

Zeitschrift: Der Kreis : eine Monatsschrift = Le Cercle : revue mensuelle
Band: 29 (1961)
Heft: 7

Artikel: Jonathan is his name
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-570541>

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JONATHAN IS HIS NAME

(Synopsis of a Portrait)

by Seaweed

... and he was—he is—my friend, only he has gone, now. I will see him again, no doubt, but will he come back to me?

The story is very simple, really. To me, one of the vast 'misunderstood' crowd, it is simple because of its combination of near-idealism and factuality; to him, it was just a mere happening, due to purely local circumstances, and an incident to be forgotten, not to be thought of at all, albeit a very deliberate acceptance on his part. Jonathan went away, four days ago, because he felt too lonely; as, of late, he used to say: «At twenty, I am having grey hair!» You see, for the best part of the time, there were only Jonathan and myself out here, a comparatively isolated spot on this small island down South. My private beach wound up to a shallow bay, a thousand feet to the South; and miles of deserted stretches of white sand, fringed with coconut and palm trees, ended where Jonathan's small village stood. There live my nearest neighbours; most of the men and boys spend a good deal of their time fishing, while the others went to sea, usually in tankers. Jonathan had been to sea for only six months, and he had been back for two, when the incredible grapevine system brought him the news that I needed a helper.

I had seen Jonathan two or three times, in the past, when he came fishing in a boat, off my beach, with some friends. From snatches of conversation I had with them, I learnt that Jonathan, in his village, was considered to be the local Elvis Presley, and had a large admiring circle of fans. He played the guitar a little, sang a little, was crazy about western music and songs, and was even thought to resemble Elvis. Consequently, Elvis was Jonathan's idol, and, as it is, I am a Presley fan, too, so that the rapprochement rather appealed to me. I never saw too great a resemblance, myself, except perhaps in the sulky lips, and the sideburns; but, I was greatly taken by his looks and youth, and more specially by his vitality and intelligence; for a native, he is by far the most superior type I have known in this part of the world. He is not dark, and anywhere else could easily be mistaken for a Mexican or a Cuban. Imagine, therefore, my surprise and silent joy when, one Sunday afternoon, having walked the five miles that separated us, he came to ask me for the job. He returned on the following morning, at seven, to stay. That was seven months ago. I miss him more than I could say, and if it were not for the fact that I am just beginning (I hope) to become somewhat realistic, I would find his absence absolutely unbearable.

You see, the majority of the workers I had had in the past, had always been treated friendlily and perhaps too well, though there had never been a Jonathan among them. Nevertheless, it had invariably been an employer—to—employee situation. Jonathan was so exceptional, by all native, and some other, standards, that I treated him like an equal, right from the start, feeding him with me, occasionally taking a drink together, and sharing my living quarters. The small hideaway resort I have just built, a good part of it with my own hands, has ten rooms, and is fully equipped to take in twenty guests. It has not had a full 'season', as yet, but since I want to keep the rooms clean and tidy in the event of unexpected guests dropping in, Jonathan shared my rooms. Tacitly and naturally, he also shared my wide double bed, but our

physical relationship started only a month or so after he had come to me. No matter how much he appealed to me, I did not want to think I was the 'first one'. One evening, as we were talking in our room, he reclining on the bed, half resting against the wall, he began to feel sleepy. I sat next to him, a furious turmoil in my heart, and teased him. His beautiful lips twisted into a small smile, and he closed his eyes. I caressed his bronzed knee and wonderfully shaped thigh (his thighs are what I admire most, though he is perfect in every other respect, too) which were generously displayed by his khaki shorts completely spattered with dry white, green and red paint, from the work he had been doing. Since he did not object to my gentle caress, I went further up, lifting his T-shirt, smoothing his hard stomach with my hand. There was nothing smoother than Jonathan's skin, and, as the weeks went by, I got to know every square inch of his whole wonderful body. His flesh, any part of it, whether it be his back, his chest, arms, armpits or even his feet (oh, those wonderfully shaped small toes!) had that rare, and therefore so much more exquisite, quality of actually possessing a wholesome, sweet, appealing fragrance. As, in the months that were to follow, I kissed every dimple, every crease and pore, every place of his adored body, that special fragrance that was his made me drunk with love and tenderness.

