

THE FLOWERS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

1970

In an August heat wave in 1970: Well before my meeting that night out in our garden down in Little Italy: I was eating a light supper alone in the sidewalk café at the Cookery on the corner of 8th Street and University Place in The Village. I love to be alone. When you've come out of years of silence and then spend hours a day talking to numerous people in a struggle to support keeping their birthright alive, it is very pleasant to be among people and to not have to talk. Sometimes that summer through the big open café window I would hear the great Alberta Hunter sing, *You can cheatum but you can't beatum thos e cake walkin babies back home*: In this sizzling afternoon before a meeting: I was sitting at a table at the sidewalk café watching the passing parade of acid trancers, hippy day dreamers and straight arrows with blinders. Then: A distinguished older man of sun red sharp face and silver hair in a blue suit and silver tie and a very short Japanese gentleman in a Brooks Brothers hunch back special gray flannel suit walked up to my table. Sinfan Tasmaguri said: "Ah! It is The Evil Genius his Self. Hello Mr. Big. How's the air down there?" To which I replied: "Hey Mr. Big! Howya doin? How's the air and the sun and the moon and the stars and the atomic radiation up there?" Sinfan said: "Mind if we join you?" I replied: "Are you kidding?" Tempo Perdue sat down slowly. I said: "There's a parade of daydreamers today. No one seems to be looking at anything." Tempo said: "Nobody sees anything." Sinfan climbed up on his chair. He ordered a coffee. Sinfan said: "Where've you been?" I said: "Working hard and having fun." Sinfan laughed: "I hear you a bad wittle Jewish boy of evil genius. Far from being a churchgoer. A traitor to your betters." I laughed: "I must be crazy! I thought you were the bad little Jewish boy evil genius. I am a godfodder Japanese junior Jesus." Sinfan said: "You lucky son of a bitch." Tempo Perdue said: "Everyone has to have their own life. It's better to be in a cage with friends than alone in a rose garden." Suddenly the atmosphere of the street of factory university zombie dreams was filled by a 5 years out of college female shriek: A shriek like the soul of a dying swan machine: Embracing the precursor to an MIT Architect being whipped on her legs by her father with a big birch switch: Because she made a very tiny mistake: Exploded out through the big open window of the Cookery: The shriek screamed: "Of course I'm looking good. I feel like a Daffodil just emerged from old cold dirt to face the sun. You have to talk to David, Sourkraut. He's cheap. He really tries to help people. He's not mercenary like shrinks. He charges fifty dollars a month and it's open house 5 days a week from 7 P.M. on. You can talk to him all night if you need to. There's no: We have to stop now or I'll lose money crap. Sourkraut Baby, just get your vestibule down there." The woman called Sourkraut snapped: "What's his certification, Nora?" Nora screamed: "He's not certified. He writes weird poetry like pictures and writes Chinese with birds. But that's irrelevant. David's a genius. He has an astonishing mind. And he socks it to you. He rips apart lies. David doesn't crap around. Bluebelle's ex-husband used to beat her with coat hangers! She couldn't leave the rat. Then she talked to David. She left her husband. Thanks to David. She met a publisher. They married, got a house in Connecticut, and babies. She got his rocket in her sprocket. People call David The Marriage Breaker. But it's not true. She sent David a lovely thank you note for her new life. David made her see her bondage to her old husband was mean. Her old shrink put her down because her husband was paying him. Most of David's friends live together in Little Italy." Sourkraut snapped: "Does this sound like a cult, Nora?"

fig. 1. DAFFODIL

Nora
 screamed:
 "It is sort of a low
 grade run down psychedelic
 psychiatric singles commune. But don't
 worry, you can be an outpatient like me. They're people
 who want to understand their life and for them David's empathy
 works. He saves lives. You know, David's done more for me in six months
 than ten years of a hundred bucks a throw says you gotta do all the talking and I don't
 have to say anything because the customer is always wrong therapy. You ought to see that
 place. It's like a humanity stuffed Neapolitan slum palace. Long Godfather Cadillacs parked
 half on the sidewalk. Hot Italian stallions in tank tops in every doorway. Butchers with fresh
 lamb skins hanging out over the sidewalk. It's safe. David's protected by the Mafia. Some of
 them, Consigliore or something, come to David's meetings sometimes. I heard one guy brag he
 robbed Tiffany's windows in broad daylight. No one showed up at the Hudson river pier to pay
 for the jewels at the arranged time. He waited 30 seconds then threw all the diamonds into the
 river and escaped. Sourkraut snapped: (slowly) "This is crazy making Nora. He's a liar. No real
 jewel thief would do that. He'd take them to his bittersweet mistress in a cheap and tight satin
 dress in a room with a bare light bulb to stall having to marry her. Unless he's crazy. But then
 again: Why would anyone who wasn't crazy go to this David?" Nora screamed: (faster) "You
 must be right. You have such a really profound Lake Forest sense of reality brain sitting there
 eternally like a hyacinth that never came up. Anyway: There's a big courtyard. A garden. They
 say David planted basil in the garden and Italian women from all over the neighborhood come
 in at night with flashlights to pick the best top new night growth on the basil. It's like medieval.
 Several of his friends are architects. They're in the process of redesigning this space: Three build
 ings surrounding a huge garden. Everyone slaves on the buildings. And David's the master. He
 calls his meetings: Dave's Mind Garage. One of the Columbia architects wears blue French
 mechanics' overalls that have Dave's Mind Garage embroidered in roped silk thread on the
 back. The guy wears white gloves. He's constantly on his knees sweeping up the cigarette
 butts off the dirty wood floor with a whiskbroom and a dust pan. He's almost laughing.
 It's funny what makes people happy. These people know how to smoke! David says all
 work is like polishing a mirror until you realize you're the mirror and then there's no
 mirror." Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "This sounds dumb and scary. Like a dope
 dealer family circle." Nora screamed: (faster) "The first time I went I was
 scared. A Chinese blood red room: A weird cement half cone medieval
 French corner fireplace: A bare bulb in a tiny bathroom: Everywhere
 the smells of bare brick stripped of plaster by a dynamic latent homo
 sexual New Yorker writer proofing masculine labor ability. People
 were sitting in a big circle in folding deck chairs. An investment
 banker next to me was eating a Blimpie sandwich. I was
 a little squeamish about where to put my eyes. I
 feared to see psycho
 hippies or snake pit
 offal. But I lifted up
 my eyes and saw a
 nervous Yale man
 from Texas who
 tried to rape me
 seven seasons ago
 on Long Island at
 Whitney Whיתהא's
 double coming out.

