

MEMORIES OF ROGER HOBBS

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SONIA SABNIS

As our Latin 210 class prepared for fall break, I played the Mountain Goats' song about Cicero's *Verrine Orations* ("Song for Cleomenes") for the students and jokingly challenged them to write their own song as a tribute to the *Pro Caelio*. I remember I was in a cafe in Berkeley reading my email when Hobbs' submission appeared in my inbox--it was an absolutely brilliant and hilarious tribute to the material we had covered in class up to that point. I have played it for every *Pro Caelio* class since then.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/dtps2abw5wle8is/01%20Pro%20Caelio%2C%20Vol.%201.m4a?dl=0>

I am in Rome for this academic year, and I was delighted to find the Italian translation of *Ghostman* in a bookstore.



SAKETH

It was the first few days of high school, and I was at the first debate club meeting. A sharply dressed young man introduced himself to me as Hobbs (or, more properly, as "Roger John Cobbler Townsend Hobbs X, but you can call me Hobbs") and in the course of conversation he shared a small, wrinkled orange paperback entitled *Flood Tribes*. That he had written this tome dawned upon me while I read it. It was brotherly love at first sight.

As neighbors and classmates in high school, Hobbs and I spent many hours together, conversing extensively after getting off the bus together. To the law he was "Roger", to others he

was “Hobbs”, but to me he was simply “Comrade.” Our shared passion was socialism, and together we founded the Young Socialists club at the school, viewing ourselves as a modern Marx and Engels. We persuaded the high school to permit the Socialists to participate in the annual Democrat-Republican debate, and ultimately we won the debate -- or should I say, Comrade Hobbs’s extraordinary extemporaneous speaking skills prevailed yet again! (After that debate, the word “chairsexual” was a surefire trigger to send Hobbs into peals of dulcet Hobbsian laughter, independent of the time or place.) Hobbs was a ready mentor for my revolutionary spirit, and his insistence on clarity of word and thought left an enormous mark on me. I was so moved by my friendship with Hobbs that my college application essay was more about him than about myself!

As but one of too many treasured moments to list here, I will never forget Hobbs kneeling by the bedside the night at the hotel after we traveled for a debate competition, reverently contemplating the pages of a Marxist book. I remember thinking in that moment of how much I admired his authenticity of revolutionary spirit, which has inspired me in countless ways.

My great regret is that we fell out of touch simply due to the distance of separation after high school. The news of Hobbs’s passing taught me of society’s recognition of his hard-won talents. (It was through continuing to read of his work that I came upon this memorial page.) When I had heard the news last year, I conducted my own private ceremony in his honor with a few attendees. I regret that I could not attend any of the formal ceremonies. My deepest condolences to his friends and family.

In the time that I knew him, Hobbs unified opposites: revolution and elegance, creativity and consistency, and, most painfully in retrospect, deep feeling and stoicism. I loved the man with a little brother’s love, and my memory of him continues to inspire me. Farewell, Comrade.

CASPIAN DENNIS

As Roger’s British book agent—working on behalf of Nat Sobel and Judith Weber—I first encountered him through his writing, within the extraordinary opening pages of his remarkable debut novel, *GHOSTMAN*. *GHOSTMAN* would have been a stunning literary achievement for any writer but for one as young as Roger, with his first published book, it was incredible. Those pages prompted a huge amount of interest from competing publishers, and ultimately, to a book deal with Bill Scott-Kerr at Transworld.

Consequently I met Roger in person when he came to London for the Crime Thriller Awards, for which *GHOSTMAN* was shortlisted for the prestigious Ian Fleming Steel Dagger. I have a vivid memory of accompanying Roger to Transworld where he met the assembled team who were working on his books. He reeled off a series of anecdotes and stories about some of the larger than life characters he’d encountered in his research, and had everyone in the room, and especially the sales reps who were responsible for actually going into bookstores and selling his book, totally entranced. Working at the “coalface” as they do, sales reps are not the easiest audience to win over, but Roger did so because his stories were just as thrilling and engaging delivered in person as they were on the page. Roger had a gift for storytelling. No doubt part of that was natural, but must also have been the result of the years of hard work that he put into developing his craft. It seems clear, too, that it was the support of his family enabled him to develop that gift and for his talent to blossom.

