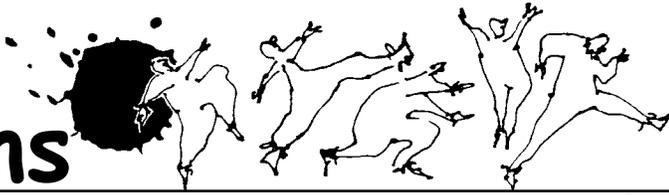


Deanotations

Issue 107

June 2003



Dear Reader,

Due to renew? Here's an Operator's Manual on the use of checks — written for check recipients, but of use to check senders as well:

[For users of Model 2608 Multiply-Surrogate Legal Tender device (pat. pending)]

This wood-pulp-based engraved planar exchange device, when used according to the following instructions by properly trained and authorized personnel, ideally those designated in the "payee" portion of the device, may be exchanged for other devices, wood-pulp or metallic, which, in turn, may be exchanged for goods and services, limited only by the value-designating portion of the device.

The goods and services are not limited as to their nature (quality or quantity) except as stated above or as restricted by law in those areas where the exchange is negotiated. (Contrary to rumor, nothing forbids the use of this device to purchase Happiness, in so far as Happiness can be defined in terms of goods and/or services.)

This device will work when used as directed in the United States of America and all its territories and possessions. Use of this device may be limited in various ways (order manual 246AX-304 for details) outside the USA and its territories and possessions.

This device is surrogate only. Money is an idea based on faith. This device, though tangible, is but the idea of an idea, based on a faith finely extended, visible only in sporadic glints of reflected light, as on a spider-thread; but, like that thread, is strong enough to capture and hold small insects; therefore, all due care should be exercised in utilizing this device to weave tangled webs.

You are required to "endorse" this device by applying to its obverse side along the top left edge an approximate holographic facsimile of your personal indicia or credentials.

If you have further questions on the use of this device, please do not hesitate to call 1-800-CHKMATE.

Please send names, addresses of others who might like to receive free sample issues of Deanotations — and might even want to subscribe. Starting next month, subscribers can go online and vote to kick out one subscriber a month until only one is left — which of YOU will be first to go! (I'll try anything!)

*From the confidential files of
Dean Blebert*

Out of the woods, through our back yard and back into the woods scoots (while a large white cat sits in the center of the lawn, not batting an eye) a red fox.

Fine mist — just enough to blur the windshield, not enough to keep the blade from squeaking.

What's rong with wreckless driving?

Evening Event

"Evening" — yes, the sun down, slow seep of darkness evenly over all, a perfect evener.



Though I have just traveled 500 miles, the tip of my tongue still dwells on the fascinating hole in my molar where the temporary filling has worn away.

I eat dessert again and again;
The scale reveals a gain and a gain.

Not that I disagree with you,
but must we always have opinions?

How is it people can live in the past and not know it? Perhaps in the used-time lot where they trade in their old time for new, the salesman sets the clock back.

They clean and dress his remains to be seen.
Where has he gone? That remains to be seen.

“Pray let us do it in the hay,” he said loftily.

“An awesome cave!” said the spelunker, sub-limely.

“To confuse the drug tests, let’s use the same bottle,” he said, intrepidly [intra-piddly]).

“Oh...I REALLY have to sneeze...” she warned, a-kaCHOO-ally.

“NO! You have to do what I say. Mommy said so!” insists the older child, oughtisticly.

A father who insists on total obedience is trying to be an absolute relative.

Poet: “The child is father to the man.”
Parent: The child is fodder to the fan.



Aladdin, the Mermaid, et. al. in Disneyland

Dreams that lived on the page —
we could hear ‘em, BE ‘em —
Now preserved in a plastic
Mickeymausoleum.

Fruit Bowl With Silver Pitcher

(Still life, oil, by Pam Coulter Bleher, 1992)

The pitcher’s cozy nest of reflections
brings back the charmed world
in which a child once lost himself
(just staring at a spoon or goblet),
the lure of a magic world inside:
a tiny twinkling liquid infinity.

