Notel Nobel

by Ann Bogle

First off, glad that Dylan won.

What a morning that was for me. I slept overnight and awoke very early. The classical radio station is always on low. I was standing in the kitchen when the Nobel Committee's spokeswoman gave her announcement and credited American Bob Dylan in the tradition of sung literature, for example, Homer.

Phenomenal is the first true word that came out of me after the first streak of fuck, fuck, fuck.

Even the jokes later were good, floating lyrics of all descriptions.

I felt sad to realize that New Yorkers might have believed the contest was between Leonard Cohen and Bob Dylan. *The New Yorker* had published a feature about Cohen as shown with his yellow tabby boy cat reclining on an outdoor glass table next to Cohen's cane. My Lucy girl I guess you might know was a less common girl orange tabby. Bruce told me based on the article that Cohen had entrusted the wrong woman financial advisor and lost all his earned dough. Bruce wanted to be sure I'd seen that essay. That was before Cohen died. Castro died. *Castro Died* should be a title by Samuel Beckett. Once I nearly went out to buy a bass clarinet just for the purpose of playing along with Leonard Cohen. My expert clarinetist friend Daniel Harris told me to rent one first, so then I didn't. I play B♭ still and it's unique, my sound, that remains of it.

I went to see Leo Kottke perform last night at The Fitzgerald. My doctor friend and I went together by taxi from my place in St. Louis Park. Her dad was a novelist whom some regard as the first beat novelist. I guess she's unique among all my friends in that I met her main boyfriends over our lifetimes before I met her (and bedded

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none of them and yet appreciated each of them). How weird that fact alone is, let alone that she ended up as a doctor New Yorker living in St. Cloud. She is older than we are! Benchmark 65, a gorgeous grandma. Her last husband is twenty years younger. I find it gruesome. I hugged her at the Fitzgerald when she said he was in jail. I slurred my words, too, glad we were there by cab.

The concert was among the finest of Kottke's I have seen. He seems to be doing so well. Great from every arrow. No mention of the Nobel, yet one call out from the audience about Purple Rain, and he said, "I'm getting in trouble now." The speech, the finest, the hemming, the songs, I knew all of them, words or not. One I'd heard only once on Prairie Home Companion about Enrique. The encore was a streak of genius, since he stayed seated and explained that he was to play the encore without retreating to a curtain.

After you had headed back to California, a green van precisely like yours parked across the street from my place. At first I hoped you might have changed your mind and decided to stay longer. Then a guy wearing a yarmulke got out and walked directly up the street not taking the sidewalk toward Excelsior Boulevard, though it was daylight, broad daylight. I ventured to get a look at the back of his van. No bumper stickers, no words on it.

Belief is all, as I just told my emergent favorite student in Houston, who wrote on Facebook that she went out for a skate before dark last night. She was stopped by a constable, as she put it, to whom she needed to cite skating law on Houston streets. The young old people roller-blade there. Roller-blading, a Minnetonka invention, Shady Oak Road. There's a club called the Urban Animals who gang skate. They skate on the main streets and stop for one beer at a bar then skate to the next, skate it off, each beer. I used to love it when they came into Cecil's because on blades or roller skates they were tall!

Guys and gals both.

I know I promised to send you scans of that notebook. At least I don't forget.