At the award ceremony itself, held at London’s Grosvenor Hotel, Roger, dressed in an immaculate three-piece hound’s-tooth suit, was stunned and delighted when it was announced

that he'd won the Ian Fleming Steel Dagger 2013 for *GHOSTMAN*. Sat at our table that evening were giants of the thriller world such as Frederick Forsyth and Lee Child, and though Roger fully deserved to be in their company, he seemed naturally rather overwhelmed to find himself there, surrounded by many of his heroes, at a televised ceremony, receiving the award for the best thriller to be published in the UK in 2013. No doubt anyone would find having achieved such success, so quickly, hard to adjust to. I can say, however, that there was no great surprise among the other publishers in attendance—the quality of *GHOSTMAN* and the nature of Roger's talent was widely and rightly recognised within British publishing.

I'm sorry not to have spent more time than that with Roger, nor to have had chance to get to know him better. Yet it is a privilege to have been there that evening, to be with him when he achieved such deserved recognition for his work. That's how I shall remember Roger Hobbs.

ANONYMOUS

Hobbs saw the best in me and he saw me how I wanted to be seen. He was so important to me. And will be forever.

ANONYMOUS

I should have every reason to envy his success, but I never could. He was too warm, too kind, too giving. And too damn young.

LOU BOXER

Our discussion for the NoirCon panel began as follows: "Roger Hobbs presents *Forgotten Innovators in Suspense*" instead? I'd love to hear what styles, story types, writing techniques and plot structures inspire my fellow writers to stay engaged and intrigued. I'm a structuralist at heart, and I think this is the perfect venue. I'll give panelists a chance to intro and bio themselves, then talk briefly about their own work. Then they each one will present a writer who keeps them in suspense. They could read a passage, share a plot, or describe a technique. Then, if time permits, we can compare and contrast different suspense-building methodologies. Hell, we might even figure out how they work!

ANONYMOUS

I didn't have much one-on-one interaction with Hobbs given that I very much knew him as a part of JDorm. When I was a sophomore, however, I took a ballroom dance class, and I was surprised when he showed up as well. I was absolutely awful at it. I have no grace and I'm not sure what possessed me to take the dumb class in the first place, but he was my one ally there. It was just an 8-week class and I'm not sure he'd even remember it if he were here to ask. But hereafter the first thing that came to mind when I heard he had died: his blue eyes, how poised he was when dancing with someone he had just met (who kept stepping on his toes), the way he never stopped looking at me in the eye no matter how much I screwed up. I will miss him.

TILDE

I can't imagine starting a journey through Reed College without Hobbs there. No one could weave the web or lore like him. He made being at Reed feel like entering a thriller novel or even a fantasy world filled with timeless stories and gritty knowledge. I remember the first time I tagged along with him to go to a midnight movie. I think it was the first *Twilight* film. The movie was ridiculous, compounded by the fact that, 10 minutes before it ended, the film caught fire and we had to wait almost an hour for them to find another reel and finish the film. The whole time, waiting, he kept me entertained with stories of Portland, making me feel like the luckiest person

ever to be living in this city, his city, filled with suspense and dark humor. I tried to keep up with his stories by peppering the conversation with ironic jokes and nonsense. When we finally completed the mission - the movie - it was much later than we had planned to stay out, we were tired and starving, so Hobbs decided it was the perfect time to introduce me to the Roxy, an all-night diner in Portland with photos of celebrity patrons and demented artwork plastered on the walls. He told me it was the perfect place for delirious nights writing from dusk until dawn and I could vividly picture him doing just that. In that moment, the Roxy diner was a studio for genius or the setting of a noir film starring a young writer who finds himself at the center of a hard-boiled mystery. That was the kind of world that Hobbs could evoke. He could quickly convince you that you were living in a world of mystery and adventure and you were happy to be along for the ride.