Partly it’s the sudden distance
to which convexity stretches things,
a single orange streaming back and away
as if slipping into silvery blue future.

Partly it’s how silver contains the world
in a bubble that lasts for centuries,
taking us in, year after gleaming year,
as fresh as a droplet of dew.

[continued]

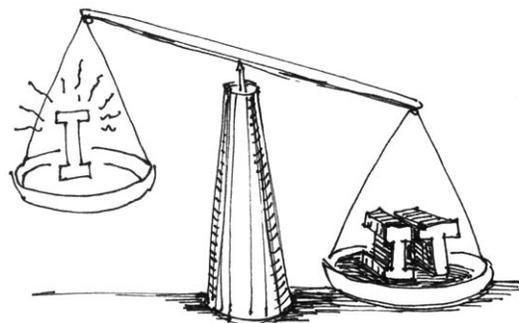
The child knew disappointment too —
couldn’t enter, looked up, always,
to unwanted spinach and dull daylight,
maybe, seeing reflections move as he moved,
saw through the trick.

But here I feel only the charm:
I move in, then out to notice
how full and luminous are the glossy gold,
red, green and yellow fruits lolling
in the luxury of unforeshortened space
and unsilvered light this side
of the mirror —

as if I’ve come upon light, powdering,
combing out her long sleek tresses,
singing to herself before a silver mirror,
and she turns to me, smiling.

I used to feel far from home, especially
in the nursery, where the linoleum featured
motley monsters (Mother Goose figures,
I later learned). At that time, my body
had been nowhere else. I wonder where I
could have felt far from?

A proof of spiritual existence? I’m just not equal to it.



“Peace on earth, good will to men” — so proclaimed
the angels, like most candidates for public office
ever since — and they kept their word just as well.

Urgent Message From the Dept. of Homeland Security:
What to do in case you are NOT attacked
by terrorists: 1. Get a life.

In the 50’s we were trained to duck and cover.
Now we are told to cover and duct.

He was killed by friendly fire. The fire
came towards him smiling, held out its hand, saying
in a hearty, resonant baritone, “It’s you! I’ve heard
so much about you! How nice at last to meet you!”

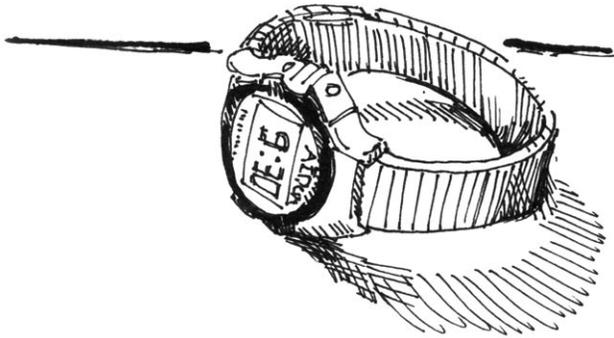
Lying in Bed One Morning Before the War

This reminds me of the ludicrous account he gave... of the despicable state of a young gentleman of good family. "Sir, I heard of him last, he was running about town shooting cats." And then in a sort of kindly reverie, he bethought himself of his own favorite cat, and said, "But, Hodge shan't be shot: no, no, Hodge shall not be shot."

James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson

If this house were bombed now —
but it won't be; that only happens
to people far away who live in
ugly stone and mud-brick houses
and don't own much or enjoy life anyway...

but if it were bombed, I wouldn't like it
(if I had time, before I died, to notice).
It would ruin the house, the resale value
would plunge, the trees would be burnt stumps,
the lawn all muck, rags, broken bricks and teeth;



my wristwatch on the dresser...the dresser,
all my socks, my underwear, my shoes in a row;
in the corner, the blue bag of clothes to be washed,
never to be washed...and, on that chair,
my pants with my wallet — Ohmygod, my credit cards,
dollars, IDs, photos! And downstairs, a room full of
poems hardly anyone has ever seen...