fig. 2. HYACINTH

Then: I saw David
at the other end of the circle of people:
Oversized head: Jumbo brain: Shaggy hair like a tall wet

Jewish) Shepherd: You know the kind: Nose always in books: Skinny: Thick glasses: Dreamy eyes: Bedroom: (Sharp:
Narrow like a snake guarding a treasure. He's a cross between Groucho and the head Rabbi

of Ch)elm and a big hairy pale white chocolate tulip full of candy and nuts. David nodded toward me and (instantly
attacked my high laced hard leather knee boots. David said: 'They're S and M, Nora. Do they lace all the way

up to) your pussy? There's an ingenious way to scare off a man. They're saying don't come near my rough (trade
pussy.' I thought David was trying to get rid of me right away. I thought maybe it was a test. Everyone laughed.

'Right) on, old sport!' some old coot with a big Bismark moustache in a vest with doggy buttons and a (Princeton
tiger tie cheered." Sourkraut snapped: "Bow Wow. OK. He's got a chorus. OK. He's a sharp Kike slob. OK. But what kind of crap is this? It's X-rated." Nora screamed: (faster) "You really haven't heard anything yet, Sunny

Sour)kraut. Wait. To me the boots look kinky chic, Bloomys fourth floor. They actually cut me out a (hundred
dollars. But to David the boots say rock hard jumping saddle leather closed cunt, Get Lost! When I should say open for business. David is a super detective. After a few hard questions about my father, David explained

my) father used to switch me with a birch switch on my legs whenever I made a mistake. My high (leather
boots are protecting me from my father's leg whips. I cried. I smiled. David asked me: 'What do you want to be when you grow down?' I asked: 'What do you mean?' David said: 'There's something very small and

precious buried in you. Like a buried treasure: **Maybe you can find it?**' I said: 'Where is it in my liver? My
kidney?' David looked disappointed as if to say: **'Forge it.'** I looked at the rest of the people. A tall pretty
woman in a mini skirt, in an ocean foaming blonde curls and blue eye shadow: Some men were bearded
in plaids and lumber jackets and some were clean shaven in suits: A Harvard Wall Street lawyer bragging
about how he punched his wife in the stomach when she was pregnant then ran up to a Puerto Rican dance
hall, got to the middle of the dance floor and yelled: 'I hate SPI CSI!' until they beat him: A suave Italian in
a blue suit wearing dark glasses at midnight who was 40 and still lived with his mother and father: An
awkward Jewish squirrel with Harpo eyes wearing nuts in his cheeks: Next to him a doctor at Bellevue:
Then in a whirl the weirdest kid flew into the room. A frail 17 year old fairy from Chicago. He'd run
away from home after his mother died. He wore a white sheet. He had a huge fuzzy blond afro. He was
carrying a pillow. David said: 'Hi! Tommy! How ya doing? How ya doin? The kid said: 'I'm doing great!
David said: 'Still carrying your mother's pillow?' The kid said: 'I threw out my Mother's pillow that
meeting when you asked me what I would do if I lost my Mother's pillow.' David said 'What's that?'
The kid said: 'This is MY pillow.' He smiled like Rita Hayworth. David yelled: 'Bravo! Tommy! You're
a real man!' The kid said: 'No I'm not. I'm a freaky fairy and I know it!' David said: 'Tommy you're
one in a million. Hey did you hear what happened to Chester?' Tommy said: 'The glory hole Queen
who worked for the Red Cross?' David said: 'Yeah. The guy who was compelled to run down to the
men's room at work to suck cock off through a hole between the toilet stall walls.' David looked at
me as if to say: 'And you think you have troubles?' David said: 'Yeah that really nice guy who got
gang raped the first time he went to a fairy bath and cried all the time. He wrote me a great letter
from Viet Nam. He's still with the Red Cross. He's having a really beautiful love affair with a
chopper pilot!' The kid sang: 'Everything is wonderful.' Whistled: 'Have to run.' Sighed:
'I'm really happy!' Yelled: 'Thanks.' Whispered: **'Can I pay you?'** David said: 'Getting
your own pillow paid me more than most. You need your money. Have a great life.'
I try to find a pearl washed up on the shore of the ocean of your being.

