another stranger can testify to something so ephemeral it disappears if he looks too closely?

S.

Surrender.
Plural.

They say, with caution,
we've topped off.
All it means
is a constant flow
of cases.

My hospital workload
triples.

As the press cools
the baths heat up.
I'm there one night
as someone asks,
 "Please have the D.J.
 announce that the two guys
 upstairs rimming are
 exposing themselves to
 great danger."

It's almost a joke.

How to stop.
I don't want to stop.
And what of those
who haven't started;
what do I say
to them?

"Don't come out!
Pariah!
Unclean!
Smear the lintel
with blood
of the lamb.
Pass over!"

We are not
the chosen.

3/1/84
Barry Byford.

84-07

SEEN AND UNSEEN

Sex sexy sex-related innuendo
the sly look self-satisfied
canaryful cat eat my glance.

VISION:

You stand there in the locker-room
passionless as porno and just as
aloof and yet it cannot cool what
is smoldering in my gut since your
form approaches my ideal.

I search for the phrase, the words
as perfect as your body and it only
sends me into wordless rumination
on what you might like to hear.

But when you look at me and really
see me with interest kindling in
your face I look away not ready
with that something I will say that
will make a conflagration of your
loins.

REVISION:

I call thee
(conjunction)
by the power
of fetish--
big juju.

I give thee
the secret
of my real name.

Use several names
for several powers
for all bases
covered.

Consecrate my dream
in fluid
thicker than blood
on the altar-stone
of your maleness.

Archetypal,
I will be
the very ideation
of: RECEPTACLE.
Drink from me as cup.

EDIT:

It's a long way
from that wad
shot in silence
to satisfaction
lying, waiting,
like some beast
or its answer.

Not all appetites
can be identified;
not all hungers
can be sated.

I have gone through men
like bon-bons squashed
to see their centers
and then left
uneaten but ruined.

Others I have prepared
by cutting crusts off
and consumed them with relish.

With men,
I pass too easily
from gourmet to gourmand.

3/3/84
Barry Byford.

84-08

EXCESS

I ingest life
like a bulimic,
I throw it up
with an accusing finger
of guilt.

I disclaim
knowledge and sight
to limit liability.
Non-taxing, flow-through
blandness.

Empty calories,
empty lives,
don't concern me.
Psychic malabsorption.

Emotion affects me
like a diuretic
leaves me
dribbling over
the bowl--
incontinent.

But there are those
who move translated,
eating their words
only once--
no shit.

5/10/84

84-09

BAR-FLY ON THE WALL

"A disease is under my fingernails.
it stains me like a tattoo."
-Landray

It's a place packed
with double arm-bands
and double vision victims.
Cover all bases.
Leave no stone unturned.

Janus stands as patron saint
of bars.
Ambiguity imitates life.
Snap shots of faces slide to grey
newsprint running, mugging
all the way to the morgue.

The tinged conversation
is of fear and being
forced to be safe.

Hunger and reason
and the killing season is on us
with what feels like vengeance.

The name on the bullet
is legion.

So wondering eyes
meet wandering eyes
in a compromise made
in the play of survival
versus drive
and life against living.

5/20/84

DE-EVOLUTION

"God made man but the monkeys supplied
the glue."--Devo.

Genes are dancing
in Charles's head;
Dada Mendel
behind him
(dear sweet-pea
progenitor).

Galapagos
and gibbons
talk to Charles
of selectivity,
advantage and edge.
"It's a rat's race,"
chatter macaques.
"It's a jungle,"
mumble the moths.

He reads tea-leaf
chromosomes
in cellular cups
predicting success
or failure
as mindless
manipulation
carries the banner
foreward.

We have adapted
as well, dear Charles.
But we have bellied up
at Jehovah's juke joint
and made our selection
without regard
to generations
yet to come.

I pushed the button
for an up tune
with a sad chorus,
horns a-plenty,
and a daring diva
driven by a talent
for fierceness.

Poor Charles.
No survival value
is found in so much
of what we do.
We seem quite
determined.

5/26/84

84-11

STATIONS

I am witness
to a kiss-off
at the Duo Squat machine
number three.
(He wasn't doing it right anyway.)

The kissee's eyes
refuse to meet
the kisser's gaze
of righteous confidence.

I couldn't hear a thing
with the oof-ing and
ugh-ing all around
and disce
thudding overhead.

An attempted kiss; rebuffed,
a hoarse good-bye,
and it's over
(exit kisser)
as towel goes to eyes
for a sec..

MULTI-BICEP #16:

A: "...money...so I told him to move out tonight! Might as well
get used to it. I hope he likes it. Trouble is, he will."

B: "...crazy..."

A: "What, the whole thing?"

B: "...crazy to leave you."

I watch as upset
is worked out more
than muscle
by the jilted beauty.

TEN-DEGREE CHEST #12:

C: "...you're available again, there's that to be said."

A: "But I don't want to be available."

I STILL
HAVE TROUBLE
FIGURING OUT
1ST, 2ND, and 3RD
PERSON —

I would be all comfort
and consolation
to cushion his rebound
into my arms.
I've caught him now
staring three times.

DOUBLE SHOULDER #14 (a) + (b):

B: "...well give me a call if you want to talk."

A: "Thanks, I will. I'll need to....gorgeous isn't he but...saw
him here last week...not a chance..."

I get bored staring
not finding an opening
suitable to crow-bar my way
delicately into his life.

Two egos, two cocks,
each with his harem
and a favorite at his side.

6/3/84

REFUSE

Purged of duty, I stand
indelibly smudged
to atomic shadow
on the wall of my
deviciveness.

What does it,
who does it,
all mean nothing.

