

Protests front page poem

Just a short note to let you know that I am protesting a poem written by Irving Layton which was printed on the front page of Excalibur on March 8, 1973, International Women's Day. The poem, I'm sure you remember, begins with the line, "Women are stupid."

More than in protest, this letter is written in compassion, lest you think you were forgotten, or worse, that nobody cared.

SUSAN WALKER

Is Layton emasculated?

Although I'm aware that this is pandering to Mr. Layton's obvious need for attention, I do feel I must offer him sympathy. I used to read his poetry and thought him an enjoyable sensualist — bombastic, it's true, but sensualists are fun.

Now I realize that sometime recently he must have been got at and emasculated by some of my more malevolent sisters. Why else such bitterness? Too bad, Mr. Layton.

Excalibur, however, ought to be well censured for resorting to the cheap trick of tripe on the first page just to get themselves more attention.

WANDA TROTT

Telos Bestriding

Oh, man. Son of man, son of some father
Or other
Man at the centre
Enlightened and glorious, oedipal man
Man alone
With your virtue, arete, glory,
Chivalry yet (stroking your soul with the
other hand)
Remembering nothing of noble Colossus
Except he bestrid, he bestrid the hole world
(He fell down, of course)
Go, seeking your being with angst all sublated
Splitting the cleft of each atom you find
Making for nature a fine iron maiden
Put to rough wooing
By golden men in mythic caves. Ah!
The dream of the cave, that dream is forever
Hold fast to its virtue its truth and its beauty

Its anguish its joy its honour its duty
And after each cave there's always another
Up, up and away -
(Suck me off baby. Ah!)
Oh man. Your indifferent muse
Contradicting her terms
How hard you would make it to love you at all
Especially
When the pricks are down. Which is
After all
Most of the time.

MARY O'BRIEN

About women: A prophecy

Women are, Mr. Layton, they are
And forever will they be

Women are, Mr. Layton, both tender and
strong

They comfort and sustain the Goethes, Mr.
Layton[And gave them their genes

Those genes, Mr. Layton, were the Wagners
and
Marxes and Einsteins too

The Lord works in a mysterious way, Mr.
Layton,
His wonders to perform

But for the woman there was no mystery, Mr.
Layton
No mystery at all

Women have been so large, Mr. Layton,
They have been so kind

For they pitied all men
Their anguish of mind

They pitied the arrogant bastards
Their sheer need to scream
About Einsteins and Wagners and Spinoza's
dream

What soul has a man, Mr. Layton,
Whose ambitious foot
Has trod on the face of his author
Or his spurs have rent her gut?

Do not cry, little man, Mr. Layton,
Please do not cry

We are kind and it will hurt us somewhat
To do what we now have to do

Keep our genes to ourselves, Mr. Layton,
Give them no more away

Our giant foot will not disturb you, Mr. Layton
It will turn aside
And continue its giant stride

DENYS BROWN

Concerning the occasional man

The occasional man is oppressive,
Unrealistic and oppressive.
God with a capital E for error sought to try
human sanity,
And made the occasional man this way.
She left clefts in his cunning.
May intelligence replace these.
Doctorates can't.
The occasional man would electrocute
Margaret Atwood and Shirley Chisholm.
With perverse poetry and technical genocide,
Unlike Cohen he would oppress them.
Blindness is born with this man,
And insight beyond him.
His creations will be freaks,
With death in their tone.

The everyday man? Who would question
His capacity for freedom!
He will endure beyond myopic publications.
As God, the giver of life,
Knows in her wisdom,
The free will endure, without contrivance,
And this, of course, is best.
These have ideas and live unencumbered by
Phil 301.

Who can define the oppressor's position?
Without him we would not notice our
liberation.
For in forever raising the sail in our struggle,
We combat his over-bearing wind of turpitude
To create in ecstasy
Within a tangible heaven.
We see God in our stars,
And live true adventure.
Constricted dreaming does escape us.

The occasional man facilitates life's struggle.
I pray, though, that, unblessed, he will dry up.
When free fingers kiss rosy cup,
His colossal flesh will dissipate.

PAT SMITH

Irvingsdrockh on gurus

All minorities are stupid.
They're cunning but they're stupid.
Life with a capital L wants it that way.
Negroes will never give the world a Spinoza,
A Wagner or a Marx;
Some tap dancers and second-rate waiters,

yes,
Vision is strictly a white poet's prerogative,
But never an Einstein or a Goethe.
So's creativity except for a handful of pseudo
Norman Mailers
With aging flower child trappings and
enlarged biases.
The Indians and the Jews? Who ever doubted
The Metis or Chosen People could equal the
Herrenvolk?
Let them protest til kingdom come
But Tenure who pre-arranged it this way
Knew what it was about
And contrived matters wisely and for the
best
Giving vision to professors and bigotry to
their lessers.
No humane superiority is vaunted here;
Both are requisite poles
In this hustle impotent gurus are embarked
on;
For ego straining to publish idle chatter
Demonstrating a mind forever blind and
chained,
Its concern is neither with the spirit nor the
humane
But to go that one small step beyond the
washroom wall
(or writing of that calibre)
To Triumph! on the front page of the
Excalibur.
Irving's persiflage is, alas, but camouflage,
Climacteric machismo, super-annuated,
proto-Beatnik,
Wistful gazer at panty raiders, cut his teeth
on Stepinfetchit,
Please God save Mommy from the Yellow
Peril,
Bootleg whiskey, reefer madness,
Out with Susy who's really "neat"
Jerking off in the rumble seat.
What bruised his tiny psyche?
Did his Mommy like his sister best?
Or was it bottle not the breast?
Or, my God! Could you, would you, do you
think,
That Susy sneered at his silly dink?
ANGELINE RYAN

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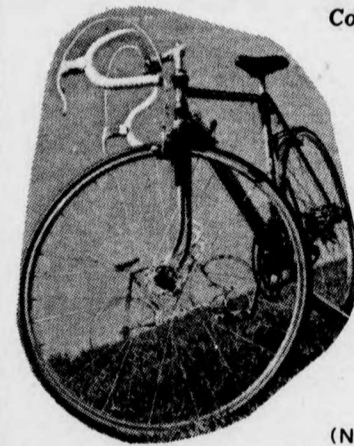
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