The kid said:
'I will.' He
walked out.
David said:
'We'll never
see him again.
He got hold
of his Self'
and smiled.

fig. 3. TULIP

you know
 David smiles like he knows what's really going to happen. Then this really cute little baby doll started talking. This cute little woman's troubles started way back when she was a child and her father played tennis drunk and slammed her face with his big backhand when she wandered onto the court. David says the woman's been looking for abuse ever since. The woman keeps saying it didn't hurt. David says: 'He was a drunk rotten abusive son of a bitch. You call that a father. I call it a Father The Ripper.' You can never tell if David's really angry or pretending anger. David is relentless. David may be talking to one person, but really he's talking to everyone. Sometimes you can see your own shit better in someone else. He always seems to be getting at something on the tip of your mind's tongue. David doesn't let up. Baby doll says she picked up a judge who takes her home with him. Seems his brother is around, and they want to have a fun evening. The judge's idea of fun is to fuck her from behind while she sucks off his brother and then they both piss on her. And then beat her with silk peonies. David goes over and over the incident. David discovers it's not just any old judge. It's her father and her brother! The baby doll is blubbering. David says: 'You do it to yourself! Still getting Dad to whack you! Still a baby. It's the baby who hangs out with creeps like that. Not the grown-up. Time to be adult. An adult can find plenty of decent men in this world. If those creeps come near you call the cops.' She says: 'I'll beat the shit out of them.' David says: 'Good, good! But leave them to heaven. Don't dirty your hands. Call the cops. Throw your garbage in the gutter. Keep your jewels in a safe. There's a treasure buried inside you. Find it. It's what you really are.' Suddenly David looks tired. 'I'm keeping half the people around here's real Selves alive,' he says." Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "Hey! My father used to hit me all the time. So what? What's this weird real Self crap?" Nora screamed: (faster) "It's just ^{v v v v v v v v} *something he* says to people to get them to like themselves instead of hate themselves." Sourkraut snapped: "O this is silly. Everybody likes themselves or they're sick. By the way, how's Leo, Nora?" Nora screamed: (faster) "Leo's married. Leo's a first class shit. I'll tell you later!" Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "But he's rich! What do you want? Blood?" Nora screamed: (faster) "I'm getting to that. OK. Anyway: A really good looking doctor says: 'David, I see pain and suffering all day at the hospital, I don't know if I can take it at home at night too. I deal with it all day. I feel so lousy at night.' David says: 'You know it's interesting that your father owned black and white silver screen movie houses and your mother was a painter and you're a radiologist.' The doctor asks: 'What do you mean?' David says: 'Aren't X Rays black and white film pictures? Maybe you're devoting your life to pretending you're getting your divorced mother and father back together.' Then the doctor told about how he had married a beautiful young woman and had a perfect marriage. Then one night he came home and she was gone. He never found out what happened. She disappeared. He never saw her again. He didn't know where she was. David wouldn't talk about it. David said: 'To talk about this now can only hurt you.' Then the doctor asked: 'Do you think she only married me for my money and left with someone she really liked when she found out I didn't make as much money as she wished that I made?' David said he didn't want to talk about it now.

