

[Mrs. Richard F. **Schiller's last name** sends us to...]

On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry by Friedrich Schiller

1. References to children, artists, people with 'special artistic natures'

...This sentimentality in respect to nature is especially strongly and most universally expressed at the instigation of such objects, which stand in a close connection with us and bring nearer to us the retrospective view of ourselves and the *unnatural* in us, **as for example, with children** or childlike nations. One errs, if one believes, that it be merely the conception of helplessness, which sees to it that we dwell on children with so much emotion in certain moments. That may perhaps be the case in respect to those, who in the face of weakness are accustomed never to feel something other than their own superiority. But the feeling of which I speak (**it takes place only in quite peculiar moral dispositions and is not to be mistaken for that which the joyous activity of children arouses in us**), ["You have to be an artist and a madman, a creature of infinite melancholy, with a bubble of hot poison in your loins and a super-voluptuous flame aglow in your subtle spine (oh, how you have to cringe and hide!), in order to discern" cf. also: joyous noise of children playing ??] is more humiliating than favorable to self-love; and if, indeed, an advantage comes thereby into view, so is this by no means on our side.

2. The lost past, represented by childhood, which the artist attempts to recapture and merge with his current life

We see then in nature devoid of reason only **a fortunate sister, who remained behind in the maternal home, out of which we stormed in the high spirits of our freedom into foreign parts. With painful desire we long to return thence** [anabel leigh who died as a child (?) pre-soviet russia(?) 'temps perdu' generally(?)], so soon as we've begun to experience the distress of culture and hear in the foreign country of art, the moving voice of the mother. So long as we were merely children of nature, we were happy and perfect; we have become free and have lost both. **Therefrom originates a twofold and very unequal longing for nature, a longing for its *happiness*, a longing for its *perfection*. The sensuous man laments only the loss of the first; the moral one can mourn only for the loss of the other.**["the moral sense in mortals is the duty/we have to pay on mortal sense of beauty"]

Dost thou step out of thine artificial circle to it, does **it stand before thee in its great repose, in its naive beauty, in its childlike innocence and simplicity—then tarry beside this image, cultivate this feeling, it is worthy of thy most glorious humanity. Let it no longer occur to thee, to want to *exchange places* with it, but take it into thyself and strive to wed its infinite advantage with thine own infinite prerogative and to produce the divine from both.** ["the twenty-five years I have lived since then, tapered to a palpating point, and vanished" "for the first time in my life I had as little desire for her as for a manatee. Perhaps my learned readers will perk up if I tell them that even had we discovered a piece of sympathetic sea side

somewhere, it would have come much too late, since my real liberation had occurred much earlier: at the moment, in point of fact, when Annabel Haze alias Dolores Lee alias Loleeta, had appeared to me"]

3. Mental freedom even during suffering

..impure and material pathos will always be apparent through a preponderance of passion, and through a painful preoccupation of the soul, since, **on the contrary, true poetical pathos is recognizable in a preponderance of self-activity and in a mental freedom, which persists even in a state of emotion.** [sentiment + detached humor/irony (?) in "it may interest the physiologist to learn, at this point, that I have the ability - a most singular case, I presume - of shedding torrents of tears through the other tempest" also Brian Boyd says Humbert "seems to represent the human mind at its freest and best, lucid and unimpeachably self aware, and then discloses the mind's awesome capacity to blind itself and other minds..."]

4. Combination of satire with mournful sentimentality (the two kinds of sentimental art are satire and elegy)

The pathetic satire must therefore flow at all times from a frame of mind, which is deeply permeated by the ideal. **Only a ruling instinct toward harmony can and may produce that deep feeling of moral contradiction and that glowing indignation against moral perversity, which in a Juvenal, Swift, Rousseau, Haller, and others becomes enthusiasm. The same poets would and must needs have composed with the same success also in touching and tender types, if accidental reasons had not given their souls in early life this definite direction; they have partly also actually done it.** [Humbert's constant self-criticisms in re: perversity, VN's quote about a scoundrel who manages to appear "touching".]

5. Improper language

a) only the poet is licensed to use it

But does not poetical literature exhibit even classical works, which seemed to offend the lofty purity of the ideal in a similar manner and seemed to be very much removed through the materiality of their contents from that spirituality, which is demanded here of every aesthetical work of art?... **In the concept of the poet itself, and only in this, lies the basis of that freedom, which is a merely contemptible license, so soon as it can not be derived from the highest and most noble, which constitutes him.**["a poet a mes heures, I composed a madrical to the soot-black lashes of her pale-grey vacant eyes"; H's objection to other people swearing]

b) decency of language is a virtue only once innocence is lost

The laws of decency are alien to innocent nature; only the experience of corruption has given rise to them. So soon, however, as that experience has once been undergone and natural innocence has disappeared from morals, so

are they sacred laws, which a moral feeling may not infringe upon. ["No, she gave it up, she refused to go into particulars with that baby inside her. / That made sense."]

c) anti-freudian thesis: sex is the aura of art, rather than art the sublimation of sex

These sensuous energies must therefore issue forth from the totality and from the fullness of human nature. They must be *humanity*. But in order to be able to judge, that the totality of human nature, and not merely a one-sided and common want of sensuousness summons them, we must see the totality represented, of which they constitute a particular feature. In itself, the sensuous mode of feeling is something innocent and indifferent. ["But really these are irrelevant matters. I am not concerned with so called 'sex' at all....] It displeases us, therefore, **only as a man, because it is animal and is evidence of a lack of truly perfect humanity in him:** ["...Anyone can imagine these elements of animality..."] it offends us therefore as a poetic work, because such a work makes claim to please us, therefore deems us capable of such a lack. However, **should we see in the man, who is surprised thereby, human nature act in all its other capacities, should we find in the work, wherein one has taken freedoms of this kind, all the realities of human nature expressed, so is this basis for our displeasure removed,**["...A greater endeavor lures me on, to fix for once for all the magic of nymphet love."] and we can take pleasure with an embittered joy in the naive expression of true and beautiful nature. **The sane poet, therefore, who dares allow himself, to make us accomplices in such base human feeling,** [cf. people feeling uncomfortable about sympathizing with Humbert, Humbert's position in re: the jurors] must know, on the other hand, how to carry us aloft to everything, which is humanly great and beautiful and sublime.

6. An individual paradise

Under a happy sky, in the simple relations of the initial state, nature is easily satisfied with a limited knowledge, and man does not become brutal, until he is distressed by want. All peoples, who have a history, have a paradise, a state of innocence, a golden age; yes, **every individual man has his paradise, his golden age, which he remembers with more or less enthusiasm, according as he has more or less of the poetic in his nature.**["I still dwelled deep in my elected paradise—a paradise whose skies were the color of hell-flames—but still a paradise"]