

THE QUEST NON CONSUMMATUM EST

(Dedicated to the Bodhi-BeSotted Trappist Monk, Th☼Mas Merton, 1915-1968, A Fan of Bob Dylan & a Friend of Joan Baez)

"There has to be a deeper meditation, beyond dreams, beyond imagination, beyond biography & beyond psychology."

(Tho. Merton)

In Light of my December '22 & January '23 contributions to this Newsletter, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that our ongoing Quest is every bit as polyphonic & unquantifiable as the Imagination. In fact, another way to phrase this InSight cum Query might be, How does one break through the Gates of Longing into the Cabinet of Narnia-caliber Curiosities & the Uncreated Light-illuminated Piranesi-esque Escher SpHere behind the Looking-Glass &/☼r Scrying Mirr☼r, where almost Nothing is what it seems? By Way of an eXample, Imagine, if you will, what your Inner Roy 'Tommaso' Campanella was going to do with that high, inside fastball before it -- to 'echo- Bob Dylan on Roy ☼RBison's great hit in his epochal "The Philosophy of Modern Song" (2022) -- 'Blue BaYou.' All this while attempting to juggle here on the Far Side the sheer off-the-scale Virtuosity entailed when Liszt transcribes Paganini's fiendishly difficult 'La Campanella' for the keyboard. And who, then, might this be looking into the Borgesian, Aleph-like, Ich☼r-polished Portal where the gossamer thReads of this Aval☼nian -- not to say 'ShulaMighty' -- ViSion in a Dream are being constantly subtly re woven?

So maybe the ActiVated iMAGInation is The Grail after all, having everything to do with Death & Transfiguration. In other words, welcome to the 'Forest of Symbols,' where one tends to lose one's way in the metaphorical Dark Wood, the Realm, if you like, where the Sun-kissed '☼chre & Tangerine' walls of Sorrento south from Napoli literally saved the prone-to-Melancholy Nietzsche's life. A fine instance of the transformative power of Vitamin B for Beauty. In this curiouser-'n'-curiouser conTeXt, I'd recommend giving the mid-19th century French poet Gerard de Nerval's 'El Desdichado' -- which is referenced in the Notes to T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land" (1922) -- a close peruse, paYin' pARTicular Attention to de Nerval's longing for 'Posillipo & the Italian Sea.' In other mots -- to 'echo' Goethe -- a land where the Zittr☼nen bloom.

Among the would-be prototypes for this Unconcluding PostscRIPt being Dante's 'Paradiso' & a certain eponymous 'K.', Where do we go from here? Which is of course always a QUESTion worth posing here in the sublunary sphere. What I'm proposing here at the 11th hour, is that when you find yourself chasing ghosts & pursuing shadows, you'll discover that you've embARKed on yet another 'ArgoNaughty' Journey into the archetypally fraught & liminal Land of ReBirth. This is what the ancient Egyptian tRADition terms 'Zep Tepi' (the LumiNous Abyss that preceded the Big Bang) & what the Jewish Kabbalah refers to as 'Ain Soph' (the ab☼original f☼unt from which everything else proceeds). ThInk, for stARTers, the abS☼lute centRALity of Suffering & Homesickness to any Initiation worthy its name. It's in this Eternal Moment that the Quest {Re}Begins. May said Night Sea Journey long continue . . .