fig.4. PEONY

sourkraut snapped: (slower) "You're
 damned right she left him because he lied about how much money
 he made. I suppose David didn't want to hurt his feelings so he didn't
 have to get him into a more just marriage. He's no shrink. I don't know what he's
 up to but he's no shrink. Shrinks get doctored into trophy wives that give them their
 They don't let men walk imaginary dead dogs around empty bedrooms crying all
 about Leo? When are you going to get your hands on the money you deserve? He'll leave his wife.
 You're a mega sharp licensed MIT Architect from MIT! She's just a Westchester
 from duuuuh NY Jew. What'd you work for all those years? To slave at a hard job?" Nora screamed:
 (faster) "Leo is mean. He'll just do to me what he's doing to his wife with me." So urkraut snapped:
 (slower) "So what? Close your eyes. Grit your teeth and spread your legs. Leo has millions. All this
 could be yours you foolish little opium dream poppy!" Nora screamed: (faster) "Wait. I'm getting to
 it. When I talked to David about how me an Leo is he'd switch on a tape recorder on an orange crate
 and play opera. He has a theory that great singers are giving back to others their mother's beautiful
 feeding of milk to them, that an aria's the outpouring of: a giving back to others in an adult expression
 of: any infant's happiness at sensing sensations of warm milk in mouth and throat. *O che la mort ognora a a*
Addiooooo Leonorrrrrra, would float through the dump." Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "David could be a
 quack. Is he qualified? Is he even a lay analyst?" Nora screamed: (faster) "Of course he's a quack! David
 tells people if anyone asks about his credentials to say his teacher is a hermaphroditic wart infested black
 Chinese dwarf from Passaic who sells pro kits, towels, and used condoms and reads Howl to gay Tibetan monks
 taking a shit in the men's room in the basement of the Brandywine Theater in Newark." So urkraut said:
 (slower) "What a creep." Nora screamed: (faster) "Listen, Sunny Sourkraut baby, I have no particular
 faith in credentials. Ruthie Le Geue's a psychiatrist from Harvard Medical School, and she's an atomic
 asshole." Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "Stop screaming so loud. I get it. There's something important I
 want to ask you. Do you think if a man and a woman are window shopping on Fifth Avenue and they
 both pick the same furniture for their dream house it means they love each other?" Nora screamed:
 (faster) "I do: If it's real well designed unpretentious furniture. OK: Something David's doing makes
 me feel better. Beneath David's brutal river of verbiage I sense compassion. And his dedication is
 beyond reproach: Empathy is his whole life. For a piddling fee he works preposterous hours. If
 someone is in dire need, David will talk to them all night. Free. His insights are dead center. I went to
 Tuffuss my old shrink and he said everything David said was right. And he told me later he
 spent 6 hours trying to figure out how you can make money helping people. He said it's
 impossible. I thought either David's rich or he has a wife that lets him live poor. I
 checked it out. He's divorced. He has no money. I asked David why he
 charges so little. David said: 'People smart
 enough to realize
 that they should
 become their
 Self won't
 pay a lot.
 Only
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 grandeur
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 goody
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 ders
 will.'

fig. 5. POPPY

Sourkraut snapped: (s lower)
 "You're not supposed to
 say things like that."
 Nora screamed: (faster)
 "OK! OK! OK! OK! OK! SO
 I asked David how he can do what he
 does David scratched his head
 and said: "Well you
 know
 what
 Otto
 Fenichel used to say."

"what?" David gave me the message
 from *The Collected Papers of Otto Fenichel*,
 #23, *Respiratory Interojection*, to copy out and to memorize:
 "It appears that in the taking over of another's expressive movements,
 the first act in every process of empathy, that the taking over of the rhy-
 thm and kind of breathing play a considerable role." I tried to copy Da-
 vid's rhythm and kind of breathing but I got scared! He doesn't breathe
 the!" Sourkraut snapped: (slower): "Empathy! A Nazi general is his hero! Bull
 shit! O yes he does! He talks all the time. His talking is his breathing! O he's a clever devil. Why do you think
 people like music? It changes listeners breathing. They start to breathe like it! Watch out Nora! Sharp am I Time
 Magazine was I on? A conscious Cagliostro you're dealing with! Shit bombed by a merciless Mesmer you're getting!
 A rotten frog under a rancid psychotic water lily pad that will turn into a prince never. I worked in a very large mental
 hospital one summer. It's really good for college applications to help poor sick underprivileged drips. I've seen hundreds
 of Davids. He's a paranoid schizophrenic superiority complex manic depressive impotent multi personality passive aggressive
 sociopath! They're quite common. Always trying to undermine their friends. You're in imminent danger! Get away from the illegal
 sick monster. What's wrong with Leo and cereal for breakfast with the kids and driving them to school in a station wagon? In
 Hollywood! So what if Leo screws around? He'd do it for you! Get down and dirty Nora! Get Leo by the balls and squeeze it
 for Jesus." Nora screamed: (faster) "All you ever want to do is get your mother jealous of you. When you walk down the aisle
 you want to walk down the aisle with someone who's so rich it'll make your mother drop dead. I don't want that! I want my
 own life! David fights for people's rights to live their own way. One hot night we were meeting out in David's garden.
 Italian women were leaning on pillows out of the windows overlooking the meeting. David announced: 'More than
 anything, women fear abandonment.' He looked straight at me with his crazed New Jersey snake eyes. He fingers his
 beard. He says to me after a while, 'You know, I don't feel sorry for you. Not one bit. No one leaves anyone else.
 It takes two. The person who was left often provokes it because they're afraid of being passive and waiting for
 someone to ditch them.' David knew I hadn't wanted to talk about how my husband had left me at all. David
 barks: 'And stop feeling like a victim. He left you because you were too smart for him. Let him go fuck a
 TV Cluck. You get someone like you!' An Italian woman yelled down from a high window: 'Listen to
 David. He's right!' Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "O my god. He got a chorus up in the clouds like
 Airistoughfunnaes' *The Clods*." Nora screamed: (faster) "Of course! Now David said: 'Why do
 you look so homely? Plain? Why don't you do something about your hair? Wear some makeup?
 Get rid of that long dowdy dress? No one smart will go near a sad wrack in a potato
 sack!' I said: 'Leo never complains.' David yelled: 'Who?' I said: 'Leo. I
 came here to be able to get rid of Leo! Remember!' David laughs
 like a fake Jewish owl: "Ho Ho Ho Hoo! Hu Hu Hu Hu!
 Hee Hee Hee Heeee! Leo! How'd you find one
 with a name like that Nora?"  said.