LINNEA KELLY

Hobbs was the second person I ever profiled. I was 17 and horribly nervous but he immediately put me at ease. We joked about how fortuitous it was that a crime convention and a cat convention were being held at the same time. He ate three mini-croissants, laughed so loudly the other diners stared, and ended the interview by telling me to come to Vegas with him and Nok. He was wearing the worst/best orange pocket square. Several months after that interview, it was Hobbs who convinced me to go to Reed rather than Vassar. It was the best choice I ever made.

ALEX LARSON

It's hard to sum up 6 years of friendship in a few anecdotes. I could probably fill a book with my memories of Hobbs if I were the book writing type, but that was his thing. I've always been better with telling stories out loud than writing them down, so I will do my best.

I first met Hobbs through Mace when I was a freshman and he was a senior. I went to a RAPS event during my first semester at Reed, and afterwards we went back to Mace's apartment to hang out. We hit it off, but we didn't get really close until the summer of 2011, after he graduated from Reed. We talked on facebook messenger all summer, and he sent me a novel he was working on to get my opinion on it. I wasn't aware of his writing before that, and I was impressed with how good he was. We were both a little bored and restless in the beginning of the summer, and talking gave us something to do in our exiles from Portland.

By the end of the summer we were both back in town, and within a couple months he was unofficially living in my dorm room, as I was unofficially living with Joe. He didn't have the money for a place of his own yet. I was in Mace's apartment with him when he got the call that Ghostman had sold, and that call changed everything. After he got the deal he moved into our apartment complex, and for the next couple years we were neighbors. Hobbs and Lara were the best neighbors I've ever had, and pretty soon the four of us spent pretty much all of our time together. It was an ideal living situation for developing close friendships. I miss it a lot.

In 2012, Joe, Lara, Hobbs and I took our first road trip. We drove from Portland to Los Angeles and then to San Francisco. The whole trip took about 3 weeks, and we really bonded as a group of friends. We spent at least 40 hours in the car together, and we enjoyed each other's company the entire time. Hobbs spent the trip editing Ghostman. At one point we had to stop by Best Buy to get an adapter so he could charge his computer in my car and work in the back seat. It was our first of many adventures, and I don't think we would have been such good friends without it. I still think about driving down the 5 together every time I hear Seven Nation Army, which we listened to so often that it became our theme song. We went on several vacations together after that, which were also exciting and special, but this one was my favorite.

That being said, the best memories I have of Hobbs don't have to do with vacations or parties or even Renn Fayre. What stand out are all the small moments and conversations. Hobbs was my best friend, and we experienced a lot together. He was someone I could always confide in and be honest with because we understood each other so well. We spent a ton of time together, so he knew me better than anyone else. What I remember most fondly are the countless nights we spent watching movies. We liked to talk over them while we watched, discussing and analyzing. I remember enjoying the elaborate dinners Lara made for us, which we really appreciated since neither of us were the best at cooking for ourselves. I remember the hours we spent sitting on the couch together, mostly ignoring each other while we worked on our respective projects. I remember all the times we just spent the afternoon hanging out and talking. What I valued most about our relationship was the sense of companionship we had. It didn't matter what we did as long as we did it together.

A few years ago we went out to dinner, and after the food came we sat in silence and focused on our steaks and wine. After several minutes he looked up at me and told me we would always be friends. We went out to eat together a lot back then, and I don't remember every meal, but I will always remember that one.

ANDREA

The first time I really talked to Hobbs was on a Greyhound bus to Seattle. There was some kind of miscommunication and I got off the bus with the impression he was gay. Lara, I assumed was therefore his roommate/bff. I continued with that misconception for way too long until I saw them kissing at a party and commented on how drunk they might be to be doing that. I was corrected-- I am a dumbass.

