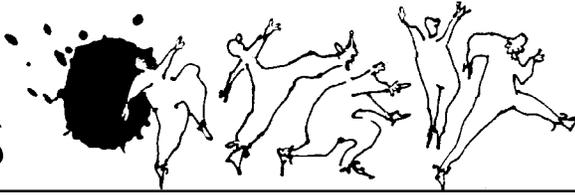


Deanotations



Issue 95

June 2000

Dear Reader,

This issue is late late late. "APRIL": Yu-LIE, it May be June. I've been busy losing weight and locating (by map) my abs, as I become my inner cowboy. I've lost about 75 pounds since mid-August. Hard work at age 58 to achieve this Amazing Grace: I once was fat, but now I'm lean, made puns, but now...still Dean.

Having shed my ab flab, pec dreck, lat fat, etc., now I'd like to reduce my paper backlogs. I try to shed stuff (files, magazines, books, letters...) as I go along, but am ceaselessly amazed at how much accumulates. (Ceaselessly amazed? Imagine the stress on my raised eyebrows!) One reason to become famous is so that other people will bother with putting all this stuff in order. Ambition is a desire to dump one's responsibility for one's accumulated debris on future worshipful descendents and grad students, by making our debris valuable enough to others to make it unnecessary for US to sort through it to ensure nothing good is wasted.

If fame evades me, I may send threatening letters to presidents to get gov't agents pawing through my rubbish: Fame or criminality, or, best, be a famous criminal. As the cops surround me and the oil tank I stand on sprouts flames just before it explodes, instead of Cagneying about how the cops will never get me alive, I'll sneer at all you good people who have to sort through your own files. As I succumb to the flames, I'll envision a PhD-hungry scholar sorting through heaps of my papers, stopping frequently to shout "EUREKA!"

Bach's scores lined pie plates. When armies need metal, statues are melted down. Marble glory becomes rubble and building material. And I just thought of a great line, but I didn't write it down, and can't remember it. "It's ART!" we say. "It's IDEAS!—and evil ones at that" says a politician as he lights a match. "It's stuff, just more stuff" says the physical universe, an expert on stuff, as it shreds, shrivels, burns, floods, erodes all this good stuff. It thinks the artist is stuff too—and you, Dear Reader. If you read and understand these poems, do we thus foil the universe that would snuff us in stuff? Or do I pour mere stuff (noises, miniscule energies) into stuff (the brain's tiny noises)?

The answer is in the question: If YOU read and UNDERSTAND. Seems trivial to say, but I'm here and I'm talking to you. The physical universe can't be here or talk to you, doesn't believe you exist. Pieces of paper exist, ink exists, tables exist, bodies exist. This is a secret activity carried out under the nose of the physical, which, seeing only paper, ink, tables, bodies, air, misses the communication.

*Yours (should you choose
to accept him),
Dean*

Early spring. Bloated: with each step a fart.
Overhead, wild geese.

Never try to come between a dog and his bone
or a man and his worries.



I think I've grown wiser with age, but have I made
others wiser? Apparently not: What I can think but
not say to others rises around me like floodwater.

Failing so often in our efforts to be useful,
we begin to complain of being used.

"I'm just tired."
Is anyone ever JUST tired?

Kids walk lightly, barely touching earth,
not to wake gravity, who hasn't noticed them
yet.

Spring wind fills even the smallest trees
with dreams of sky

Who heals a sick hurricane? A spin doctor?
An eye doctor? A gyre-cologist?

Up the phone pole, inches a day, coils a vine,
crying, "Hold on! I'm coming!"

The neighbor's pear tree storm-splintered. They're
only wood.



Eroded cliffs expose a tangle of tree roots,
which run for cover.

Someone blasted that tree. It has just enough
truncated, bald or sparsely-leaved arms left
to tell us that the assailant went that way, that
way, that way and up that way.

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man
gets his eye put out.

