Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa is Trying to Say Something to His Mother

by Jason Lee Norman

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa wants to say something to his mother. He only gets his best ideas while in the shower or in a deep sleep. It is nearly impossible to write something meaningful in the shower. Agrippa wants to say something meaningful to his mother, he wants to use love words. When Agrippa thinks of saying these things to his mother he becomes embarrassed and wants to go back to bed. If only his mother was sick, Agrippa thought, like deathly ill- then maybe he would be able to say the things that he wants to say to his mother. Once, when his mother was ill with flu, Agrippa came into her room to wake her and bring orange juice. If he woke her she might seem groggy and disoriented enough to feign the appearance of a dying woman. Agrippa would use that opportunity to thank his mother for giving him life and sandwiches. The songs that she used to sing to him still dance in his head while he wrangles equations. The stars in the cosmos spell out her name.

Agrippa says nothing. Agrippa searches desperately for a pencil. Agrippa is a simple man. Agrippa believes in magic. He wants to say something to his mother. He wants to thank her for giving him life. Will that sound trite? Ridiculous? Agrippa is happy with life, with being alive, and prefers it to the alternative. Not existing would be too much to bear.

It is possible, Agrippa thought, that his mother could be dying right now. She may put down her cup of tea and not pick it up again because she would be dead. This clearing of her throat could be the last noise she ever makes and he will have no rich words to fill the

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silence with. Agrippa feels as though he is at the bottom of a pool. His mother lifts her cup of tea. Her final sip?

Agrippa dives into the couch cushions for a pencil.