

You Never Actually Own A Patek Phillipe, You Merely Take Care Of It For The Next Generation

by Chris Okum



We Are Living After The End Of The World

He is their father. He teaches them. He punishes them. He insults them. He points at himself and tells them they are made from him. He makes sure they get better when they are sick. He spreads his

diseases. He takes away everything they have. He gives them everything they want. He encourages them to be close to him. He ignores them and pretends they are ghosts. He validates them as unique, valued individuals. He destroys their confidence. He builds a life for them. He destroys their entire world right before their very eyes. His voice speaks of the many streets and rivers down which they must travel before they eventually achieve that majestic form of being that comes from understanding his universal mind.

Everything So Real

Robert Bechtle got out of bed and put on his painting pants. His wife asked him where he was going. Bechtle told his wife he had to paint something. His wife looked at the clock next to the bed and complained about the lateness of the hour. "I have to paint a tricycle," said Bechtle. "That's what's missing." His wife asked him what color he was going to use for the tricycle. Bechtle told his wife that he wanted to use International Klein Blue, except he didn't say International Klein Blue, he said IKB. "Although I don't think I'll be able to find a store that carries IKB. Not around here." His wife had no idea what IKB was, hated it when Bechtle spoke in words she didn't understand, and so she changed the subject, asked about their daughter, who was supposedly at the movies with a young man they had never met. "If I don't paint it right now I'll lose it," said Bechtle to his wife, who had her eyes closed. "I think I'm in love with the color blue." Bechtle's wife pretended not to hear what he had just said. Bechtle thought it would be nice to be famous for painting, but even better to be famous for falling in love. He loved so many things. He loved his wife. He loved his children. He loved his bed. When his first child was born he was afraid that he would die before the child got to know who he was. This was no longer an issue. Both his children knew who he was. Now he was afraid of losing the tricycle. There was nothing he was afraid of more than having an image in his head, an image to be placed on the canvas, and then having that image dissolve without notice over the course of daily

life. The only thing he was afraid of more was death. But he wasn't afraid of dying. He was only afraid of being dead. The one thing he would never experience was the one thing he dreaded more than anything else. He had tried in the past to give material expression to this fear, but the color of death was no color at all. IKB was the closest he could get to the color of the void, a blue that lept off the canvas and hung in mid-air, but this was a hue suitable to an infinite expanse, not the realm of oblivion, which was the place where nothing invents nothing, forever.

Harvest Time

Jacques Lacan's life project was to try and figure out why people do what they do, and like Freud and Jung, this demanded a journey to the core of the psyche, where, like a spelunker, Lacan would flash his analytical light and grab choice chunks of behavior for future exhibition to an audience of like minded contemporaries and acolytes (mostly acolytes), who would then gawk at and interpret the meaning of his treasures of the ineffable (including, but not limited to: The Imaginary, The Symbolic, The Mirror Stage, The *Objet Petit a*). Lacan was an explorer of the mind par excellence, and spent most of time away from the banal concerns of every day life. However, like all carbon-based lifeforms, Lacan had an expiration date, and his was September 9, 1981, at which time a doctor announced to Lacan that due to his terminal colon cancer he would be given a fatal dose of morphine to quell the painful effects of said disease, thus ending his life. Lacan had complete foreknowledge that he was about to die, almost as if his palliative care was actually a kind of execution. However, Lacan's doctor was simply doing what doctors do, with no ulterior motive, and Lacan understood this, if begrudgingly. There was nothing to analyze. The patient was in hideous pain, and so, as a doctor, you make the pain go away, even if that means the patient goes with it. Lacan was going to die because it was time to die, nothing more, nothing less. Here was a man who had lived comfortably beneath the surface of human activity, and

now, in his last moments, he was being forced to come topside and end his life on the plane where most of us mere mortals exist. As such, Lacan went on a reverse odyssey, from the organs to the skin, whereas most of us do the opposite, completing our lives at the center of our souls. How Lacan felt about this irony was not recorded for posterity, but based on the eyewitness testimony of his daughter, he was something far less than satisfied with his final discovery, which resembled nothing so much as a piece of gum stuck to the bottom of his shoe.

The Yellow Shovel

The younger brother said, "Nothing matters more than a yellow shovel coated in baby oil next to our brown dog." The older brother said, "What he's saying is that a large useful thing like a shovel can be yellow, and that if the shovel, which is yellow, is coated in baby oil, something that lacks color, and these two things can sit on each other and also next to a living thing like a brown dog, then all these things, looked at clearly, should appease both of you and the one mind you seem to share." The mother and the father looked at each other and didn't say anything, but then again, they didn't have to, because both knew what the other was thinking, which is that both of their sons reminded them of that magician who lived in a plexiglass box suspended over the Thames River in London for 44 days, the one who always had a queer smile on his face, like an airplane mechanic who gives a thumbs up to the pilots after purposely installing the throttle hardware improperly. They were their sons, their dear sons. They used to live inside them. They used to carry them wherever they went. But something happened. Something had turned these coins of their love into worthless little tokens. There was something in their hearts that no longer beat in time with theirs. The exact nature of the thing couldn't be known or even stated. Where were the sons they thought they had raised. Somewhere behind their eyes, in a space they had never learned to create.