Some Eyes I'd Eyed—an Eye-Twister

"Honeyed", "her honeyed lips", funny,
I've seen that word 1000 times before
without noticing that "honEYED" includes "eyed",
sweet eyes, hon-eyed, though it could also be
the fierce, Hun-eyed gaze of Attila.
Is it I Honey eyes with honeyed eyes?
(Another discovery, the "yes" in her "eYES", Aye!
TWO aYES!) Honeyed, I'd eyed her back.

Honeyed eyes are stickiest in the Spring,
so beware the hon-eyed of March.
Honeyed eyes stir dreams, all the "I would's",
or, contracted (as our dreams, alas, are),
the "I'ds". Both I'ds and Ids the eyes undid:
Eyed and ID'd (the idea!) by honeyed eyes,
I'd unhid my Id.

In the land of the blonde, the honeyed man is king.

Almost as sweet, "monEYED" is a towering eyeful:
Derived from mono-eyed?—
like the cyclopean pyramid on the dollar bill?

Money for moneyed classes, monocles
for one-eyed glasses. Mon-ocled means
single-eyed (mon-eyed): Only posh snobs
peer through monocles, their glares
one-eyed, moneyed, honed, unhoneyed.

In the land of the bland, the moneyed man is king.

Yes, lovely boobs...now
STOP that! (Silly eyes, I can't
take you anywhere!)

A baby and a budding bosom are soon bosom buddies.

I was breast-fed.
There's been nothing quite like it since.

Bill Gates says ending
is beginning: To shut down,
we click on "Start-Up".

Windows98
Upgrades 95—simple,
automatic...SUUUURre.

Summer forgotten,
"Insufficient Memory"
freezes my Windows.

Asking for my files—
please do not say an error...
Damn! Sayonara!

Data may be lost
if you proceed. Proceed? Yes?
No? (Where is Maybe?)

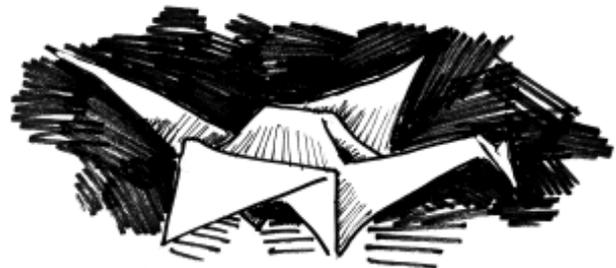
Opening E-mail—
an irrecoverable
error! WHAT error!?

Click...click...click click CLICK!
The mouse makes nothing happen.
Control-Alt-Delete...

Control-Alt-Delete...
Even this does doodly-squat.
Curse, press "OFF", then pray.

Lightning! I'll have time,
MUCH time, for cherry blossoms—
no surge protector.

Clicking on icons
this spring day, I wonder what
my neighbor's doing.



Too bad about the origami factory—they folded.

Where It Went Wrong

Say it's a drug you HAD to try, bad sex,
a sweater you shoplifted—but at the time
it was adventure, SHOWING them, not letting
your best pal down, giggly secrets—
all sorts of things that could only be good.

But what about unreality?
Say you've had a few drinks or joints and feel
spaced or tingly and decide to do something
really wild, but now this guy
you hardly know has the camera going
and you're supposed to lick
whipped cream off his buddy
(who keeps going soft) and
it's dull, dirty and unreal,
so how can that be good?

You can say, "This is unreal", put
your clothes on and walk out. But maybe instead
you say to yourself, "This is so unreal—
it can't matter to the rest of my life.
It's just a cartoon!" So you use the unreality
as an excuse to do what reality can't stomach.

But it doesn't work, because when you leave,
you haven't left: EVERYTHING is unreal.
(Unreality won't be used. It wants
to own you.) Your friends have become
an alien species. The clear sky
leers. Houses and trees are eating each other.
Your parents are antique dolls in an attic.
School keeps slipping into noise. Everyone talks
like Donald Duck.

You can go back to your cohorts in unreality
and solve it with more of the same. Or
maybe in the heart of cartoonland
you tell your Mom what you did,
and as she listens (if she listens
and doesn't vomit outrage all over you)



that old hard lump rises up in your throat;
then (as someone holds you tight) bursts
into a wetness that overflows your eyes
with its sweet sting as you find
you have reclaimed a reality
you can live with.