Mean-ness is a topic
I know of.
It cements the wall
I'm smeared on.
What are the bricks
(spell it "Brix";
make it a product;
sell it)
they ask.
From ashes to cinders
to blocks;
they are my blocks
my home reef
of coral. Be careful
your hull doesn't crack
(Pray to the Hersperus
daughters.)

I took you
to the tender loin
of the issue
and showed you
wall after wall;
a fortress of madness,
bastions of filth
and a sump of humanity
it's pump broken with silt.
And yet you did not see me.
Your eyes are stuccoed over.

There are windows that don't close.
There are mouths that don't open.

What was I before this shadow
(you were all thinking
"Holocaust" and days after)?
I was what cast the shadow
and my substance dwindled;
I melted from vision
and from your mind
into nuisance;
numinal;
nominal.
(you call a dive a haunt?)

Billious with billions
we befriend the assasins
because we are all
Americas.

84-13

JETSAM

I shatter on rocks,
eat lichen
my toes
scattered
fingerlings
my eyes
shed scales
with the sucking
tides of words
that crush
my heart.

7/16/84

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary Snyder". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

84-14

INSTANT KARMA

Silence
and a red sun
running
from smog
sets the mood.

I can't breathe.
Stifling
currents rippling
upward
from black tar
into pink lungs
turned grey
from living.

Slier punishments
than those described
in Sunday school
for little ears
and minds not used
to a world of greys
prevails.

I wish the dead
a peace
that gives me rest
from thoughts of them.
If I should find
that souls deprived
of my remembrance
dwindle, starved
in frozen bardo
that will be my Hell.

There may seem
no change
from life to death.
Day and night;
Heaven, Hell
the mish-mosh
of tortured life
forecloses to
a tortured death.
The seamless garment
is revealed.

The days perform
a psychic pointillism
making a pattern
discerned only
at a distance
from myself
I can't attain.

Reconstruction.
With each new blink
the TV eyes
of consciousness
repaint the world,
the red sun
the sun red
through blooded lids.
Choices are made
in nanosecond bursts
of brilliance
or buffoonery.

In the mean time
it furthers the wise man
to regard all sin
as self-reflexive
instantly reactive
and silently fatal.

Barry Byford.

8/1/84

84-15

MOM

I can'twon't
remember how I
felt those days
of your drifting
passage from our midst.

My shrink says
I've got to talk
to you to settle
what remains
between us.

I could not speak
you would not listen
even then, corporeal,
yet ghost-like
in my presence.

If I bled for you again
would you reconstruct
like Christopher Lee
in some Draculoid form
and rise to finish the meal?

Possession is nine tenths
of the law that governs
how you still rule
my life.

Nothing reaches out to you
so well as does my guilt
insistent
tapping
on the pane.

8/5/84

84-16

CIRCLE

I came from fear
and a place where my hand
in the hand of another man
was judged sick.

I arrived in Mecca
and embarked on sex
as career to dissolve inhibitions
to stickiness or at least
convert them to fetish.

For a while it seemed
that one man's hand in another man
was normal
if not divine.

There was no contagion
nor fatal incubation
in our exuberant
consumption of vitality.

Now fear has found me
to exact retribution
and my hand in the hand of another man
must be gloved.

11/3/84

84-17

STAND-INS

Where I grew up
if your wore tight pants
you were either
a faggot
or a damn Eye-talian.

Those damn Eytalians--
immigrants
stealing our jobs,
breeding like rats:
That's what my father
would say.

Then as I grew
and demography
shifted
my Italian friends
could be frequently heard
to complain
of certain groups.

Those fucking Pakis--
immigrants
stealing our jobs
and they shit on the floor;
right on the floor,
I'd hear them say.

But one thing remained
exactly the same
something in common
all could agree on.

Those fucking faggots,
the lowest
the sickest
and so on.

The comfort afforded
me by the niggers,
the kikes and the
Polacks
was weakened
I decided
to loath my own
since belonging
is something
we all can agree on.

11/15/84

84-17

STAND-INS

Where I grew up
if your wore tight pants
you were either
a faggot
or a damn Eye-talian.

Those damn Eytalians--
immigrants
stealing our jobs,
breeding like rats:
That's what my father
would say.

→ more specific or direct

Then as I grew
and demography
shifted
my Italian friends
could be frequently heard
to complain
of certain groups.

Those fucking Pakis--
immigrants
stealing our jobs
and they shit on the floor;
right on the floor,
I'd hear them say.

But one thing remained
exactly the same
something in common
all could agree on.

→ replace with new adjective

Those ~~fucking~~ faggots,
the lowest
the sickest
and so on.

expand

} more descriptive + pointed

The comfort afforded
me by the niggers,
the kikes and the
Polacks
was weakened
I decided
to loath my own
since belonging
is something
we all can agree on.

11/15/84

BARRY BYFORD
400 DUBOCE #411
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94117

84-18

AVOIDANCE

When halt-
ing I re-
cede
into the back-
ground I shrink
from life
confrontation
there seems
no value self-
worth where
to continue
is more than a chore.

So much depends
on the image
projected of me
in the future
where I see
myself placed
where it matters.

I persist
it must be
by force
if not pleasure
by habit.

Facing the fear
the answer to
questions of
competing
and placing a value
on me without
rating
competing
retreating.

11/15/84

84-18

AVOIDANCE

When halt-
ing I re-
cede
into the back-
ground I shrink
from life
confrontation
there seems
no value self-
worth where
to continue
is more than a chore.

So much depends
on the image
projected of me
in the future
where I see
myself placed
where it matters.

} re-structure

I persist
it must be
by force
if not pleasure
by habit.

Facing the fear
the answer to
questions of
competing
and placing a value
on me without
rating
competing
retreating.

} large style

11/15/84

BARRY BYFORD
400 DUBOCE #411
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94117