

Prophet foretells

THE PROPHET

by Tehlahl Ahmbraghin

Sir;
Yes, I remember the day President Spark died. We were all sitting in the bar, washing away the thousand pains of worrisome frissons which make working in a newspaper tolerable hell, welcoming the liquid sustenance which acquired ambrosial qualities by the time it trickled down our parched gullets, though it was only Labatt's 50. We were sitting in the lounge, not just any lounge, but a clean, well-lighted place, where Papa used to quaff brandy and soda on those sticky hot Paris days when even the reliable metro to Mairied'Ivry ran late and the Ricard came laced with extra doses of iced water. Yes, I remember, watching the world pass by and the special satellite broadcast of Bruce Hogle's minitorial which we expatriate Edmontonians awaited each day with unbridled eagerness. Claude, of course, broke the tradition and ordered Dubonnet, but the rest of us were content with our 50, shedding an odd tear as Bruce lamented the unreliability of ETS service, reminding us of the frailty of the world's icicle infrastructures, when suddenly, Bruce disappeared from the screen, coming back a moment later to tell us that President Spark had died a tragic death. We shouted no, no, it couldn't be true, but the great rivers of tears coursing down Montparnasse soon drove home the grim reality. Yes, I remember the day President Spark died.

Doug Fissure
Ottawa

Up yours from Maggie

Sir;
Hey man, stuff that camera up your flaming ass. I mean like f--- off. Hey, goddamn it, yes, I mean you. I don't want any of you goddamn reporters around. What I do is my business. I'm living my own life. You shouldn't f---ing care if I was married to the f---ing pope, that's how private my life is. Taxi, taxi, goddamn it, no cabs around ever since they saw me with that asshole Scorsese, goddamn it, I told you to lay off. I'm really happy with my marriage. No shit. And yes, I do give better head than Maureen. Dammit, don't quote me on that. Leave me alone, man, LIKE I just want to be a private person, if it's okay with you.

Maggie
Dylan's Farm
Sausalito, Calif.

And the people looked up from their labors and they beheld the robed figure approaching. One by one they fell silent as recognition dawned. A book fell from a limp hand, its pages fluttering. A pen dropped. A beaker overflowed. A calculator printed out: "Overload."

And they gathered around him as he came among them and they said: "Master, will you give us of your wisdom?"

And he replied: "I have been in the mountains many long years and I have learned many things. The wisdom of the ages has been given to me. I have learned from the solitude of Nature. And I have journeyed many miles to come among you. And I will gladly share my wisdom with you.

"But can I sit down first?"
And when he had seated himself and the multitude was gathered, one of them spake and said: "Oh, Master, speak to us of differential fees for foreign students."

And he in wonderment replied: "Are you kidding?"

But others among the throng cried out, saying: "Yea, Master, for a cruel tyrant has decided that some among us should pay more for an education for others." And another said: "It will create divisions among us." And another cried: "How can we build a universal society of peace and brotherhood if strangers among us are not welcome?" And yet another beseeched him: "Tell us how we can learn from one another if each man dwells in his own house?"

And finally the Master raised his hands and stilled them, saying: "Enough already! get the picture!"

And he spake to them in a parable, saying: "At the temple of the Sun in Bala-tur, where young men gathered from many lands to

learn the wisdom of the ancients that they might become priests in their own right, the high priest decreed that the young men from far lands should present gifts to the temple when they arrived and were admitted to the temple as supplicants. And the young men from far lands did so for they were grateful for the opportunity; and in time the temple was filled

with treasures and adorned with valuable works of art.

"And it came to pass that certain of the sages of the temple grew old and feeble and thought to retire. And the high priest sought diligently among the brightest of the young men who had become priests to find replacements. Now certain of the recruits were from far countries

and they unfolded to the high priest a differential salary scale, saying: 'Verily, our learning has cost us more and therefore our teaching will cost you more.'

"And there was great discord that could be heard throughout the temple.

"But it came to pass as they had said and in time the temple was emptied of its treasures and denuded of its works of art."

And here the Master paused to refresh himself with a draught of wine that had been brought to him.

And the people stirred uneasily and one among them said: "Huh?"

And when he perceived that they understood him not, He said wearily: "I will give you another parable."

And the multitude spake as with one voice, saying: "Oh no! Not again!"

And he stilled them, saying: "What profiteth it a man to create discord in his own house?"

"Does a man beget peace by exacting a price from his friends for his friendship?"

"Wherefore does a man create harmony by drawing attention to differences?"

"Such a man would invite his mother-in-law to come and give his wife cooking lessons.

"Such a man would put tomato juice in his beer.

"Such a man would send one of his children to school and keep the other home as a control group."

And the multitude nodded in agreement, for they all knew whereof he spoke. They all knew what a klutz was.

And a young woman said to him: "But what can we do, Master?"

And he pondered this and spake again, saying: "The answer to the problem of the tyrant is difficult to see. The answer to the tyrant is smaller than the eye that would see it but cannot. The answer to the tyrant is harder than the bone within you but moves more swiftly than the wind that chills the bone.

And a young man of the village, thinking perhaps the Master spoke in riddles, blurted out (for he was very fond of riddles): "A bullet, Master?"

"Is the answer a bullet?"

And the Master smiled on him condescendingly, and said: "No, my son; but you're close!"



Answers to biblical quiz

1. 2 (I Chronicles 5:03)
2. 4 (Genesis 39:06)
3. 3
4. 4 (Genesis 5:27, Ezekiel 1:11)
5. 4 (Genesis 38:12)
6. 4 (Genesis 40:12-19)
7. 2 (Genesis 37:29)
8. Well it's not Wally, he's not even an historical personage. Are your lips still moving as your anxiously verify whether or not you got even one answer right?

Here they are: Another James, Bartholomew, Thaddeus and Simon the Cananaean, i.e. 1, 4, 10, 13.
9. 3 (Matthew 27:7-8)
10. 1
11. 5
12. Please send answers to: Dean Baldwin, Arts Faculty, 4-37 Humanities Centre. Remember you cannot pre-register unless your answer has been tabulated.



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