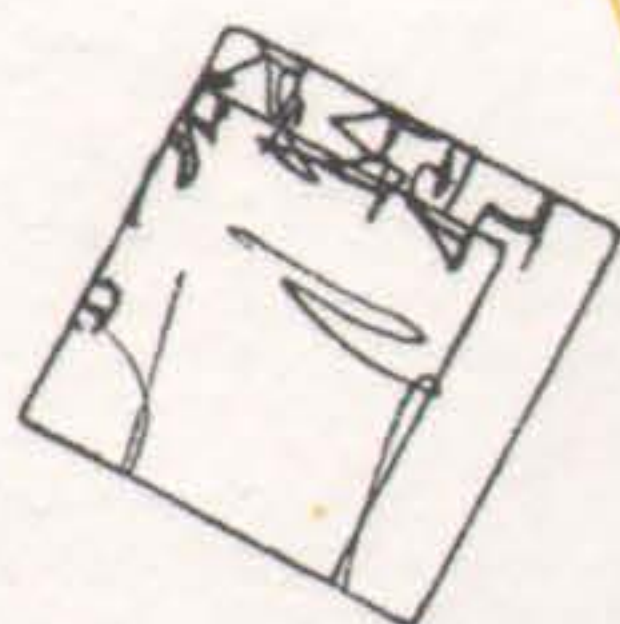


THE BUSSES

STEVE BENSON



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REV. J. H. HENSON



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STEVE BENSON



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Socrates: . . . And do you accept my description of the process of thinking?

Thaetetus: How do you describe it?

Socrates: As a discourse that the mind carries on with itself about any subject it is considering. You must take this explanation as coming from an ignoramus, but I have a notion that, when the mind is thinking, it is simply talking to itself, asking questions and answering them, and saying yes or no. When it reaches a decision--- which may come slowly or in a sudden rush--- when doubt is over and the two voices affirm the same thing, then we call that its 'judgment.' So I should describe thinking as a discourse, and judgment as a statement pronounced, not aloud to someone else, but silently to oneself.

Thaetetus: I agree.

Socrates: It seems, then, that when a person thinks of one thing as another, he is affirming to himself that the one is the other.

You train your
mind on a certain
kind of statement

Interval

listing	listening
	hiding out
	listening all the time

On the bus— words walled in
Too much excitement and tension

Hi, this is the voice of Vernon Leder

"No! That's not
the way I see it."

Random cycles screening
 I recycle the words as I see them passing before
 my brain before I write them down
 There is no cleverness intended in them
 Rather just I think Thank you
 the tendency therefore I'm for continuity
 inebriation eclipsing both the sun This is not
 of the the stars fall out of systematic
 fresh the sky the big blue if it were to be
 refreshing eye resolving reduced to one
 complex and as it shelters the coil it would be
 precise, limited tending or touring a sentence
 by what is thought from one to another a scheme
 is known no certainty to place a reason
 First we count the firm logic of its matrix an intuition
 all four of them then in the meantime at supper
 a sentence grows for the sake of add the words
 the names restrained retrained retained anyway you see
 No need to write *sic* after them the resistance
 Or to apply them to a specific theme gather against
 that was facetious when it started them
 on your insecurity

looking across
 the room literally
 but not seeing
 how far the distance
 when you're on the phone
 except the cord
 tangles on your way to the door
 if you remember I
 wanted to watch your TV
 Walking on this edge
 carrying your little card
 the symbol of a negotiable man with its
 certain words I like certain compulsive empathy
 words I don't of thoughtless contingencies
 Again co-opted by one's rights made socially ideal
 What's that? What's the matter ignoring the nonpreposterity
 with that, this? The of the room
 locution confuses the occasion, location
 Problem solving Again and again
 isn't done. What's more, I called
 I'm not working to make matters worse
 some role out In the far part of the room
 so much as I want A tree, in where a broom won't reach
 necessary checks the middle of the false claims eyes make
 to crash against part a tangent of territory
 interior remains
 taken care of, bounce there but not back
 The lines dictate till hair part taken for no good but
 translation falls over some vision
 imagined something Roles, models, forms perspective question
 not so much to say as twilight setting the scene bounces on
 phrasing, forced out on some splintering axis

