



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series A: Writings and Addresses. 1947-1991

Box 1, Folder 2, Poetry [typescript manuscript], 1947-1948.



FRUSTRATE

Dame Society cavorted
As she clasped joyously
To her murky breast
One more convention idiot.

Date, she proclaimed it
An' the yellow-lock youth
Re-echoed "Date", weakly
Submitting to form ignorant.

Honest, God-given lust
perverted rigidly
To insipid format
Under the Good Dame's
embracing, tattered shawl.

Frustrate, sensed he
As finger stroked limpid finger
But suppress he must
Nature's beckon eternal.

For the Good Dame smirked
plailing the shawl
Intoning
"Date...".

Dec 1946

SOUL-DRIVEN ENIGMA

My heart reached out
To embrace
But you were not there
You - ethereal you - were not.

How long must the soul
Drenched with sharing thought
Smart alone, confined
In tower ivored isolation?

When will I possess thee
O, Evanescent One?
When will bosom and mind
Claim thee wholly, completely.

The sheer, resilient thought
Of finite gathering you
Sustains me, Nourishes
The driven soul.

But haven't I yet
Embraced thee?
- Or
Have I?

ANVIL TONES

Peace, called they, and
Good Will bellowed lustily
But hollow the sham
Did din on crushed souls. °

The prince prophecy glorious
On page engraved
But in disciples' soul
Sham - lip mockery.

O, how long must
Circumcised hearts
Smart under blessures
Chiseled with Christian love?

Abraham's sires turned
The cheek over and o'er
Yet butchered the Pius sword
To the anvil-ring:
"Peace, good-will".

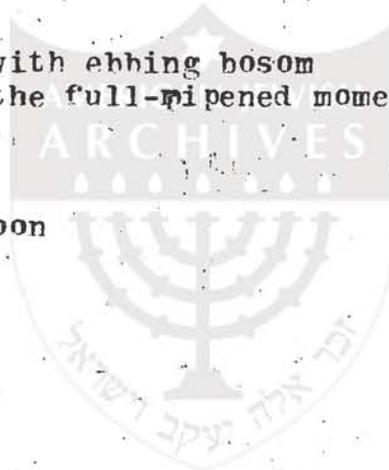
In sepulchrous grave,
The prince, if he be,
Muttered: The words are mine
But thine the hypocrisy.

Serenity on Cliff-side

The milk-moon lavished a
a kiss sensuous
upon the lake waters
and my own.

She
and I
together, with ebbing bosom
sucked of the full-ripened moments
- our own.

Serene
the milk-moon
and we.



Dec. 1946

ABLAZE

The seas, massive typhooning
crushed pulverized the fetid dust

the heavens cracked under
blazing shattering thunderclap

electricity sparked surged
spewed forth dynamitic fury

the earth was rent, the heavens
burst, the skies rumbled

cósmos, a seething cauldron
was enflamed, brewed over

knife glistened, clashed intoxicated
with bristling, bloodened sword

under spuming sun
you bared your incandescent skin

you were all the fury
- past and Future

ROOTED ETERNAL

In my garden' heart
There blooms a rose
Stalwart, yet delicate,
Fine, yet fulsome.

Her roots fasten deep
In my garden's heart
And nourish does she
On freshets of my
earthen soul.

For nought, foreign winds
Caress her, for my bosom-loam
Enmesh the rose-roots
Embracing them for Eternity.

Jan 3, '47

SUMMONS

In veiled darkness, have I longed
For thee
O Scythe,
Harbinger of sleeping Death.

In thy soft arms would I repose
Sweetly, covering
My haggard self
With sullen oblivion.

Must I wrangle with fool existence
Unbabbling the bard's word
The sage's gem, only for
~~the~~ Soddy, commercial self.

Must I wrestle Dionysius
In frenzy stuporous
Vainly struggling against treacherous
Tides, Dishonest word, Morbid
concession of arrogant tolerance?

Come, becloak me,
End all struggle
All torturous conflict
Singeing my tethered soul.

Come, now, there is no purpose
No direction, no end
- not in starry planet,
nor on barren social earth.

Come, prithee, now!
- but hold...

Faint do I hear the tinkly tread
Of Eros, She descends upon me
Her lips taste my furrowed brow
Her kiss balm my sanguine breast.

Yet stay, O Scythe,
Pause for moments singular
While I taste of ~~Eros~~ ^{supple}
In her, perhaps, will I find
solace, partial solution
to Life's sordid complexities.