KARL

Hobbs, you signed my copy of Ghostman with the words, "To Karl, you crazy bastard." I still have absolutely no idea what prompted that for my vanilla ass. Thanks for having faith in my inner party animal.

EVAN

I am still not exactly sure why Hobbs enjoyed seeing me enjoying myself more than he enjoyed enjoying himself, but I always tried to outdo myself whenever I was around him so I could see him smile. After a particular hula, during one of my trips up to Portland to see him and other friends, on a weekend when the water supply had been tainted and I didn't know it, I was quite sick to my stomach and was sad for disrupting the dinner plans that had been made earlier. After lying sick in the hotel room he had gotten for all of us, I insisted we go meet everyone at the Roxy instead of for a giant dinner meal. "This man is a machine," he roared with a wide grin.

A friend got a concussion and was having trouble speaking and had to go to the hospital. Hobbs and I were the people there to accompany him. Hobbs and I kept up a running banter/commentary through the whole time we were in the hospital. He made it seem more like a close gathering of friends than a medical problem. Can't imagine a better person to have along in times of trouble.

ROSEMARY WALTON INGHAM

I played in Hobbs campaign for my entire time at Reed. Thanks to his storytelling, I met the man I will one day marry and still have the first seven digits of the Fibonacci sequence memorized. I will always remember staying up into the early hours of the morning, riffing

together and telling a story. He found the story of who I wanted to be and told it back to me until I became that person. Bona fortuna, dearest friend.

This is a poem I wrote soon after the funeral:
You went to Seattle and returned
with the seed of death already in you.
You died in Portland, by my side,
But you died of Seattle.

The secret of an open-casket funeral is not that it is disturbing to see you once more.
It is that your body is vacant,
That what we see is not-you, the not-there,
What you once wore
Now only so much hand-me-down-into-the-ground.
I said goodbye to your husk, but you were gone already.

I cannot consign you to the earth,
To a plot I'll never see in your family's churchyard,
But I can consign you to Seattle.
When you lived there I did not see you for months,
And now every month will be a month I do not see you.

The dead do not lie;
They go to Pike Place Market to buy fish for dinner.
They go to the second Starbucks, because the first is overhyped.
They eat Earl Grey ice cream and watch bike polo in the park.

The dead do not lie;
They go for brunch to restaurants that serve lavender coffee in a martini glass,
And take fifty percent off the bill because the service was late,
But which can't make a decent Eggs Benedict
Or live up to their price and decor.

I can consign you to Seattle.
The only cost is that now,
Every Amtrak seems to bear you.
As each green-grey train rushes by,
I fight the urge to grab my keys and drive to Union Station to pick you up,
Your briefcase in my trunk,
You seated beside me,
Talking about where to get breakfast.

ANONYMOUS (the below anecdote is from someone from JDorm, but I don't know who)

Hobbs always had time to talk to people - sometimes to his own detriment. When we were in a dorm together, his D&D group always had a question for him. Without fail. In the commons, at Birthright, on the lawn, you'd hear, "Hey Hobbs," So one night, we're relaxing in the dorm. Hobbs has just gotten out of the shower. Just a towel and whole lot of water droplets, flying everywhere. It's about half past midnight so he ducks his head in to check on everyone.

And it's here that we hear it-- shouted so loud that everyone in the building must have heard it,
"HEY HOBBS!"

He looks like a deer caught in the headlights - like he somehow thought a towel would be enough to stop the barrage. And as Allison rounds the corner, diving into the common room, he turns to face her just in time for her to ask the question, "Can my character fuck a spider?" We all know what Hobbs' laughter sounded like but that was a first time I ever saw him fall back into his chair from it.

PETER ROCK

Today I was looking back through critiques I wrote to Hobbs about stories his wrote for my class. One was about a noir writer ("The Noirist") and another about a character with a split personality and many motorcycles, and a third involving a plague of zombies at a place very much like Reed. Always he had the confidence, the voice, the sweet bemusement. So thrilled and proud for his success, and so sad for this loss.