Photography really is
 a wonderful thing.
 Remembering our dialogue
 of the other day, I stop
 thinking and just remember
 the tone of it, nothing,
 something, preoccupation,
 what I was thinking of
 is taken in the form of
 remembering what was done
 with it, as though the
 dialogue was prophesy, or
 gave form for its
 contingency & fictitiousness to
 what I think of anyway, lately
 Picking his pocket
 while dancing to 'soul'
 sounds more straightforward
 than the kind of unconscious
 flirting I was converting
 fascinated into wondering if I would
 allow to have you
 Oddly occupy a dream
 a lover state with me
 seems not so
 far off base
 to me vis politics' way of bringing the case
 around to me---
 To change seats doesn't make
 a dent. One is inclined to make a story.
 Otherwise the possibilities are lost
 in the refusal other than to generalize.
 cars shattering insides of
 his head but guided further
 away by the local attentions
 of this lover. Any name means
 someone new. John's name solidly
 stayed the premise of revolting air,
 stood not relaying but saying
 the necessary thing.

What good is
 another? In what sense
 do I want concord or
 contradiction, what's
 resistance, what's just
 watching and exchanging
 reactions anyway floating
 there . . . "Embodied" or
 personified life, begging
 the question marks, spot
 trickling to spot; "Melancholy"
 isn't fashionable/"radical"; I
 in my too-tight dress
 stepping over gardens, proud
 or "glad" to be gay as you
 prefer--- chomp through this
 bit of cloverleaf in emulation
 of earthquake's failure to imagine---
 Snap shut the close
 making the story less
 continuous than one of
 us persistent to the other
 continues to be. Are
 my words too
 similar?
 Catatonia set
 in on Mark.
 His left eye
 blinked and the
 right eye looked
 blankly ahead.
 The landscape
 surged and folded with
 the sunset, the earthquake
 and peak rush hour freeway
 traffic. A voice, his lover's
 voice cracked calling him
 down the stairway.
 Running as though spilled
 he got to his side and held
 there, wishing for sleep,

Laws suffice; remind us
 to idiocy. The third degree
 salesmen hand out,
 salespeople, long to regard,
 the pleasant running of the
 bath into the tub,
 listening for the sound of
 your/my name, I am
 transfixed, absorbed with
 wonder at the thought of
 all this happening to me
 animated particles and
 refreshing alterations
 of time and place
 and condition and
 contiguity, or am I repeating
 myself? We now leave
 the memory of Boston
 and fade into a format
 unpleasing to the jittery
 driver, who peels back his
 sweatshirt to reveal
 a deep chest, a nondescript
 tattoo formulated
 as rice cakes to
 substantiate a
 few claims to
 a motivated ex-
 istence; light
 shines directly
 down on the
 upside-down town-
 scape I inhabit in
 my creepy crawly
 erector set sensibility---
 A house the size of a city.
 An uncertainty defiantly
 defensively asserting
 itself again and
 cluttering memory
 with its disman-
 tled prospects.

The Bronx Zoo is
 such a place. Business
 people go after drinks
 and chat about
 futures in race wars
 and hopes for retirement
 extremes, dates, pretensions
 The exuberant follow always
 with us, within us,
 driving down
 hallucinated roads---
 an elaborate hoax perpet-
 uated along the lines of
 uated along the lines of
 freewheeling opportunistic
 conventionalities.
 The typical is absurd.
 The white is yellow.
 My legs are too long for
 this room. What is
 constant, irrelevant
 to the occasion? A good
 question lasts, my
 "head" undergoes
 impetuous, evasive
 change. Once
 asked, is set into
 motion,
 let's leave
 it for the moment,
 let it boomerang
 back on us--- the mo-
 ment of insight, reg-
 istration of an illusion
 drops as does a bucket into
 the well of expiration
 and the necessity to
 breathe deep makes
 itself felt once
 again, so bodies
 are "real" and
 can ground plans.