fig. 6. WATER LILLY

'I don't get it.' David said: 'O che la mort
 ongnora Leo and Nora. Verdi. Il Trovatore. In A Night at
 the Opera. The guy whose mother sold him out! To get revenge on his
 father! The guy singing in the tower! Addddio Leo Nora a a aaaaa!' Suddenly
 David gives orders to two women: 'Asia and Africa! Please! Take this living 'Miserere' aria of
 a Self-hating excuse for a woman to the toilet and show her how to put on makeup. And tell her where to
 have her hair fixed. By going to the toilet she'll avoid playing the toilets!' I said: 'Make up looks garish on
 me.' An Italian woman yelled down: 'Listen to David. He's right.' The women did my face in the john. I looked
 in the cracked mirror. I looked like Joan Crawford in *Rain*. We made a grand entrance into the garden. David said:
 'There, that's more like it! Walking around looking like a drowned swan is a form of self-hate, Leoandnora. If you
 don't love your body, who else will? When you come back here again you'll be saying: The morning glories are in bloom.
 Life anyone? Never forget that you're going to eat the black sandwich, folks. Now's the time to fight to live. To live within.
 To be your Self.' David nodded toward a bright young Wall Street Broker: 'Stan had acne all over his face. I asked him if he
 ever told it to go away, He said no. I told him to start. He started sensing his acne and yelling in his sensations of his acne: Go
 away! Go away! His acne cleared up in 3 weeks. And what about Bruise? He got the elephant man disease moon craters on his
 face sand papered. His skin is smooth as a baby's tuchus now! You know his father had it all over his cock. They called him
 Grapefruit Dick. Get on the road to Self-love. Inner change is slow. But you can send loud verbal orders into your mind that'll
 get your outer being to change fast. The trouble with most people is they let their own minds get away with murder. I'll tell you
 what I said to Malcolm X a few years ago when I passed by him on the street in front of King's County Hospital while he was
 demonstrating by refusing to talk to white people. I said to him: "You're right! Don't take shit from anyone. Not even your own
 mind. And thanks for not talking to me. I've enjoyed it." We smiled. No. No. No. Leoandnora. Don't take any shit from anyone
 and you'll be able to attract a Mister Wonderful. Marriage and a house in Connecticut. If you want that sort of thing.' I said: 'I
 can't give Leo up.' David turned to his friends. He said: 'A classic case, Do you see it? She was acting out taking Leo away
 from her mother. That's often what the two-woman over a man triangle is all about. And this Leo's in crying little girl heaven.
 He's saying, "Ooooooh!" David shivers voluptuously, his voice up an octave, 'Fight over me, girls!' David turns back to me:
 'Go read Ernest Jones on *Hamlet*. It's all in Ernest Jones.' David looks around at his friends: 'A perfect example of a
 defense.' He gives a long discourse on the defenses of the ego. Rationalizing. Repressing. Denying. Projection. Dis
 placement. Sublimation. Masturbation. Self-love. Candy.' Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "What is this, the god
 damn New School?" Nora screamed: (faster) "Anyway: David said: 'Many women leaving a lousy boy friend
 are dead, withdrawn, bitter. The y come out of it saying, **Men are all pigs**. You have a wish to live. But
 you're desperate to keep your Self attached to a shit. *Have to have* Leo. What's this *have to have* crap?' I
 said: 'You don't understand. The *have to have* is just what I can't give up.' David said: 'Any
 body can do anything. Read *Night Flight* by St. Ex upéry. You compulsively try to get
 rats to love you. Tell Leo, Tough shit. A good future is possible. Dogs live and
 die and they never know what hit them. You're not a dog. You are a human
 being. So do what a dog couldn't do! Yes. Read St. Exupéry's *Nigh*
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fig. 7 MORNING GLORY

(This lovely intelligent woman may)
(never get to be her Self and)
(may never give up work)
(ing like a dog to get)