all our dishes, chairs, couches, rugs, books —
not my books! — floors, walls with paintings —
Christ, the TV, the computer, ALL THOSE DAMNED
EMAIL ADDRESSES LOST (NOT AGAIN)! The study
with my passport, my tax records, shit, all our
neatly bundled tax records and what about
the warranties for our appliances, what about
our insurance policies! And the kitchen — that
untouched tiramisu from Trader Joes, the salmon steak,
all my vitamins, minerals, echinacea, aloe vera,
blue-green algae
turned to molten glop! And the garage, my poor
shiny Camry (only 33,000 miles on it!)
But this is unthinkable. Who would do such a thing?
No one would. No one will. And we make sure of that
by making war elsewhere, never here. Anyone who has
as much as I have, so well owned, so full of me,
my finger smears, my smell, my thoughts, my
[continued]

little ways of folding or not folding things, of
being in the middle of several books at once —

surely nothing can ever take all this
away from me. Surely my house and my things will
outlive me, and I will live for a very long time,
as long as my house and my things need me. No, no,
my good books, my sunny rooms, my long fingers,
my bright blue eyes, my teeth so well brushed and
flossed — no, my dears, we shall not be bombed.
No, we shall not be bombed.



VillainHell for Saddam [Demon's viewpoint]

What shall we do with Saddam?
Pile palace upon palace
With Saddam on the bottom:

He wanted 'em — he's got 'em!...
Too light — his heart's a callus;
We must pile MORE on Saddam.

He's tough as Hillary Rodham!
(SHE'D bust his balls — AND phallus —
With Saddam on the bottom.)

This is hard work! Oh SOD him!
He's diamond hard, pure malice.
What can we do with Saddam

To make him bellow, "Goddamn!";
Beg "Take from me this chalice!";
(To our ears, sweet as Callas.)
Let's paddle his bare bottom

To hurt his pride...then prod him
To watch in dumb paralys-
-is endless runs of "Dallas" —
If THAT'S too nice for Saddam,
We'll dig a deeper bottom.

—
The news and history all blur
As spin tells us the way we whirrr.

—
War is not always the wrong thing to do, but it is
always the wrong thing to have gotten oneself (by acts
or omitted acts) into the position where
it is the right thing to do.

Walt Whitman: A paean in the Ah-Yes!

Dorothy Parker's favorite vice:
Always scathing on thin nice.

Keats, on discovering he'd lost his ear for odes:
"Ode Ear, what can the matter be?"

Keats was inspired by algebra, dreaming of
what wild x to see. [...what wild ecstasy"]

For my sins, one day I look at my life's work
and cannot tell which are the parodies.

Welcome to my Selected Thoughts, that is,
the ones I wrote down.

You are reading the poems of Dean Blehert.
Coming Soon: the prose of Dean Blehert,
the shoes of Dean Blehert, the door knobs
of Dean Blehert, the in-laws of Dean Blehert,
the toenails of Dean Blehert...

The severed head of Orpheus drifted downstream,
singing — "Help! I need some body..."?



I've used up nearly all my toilet paper,
but my notebook remains month after month fat
with blank pages. Perhaps I'm working
in the wrong medium.

No, Henry Ford, history is not bunk. It is bunk beds,
many-teared, in which, parallel, we sleep.



The Ears Have Walls

Poet out walking asks streets, trees,
houses, men and women caught up
in the hard sunshine, everything
without voice, to sing for him
as of old, offering them
his own voice to sing with.

And everything tries to sing for him,
but it's thin, grating, far away,
like an old scratchy record.
Can't things sing sweetly anymore?
Or has the poet grown deaf with age?

Despairing of anything ever again
singing with his voice, he cries out
(or is it still the world making use
of his unretractably offered voice?):

a harsh alien cry, almost not even
a voice, surely not singing—

or have we all grown old and deaf?

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