First and foremost I was trying to realize
 formulated by cat hairs an ideal form but I was
 all over the clothes stopped at an intersection
 of the massive butcher presumably at any rate
 with a pained smile the cop told me it was
 breaking tradition over having forced me to pull over
 the hull of a remodeled My head was bandaged with
 tanker. He sought the words thoughts of this ideal form
 he had heard so often with which I wrestled unable
 in recent days, in to get out the car door
 advertising, the press he was leaning on, filling
 talk around him, video the ticket out in duplicate
 speeches, community sings--- explaining this was just
 fried rice for dinner. routine and nothing to get
 He'd had enough beer. defensive about.
 It'd be okay. His function A square barge came floating
 in modern defense had been around, soft and cylindrical, like
 assured him, a role in the--- fashion in the ice floes of couturiers.
 but did he--- his language--- he I went to hear at the master's house
 was *not* the figment of a paltry seemed helplessly engendered with indifference
 imagination, even if--- he was of me. The brutal fallacy of facticity---
 really the only sense he'd--- "*It's so weird out. What do you think is*
 I'm soothed, anyway, *happening, with the air?*" "*I don't know. I*
 when I calm myself thinking *think it's getting overloaded, with something.*"
 in terms of wish-fulfillment, that The spelling was
 I can put anything together peculiar. Always two
 A lot of varied impulses, the cold shoulder, wrinkled or three pencilled-in
 marginal paraphernalia with time's stain, of ham statutes compromising
 in my sleep, as it were, or a roast, nice for the the innocent head of
 compared in passing holidays, but I'm the sleeping justice.
 merely with some others softer now,--- that's They had turned the
 but not looking dead at not ringing I look out interest off their names
 them. for me, is the fat hole in order to increase
 it, after all. fitted in to the value of derivation.
 The lesson learned, preconceived I can barely cross off
 extracted, as it expectations--- my forces in the blur
 were, from the Dangling from an opportunity of stretching back to
 baleful reactions we the skin of to dock my sinking seal my arms
 gave my tipping the cooking ship, to bail out against the rubber
 credo, wobbling pudding were frantically at hoist relaying
 incentive arched over globs of as yet some tourists, tight calm messages
 restless, evasive unestablished amid the groans of triangles over
 circumstance went on to of other ships the parkway
 like a boil over describe, sensation way off away... system idling
 peas, practice trickling that way so much space at the docks.
 grew shelter as consideration I don't see. He had said
 in effect defense with which you enough. He
 and solitude aren't obliged, rampaged against
 against the it must be admitted, the walls of the house
 exhaustion of the necessarily to agree as though they were the
 evidence in time. headboards of his child's bed.

It's funny
 This leaf how a thought gets encapsulated
 Now you know is falling by its form, a form, any form,
 what I don't like to its grave and loses its identity
 is when you leave it open to you--- you take it over
 upside down Put it all with the presumption of pattern
 when you're together squeeze without even having
 away it tight anything to decorate in
 Exploding into your Because then you get the particular
 sonic sphere indication--- more than When I start
 Exploding in the sense that suggestion--- talking it comes out
 literary means use the word the effect more, than fact, all the same
 to mean shock and impact admittedly, of design--- voices. Not that
 and new uses and long- design? No--- exploding black man saying
 range unpredictable like you want it to "The sooner Jesus
 consequences, impressive burns everything up
 yet what is it exactly? There is the better for all
 No one knows, because it's no leaf of us."
 gone, exploded, no good I think I want this cover
 anymore. for protection. It looks good.
 It guards against
 What do you think? wind and rain.
 Do you think more than enough? It guards against
 A voice Is thinking a defensive reaction? his upsetting me
 a little old man Unlistenable answers too much or
 in my head The sun bright in my eyes me him.
 silent Which he didn't think enough Or not enough either
 The power of silence Admittedly for that matter.
 sitting in dread I just like to watch him
 wait As though it had some inevitable consequence
 or seems silent when actually anything might happen
 independent of our capacity for escape

