

# THE FLYING EAGLE

From Issue 2.23 (Fall 1997)

This was on the north side of a very big hill in Vancouver. Some of us lived where it suddenly dipped as though about to dump you into the silver-green sea. Once you realized it was the giant bear-shaped black mountains inducing this hallucination you attempted to relax. A terrifying visual, a solid abyss, set out to fade you to cinders in a time long enough to experience being in the direct path of a radiating lava flow changing daily but getting wider and more entrapping; but no, that was the actual capitalist system, with all its deadly tentacles we could see coming, and most people in Pompei saw they could not outrun it and stayed there as many sentences making a statement. themselves as stone.

on this hill facing north into that black set of pages over a lake behind an infinity that cannot yet get to Lil'wat, there were many old amazing buildings with large rooms, the cheapest of which were dark and cold so individuals had to learn to be cave people again, those who remembered how necessary it was occasionally to live and survive asteroid assaults and to discuss the necessity of storing, having observed those little mouse gods who had stored as long as anyone could talk about remembering. My concern then as always was how to keep my body warm and the possessions few and essential

enough to move out on a moment's notice, something i no  
doubt had picked up in england where i was born in 1940,  
more or less in the epicentre of the second world war in  
europe, we never discussed the other guys, god we're a  
cantankerous species but i guess all species are that way,  
no peace, never any peace, but maybe this is just an angle  
from an ultimately artificially constructed subject once  
dignified by the word "ego" and "soul" which was not  
the femininely human image of Psyche, butterfly, and  
mistress of *technes*, having been taught by the goddess  
herself no, it was with some sort of pacifist warrior class  
of monks i found myself, a class who took for themselves  
the privilege of living and working and acting together  
due to a rumour of crazed monsters flying over the sea  
to slaughter the inhabitants wherever they landed, to cut  
them open where meet the gut and the lungs and the heart  
(a criss-cross shape) and to turn them inside out, alive, the  
heart beating, the lungs breathing

this they called "the flying eagle"

BERSERKER watch!

and so to watch  
Joan at her fire  
Pope Joan doing DOS  
dis dos  
we're talkin now  
what constitutes a community  
is it a lot of ideas?  
this line allowed by dos but breaking words at an end so  
meaning is  
either stopped dead or shattered

but there is nothing here, nothing left, nothing gone, there  
was nothing  
a great, black shimmering emptiness, a Home-hardware  
molded fibreglass front door hanging in a wall of  
nothingness with nothing before and nothing behind

but somehow if you went out and met it, there was the earth  
there was slime  
cold or warm  
terrifying  
alien  
flesh  
to touch and shrink  
or open to its glory

there still was somewhere a forest, pretty close to the sea,  
a beach a place to build a fire  
it was fire we were always after, a way to keep warm, but  
our improvised methods produced nothing but smoke  
and soot and unburned keratenes, and tooth decay and a  
continual illness that always seemed to be a product of our  
condition. We had our visionaries, those who would say,  
no, it really isn't that way, don't yah see and it set yu back  
for long enough to talk till bill was tired out and i went  
home and maybe wrote a poem with a little of the holy herb

occasionally bill or bill and martina or bill and lance  
farrell or bill and diane di prima would drop by and bill  
might leave with some poems or deliver a blewointment.  
i never knew how he did it, i was lucky enough that a poet  
as yet unbeknownst to me named f.r. scott, had recently  
invented welfare; i could not fit into capitalism and i  
tried and tried, possibly i would have fit into socialism  
but i doubt it, somehow hippies were, in my subjective  
evaluation, trying to effect a truly primitive and authentic  
communism, which ultimately died of its contradictions  
which capitalism will too and take a lot of us with it as  
in every inhuman social cycle . . . genocide a consistent  
ceaseless, inconceivable nightmare under the shimmering  
electric vulva of chaos  
shifting aurora of pierced liquid  
slugs, snails, worms, slowly moving underground slime-  
moulds eternally observing spiders, scientific flies, fleas,  
ants, grasshoppers, meat-eating mantises, no other image  
is needed for this sacerdotal alien, the scholar

*“and all the little birds  
in yon merry green broom  
with her blo od THEY  
should aa all have their fill”*

this is owing, an accounting, a sanctifying, a measuring, a  
cheating, i hate it. this is the way it is

this is not forgetting the huge cold damp dark studios,  
astounding, frequently confounding the soul in cold black  
shivering with fear and ecstasy of their beauty, cold cold  
heart a real but negative concept, sustaining prussian blue  
oils oozing over  
the eagle's beak  
*a focusing in labyrinths of sometimes cosy hippy households  
bookish mousehouses*

study a strange cerement  
for each of these creatures

in yon tender green broom  
with her blood

once we heard them gossiping, now, having planted our  
fields with sunflowers and oats  
they have moved off till next winter

*poem for a new bill*

at one point or another we all lived on this big hill facing  
north with many good streams, bushes, berries, grasses,  
animals, fish, birds

smoke came and the murder of the woods  
what are his claims?  
steel came, noise came and never died

so it is we listen to the birds conversing in their crazy and  
beautiful anxiety

just listen

then whistle

•

*Kwaak*

crow comes  
chuckles  
crow sees me every day  
knows where i am

gulls discuss immediate existence, with their political  
sopranos  
the linnets' bitching and fear

turns into triumph  
the triumph of the river

•

the triumph of the river

the 430 vancouver schoolboard jobs cancelled  
the smashed-up squatter houses  
side of the River

Knight Street Bridge South

*jan 96 b.c. n.d.p. gov't cut all employable people under the age of fiftytwo \$48 dollars a month;  
\$500 a month for rent, food, medicine, transportation communication bus and telephone to  
people on welfare: \$500 a month and a 75% tax on anything they might try to earn*

*April 1, 1997, sick, old unemployable people to be cut back \$97.00 a month.*

*In this way the government will reduce the living of 16,000  
therebye saving the taxpayers \$23 million  
which would have gone to retailers and real estate owners*

*Apr 23, 1997 vancouver schoolboards cut 300 more jobs*

i dream i'm in a world wide flood stream in a kayak  
without a paddle

Reprinted by permission of the author.