How the Loss Machine Operates—A Manual

Because you left me, I am all alone forever and it's all
your fault.

Because you left me, I am no longer here at all—you
took me with you...but then why do I feel left?

Because you left me, the sky, the sun, the smiles of my
friends have also left me . . . but why? You had no use for
my sky, my sun, the smiles of my friends.

Because you left me, did you have to take everything?
Even things in my attic I never showed you are gone
because you had become their meaning.

Because you left me, I'm stuck with what cannot leave
me, doomed forever to be me, unspit-outable. Why didn't
you take that too?

Because you left me, I don't want me anymore.



Because you left me, I would desert me like a rat if I
weren't lost at sea.

Because you left me, I now live where the clock's
changing changes everything the only way it can change.

Because you in all your vivid solidity left me, you
surround me now like night, as if before you were the
crystalization of what you now are.

Because you left me—you who could never leave
me—you must be elsewhere, and the knowledge that you
are somewhere makes that somewhere incomprehensible,
and not knowing where that is, makes the whole world as
incomprehensible as right here where I, your absence,
stand, not comprehending.

Because you left me, I've become the incredible
shrinking man, the kitchen stool looms over me, the
telephone receiver is enormous and unreachable, the cat
disdains eating me, and when I tell myself that someday
I'll know I've grown because of this, my voice sounds
tiny and tinny.

Because you left me, you will always be leaving me,
which is better than your always not being with me, isn't
it?

Because you left me, you left me, you left me—why
did you? How could you have? Weren't you, after all,
me? Or who were you? Are you?

Because you left me, I know now that the you who
could never leave me was my own creation, so now I am
afraid to create, so I have no future, because I dare not
create one, and if I don't create it, nothing can come of
clocks.

Because you left me, I will never be free of your
leaving me, because if I got over it, then where would I
be, what would that make of all we were to each other
that I now know we could not possibly have been because
you left me, didn't you?

Because you left me, damn it, I tell myself things I
don't want to hear. I want YOU to hear them! But you are
no you.

Giving

The featherbed, we say, "gives," meaning it accepts one's shape. Water gives (ice doesn't). Air gives. The givers give way, wrap themselves around us, shape themselves to us, receive and release us easily with a sigh or kiss of gentle suction or a rustle of sheets or a smile in brimming eyes. What can you be given? Apparently yourself, or your own form shaping another, apparently the right to be part of and separate from another. What you can be given depends on the gentleness of your asking: If you hit the water too hard, it becomes stone. If you force yourself through air too fast, it shudders, splits, jolting you, claps together behind you (BOOM). Violence shatters whatever opens to embrace you; splinters stick to you; the violent never have anything whole, never leave anything wholly behind.



Bipartisanly we drug 6,000,000 school children with a brain-damaging drug (to make them sit still in class) while Democrats and Republicans exchange Tweedledee-Tweedledum rhetoric about budget surplus numbers and names of airports. Party disputes are the magician's patter that distracts us while the trick is performed.

5 a.m.—from the hall, a scrabble of castanets:
old dog pacing again.

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ISSN: 1524-0509

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Too often I've been told it takes more muscles to frown than to smile. It also takes more muscles (and bones too) to be a cat than to be human. No wonder cats are so serious.



The cat rises, turns, settles, curls up, using about 40 more bones than I have.

Forgetting Fire

Fire is...oxygen burning? Oxygen emitted? Oxygen combining with...? (Memo: Clarify.) I thought I knew this. When did I forget what I knew? (If I ever knew.)

The flame, whatever it is (one thing or many?) is alive, intelligent, like the vanishing of a remembered touch or the hands of a potter subtly shaping an invisible pot—

no less lovely for my having forgotten (if I ever knew) what flame is, much like forgetting itself: Memories burning? Memories emitted? Memories combining with...? (Memo: Clarify.)

Now is the time for all good.