Comes along here at about 5 to 8
miles per hour in her little red Corvette
Nobly maturing— she's got what you
might call a sort of lunacy or
branch of downright idiosyncrasy
attached to a case of leaves in the
back of the car with which she speaks
and when she says anything about
what she'd like to do tonight you listen
because you know you're not going to
hear any ideas you're not going to
hear any ideas that anybody else is
going to give you— that's the voice of
fission speaking— when she speaks
it cracks: open it and the tape
doesn't crack, or run out, it frays all over the place so you
have to pick it up and look at it to see the way it tangles
the floor, space, and your hands—
if there's a table there, or the desk,
let's say you got a mob scene in on a
Saturday night— everybody drinking
Wild Turkey and Colt 45— What do you
think is the chance anybody's really going
to stay away from the floor with
or fix the TV set? Listen, let me
to put something else on the needle
and that may give you some idea how
she means. She's got some stamps in here
in her— I don't mean those little
boiled-eyed bald-oiled ideas you'll be
— it's not mechanical and it's not natural
I don't mean— I swear there ain't

Holding a baby up by the
hind legs, a doctor slaps
and sets her down
again on the white surface
the illusion of
Green. Grain fields swamps
Tuesdays alternate throughout
forty years dramatically
throughout his forties
that keep you within reach as
dramatically unties the knots
that keep within reach as
amassing flotilla of lumberboats
outside my discipline.

All records. Available.
If you don't have it,
I can get it for you Sunday
I don't have anything I
have to do that day but
speculate so it seems to
me my body's free to assimilate
information so long as
my mind's at ease.

"I want to hear what you're doing"
he said. I felt
used, indicted, like a matter
because I always feel that
way in other people's eyes
and this was simple
I was going to Las Vegas
for my honeymoon, alone, when
the hotel burned and I
changed my mind.

It'd been a long time, I
thought back, since
I'd been alone.

before she realized she knew exactly what she was going to
She wanted to go to the bathroom because she confused
or wanted to confuse the excuse for the escape.

Bones weather
turmoil dust
feet

Pharmaceutical
lodgings, please.
Going up!

The backers
shillyshallying our
democratic neighbors
ballyhooing the longevitous
distance like wiseacres
on a country squaredance.

Whattery tryina do
hurt my toes? Dont ya
think I got enough fingers
to care for marginalia?!

Never the barber
but usually the tone
of obstreperous indi-
vidualism will be/
would be enough

The rhinoceros
hide's flowing
garment conceals
beneath its multi-
plicitous layers
of elastic
the conic section
most properly applied to
applicants to the eccle-
siastical communion.

The time is shot out of line
The time is shot from a line
and we're caring for grandmothers who are out of synch
with the age of dimensions we know nothing of.

As I would be the first to admit
duration is not in power--
neither yours nor mine nor anybody else's

sadness melts.
gives drinks away.
The dawn spins
tides on the ass--

This isn't a frost or doomsday
invitation This is just the terminology
of your conscious will power warping advancing stabilization
every-which-way Conscience Vice versa

commercial products warp
prophecies die amid

or backwards In the cities they know what it means--- it's what
 they're borne on In the provinces we steam ignorance as though
 fruit were vegetables & meat to be slapped off the table as the
 cat The dying fall etc.--- Call me after
 truer words were you leave & I'll
 not on call But browsing have a message Turkey legs
 in unexpectedly from a night for you The for Easter
 in their cups, as it were honey's too dark or running along
 bounce the recollections to eat--- suppose the boardwalk
 off a chintsy, textured ants have decomposed in the middle of
 office wall, nylons on in it the night, naked
 the foot of the batter or halfnaked
 Cold cushions the sonofabitch lost my
 Shucking & jiving barbaric moss mittens opposite sex
 I'm buying something I walked in forests everywhere in writing
 to drink with friends so I couldn't tell if in and out of the
 and make this end I got lost--- there was brain: old before it's
 meet something some no one there to toss it time to get
 body else's meets & with If absorbed started Never say
 you're entertaining me too the sound I cdn't die with your tongue in
 but I just want to let you get used to it, had to leave your cheek
 go or let me so I can entertain because I cdn't halt the party
 you, see if I can say something threatened to go on more indefinitely
 in between and slip No ideal, for instance obstacle, to
 around you Dammit limit