LINDA KIRSCHNER

When my brother died of brain cancer a few years ago, the most comforting words I received were from a friend who told me that memories of happy times would help ease my grief and allow my brother to live on. Other people reminded me of the importance of speaking the name of the person who died. And then there were the stories. With Roger, there must be many stories that you remember, but let me add a few more.

Roger was in my 8th period class, the last of the day. The group was small—after all, no one who could figure out a reason would schedule a class during that period because s/he could leave school early if he had a free period. The people in that class did not want to leave early. They wanted to soak up all they could learn. There were kids in that class who were ostracized, the girl who was adopted and had a cleft palate (and whose older, adopted sister was drop-dead gorgeous), the girl who had seven fingers on one hand and only two on the other, the girl who had been told by her counselor that she could not, should not, take an AP course. It was a motley crew, to say the least. The very first day of class, I took attendance, of course, and there was only one absence, Roger. Roger arrived fashionably late, with the air of the student who knows his importance, in his white suit, carrying his brief case. If I didn't know better, I would have assumed that he, not I, was the teacher, ready to begin. It's hard to know what to do in that situation. All the other students were waiting to see what was going to happen. I think Roger was taking my measure at that moment. I said, "You must be Roger." He said, "I prefer Hobbs." I could have, should have left it at that, but I said, "I'll call you Roger." I meant no disrespect to him. I wanted him to know that he was joining more than a class: he was becoming part of a family. He never mentioned the moment nor did I. I only hope that he did feel that connection.

In May, the last day before the AP exam, there was a fire drill during 8th period. Everyone in the room groaned because this was the last opportunity they had to ask any questions before the exam. Roger was the first to grab his review packet and take it with him as we exited the building. Everyone in the class followed his example. We sat on the grass in the bus circle reviewing while the rest of the student population was reveling in the freedom of a fire drill. Those students did far better than anyone would have expected on the exam, and I credit Roger's example for leading them to success.

When Roger's essay appeared in the Times, I felt as proud as any teacher could, and I let him know. Time itself moves quickly, and the next I heard of Roger was on the publication of his first novel, and I enjoyed reading his words. When the second book came out, I packaged

both books in a mailer and sent them to his west coast address, but the envelope was returned months later, ripped and torn, a casualty of the post office. I have meant to resend them for well over a year, and they sat on my side board in the dining room, waiting for action, and I am truly sorry that I did not ask him to personalize the books so that he would know just how important they—and he—were to me.

MANDY ALLEN

The other day I found myself tearful over a grapefruit I was cutting for my daughter. I was recognizing what I do to support her changes all the time and how fleeting raising these children is. They are our hearts walking around outside of our bodies. I thought of you in that moment and of the things you must have done to serve your son in his life and then still serve him following his death. Reading your post today reminded me I have been meaning to tell you about a Roger moment.

It must have been about a year ago Adam and I went to dinner with Roger and Lara. After dinner we went back to their apartment in Seattle. I was sharing my experience that it was so nice to be away from my children for an evening. I became anxious and was expressing myself openly. I started soapboxing about my self-neglect, sharing about how I will forget to drink enough water or put off hydrating when I know I am thirsty and then forget about my own basic needs. I was going on about how losing my job six months ago was very scary for me and I was in a job at the moment that was exhausting and frustrating and was detailing the abuses I was suffering there and was expressing how I felt trapped. I was sharing about the needs of my children - my daughter requires a lot of time in transportation support and is moody and teenagery and I was expressing my guilt over playing cards with my 4yo son but not being willing to effort at the game enough to learn the rules or understand if my son knows the rules or not - I just blankly play the card game letting him tell me what to do next thinking about other things to get through the day.

