

14 Oct 76

Hello Jo dear,

It's 4 AM, and I'm up early to try to get some (writing) thinking done...but all that comes is an imaginary dialog with you. I chuckled, puzzled, laughed, sighed, over your lastt lwtter---which you have doubtless forgotten in the passing maelstrom of your mind. (I don't mean your mind is chaotic, although it is, a bit---just that so much goes on, and also, you're writing.)

You mention the break-up of your c.r. group, which is what caused the chuckling. You see, I visualise you and them from the outside, while you only experience it from their intimidated and furtive escape from you.

Listen, love, you'll get a lot fewer mysterious tiptoeings-around in life if you face a couple of things:

You are egotistical. I am as certain that you talk too much as I am that the earth turns. I imagine that when you are consciously not "talking too much" you sit there like a smoldering basilisk with ever-larger goutts of smoke coming out of your ears until your "silence" dominates all the talk in the room....Or like when the ocean suddenly recedes for miles, leaving the bottom of the bay bare, and people venture forward into the strange, unaware that the odd line on the horizon is a five-mile-high wall of pent-up words rushing down on them with the speed of light. I can just see it.

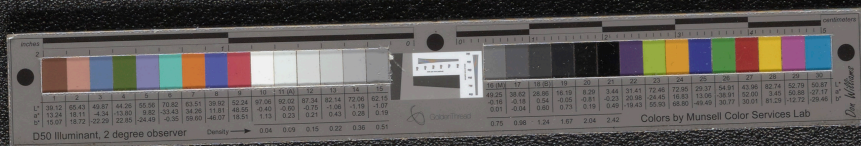
And of course you intimidate people. You intimidate the hell out of people. When you're being carefully gentle and non-intimidating I imagine it's like being gently dandled from paw to paw by a Kodiak bear. Your natural way is to intimidate everything and everybody in the environment, simply by being in there faster and more complexly and volubly and positively and generally like a loose live wire thrashing about.

You are also crazy as a coot.

All this has nothing whatever to do with your being or not being a Lesbian, the best-balanced friend I have is one. So is the second-best-balanced, at least when last seen.

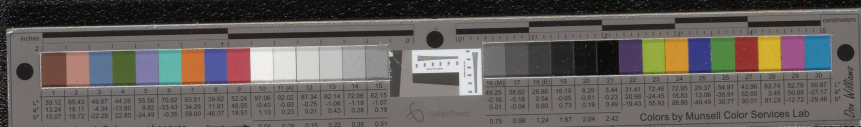
The reason you are crazy, intimidating and egotistically farrulous is because you are some kind of a genius, or part of one, or one part of the time. You are just so full of you and life. I can just see the picture, when you have that feeling you're among friends, someone who officially "shares" with you, a woman or a Lesbian or a writer----and you feel you can be yourself, or talk honestly to the point---and out comes this incredible flood of points (a), (b) B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, etc, which reminds you of (parenthesis) C, which leads on to E and F, which subsumes general principle C, having the subcorollaries H-prime illustrated by example VII, and what happened to me last week suggests that maybe we should turn the whole existential point on its head, which would lead to thoughts J,K,L----and what the hell have you crawled under the rug for when I was just agreeing with you and having a nice conversation?

Honey, other people, Lesbians, women, men, aardvarks--- take a long time to go from A to maybe A-and-a-half, not to mention B, and when you open





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the curtains and invite people to share worlds, the other person is very apt to crawl under the rug or leap out the fire-escape ----because they HAVEN'T GOT any such torrential inner world to share back.

While you're left feeling like you've been shouting down a well and why in christ's name didn't they respond, share back, even interrupt with their own views? ...They didn't because they couldn't. They haven't any.

The lonely steam-rollew.

And subconsciously you're so used to this, so used to being too fast and too much and seeing more and so forth, that you really don't take seriously any humble daisies offered to you. Other people have been stupid and wrong for too long.

Your doom is partial comradeship; any group will offer you companionship on only a portion of your perimeter, or heart. And you are going to have to learn to think with your mouth shut in those perilous moments when lesser mortals sidle up with a flower.

