

## Imagination

Tuesday, January 10, 2006

The drama of running wild on the lawn in total freedom with my mother standing on the side trying to stop me takes place in my mind. It is an act of imagination. It may have absolutely nothing to do with the outside world, or with what happened in the past. In fact, this running wild event, which took place at four years old, and which I so often think about, may never even have happened!

It doesn't matter. In my mind, it happened! I imagined it, and I continue to imagine it. This is my daily imagined reality.

Because it is imagined, does not mean it is not real. Imagination is reality. Life is in the mind. The question is: Can I imagine myself out of physical pains? Will this release endorphins which that cure me? If it feels better, it is better. If I imagine I am better, I am better. Period.

How powerful is the imagination? How much power dare I give it? Is reality really within? Do we imagine the world into existence?

I want this to be true. I want to give myself such power. Dare I grab it? What will mother say?

"Discipline yourself. Control yourself. Then you can have it!"

### The Rise of Discipline

#### "Mother, You Are A Genius!"

"How will I rise?" asked Larry Discipline.

"You will rise!" answered his mother.

"Mother, are you me?"

"Yes, but you will rise nevertheless."

"No more sleeping late?"

"Those days are over."

“But mother, along with this discipline comes a fear that I will stroke out, become helpless, and even die! What importance is my work with all its creativity, freedom, and discipline, if eventually, in the end, I simply die? What use if my body, and with it my mind, slowly cripples itself with old-age diseases of arthritis, rheumatism, phlegmatism, coronary thrombosis, aranco-philantropy, musical analysis, or any other artery-hardening creations of old age? How discouraging to realize all I do, think, or feel, will someday come to an end.”

“These are realistic fears, my son. The future is ever a mystery, and mystery is founded on the unknown. People often fear the unknown, and thus the future as well. Nevertheless, the future, the unknown, and fear itself are created and reside in the imagination – specifically, your imagination. These ego-built fears are self-created and thus imaginary.”

“Then I must ask the question: Is the imaginary, real? Or is the real, imaginary? Does imagination create reality, or does reality influence and even create imagination? Is this a dualism? Where do I stand within this chasm of opposing forces?”

“My son, standing is not as important as sitting or even lying down. In fact, the best way to attack this dualism is to sleep on, under, over, and around it.”

“Very funny. I suppose that is a joke.”

“Although dreams can be funny, sleep itself is never a joke. It often helps solve a problem or synthesize a dualism. Some believe sleep is a doorway to Ultimate Reality, a Reality that can unite imagination with realism.”

“Imagination or reality – which was born first?”

“They were born together.”

“Twins?”

“You are a twin.”

“What does this have to do with running wild and discipline?”

“These are the twin themes of your life. Their conflict creates your life style, existence, and reality.”

"Mother, you are a genius!:"

"That is true, my son. And you are me! We are ever together."

### Only For Me

Not for others. This writing is only for me.

I will write to complain and save myself.

Never mind direction, self-discovery, and meaning. Sure I might discover such things while I write. But the purpose of this one is more visceral: It is written to save myself. And this means save body and soul.

I'll start with my body. The fucker feels like it is falling apart. Talk about complaining! I hate to seem like a kvetch, but, of course, that is what this Zany section is all about. A Kvetch journal. A survival manual.

Many parts of my body hurt. Should I list them? Why not? Let's move from the top.

Above my neck, the head area is fine. Eyes, ears, nose, and throat, okay. Brain functioning at average levels. Thus, little to no problems above the neck.

We're talking physical here, not mental or spiritual. My mental state has been one of success, and that is its own puzzle. I'm not complaining about success and what it has done to me. I'm only puzzled by it, why it does so little for my mind and happiness, etc. But this journal is beyond success. Beyond Zany. (Does the Zany state represent the Success State? And what does that mean? But such zany questions are for another Zany journal.)

There are some qualitative differences here. First, this is this first time in my life I am writing "only for myself." In the past, everything was written with the eventual idea of publishing. Behind that was ultimate recognition by others. By now, I have exhausted that avenue. I've written enough for others. (Maybe now it is finally time to write something only for me. Me and God, of course. He can never be left out of the equation. And since God is the world, ultimately, even this writing is "for others.")

Only they may never read it. That's fine with me. . . I think. We'll see. In any case, this little diversion is over.

My new state also means I no longer have to push my desires or wants on the audience. I no longer have to demonstrate my ego talents, my writings, guitar playing skill; I no longer have to show or prove my worthiness to them. My shows can now be "all about them!" My ego has been totally satisfied and satiated; it drifts to the bottom. I can give audiences only what I believe is good for them. I can give them what they want; and I can want what I give them.

Maybe I no longer have to perform. Maybe it is no longer a need. Obviously, if I am called on, I will do it. But perhaps I am now in a "take it or leave it" state. This means I am totally free of my former need to perform. The need part has dribbled away. This leaves only the boiled down distillate of pure performance. Pure performance! Wow! I've never said that before. I wonder what it means.

Onwards and downwards.

Beginning with my head: So far so good.

Now for the rest of my body.

Friday, January 13, 2006

### Rebirth Mode

Yesterday I ran slowly for about an hour and a quarter. Then I did slow, limited yoga warm-downs. At the end, I felt alive once again. So good to return to these lovely routines!

This morning I feel a mixture of sadness and happiness. Happiness because I've gingerly returned to my beloved movement routines; sadness at the possible demise of my body parts. My left knee, under the knee cap (a new place), hurts this morning. Could other body parts be far behind? Is my dancing career slowly coming to an end? Will I eventually be hobbled, crippled, unable to work, and useless? The old fear-filled questions return to haunt me. They make me sad. This mixture of happiness and

sadness creates a beautiful melancholy followed by desire to express it through writing.

