



Sunday, May 4, 2014

Zapping-you Whenever Thoughts Flow

## Blue Hour Rescue



Protection, 1960.

When my son Paul was little and my office was in a tiny room at the house, he used to come in with an apple and sit on a big chair. I would turn my office chair around to face him, and put my feet up on the arms of his chair. In this way, I would enclose him and protect him. We called this time “Protect Time,” and it impressed on him forever that fathers protect sons. Paul is thirteen years old, and we still talk about Protect Time.

I like wearing sunglasses because they protect me from the harsh light of the world. My house protects me from the rain. My skin protects my bones from becoming bleached in the sun. I love visored hats in the rain because the visor protects my face from the water. A hot coffee cup in my hands, in winter, protects my hands from the cold of my downtown office, before the heater hits. My dad used to protect me, but he died. God protects me every day with an invisible shield. This works in combination with my sunglasses and my skin. I mix frozen berries with

my protein shake; the berries protect me from certain forms of cancer. I go to bed at 8:00, and this protects me from the debilitating forces of stress. Rising before the sun protects me from the mad rush of the eon. The quiet and solitude protect my spirit, and these work in conjunction with God and my skin.

My favorite time of day is when I crawl into bed. I sleep naked because I want to be free. The walls of my home protect me from the wind. If it rains during the night, I am all right because of the roof and the walls. A man needs a roof, four walls and a good wife; with these, he is happy. In the winter, a down comforter is bonus protection. I hope it is unnecessary for geese to die to provide the feathers that insulate my naked frame from the blue of night, which is 4 a.m. Four o'clock in the morning is called “the blue hour” because it is the time when the body comes closest to death. The heart is stiller then, the blood cooler, and the body practices for its ultimate demise. If God is merciful, death is deferred for another day. At 4:01 a.m., life begins its slow return. Heat returns to the blood, and the heart adds another beat per minute to prepare its home for the stresses of a wicked eon.

Death is dodged for another day, but maybe not tomorrow. Maybe tomorrow I will die. Death hangs over the head daily and by night, and there is nothing for it but food and skin, berries the color of wine, and sons and a good wife. But these, themselves, die. The only thing for it, then, is the invisible barrier of God. But even this flies at the hour appointed for an earthly end. The only thing for it, then, is an expectation for a future beyond the now-visible world. The only thing for it is the knowledge that God will one day abolish death. This knowledge is the feet of God at the arms of the chair, protecting the citizens of this tiny room from despair. —MZ

I wrote this essay on March 2, 2006.

The Romans series will resume next weekend, God willing.