David grinned as he said: 'So what's so great about Leo? Does he have an eight foot cock? With flying feathers of every color of the rainbow ensconced? On which sits a cactus on an eagle on Queen Isabella of Spain's left labia? Or is it all on the ash tray in her labia under the poster for Spike Jones Does Chastooshka starring Mickey Katz?' David sang: 'Down The Petersky! Vir gayen Down The Petersky! Down the Petersky gayen vir! Down the Petersky gayen vir! Down The Petersky! Vir gayen Down The Petersky!' I smiled. David said: 'What kind of shits do you hang around? They're a pack of cruel sadists. And you want to suffer? You love the pain?' 'Do you love being in pain?' I answered: 'No! How can anyone want to live in pain?' 'I'm hooked on pleasure. Sexually Leo and I are hand washes hand. He never whips me. He just spits on my nose when he comes! It's just innocent fun.' David said: 'You're a closet S and M pair. He doesn't literally use whips and lashes, but in reality he's a whipper. It's not true you don't love the pain. And please don't tell me what innocent things you don't do to him. The situation's the proof! You picked it. You stayed in it. It's your pain bath.' Suddenly David wasn't angry. I saw he could stop on a dime. He lit a cigarette and smoked it all the way down. He said: 'When you want to learn how to start something Leo and Nora first you have to learn how to stop it and you'll be just plain Nora. Get rid of your love affair with pain! Stop! Otherwise it won't matter if you ditch Leo. Because you'll get another Leo. There are plenty of Leos waiting in the wings. Whole city blocks of them. Just waiting. They can smell Noras a mile off. O here comes one! Yippee!' David whooped, rubbing his hands like a New Jersey Fagin: 'What a lovely spectacle my darling. A sweetheart in love with pain my darling. More pain! More pain! Let me writhe in your lovely bathtub of pain with crab infested socks on darling! Have you ever seen anything so terrible?' The Italian Women yelled down: 'Listen to David! He's right!' David said: 'Throw Leo away. Flush him down the toilet. You need Leo like you need last year's Tampax tomorrow evening at a quarter to nine. The next time he calls tell this Leo to fuck off. The lousy mean little gafaerlicht rat. Tell him you'll call the cops. And if he still won't get lost you can always come and hide out down here in this veil of tears.' Suddenly David's beaming: 'Tell Leo you have the clap and you thought he and his old lady ought to know.' David scratched his hair: 'You're not helpless. You don't need to love Leo. Love your Self. Never put your love on anything without holding a part back on your Self. You need to love your Self. Have you ever tried that? No one can do it to you the way you can!' I said: 'What?' David said: 'Loving yourself.' I said: 'I think about Leo all the time.' David said: 'Don't think! It's deadly! Realize! Take back your love off Leo! Cathect your love that's flowing onto Leo back onto your Self.' I said: 'What's cathect?' David said: 'Take your energy off Leo and put your energy in your vagina and wiggle. Love yourself. The hardest thing in the world is to take your love off of another hand get it back on your Self. Start jerking off. No need to depend on someone else to feel good. No need for desperation. You don't want to be a person who's desperate. Become your own mother. Be good to your Self. Give your Self pleasure. Do you know you have a Self?' He gently strums in the air over his crotch an invisible owl and pussycat medieval ukelele. Switches on his tape recorder: Verdi: 'O o o o che la mort ognora aaaaaaddio Leonora. Use a little K-Y jelly,' he says, dreamily strumming. 'Or flower petals. Yummmmm, soft, nice petals. Cactus flowers in the pink desert. Yaw the tops. Yaaaaaw King Kong's penis. Yaw the tops. Yaaaaw the breasts of Venus. Yaaaaaw the purple light on a summer night in Spaaaaain. Yaaaaw Garbo's pussy. Yaaaaaaw nice and mushy. Yaw cellophan^e.'

(slurp.)

fig. 8 CACTUS

I looked around and saw everyone smiling.
 I cried. David said: "This is the way: Love your Self.
 Yes. Your Self can feel good all the time. What put the ape in
 apricot? What put the rife in strife? What made the Marvell winged
 chariot fly away from T.S. Eliot? What made the clematis vine for life!
 What made the pansy ante up the pantie? What've they got that you ain't
 got? A Self! Search for your Self! Find your Self! Sense your Self. Sense
 your head and Say: 'I.' Then sense your entire being. Say: 'I am alive.' Then
 sense your head. Say: 'I.' Then sense your entire being. Say: 'I wish to live.'
 Then sense your vagina and say: 'I love my Self.' Go ahead." Sourkraut
 snapped: (slower) "The goddam male chauvinist pig!" Nora screamed
 (faster) "I suppose David is a male chauvinist. He's always telling
 ing women to dress up and service men and he's always telling
 men to dress up and service women. He's always saying there are no men or women there are only
 persons. And down deep they're all the same. His pet test question about a new boy friend's honorable inten-
 tion: Does he lick your pussy? Anyway: So. Then David told me to kiss my hand and say: 'I love Nora.' I couldn't
 do it. I was afraid to kiss my own hand! The odd thing is when I talk to David I feel strong. He takes away what you never
 had and he gives you what you always had. He gives away what people sell and he sells what people give away. He takes
 away your idea that you can't afford to be something deep inside you that's hiding: Waiting to live." Sourkraut snapped:
 (slower) "Watch out! Watch out! Snake pit twilight zone funny farm clone! Ear th calling Nora Dollhouse! Earth
 Calling Nora! You're out of your tree!" Nora screamed: (faster) "Yes. It's curious. I do feel grounded. That night when
 I got home I touched my vagina for the first time in years. It felt good. Anyway. To continue: David asked: 'Know what
 men want? Well, I'll tell you what they do n't want: Rata t at tat! Rata tat tat! Machi ne gun teeth: Sandpaper sneers: Lemon
 juice quarrels. They don't want a woman who cuts, clutche*s, and criticiz*es. Men have plenty of wounds of their own. Why
 should they get cut by your slices?' David winked at me: 'I'll tell you what real men want. A woman to smile at them. Like
 their mother. They want to be licked and they're willing to lick to get it. Like ice-cream cones. Sex is regression to infancy
 Licking, sucking, slurp slurp slurp slurp. Mother's milk. Men and women together want to be babies again. They want to
 crawl back into their mother. Baby skin on baby skin. They like to be licked, just like you. Nicely. Gently. Mmmmm.'
 He went to work on an invisible ice cream cone. Everyone watched happily enjoying the invisible ice cream. Sud-
 denly: Clutching his beard with one hand and extending his other arm like Moses, David said: 'Now you can walk!
 He stood up, eyes glittering, extending one arm out. Thro w d own your crutches and kiss your hand! Just like
 Charlton Heston imitating Ayn Rand imitating Cecil B. D e Mille imitating a high class wasp in the Ten
 Commandments.' Then I started laughing. I was crying, b ut it came out laughter. I guess due to David
 doing his stupid imitation of Charlton Heston. I kissed my hand for the first time in my life. I said:
 'I love you,' to my hand. My face was wet with tear s. I was so happy! David is amazing. I tell
 you I've seen him do miracles and he doesn't seem to think anything of it. He just poo
 poos it. When people told him something h e did was a miracle he said: 'Being
 alive is the only miracle.' Then a guy talk (the po ed about how it took him forever
 to pee. His mother had sent him a p (st card) ost card from Niagara Falls.
 He put the post card over his toil (of Nia) et. He started looking at
 (gara Fa)
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fig. 9. PANSY