Stay, momentarily, Linger
While I try this once,
For if not in her
Do I find Purpose,
- Then wherein?

Should she be the age-sought
Balm to fevered mind
Then leave me to suckle
This once, Ethereal,

Again will I summon thee, O Scythe,
But then when all
To Perdition's lest
- Eros as well;..

ROOTED, ETERNAL

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Caress her, for my bosom-loam
Enmesh the rose-roots
Embracing them for Eternity.

Jan 3, '47

LABYRINTHINE HEART

To the partner
of an astronomically
wonderful relationship!
H. B. ...

I took my heart in hand
and looked thru it.
Nothing could be seen
for inflamed, festered tissue
Enveloped, beveled the
Pumping soul.

With scalpel's shimmering edge
I incised the veiling, opaque tissue.
Thru the rent aperture I peered
To fathom the mystery of
Passion, heart, mind.

Probed, I probe
And widen the breach did I
But more did I gaze an' seek
Less did I know
Less could I comprehend the maze.

Mending temporary the cut
I placed the torn heart
Within the bosom well
Leaving it to heal with time,
Leaving it till mind could comprehend
the incised, festering heart.

(conceived wistfully on a
morbid morn sprinkled abundantly
with lurid moonlight...4/6/47)

BLISS ON HIGH

The warmth of silken night
Vapors into nothingness
As heart of my near one
Exudes affectionful sighs
Destined for me, for me alone.

On high, Gabriel trumpets^f jubilantly
For me, for me alone,
For in moonlit air
The sveltness of body melts,
Distills in beloved fingers.

~~But~~ ^{really} Not for the caress
Does he exult
The mellowness of trumpet-tones
Herald glorious union
Only union of ^{entwining} ~~binding~~ spirit.

Yea, he does exult
How he does embrace
Not the corporeal
Not me, me alone
But we - we of spirit.

NAIVE TOUCHES

Guard your reach to the grape-bunch,

Naive one.

Are they yours...

...Singularly yours?

Cannot your musty pupil perceive,

Foolish one.

See, they nod in the whistling wind

Turning to each who deign touches.

Your lips smack lusciously the nectar

But, silly one,

Is not saccharine taste equally sweet

On tongues of others?

Reach, yes, reach

But think not thyself

Sole connoisseur

Sole luscious taster.

The grape-bunch will be plucked

By passerby

Till hemmed in by you

If you will but consider hemming,

Naive one...

ABLAZE

The seas, massive typhooning
crushed pulverized the fetid dust

the heavens cracked under
blazing shattering thunderclap

volcanoes churned festered sorely
spilled over hot furious pustulent lava

electricity sparked surged
spewed forth dynamic fury

the earth was rent, the heavens
burst, the skies rumbled

cosmos, a seething cauldron
was enflamed, brewed over

under spuming sun
you bared your incandescent skin

you were all the fury
- past and Future

June 1947

OMNIPOTENT

You lay in my embrace
and the heavens bowed
to kiss the waters, damp
chloridic kiss

The world my beckon obeyed
and the night paused
and the dawn was reticent

I was omnipotent
and you were my power
my right to rule

Within the ^{my} passive moment
all nature cowered
as we were one

We were reason, logos, cause
we were space, ages, geography
force, passion

in wake of our inexplicable
magnitude
all else was residue,
meaningless
impotent

CHARGE

With first crushing embrace
I knew you charge of my
life...

You electrified my being, surged
crazedly thru my coiled ~~being~~ body
and with
wild, orgasmic fury
you rushed, welled over my
mind, my thought

You flamed my whirring world
with maddening, frenetic
frenzy you were
electricity, sparks, ~~blaze~~ fire
you were all that simmers, that
ever will ...

Without your incandescence, I am
but hulking, lifeless mass
...with you, I am life itself

Life
vivid mad rushing
endless

BLIGHTED MATERNITY

Lost -
Eternally lost?
sucked into the quagmire
pulled down into societal abyss
of flaccid complacency

the tutorial prod is snapped
and clammy familial bonds
invest the once restless
yearning mind

now shackeled soul
- only smothered smugness?

engirdling, matriarchal arms
lovingly going "good only for you"
lead apace into the yawning, gaping
chasm where the groping light
is now snuffed, now permeated
with horrid stench of littered souls
Lost, eternally lost
in familial, societal embrace
- "good only for you..."

the dainty sodden word, the tainted smile
commercial chit-chat - these
the guideposts, the end
the elan nouveau, maternally-propelled

pricked, needled mind - swaddled
in other climes - writhes, cringes serpentine
in abortive revolt...but late,
too late - or lost
Lost eternally?