Further, you have to recognise that you are not, never, going to be "among your peers," part of a real "sacred band". You have to find your peers in this or that facet,----as you really do---making a network of part-sharings serve the lonely need for a group of true fellows. It's the fate of the over-intellectualised even on the barricades. In action you're a Lenin, but your fate may be more like Trotsky's.

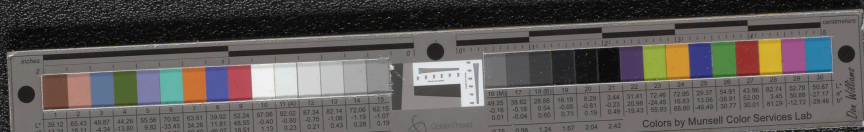
Now that is all I know about that.

But I should add that crazy egotistical rampantly talkative Joanna is also perfectly sane, kindly, just, luminously compassionate, and I would have no hesitation in exposing my deepest soul-quandaries to you. Please emphasize this paragraph----I was so amused---being, you know, older and having seen geniuses trying to make out in a world in a world of trained poodles----that I went on and on. I know the bull-dozer aspect for what it is, and I don't for a minute confuse it with the core of you. I ache for you, Jo.

...The only real danger of your position is, like I said, that having had to learn to dismiss so much stupidity you get into the automatic habit of rejection.

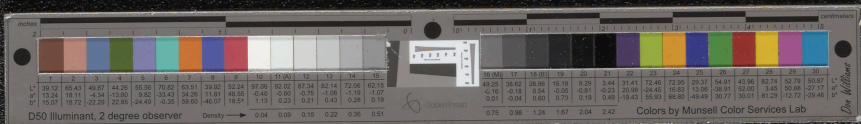
Which brings up URSula....I do think you reject too much there. You worry her work like a frantic puppy, and some of the pieces flying off the bones are real pieces. Of marrow, if we may carry this metaphor a bit unhappily longer. She's writing mostly about good and evil and death, you know. Motives which are as yet peripheral in your own writings, your good and evil are incidental to the life, life, life in your stuff. She's fundamentally an abstract thinker dressed in the characters of fiction---witness OMELAS. And then she had this biological idea---LEFT HAND. She has a few genuine images, dragons and ice-fields and forests and mad kings in drafty scrubby keeps. But her most personal, odd, writerly thing was LATHE OF HEAVEN, where her characters started to run themselves. Truly, Doctor Haber in that is a real, real villain. And the strange upwelling of quietist hope showed up, the thing she tried to do more with in ATLANTIS. In LATHE it's a rather absurd but lovable salvation-through-aliens, and sea-images.

It is perfectly OK for a writer to be preoccupied with the neutral themes of mortality and viteue---only thing is, it makes for pallid writing unless one is an ecstatic. ...I kind of love her, as a baby philosophe more than fictioneer.





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Now, I better end this blueberry mash. Let's see if I left anything that should be answered.

Yes, I'll write Geo. Hay about Saxton.

No, in my present state I couldn't guarantee to do an introduction for Hartwell.

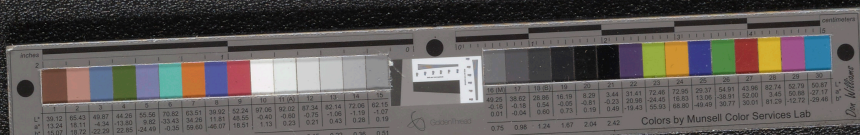
Again, absolute laughter at WE WHO being published in, gasp, GALAXY. Jo, this is a crazy world...I wrote Jim Baen I was glad he did it.

Great news about the faculty possibility.

Christ I hope the facial neuralgia is better. If it ever, god forbid, develops into real trigeminal agony---"tic doloureux"---they have a new minor operation which puts a pad under the place where the nerve passes a sharp place in the jawbone that has had great success....I tell you that in case you find yourself staring at a vista of unrelieved horror in the night, which tic d. can be. I have a friend who's been living a walking death from the level of pain-killer needed to turn hers off. (She's MUCH older than you.) But there is a possible treatment now for the first time.

(I don't think I know how to spell. Wait---tic douloureux? There.)

Now sweetie go out and intimidate the world, suffer & study & convulse and talk, talk, talk, cook your week's stew, may the sun shine in your weighted curtains---above all may the writing go well. And may the world offer you some much-needed security.





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