Then a guy told us all how his father made him and his two brothers excavate his basement every day all summer vacation for three years. They never saw the light of day. And to get even with their hard father they learned how to fuck each other in the ass all at once under the house. They called them bent pigs. Then a guy talked about how he learned how to climb out of his crib. Get a chair. Push it to the lights. Climb down. And climb back into his crib. His mother caught him and beat him for being a smart ass. David told him every day. The guy said he never would. David said: 'You'll see. You're in terrorizing your mother. You think terrorizing your mother is love.' Then an investment banker talked about how he was so afraid of his mother. You'll be a baby dependent on a later and yelled: 'I did it! I put my foot on the kitchen linoleum!' David said: 'Next week! Boiling Water!' Then a woman started complaining about how when her husband went to hit her to save herself she had to hold the baby up in front of her to get her husband to hit the baby. Then a guy talked about how he used to get splinters on his cock from humping the wood shingles on the roof of his house while he watched his mother bathing down through the skylight and how he was always falling off beds, ladders, vans, etc. and spraining his cock. Then a woman started talking about how she liked it when her father spanked her with a hairbrush but her husband an English professor wouldn't do it because he was a speed freak into black used and unwashed New York Athletic Club spandex jock straps on her nose. Then a terribly odor sensitive girl talked about how she was leaving her husband even though she loved his mind because he used the wrong soap. Then a very rich Brazilian woman talked about how she couldn't stay away from the Lincoln Towers Jerk Off Club." Sour kraut snapped: (faster) "Comedians. What's that?" Nora screamed: (faster) "Then a man talked about how his mother went on his honeymoon with him and every six hours checked him and his wife's pubes for crabs with a flashlight."

fig. 10. ORCHID

Then David asked
 a severe air force officer
 who kept saying he didn't know
 what he really wanted to do with his
 life to close his eyes to see what came into
 his mind. The man said: 'I saw my Self making
 pottery. I've always dreamed of making pottery. Three
 months later he was making and selling pottery to really big
 stores. Then a script girl from Hollywood came in with a bent para
 lyzed arm. She couldn't hold a pen or write. David figured out in 20
 minutes she was freezing her arm like a cowboy holds reins to try to
 symbolically hold on to a western movie actor who'd jilted her on
 location in Mexico. When she heard this her arm moved. She could
 write! She was so happy!" Sourkraut snapped: (slower) "Of course
 her arm moved! David's godsdams Jesus! Isn't he a goddam Freud!
 Isn't he goddam Frank! Isn't he goddam Sammy! Isn't he goddam
 Dean! Isn't he goddam Jerry! Isn't he goddam Chubby Checker! Isn't
 he a goddam Rock Hudson! Isn't he goddam Doris Day! Isn't he the
 goddam Katzenjammer kids! Isn't he goddam Sbrain Listerene! (slower
 and slower) Isn't he goddam psychedelic! Isn't he goddam Lenny
 Bruce! Isn't he goddam JFK! Isn't he goddam Bobby! Isn't he god
 dam Teddy. Isn't he goddam Elvis Penis! Isn't he goddam Donovan!
 Isn't he goddam Martin Luther King! Isn't he a goddam Mustang!
 Isn't he goddam Johnny U! Isn't he goddam Griff! Isn't he goddam
 Liberace! Isn't he goddam Paul! Isn't he goddam John! Isn't he god
 dam Abbey Road! Isn't he goddam Abby Hoffman! Isn't he goddam
 Abby Mt. San Michel! Isn't he goddam Andy Campbell! Isn't he a
 goddam GTO! Isn't he a goddam Camaro! Isn't he? Isn't he? Isn't he?
 (even lower and slower) No! No! Nora! He isn't! I'll tell you what
 he is! He's a goddam Murph the Surf! He's goddam Charles Manson!
 He's the goddam Mad Bomber! He's goddam Tricky Dicky! He's a
 goddam Fidel! He's a goddam Hitler! He's a Self proclaimed! Self
 serving chauvinist! Pig! Whacko! Ninny! Creepo! He's an insanely
 weird yucked enchilada! Ego! Power! Trip! Loose cannon. And you bet
 ter watch out or goodbye Leso. You turn that precious Self of yours in
 to a Venal Fly Trap or you'll never get your hands on all that money!"
 Nora screamed: (faster) "Screeee (i feel like a daffodil stepped on by a
 horse) eeeech!" Sourkraut snapped: (extremely lower and slower)
 "You pathetic little psycho issues flower child." Nora screamed:
 (faster) "Screeeeeee (i feel like a hyacinth crushed by a truck) eee
 eeeeeeeech!" Sourkraut snapped: (extremely lower and slower)
 "You're worse than a drug head! You're a sick head! You're turn
 ing into a page out of Bawdylair's Flowers Of Mental Illness!" Nora
 screamed: (a bit faster) "Screeeeeee (i feel like a tulip ground into dirt
 by a cow hoof) eeeeeeeech!" Sourkraut snapped: (extremely lower
 and slower) "You're the whole goddam sick garden! Your career path
 is shit!" Nora screamed: (even faster) "Screeeeeee (i feel like a peony
 bombed by bull shit) eeeeeeeech!" Sourkraut snapped: (extremely
 slower and slower) "You look like shit!" Nora screamed: (far faster)
 "Screeee eeeee (i feel like a poppy pissed on by an elephant) eeeeeee
 eeeeeee ch!" Sourkraut snapped: (extremely lower and
 slower) "If you're poor mother!" Nora screamed: (much faster)
 "Screeee eeeee eeee (i feel like a morning glory gnawed
 by rat fangs) eeeeeeeech!" Sourkraut snapped:
 (even more extremely lower and slower)
 "You're going to end up with
 nothing but your Self."

