

James Magner, Jr.

LETTER TO KAZIN

(In the midst of reading  
New York Jew)

You have gathered to yourself  
the earth  
in radiant voluptuality  
-- your people I celebrate, song of my heart  
endlessly  
for they are the ones that are homelessly  
at home  
in our treasured sty,  
who seek not the sop of the supernatural  
"for existence does not contradict itself,"  
-- orphans that lift their clay to stars  
that are Abraham's eyes.  
At Jacob's well, does Jesus, my lordly Jew,  
(how often do my constipated wasping kin  
forget their God was a Jew  
and malign him  
as allusively constipated Ezra did  
-- as even Eliot did,  
fools who in denying their bearded brother  
deny themselves,  
who in tracking him down  
have sought themselves  
in the garden above The Cedron.  
"They have pierced my hands and feet,  
they have numbered all my bones.")  
-- In Samaria, in evening, does my gentle Jew  
of simple eye  
prophecy  
to all,  
"I tell you, woman, that the time is coming  
when we will no longer worship  
either here or in Jerusalem  
but in the Spirit and in the Truth."  
-- The Spirit, The Father, The Mother,

The Shim of all  
from Heisenberg's sacred uncertainty  
to Palomar's nova,  
Alpha to Omega.  
O Jacob, O David, O Solomon,  
Philo, Gamaliel, Maimonides  
unto Buber and beloved Fromm,  
king of hearts and mystery  
and man's forever longing;  
Lords of my open road  
unto Bellow, Schwartz and Kazin;  
We are on The Open Road, Brothers,  
we will not be defeated  
as creation, despite all butchery,  
is not defeated;  
As the Lord of The Sur saw  
from his hawk-haunted tower  
-- The Mother, The Dark, The Night  
will bring us home,  
no one will keep us in our ovens,  
the smoke ascends from Auschwitz,  
we will, brothers, mothers, sisters, fathers,  
be brought into our own,  
who can defeat us?

For I see the waves of Madaket  
forever roll to shore  
and that rolling process  
impossible to impede.  
Abel is still with us  
and we keep on.  
There is no coffin, cul-de-sac  
that keeps us from ourselves.  
We are endless  
in virtue of That which is endless,  
in virtue of That which I write,  
by which the mother bears the child,  
the child flies the kite  
and quail huddle at nightfall  
and fish find home in the dark.

He suffers and celebrates Himself  
in his members,  
caught beautifully in bounteous and terrible process,  
enduring Himself in overflow.  
We are one, despite ourselves,  
and suffer one God in awareness  
and incarnation: this is our Fall.  
And, thus, I write to you  
to tell you  
New York Jew,  
in hobbled scrawl  
and quirky sight  
that we, despite ourselves,  
and horrid obstructions of history  
are One, beyond ourselves,  
beyond the cliffs of limit  
that blinds us to the Blue  
that never ends  
and sings its endless and returning arc  
unto our rest, unto our life, unto song. Shalom.