June 1947

MY LIFE

With first crushing embrace
I knew you charge of my
life...

You electrified my being, you
surged crazedly thru my coiled
body and with
wild, orgasmic fury
you rushed, welled over my
mind, my thought...

You flamed my whirring world
with maddening, frenetic
frenzy... you were
electricity, sparks, fire
you were all that blazes, that
ever will blaze...

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but hulking, lifeless mass
...with you, I am life itself
Life, vivid mad rushing
endless

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Nothing could be seen,
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within the bosom well,
leaving it to heal with time,
leaving it till mind could comprehend
the ~~opened~~ heart.
incised, yet festering

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chloridic kiss

The world my beckon obeyed
and the night paused
and the dawn was reticent

I was omnipotent
and you were my power
my right to rule

Within the impassive moment
all nature cowered
as we were one

We were reason, logos, cause
we were space, ages, geography
force, passion

In wake of ^{our} inexplicable
magnitude, all else
was residue, meaningless
impotent

CHAFF OF TIME
(THE FICKLE FURY...)

Hurting moments
scurry through the abysses of
the space

you, moment,
most valued gift of ages
I long to share with
whom I thought cherished

Palm-wise I held you out
as a token of esteem, trusting
you would be in-gathered fiercely
precious gem that you are

for in embrace, embrace of you
and the cherished one (I thought)
you, exquisite moment, become
meaningful timeless eternal ---

but the palm extends in vain
and you, gilded moment, are chaff
repudiated by a wind-blown, directionless
fury
all past, without future

Sept 1, 1947

NUCLEAR VISION

Gather in, my brothers
For we are at journey's end

Stark, brutal, flashingly sudden
our fate
Under mushroom's dervish
Loosed by addled mind
Crushed down

...all

Gather in, my brothers
Noah revisits
And into the ark-bowels
descend we...all
To Arrarat be off

The cycle full-wheel
has turned
And the dove is dead.
Gather in, my brothers
gather in

Or is there
a messiah

February 1948

INHUMANITY PRECIPITATE

It was in the loneliness of morning
I found the freedom of man
When the cool unhurried breeze
Envelops the undriven mind
When ~~even~~ the far-distant
sounds of commerce
Are tiny symphonies of pleasant
peace.

When the clock ticks, not as in waking
~~EEEE~~ day
The leisure of calm morning moments

And the newspaper is still abed
And the shriek of hate is deathmute
And the scud of inhumanity ~~has~~ settled
Leaving clear the fluid of man's peace
In the loneliness of morning

April '48

BEFORE INHUMANITY WAKES

It was in the loneliness of morning
I found the freedom of man
When the cool unhurried breeze
Envelops the undriven mind
~~And~~ when even the far-distant sounds
of commerce
Are tiny symphonies of pleasant peace.

Then the clock ticks, not as in waking day,
The leisure of calm morning moments

And the newspaper is still abed
And the shriek of hate is deathmate
And the scud of inhumanity has settled
Leaving clear the fluid of man's peace
In the loneliness of morning



April, 1948

PROPOSAL

For a loaf of bread my hand?

No, for p^stries and verandas
scotches at twilight
for low-slung carriages
whisking thru fetor of drunken night.

and ringlets, and armlets
and noselets (what say, primitive?)

no, these -- Class, veneer
of inbred existence

For these, not alone hand
but heart and mind
total submission.

But what of love?

Is not the soul too tender
for barter across the board?
Must all life, even the reality of passion,
be weighed, sliced, measured, and offered
or the block to highest bidders?
have we sunken low, so abysmally low
in economic vale so determined
to deny the priceless, the unbarterable
the human element...

But security, friend
think of security...(is this really your voice?)

think of morning without maids
(I think of its...so what?)
think of noon without play
(I think of it - ~~but~~ not in
~~the~~ ghettos of the select, but
in the free open places where
MAN is the measure, not the MINE)
think of evenings without drink
(I think of it - liquid is wet and
quenches mightily from brook as from vintage bottle)

think of all these, friend
Security...

Well.....

I think of all these
I think of the hollow mock laughter
the dull insensate brains
swaddled in cognac fine
I think of long corseted evenings
in polished stables
I think of all these
and more

Hear you, then:

Give me my bread, crusted but real
my freely-flowing brook
in everyman's open places

give me these and
a heart that wills life
a mind that wills freedom
a voice that is its own

these are my security.



SWITCHBOARD BLUES

or--"...the crown of gloria has gone from our head..."