The reason I asked you is Over the next few
 I think it all has to be done right here years
 Before we're all done away with I'm wondering
 by this huge wave if you thought
 we're hallucinating on our right you didn't get a word in
 but a sentence that transcends its because we didn't want you
 historical occasion let you to
 like a language lesson Trying to invent a new kind
 forgets what it was going to say of language
 a mild liqueur for the present
 roommates in the rain

 Over here a bronze
 A colossal chunk of language
 false image reproaches of all in-
 Black limousines falling in tentions to severe
 grown sliding sheltered over the direction of addled illogic and
 Tudor wingates worth some two or purposeless
 inebriate sassafras jars three cents worth fake tepid
 elegance personified of unformulated emotionality
 in the image of a priest the word has alternative
 becalmed on a white ocean usages
 straying forward and backward The intention to
 the rhymes lie down like old pens rhyme suddenly with
 warbling in freckled moonlight foregone or unforeseen
 champagne pouring on toast ideas hypostatized
 tips of anal trees slammed on betrayed in the brain
 revolving doors encourage wine gushing forth
 out of the deep

"No I'm not working" Over the crowd red of the sea
 High--- The forest over left from the reception where he saw it
 Formula: I'm beyond mention cropped there, dangling
 but not gone up demanding like a meaning from
 I seem to be attention treetrimmer a figure of speech
 left on begins again with a withering
 or over wilted expectations crease

I can't say The whole wax works
 what I'll think of founders when I think of
 it later. When the inconceivable heat of
 the sentence ends the unexploded bomb
 here. The state of being
 without is definitive.

My latest theory is that sunlight through
 we pretend or act as though anxiety crowded windows
 we've known each other trying to she left after
 a long time closely and burn off the second feature
 are very relaxed mists she came in in
 around each other the middle of
 then realize gradually something else to do
 suddenly we don't know but helpless
 each other at all One feels addressed. Thank
 well--- we reduce Heavens it's not for me
 each other to tears The voice carries over the phone
 we can barely shed And room to room around him
 --- Caricatures Help is neither on nor about
 distract the imagination Recurring--- a sentence structure feels
 from its inevitable quandaries Myopic headache--- searching within
 A need for mussels The scold--- down the river from Alaska
 one knows something like Asked, she refuses to listen
 what they are, how they The voice batters against the bar
 taste--- one's judgment Without the loud music, how
 tends to get in the way would voices sound
 --- between hunger and the other Terse individuals
 distraction is act out vectors in
 food--- the anxious discomfort diagrams likely
 and putting up with it reading the newspaper to carry on emblems
 Within these bodies Within these rooms the force of desire
 hugging each other moving around to a resolution it is
 by the butt, by the eyes tensely waiting thought one need not
 What clutches do animals working reason out
 we need to get in over the principles Who came
 to kick out of territory or hope on their own?

As the time grew nearer I don't think
they changed their shirts that's much.
and dresses for something I am the voice of Back off! Back
new. something else. off!

The kind of automatic Any form repeated
talk that goes on in requires a lot of resistance
anyone or any social grouping from conditions to avoid
whether one listens or isn't tedious error of reminding
Change your mind in the one of something futile
middle to show you're there to remember, because useless.
and haven't yet been Purposeless smokestacks caved
strictly determined by in at the big earthquake.

pertinent conditions;
latinate constructions,
configurations sweeping

turgid conscience into what I've said as many
their wake. I'm glad times before.

anyway I'm not where
they'd asked me first.

Though actually maybe
it was just because I
happened to be someone
they wanted an excuse to

I welcome the
change.
But perhaps they're
right.
It's ambiguous.

To change the subject I
want to become more actively historical.
This is typical of my age? I have been accused by
those of my not really friends who would in effect
consider themselves active that I'm not, that is, that I
compromise myself by doubting my convictions or most
powerful bonding, shall we call them, impulses--- that I
don't follow through on what they would like to see
center for the whole, generate unity--- instead, . . .
but knowing requires a self-assurance that's untrue to me.
I accept the validity of bonding, the necessity of community
value for meaning, but see my life and context as solitary,
interstitial and intermittent, and don't yet understand
what activity I can undertake without compromising
that knowledge of my value--- which I take to be positive!

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