Happiness and sadness, life and death: Such a mixture means rebirth is on the way. I am in rebirth mode.

Months of “suffering from success syndrome” are over. As for the accompanying body pains in my right shoulder, right thumb, and left knee, so far they have not faded. Nevertheless, it is still early in my rebirth. I’ll keep watching them and see what happens. If, as I usually believe, they are related to the state of my mind, I predict they too should slowly disappear. . . or at least become much more handleable.

What an optimistic thought! Dare I be so optimistic? Dare I be right? Dare I believe my by aches and pains will disappear, that my physical body theory of medicine has a Christian Science truth to it? Dare I believe that I work so intimately with God? Dare I believe He dwells in my body parts, and is creating these pains to teach and help me grow?

Dare I believe in my own philosophy?

Saturday, January 14, 2006

### Weight of Success

Tensions in noodle nuggets. Terror bunches in the form of hysterical patches have recently been dropping on my body parts to prevent me from flying. Like a bird, I stood for years, like a bird, perched at the edge of a cliff, poised and ready to fly through the abyss below. My “success” is that new found “Alhambra ability” to fly. But part of the process scares the shit out of me. Thus terror bunches, grapes of hysteria, fall on my knee and thumb; hysterical patches settle on my hammer toe and in my (mostly right) shoulder.

These are psychological explanations. But, in reality, does success engender real, in-the-world pressures? Am I actually under a heavier performance burden? Probably.

Success can bring great satisfaction, even elation, and joy. But it also creates a heavier burden. I don’t mind the burden. I’m always looking for something to do.

Burdens fill up the empty spaces in my brain; they create little problems and annoyances that my curious mind likes to work out and fulfill.

So, welcome to the new view of success. It has lots of problems, annoyances, and challenges. Success has as much to kvetch about as failure. Only the kvetchings are different. Happily, I can complain about it as much as failure.

Although success and failures are transient, kvetching and complaining last forever. Thank God for that!

Tuesday, January 17, 2006

### Jumping Off The Cliff

Death and depression seem strangely exciting this morning.

Could it have something to do with my new commitment, focus, and interest in guitar practicing? It is, basically, happy, focused commitment.

What does such a commitment (and interest) have to do with death and depression? Puzzling, indeed.

Perhaps death here implies rebirth (death and rebirth), and depression implies a prelude to creation: In the beginning, bereshit. God created a new classical guitar effort.

What have I done in classical guitar playing that is new? I've jumped off the cliff!

I'm floating, flying, gliding, bumping over the abyss. Below me lies death and depression. I can see it, feel it, taste it. . . but I have not fallen into it. That's part of my happiness and excitement.

### Spiritual Crisis?

What is this post-success, continual emptiness I feel?

Maybe the world has given me all it can.

Is it time to renounce the world? This would not be an active renunciation, but

rather, a falling away of the world, and with it, desire for more worldly things (like new directions).

This could indeed be a spiritual crisis I am experiencing, a loss of gut-level interest and desire in acquiring more worldly things.

I want to want to desire more, I want to want to find new interests and directions. But nothing feels right. "I've done it all before" keeps popping up.

Perhaps, at this stage of my life, I have "done it all." Or at least enough to satisfy me. If these tasks have been fulfilled, and thus over, finished, what "more" is there? Perhaps there is nothing left in and of this world to do.

Sure I must keep body and mind in shape. For this exercise, study, and involvement in the business and outside world are good and necessary. But they are not enough to sustain my focus and interest. Vital parts of my mind remain vacant. Evidently, these worldly tasks no longer engage the totality of my being.

Thus a spiritual crisis.

Is it time to return to the monastery? To live a monk's life, dedicated to God and spirit. But still remain functioning in this world. Is it time to return to the monastery within?

I think I've nailed it.

I am, and have been in, a spiritual crisis. That is the cause of this ever-present emptiness, the so-called "post-success down" syndrome.

Thank you, Thomas Merton, for reminding me, and opening the door.

This means that my work will no longer fulfill me in the same manner it used to. Yes, it will distract me for awhile. And I may view that distraction as fulfillment, and, no doubt, for those moments, it will temporarily connect me to the divine. But, when I am finished and alone, I will return to the same spiritual emptiness. Questions: "So what?" and "What now?" will keep emerging. And, on a material/mental plane, they will be unanswerable.

These questions can only have a spiritual solution.

This means a total rededication of self and purpose to a spiritual life.

### The Ultimate Reward!

#### A Conversation with New Ma

I deserve my gift, this reward of real success.

I am now worthy. What does this mean?

What would mother say?

She would say, "This gift does not come from me. Rather it is a celestial reward. It comes from on High because, through suffering, you learned about your true purpose on earth.

"You were put on earth to bring pleasure, joy, and fulfillment to others through your art, skills, and talents. Now you have received His ultimate reward!"

Monday, February 6, 2006

#### With Fire and Sword by Henryk Sienkiewicz:

"With Fire and Sword" by Henryk Sienkiewicz: Wow, what a book! Isn't this the problem with reading a novel? I can't put it down, can't stop reading it. How will I function and go through life when my mind is so divided?

This has been my big fear about reading novels. And that's why I haven't read one for years. But, for some reason, I am reading one now.

One thousand pages of fire. What an all-consuming experience it is!

### Whiners and Complainers

What's the different between whining and complaining?

Whiner whines. They are ever the victim.

Complainer complain. Then ever fight on.

Whiner give up before they start. Whining is tinged with hopelessness, despair,



and pathetic broken spirit.

Complainers never give up. They just complain, then move on through the forest of miseries and eventually see the sun. Thus complainers are often funny and hopeful.

Dr. Zany is a complainer par excellence. So be it.

So ends a New Tree!