For, I grew to love Jonathan as I had not dared to love again since many, many years ago. I was particularly overjoyed in finding out that my love for him was not all physical; to tell the truth, had it been that, I would have grown tired of it and of Jonathan; for it is something peculiar that, whereas we do grow tired of the flesh for its own sake, it is within the limitless boundaries of the inner self that we find that intangible, yet formidable, force that we like to know as love. I love Jonathan more than anything else in this world. The same cigarette, the same drink, we would sometimes share when playing cards, or fishing from the end of the small jetty at the end of a day's work; or, perhaps, munching the same apple while going to town in our boat; at times, not always accidentally, wearing each other's shorts or T-shirts... Oh, God! how could I ever forget any of those blessings! Indeed, I do not want to forget any of them, for, right now, it is all I have of Jonathan's, and the emptiness he has left in me, specially during these warm tropical nights, is a haunting torture.

The summer tourist trade is so small, as yet, on this still 'undiscovered' island, that Jonathan became restless and bored with little to do; for, you see, he was now helping me entertain visitors when they came over in chartered boats; he helped me mix and serve drinks, and all that goes with the job. In fact, he and I together were manager, bartender, cook, valet, steward, dishwasher and all the rest. His personality was terrific, and his smile engaging, all of which made him very popular with the guests. As he once told me, not too long ago: «I can be as gentle as a lamb, as long as I am not vexed.» To be «vexed» is, over here, a great saying; I find it quaint, like also «Who'n you?» meaning «You and who else?» Gentle as a lamb, Jonathan certainly was, and many times, and that was by far the greatest attraction he held for me. He used to do certain little jobs, or chores, of favours, quite unsolicited and with obvious pleasure and desire to please; that was in the ordinary course of the day. When we felt the desire for physical contact, which was not always at night, he used sometimes to say «Let us go upstairs and undress,» and the way in which he arched his whole body under my embrace, and sighed his pleasure, drove me frantic in my ecstasy.

Yet, to this moment, I wonder about Jonathan. That he has a streak of the homophile in him, I have no doubt; but, you see, his girl friend presented him with a baby boy, a month ago, and he plans on marrying her towards Christmas. Me? I know that never, at any time, have I meant anything at all to him in the realm of affectionate friendship, let alone that of love. I knew it all the time, but what would you have done in my place, had you known Jonathan? And, you might know him if you came this way, for he said to me, on the day he returned to his village, that he would return here for the winter season. But, will he come back to me?

That is Jonathan, my gentle lamb.

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Of course, one never knows what to-morrow will hold for us, except the eternal hope that it «may be so». Looking back, in the days after the to-morrow, we may even be amused to realize that things often went the way we subconsciously hoped they would, and, if they did not, that they did not matter at all! So much does the realm of the mind make us what we are . . .

Well, a very generous friend of mine, and his equally generous friend, having read my little story thus far, returned it to me with the kind suggestion that I add a happy ending, or even an unhappy one, so long as there was an ending. There was not meant to be one, because Jonathan will never have an 'end' where I am concerned; but, as things turned out to be, now, three months later, I shall add the little something that you may be expecting to read, but it will still not be an ending to me.

I had gone away for the summer months, returned in November, and Jonathan—the gentle lamb—returned to me. Whether his feelings had been aroused to a pitch during my absence, or not, he gave himself freely to me, on the night of my return. I had missed him so very much, and the sight and the touch of his slender body sent frenzies of passion and renewed love and tenderness through every fibre of my own flesh. The arched hollow formed by his small waist while he lay on his side, and the adorable rise of his velvet hip, held a special fascination for me. I could never tire of brushing my lips over him. He never said that he did not enjoy that part of our love-making, but, most times, all he wanted was quick, frenzied, animal, almost savage, direct physical contact.

One of Jonathan's first news on my return was that he had fixed the date for his wedding, shortly before Christmas. Strangely enough, I was glad, and helped him make any arrangements I could. I knew, and accepted the fact, that once married, our physical relationship would end, although the secret hope that it might not, lingered on. For one thing, I hated the thought that, more for his sake than mine, his wife then might find out about his extra-marital tastes. Yet, had he told me, that he had told her about it, I would not have been surprised. The moral attitude of these people reach extremes that are inconceivable to anyone who has not lived among them.

