

Saga for a Friend

With apologies to Epicurus, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Richard Bach

I. Free Spirit

When amply conspicuous,
Material achievements can occlude
And tyrannize deeper truths,
Hidden strengths, subtle strivings.
So it is with the sweet nonpareil
To whom we dedicate this song.

It is a long road to that genuine health,
To the life of adventure and superabundance,
To be master of the free spirit!
He has traveled that road, but more,
Has never failed to greet fellow travelers
With direction and sustenance.

Born of an artist, surrounding himself
With aesthetic expressions,
Yet no mere collector,
He paints with complexity,
Beauty, and ardor
And Life is his medium.

II. The Hearth

“Gather ’round the hearth, my friends,
And warm yourselves, for my fire is your fire,
My home is your home, my toys are your toys.
Death is nothing to us, so I share this
For all of us to enjoy today.”

Such extraordinary quotidian generosity is
Lavished on those he knows and loves,
Even while bestowing largesse at a
Monumental scale on women of potential:
This is but one masterpiece.

His vocation is finding opportunity, of
Seeing what is undervalued, and
Nurturing that value;
Here is half of humanity
Brought to his hearth besides.

III. Black Dog

Superman's kryptonite,
Kennedy's Khrushchev,
Every great man has his nemesis.
And our protagonist is no exception:

The black dog trots 'round the house
In the dark, nosing at doors,
Watching for an opening,
While its prey sleeps unaware.

The doors are locked up tight
For now. But on occasion,
In the heat of dogged toil,
A loose latch goes unnoticed.

The dog and its shadow
Sneak in. Scratches appear on furniture,
Vases crash to the floor, and
Excrement is everywhere.

Then, nothing but the shadow of a black dog.

At first, he can only observe these ruins.
Slowly, painstakingly, the redress begins
With pure will, a will to health
Dressed and disguised as health.

Then he turns the tables.
The black dog thrives on shame and lonely misery;
With a spotlight, our hero shows the world
The damage it has done.

And he invites all the black dog's quarry
To find a spotlight of their own,
To abandon abasement,
To fight back together.

And he checks the locks once more,
Living beautifully.

IV. The Breeze

Yoda slippers, paisley shirts,
Sweater of The Dude.

Anatomically correct minotaurs
Rolling robots and dinosaurs.

His wife is an everlasting grin in his heart.
He simply adores her.

Pink Floyd on repeat
Hair like Geddy Lee.

Fuck.
Fucking, Fucked.

Among the ponderous marble sculptures,
Notice also breezy watercolors.

V. Century

Fifty years have passed,
Surely having gone too fast.
Perfect speed, my son, is being there.

His work in all its forms continues
Beyond recent milestones or any need.
Keep working on love.

From his already lofty perch,
Where will the next half-century take him?
The gull sees farthest who flies highest.

I watch and enjoy his exquisite flight,
But bear in mind it is not divine.
No limits, friend? My race to learn had begun.