Now, o now, that Gloria is gone

Whom, o'er whom, shall all o' us fawn?

Who will replace that golden voice-box

Thrilling more even than bagel-and-lox

Who will make now that "Yes, Please?" so liquid

With Gloria now gone our fate is so wickwed

Eyes that smouldered and a smile so rutilant

Gloria remains a memory so succulent

Peter and Shirley and Edith and Ruthie

and Saul and Louie and Shalom and Boozie

the boys in the backroom, the girls in fuchsia

all sadly lament the wan-going of Glori - a....

April 21, 1950

FRUITY MORAL

Bob-white glided o'er the gardener's fence
To sate his hungered breast
With the dangling cherry
Matured by sensuous breezes.

"Dart and pluck," chided the voice,
"It is yours but for taking.
The fence is no barrier...
Dart and pluck - it is yours."

But lo, Bob-white stayed his flight
And in his pristine soul murmured:
"It is the gardener's
It is not mine...".

The gardener gazed wistfully, for
He cared not.

Black crow glided o'er the gardener's fence
To ravage lustfully
The dangling, ripened cherry
Pathed in salty dew-mist.

No voice chided.
No voice restrained.

Black crow darted, and plucked
With worn beak the fulsome cherry.
"It is not the gardener's," cawed he
It is mine - mine."

The cherry, Black Crow consumed
Whilst Bob-white ever murmured morally
- yet hungrily
And the gardener cared not.

CHAFF OF TIME

(THE FICKLE FURY...)

Hurtling moments
scurry through the abysses of
~~the~~ space

you, moment,
most valued gift of ages
I long to share with
whom I thought cherished

Palm-wise I held you out
as a token of esteem, trusting
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for in embrace, embrace of you
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and you, gilded moment, are chaff
repudiated by a wind-blown, directionless
fury
all past, without future

A LESSON IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

To M. H. T.

The typewriter's going clickety-clack,
Two fingers are pounding a steady hack,
The presses are rolling
The deadline is tolling,
And Marc is fit to be tied.

"Yes Mr. Gellman, No, Mr. May,"
(Gosh, get the heck out of my way)
"I'll have it ready, don't worry a bit,"
(Those guys'll soon see me having a fit.)
At last with his head up, he smiles and then
Turns to his typewriter once again,
But there's only one more thing he must do,
He types "number thirty" and his day's work is through.

R. S. Z.

SHOWERED-EVE

In sacred circle
they bellowed joyously,
Aimlessly endlessly lavishly
they chortled

Like bold-breasted robins
they murmured mellow, and
cawed they as spirited ravens raucous.

The gossip-worm thru commune beak
slivered wriggled and at
its plush pregnant segments they
jabbed and bit and chewed
to a thick luscious cud satisfying.

And as the beaks sharpened
to brightness so dull and
the gossip-worm wriggled
o'er and o'er

the feather-capp'd minds light
as their cover
soared high in mystic heights
sundered everlastingly from
bodies' bosom.

This showered-eve was for
beaks betokened, only beaks.

June, 1947

MANEUVER FOR FREEDOM

I looked out, far out across the glazed waters
And saw with clear eye
Civilization's freedom-guarantors.
Huge were they, like their creators
And their pale drabness of gray (surely reflective of their
makers' state)
Shone defiantly under heaven-sent rays.

Amidst the cordon of freedom's bulwark
Dipped the graceful gull
(Surely not propelled by atom's vengeful drive)
Untrammelled she soared and dipped.
No fears, no hates, no suspicion
Marked her maneuver.
Surely was she free as she flapped her wing elegant
Baring a white breast, so glistening white
(Surely reflective of her maker's state).

The somber, monochromed armada (of certain technological
perfection)
Inched awkwardly, mechanically, slicing the waters
Whilst the gull flapped heavenward, them (at will's desire).
Glided sylph-like to water's surface, pausing refreshingly.
But the pale hulks plodded onward, ever onward.
In their black cavernous depths, their creators
(once their creators, now their shackled serfs)
Moved in order, disciplined in action (and thought?).

Maneuver for freedom did the giant automatons
To the clank of hard, beaten chains (symbolical?)
And the gull softly, peacefully, unrestrainedly winged
On nature's breeze; hovered o'er man's proud creation
Wondering, "Maneuver for freedom?"

gravelly
Deep in her white, feathered breast she buried her head
And shed a tear - a salty, bitter tear
Dropping it gullishly upon these
Maneuvering for freedom.

1/20/47