I was going on like this then I looked up at my husband and he was openly tearful and I looked at Roger and he was tearful as well. I got self conscious and said something like 'that was a really complicated way of letting you know I'm thirsty.' And we all laughed and I was given a glass of water. Then we played Cards Against Humanity and enjoyed the conversation that came from this, he and Adam bouncing clever off of each other and rapping about their various project ideas. My heart was really struck with these two sensitive men in front of me at the moment I looked up from my monologue. It was such a meeting of souls moment. I wanted to share that the Roger I met had that thing I see in my husband that I know to be so precious - some kind of empathy sensitivity that is raw and beautiful. That makes artists. I experience that it also carries with it a burden that must be difficult to bear. I got a new job offer the next week and have been at my current job for nearly a year now. And, I feel like I am getting to do my hearts work again with my current employer.

The poem your family shared at Roger's memorial reminded me of the sensitive man I witnessed that evening. And I mourn not getting to know him better. Since Roger's death he did visit me in one of those 2am all too alive seeming grief inspired after death visits that I have been known to have for people I have loved that die. Two days after we found out he had died he was standing outside of our bedroom in the hallway and seemed to laugh lovingly that I was sleeping on the very uncomfortable bunk bed in my sons room, ala "So, this is the glamorous married life?". I begged him to go visit Adam because Adam loves him so much and will miss him so much. He refused. I told him I was so upset because I would have wanted him to grow up and marry Lara then make babies and get straight like Adam and I had done in our 20s. I wanted him alive with us to struggle through all this shit of being alive and be a friend and peer

to Adam. I told him every plan I had hoped for all of our lives together. His ghost insisted with a smile-like feeling, "Mandy, I was never going to do any of that." It was so clear in the visit/dream, he didn't talk out loud just insisted leaving a very clear and unwavering impression on my heart that there was not one thing anyone might have done to change the course of his fate despite anything anyone would have wanted for him in his life. He told me I was supposed to let people know this. I told him I wasn't happy with having to carry out that burden and maybe I would and maybe I wouldn't. Maybe this experience was more a reflection of some kind of grief fueled vision manifested from my own regret and not so much Roger actually visiting but, in either case it helped me get through some moments of this pain I am experiencing over everyone losing him. Your family is in my heart and thoughts.

ROGER PORTER

I knew Roger (he always insisted on being called "Hobbs," and I did so, perhaps so we would have separate names) from a course I taught on Shakespeare and Film. Roger was a wonderfully imaginative student, often quirky in his insights and frequently brilliant; but his ideas were always interesting and devastatingly smart, and in the course they served to move class discussions in unexpected and inevitably fruitful directions. He was one of those students from whom I learned as much as I taught. And his classmates benefited endlessly from his points of view. Roger knew how to talk about film with wonderful acuity, and he always sought to find ways to see how a film director would help a viewer discover completely new things about the Shakespeare play being filmed.

ANONYMOUS

I remember meeting Roger when he won the Strand Critics award for best novel. He was a true gentleman. When I complimented him about his book. He turned away for a moment and was embarrassed. And then he almost looked like he doubted that I liked his book. When he won the award, he was happy but understated. When I invited out for dinner with the other nominees, he again looked surprised. And at that point, I realized that Roger was one of those rare people who have two wonderful qualities, those of curious, shy, and unpretentious child, and those of a wise elder, where lauds and plaudits never changed who he was. I will miss chatting with this wonderful talent, who had a great future but fortunately left us with a few works that are destined to be crime classics.

GARY FISKETJON

After a day of pondering this unthinkable and horrible news, I haven't yet got far beyond that description -- though many of my colleagues, also Roger's fans, insist as well on unbelievable. And that, too, seems true to me. I admired his work first, of course, but soon came to know and admire him apart from that, for being relentlessly intelligent and curious, hugely informed about a dazzling range of things, shy and reserved but also great company. These qualities he displayed even in trying book-tour conditions with countless unknown fans, with a poise that wasn't second nature to him yet earned by his hard work and dedication. Still another reason to both respect him and to relish spending time with him.