I shall not tell you about Jonathan's wedding, because this is not the point of the story. Of course, I was there, and it all went off beautifully, and even his seven-month old baby boy was present, proudly carried by a starry-eyed girl who seemed to be wanting to say to the bridal couple: «Here is a lovely present on your wedding day!» Two or three times during the ceremony, I caught

Jonathan's eye. There was half a twinkle of mischief, with the other half saying: «I now have a wife!» I replied with a wink: «Sure, you have a wife, but how about . . . the rest?» But, he was already looking elsewhere, and I never got his answer, and never have to this day, three months later.

Jonathan left me again, very shortly after returning from his ten-day wedding leave. No reason was given; none can reasonably be expected from these people, but I suspected that his being married had something to do with it. Yet, I am not sure about this. I know that there must be times when he craves for the passion—I nearly said love—that his wife cannot give him. He had stayed with me until almost the very day before his wedding, and on that last night together his almost furious embrace, the heaving of his hips, and the enticements to more passion; surely, all this cannot be extinguished and put aside over night. But, as I said, I have not seen Jonathan since the day he once again left me. I still have a lot of his clothing here, and he must come for them, for I would let no one take them away for him. Should I give him the benefit of the doubt, and think that he may be, what shall I say, shy of our past relationship? Or, must I think that, now more than ever before, he cares not two hoots about me? I only know this, that I love Jonathan just as much as ever, and will always do, and the day when he freely chooses to come back to me, I shall be waiting with open arms, waiting to hear him say again, as a preamble: «I can be as gentle as a lamb.»

So, you see, there can be no ending to this story, which is not a story, just as there can be no ending to any other story where our kind of love makes the plot. I hope I have not disappointed you.

A Subscriber writes:

It sickens me so much, all this conflag about *us* being neurotic, and all the psycho words the 'scientists' cook up. I am just as normal as the next and maybe a little better off than my hetero brother for I can project my feelings and understanding as a writer in two ways, I know what it is to love and to be loved and all the facets of each. Every artist has so much of both and a creator probably more than others — it just happens that my makeup verges a little more to the feminine and therefore colors my whole being. But, aside from this fact, I am no different from any other with the same bents and drives. Why can't we make 'the great unwashed' see this?

Um für das II. Halbjahr 1961

ein zahlen zu können, lagen bereits dem Juniheft Einzahlungsscheine und Rechnungen bei. Wir wären dankbar, wenn die Zahlungen bald geregelt würden, damit in der Zustellung der Hefte kein Unterbruch eintreten müsste und wir diese Ausweiskarten jeweils dem nächsten Heft beilegen könnten. Dadurch ersparen uns die Abonnenten viel zeitraubende Kontrollarbeit und Mahnschreiben, und sich selbst — das Ausbleiben der Hefte. Helfen Sie uns bitte auch in schwieriger Zeit, den Gedanken des KREIS-Zusammenschlusses weiter aufrecht zu erhalten!

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Kameradschaftliche Vereinigungen und Zeitschriften des Auslandes:

angeschlossen an die «Stiftung Internationales Komitee für sexuelle Gleichberechtigung», ICSE; Sekretariat: Damrak 57, Tel. 34596, Postbus 1564, Amsterdam. — Organ: Newsletter.

- Deutschland:** Verein für humanitäre Lebensgestaltung (VhL), Kettenhofweg 46, Frankfurt a.M.
Dänemark: Forbundet af 1948, Postbox 1023, Kopenhagen K, Organ: PAN, Klubadresse: «Admiral-Kroen», 2te stock, Admiralgade, Kopenhagen K
Holland: Cultuur- en Ontspanningscentrum (COC), Postbus 542, Amsterdam C. Central-Büro: Damrak 57, Tel. 34596. Organ: Vriendschap, Clublokal: «De Schakel», Korte Leidsedwarstraat 49, Tel. 64511.
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Frankreich: Arcadie, 74 Blvd. de Reuilly, Paris 12.