fig. 11. VENAL FLY TRAP

Suddenly:

Sinfan was falling all over the place like wind thrown petals off a lead chrysanthemum. Suddenly: Sinfan was on the ground doubled up in laughter. The two young professional women called Nora and Sourkraut poked their heads out from behind the corner of the big open café window. I gave them the Mickey Mouse smile. Their faces were white as a Wellesley toilet seat. Sinfan gave them the wiggling finger: Hopped up on his chair. He zipped and unzipped his fly. He winked. Nora and Sourkraut gasped. They turned. They ran. Sinfan chortled over and over again: "You Evil Genius, you! They think you're a shrink! Imagine! They think you're a shrink!" Finally he stood up on his chair and Sinfan said: "Do you mean they don't know what you are? They don't know what you are? They don't know what you are?" Tempo said: "Nobody sees anything. They're blind." I said: "They don't have the foggiest notion of what they really are. Or what it would mean for them if they could live from their real Self. They just want to get the residue of their parents dog training in their mind to kiss them. Some of them are very bright. They're pleasant people. Maybe they can see there is happiness. Some are decent. They get as close as a microbe's eyelash to realizing they have a buried Self! Then they fizzle. It's tragic. But they're Dog Training Asskissers. Their Self is buried in cement." Tempo asked: "It's impossible to help advertising suckers. What are you going to do, David?" I said: "I've almost learned all I can from this. I can sit in a chair 10 hours straight talking through human barbed wire down to the buried human Self. In a year or two I'm going to use all the focused mental energy skill I can develop to focus my attention on and change my life its Self. Yes. I'm going to change my life its Self. I don't believe it is impossible. I want to see if I can go up by my Self. From my Self. And change it. With out any help. Sometimes I get exhausted but I'm in pretty good shape. I want to see if I can give up my inherent breath tempo." Tempo said: "You can't give something up unless you have something to take its place." Sinfan said: "You know being smart is a handicap in this world of ninety per cent unevolved insight incapable plain speaking dullards. Even harsher than being a highly evolved advanced pituitary zapped hunchback Asian midget. If any one can do it, you can do it, you lucky son of a bitch. So you're going to do it from your Self?" I said: "Yes. I am." Tempo Perdue said: "If you don't lie down some times you'll fall down. Get your rest. I always get my rest." Sinfan said: "What are you trying to do David! annihilate everything in you but what you really are? To be free! So your giant mouth of wild spontaneity can scream out streamers of silk of all colors! To be free! So your vast intuition can grow huge wings and fly the world like a bat! To be free! To be free! So your marbled turtle brain can grow feet and take a walk in the sun! You are smart!" I said: "I am." Sinfan said: "O, by the way, you nervy little Jewish Evil Genius you, I'll be dead in a few years. The Bomb couldn't. The Cancer will. Do me a favor. Where a line meets a circle stop. Rest in extremes. Go through life like an ancient fording a swift stream on slippery rock bare foot. Don't kill your Self. When I die I would like it if you would live a little for me." I said: "I will." We had a pleasant little chat: On Fluctuation's Intention Year Cycles Of Intensity In Widespread Giddy Giddy Attenuation At Persecution Of The Id: There after we parted. As I walked down to my work from far up on Eighth Street I heard Tempo and Sinfan yell once, much louder than I've ever heard any one yell: "L is ten to D avid!"

fig. 12 SPIDER CHRYSANTHEMUM