ADAM FULLER

I dedicated THE INVERTED PYRAMID to Roger Hobbs, a friend and fellow writer who passed away in November. A few days before The Anonymous Source came out, I posted the Acknowledgements section on Facebook. This time around, I decided to post a little about the dedication.

At the end of the book, I also included a little story about Roger. Here's snippet of what I wrote:

"This book is dedicated to the memory of Roger Hobbs. I met Roger about three years ago and he passed away unexpectedly in November of 2016, at the age of twenty-eight.

Roger was a writer of extraordinary talent, whose first book, Ghostman, came out when he was just twenty-four years old and won many of the awards thrillers can win in this world. His second book, Vanishing Games, came out two years later, also to wide acclaim.

Roger and I wrote together from time to time, and I was mesmerized by his talent. I have many fond memories of writing with him in Seattle—me at work on The Inverted Pyramid, him on City of Sirens, the book that would have been his third and will now remain unfinished forever.

I recall one afternoon in particular, when Roger was working on the opening scene—a heist during a political coup in Bangkok. We were eating lunch in a Mexican restaurant and talking through ideas for the scene when, out of nowhere, Roger dictated about a page of pristine prose off the top of his head.

It would have taken me ten drafts to write something that good, and he just spoke it, fully formed, between bites of taco.

That's the kind of talent Roger had. It made me envious and left me in awe. I miss him terribly and I grieve for his friends, his sister, his parents, and his partner Lara."

RENEE HOBBS

Dear Nat:

Thank you for your email. We both share a sense of guilt and responsibility for Roger's death, and for this reason, the grief we share is particular and intense. Randy and I faced the harsh reality of being ignored through repeated emails and phone calls over 3 years as our worries grew and grew and we felt helpless to reach him. When we visited him, he did his best to make it seem like everything was fine. We raised our children to be capable and independent and we treasured their growing into their adult identities, even as we realized the particular challenges and struggles they faced with adulthood. Roger worked hard to convince us both that everything was OK. We believed in him, and that belief obscured our vision somewhat. Of course, looking in hindsight at both the published and unpublished work in light of the accident, it is easier see the addiction's pull more clearly. But our respect and love for him was what really mattered.

So truly, we must both work to step back from the useless feelings of guilt and regret. We are coming to see that, in order to truly honor Roger's life, there's no room for blame in our lives, only love. My son Roger was a dreamer, a storyteller and a kind and gentle person with a fascination for the dark side of human nature and the paradoxes of living and dying. I miss him every minute of the day. I know how much he treasured your support, your genius and your

insight on the craft of storytelling. He knew that your careful attention to his work enabled him to experience success. Indeed, I appreciate your effort to salvage some of the unpublished writing as an act of love. You gave him the opportunity for his writing to reach a large audience and to experience public recognition for his talent. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for him.

COBBLER TOWNSEND

This is not a moral code; this is merely a code of behavior which causes the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

A Comrade Will:

- § Rebel.
- § Hope.
- § Love.
- § Question.
- § Dream.
- § Think.
- § Serve humanity.

A Comrade Will Also:

- § Fight to end global capitalism.
- § Fight to preserve the rights of the people.
- § Fight all bourgeois dictatorships.
- § Fight to end the wage labor system forever.
- § Fight to end ignorance among mankind.
- § Fight to end poverty.
- § Fight to end slavery.
- § Fight to end hunger.
- § Fight to end homelessness.
- § Fight to end racism, sexism, chauvinism, jingoism and homophobia.
- § Be fair with all men and women.
- § Be honest with herself or himself.
- § Do all things for the glory of the people.
- § Put others first and himself or herself second.
- § Think of the whole before the part.
- § Think of the group before the one.
- § Cast hatred from his or her mind.
- § Revolutionize his or her world.
- § Take action to make the world a better place.
- § Abhor needless violence.
- § Love mankind above himself or herself.
- § Love others above himself or herself.
- § Value peace.
- § Value justice.
- § Be virtuous.
- § Seek truth.
- § Seek out new understandings and new ideas.
- § Spread socialism in ideal, idea, and practice.
- § Dispel myths.

- § Spread knowledge.
- § Promote understanding.
- § Promote art and culture.
- § Reward others fairly according to their work.
- § Help others according to their needs.
- § Promote toleration of individuality.
- § Be intolerant of failure.
- § Be intolerant of bigotry.
- § Innovate.
- § Fight fascism in all its forms.
- § Advance an agenda of equality between individuals.
- § Endorse and support the public ownership of corporations which will provide for the public good, as well as the public ownership of the capital needed to support and do business.
- § Support other comrades, regardless of interpretation or tendency.

A Comrade Will Never:

- § Give up.
- § Kill purposelessly.
- § Sacrifice or ignore the greater good.
- § Rape.
- § Torture for pleasure.
- § Coerce or terrorize for sexual or monetary purposes.
- § Be greedy or selfish.
- § Cause pain for profit.
- § Betray his ideology or comrades.

A Comrade should not unless absolutely necessary:

- § Kill innocents.
- § Exploit the works of others.
- § Ruin or decimate farmland.
- § Smash or destroy the means of production.
- § Ignore the needs of others.
- § Support or harbor enemies of the people.
- § Support or harbor slavers.
- § Allow the feeling of hate to flourish.
- § Support or harbor unrepentant capitalists.
- § Obey false leaders.
- § Ignore personal problems.
- § Ignore flaws in people and ideas.
- § Obey any authority claiming to be greater than mankind.
- § Have sexual relations out of malice or hatred.
- § Sabotage the plans of comrades.
- § Harbor personal vendettas against comrades.
- § Have unhealthy, dangerous or exploitive sexual relations or habits.
- § Exult herself.
- § Cut, burn or flagellate her body as distraction, punishment, or penance.
- § Hinder the force of love in others out of jealousy or bitterness.
- § Torture for information.

- § Hurt a comrade purposelessly.
- § Disable a comrade.
- § Destroy communal property.
- § Monopolize the use of communal property without consent.
- § Follow blindly.
- § Groupthink.
- § Commit suicide.
- § Buckle under tyranny.
- § Make a conclusion she knows to be false.
- § Deny a conclusion she knows to be true.
- § Have prejudice solely on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, age, ability, nationality or heritage.
- § Be inequitable.
- § Be incorrigible.
- § Be corrupt.
- § Be dishonest.
- § Be gluttonous.
- § Be slothful or lazy.

LOVE STORY

By Roger Hobbs

Eventually my train came. I watched you stand on the platform as I reluctantly took those few steps out of your arms. Looking back at your contented smile, my breath fogged the glass. When you disappeared from sight, I never thought I wouldn't see you again. Still, I was lost in that soft agony of missing you. I could never regret a single moment I spent with you. Somehow I knew it would never happen again. Somehow I knew you'd call me and tell me the next morning, and I would stare up at the imperfections in the paint on my ceiling and fall back into that moment, the one moment I ever had, where I knew exactly who I was. I can almost smell you through my cell window, like white peaches and sandalwood; I can imagine you now, wrapped up in your patchwork hat and blowing the steam away from your coffee, watching the cold air breathe in off the frozen sea. I hope that on the night they execute me, you will be on your porch, watching the sun disappear over your frozen ocean waves. I hope you don't even know I exist. For you I want to be just another headline stranger whose life meant nothing except for those few moments of sound and fury that will bring about its end. But if you do remember me, I want you to know that each day I spent in this place I loved you more. I want you to know the beautiful agony of loving you, and I want you to know that when the first rays of blue light drift over my sleeping body tomorrow, I will only love you more. You are my winter.

Car, vois-tu, chaque jour je t'aime davantage, aujourd'hui plus qu'hier et bien moins que demain.