

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN E. DAVIS II
CHARLESTON, WV
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JOHN DAVIS - One of the major problems that I've had particularly, you see, as an attorney, has been my speech. Particularly, say, at night when I'm tired, 'cause I have to constantly concentrate and watch it in order to do it, and if I get particularly tired, that'll happen, see. And one of the things I've wanted to do is.. .I want to someday be able to be the greatest orator in America. I want to do that because of the fact it would be something...If you knew how I spoke to begin with, you ask anybody, even a year or so ago, even if you ask Dr. Carter, he was the psychiatrist at West Virginia University Medical School doing the psychological testing that the Supreme Court, their expert, used to determine that I was totally and permanently disabled and incapacitated. And he was the same doctor that said beyond a reasonable doubt that I had recovered. But at that time if you would even ask him then, my speech was better. But if I'm able sometime so that some young kid is watching TV, and he doesn't know that that's a brain-damaged person or that's somebody that was on the street, but that great orator, he only wished he could be like that, and then mommy can say, "Well, do you know?..." And that's the way you influence people in this world. So as I say, that's what I need to do and it's always good for me to be recorded, to keep myself in that way.

Let me do this. If you want me to, while we're talking and you give me some introductory things, tell me what your interest is. Is this just a personal interest, are you trying to compile some work or... I mean obviously it's both. Are you working now specifically towards anything?

K. M. - My personal interest is that that experience that you had is something that, to put it bluntly, I personally am trying to see if it's possible for somebody like me to have that also. To find that. And also with that...That type of experience is not really taken creditably by either science or psychology at all. They don't even count that as being valid, as being something real. And I...it is.

DAVIS - It's as real as can be. And the thing is there's no way of validating it. See, there's no way that they can fit it into their systems, and as a consequence, (I started to say and then we got side-tracked coming in), is that in many ways science and religion have now reversed themselves from the time that Galileo stood in Padua with these tall-hatted, educated leaders of the day, and he got a telescope and he looked in it and he saw little planets: at Jupiter. And of course if this was the center of the universe the planets would go around the Earth as Jupiter went around the Earth. But he noticed that the planets went around Jupiter. Not a great observation. Well, with that, with that little experiment, that destroyed the whole geocentric concept. And don't you remember what he said? He said, "Well, you don't have to believe me just get down here and look through that telescope." And they said, "We're not going to look through that!"

I just got through reading a book. You ought to write this down because it's probably the latest, best book on what we're talking about and on the fact that science will not accept these things. It's called, *Einstein's*

Space And Van Gogh's Sky. It's by Henry Margeau, (Margeneau?), he's the one who wrote the book, *Scientific Nature Of Reality And (?) Of Science*. I think he's from Yale. And by a psychologist, Lawrence LeShan. It's just out. Larry's got some books on alternate realities. You familiar with them? OK. And Henry Margeau, he wrote probably one of the best books on the scientific paradigm. The book's just out. And they were talking about...Who's the great scientist, German scientist, late nineteenth century? Helmholtz? He was talking about this. He said that if he...(Stops at this point and goes into next room to get some medical reports)

(Resuming) Helmholtz said that if a friend of his or a fellow scientist-would tell him something that would contradict locality, or the accepted things, or if he saw (it) with his own senses, that he would not accept it. See? And of course this usually happens when you have a scientific paradigm or anything that's in threat. See, you have to remember with the Catholic Church, it was only late, what was it, in the nineteenth century that they came out with Papal infallibility. Innocent III didn't need that. (Laughs. Pulls out one of the articles brought from the next room).

This was a summary report given by Dr. Paul Crawford who I got to know during this period of time. It is a summary of some of the other medical reports and EEG's etc., all the way through. See what I mean? (Points out various details of the examinations).

M. - What I'd be interested in to have you talk about too is.. .I read the article in the paper about you, but I'd like to hear it from you. You know. Your story of what happened to you, and the actual experience and...

DAVIS - Well, I'll talk to you...some about it. It's one of those things that.. .If you want to find the best that I've seen writ of it read *Black Elk Speaks*. You ever heard of that?

M. - Yeah, I've read that in college.

DAVIS - O.K. Well, remember when *Black Elk* says he saw more that night, saw more in that vision, than he'd ever be able to tell?.. .Have you seen.. .Did you see it on "That's Incredible?" (Referring to their TV segment on Davis's story).

M. - No.

DAVIS - They did an awful good job. Both of the people were of a spiritual.. .One was an American Indian, the director, and one of the producers there was.. .both of them were of a nature to try to catch it. They went up there, got the lighting, and there's a small scene in there that's right close at it. It's got the same.. .There's going to be, I think, next May, this coming May.. .they went up there to shoot it, but they didn't get anything, didn't have the camera work...went up there to where the site was and.. .there's going to be something on "PM Magazine," maybe for six minutes. Now you don't know what...(too faint to hear).

But see, what had happened, to give you the background, is that I had had, as you can see progressively degenerating circumstances. I had

finally...During this time I had lost my family, lost everything. And I had a friend, a Dr. Edward Lewis, who hasn't been maybe the most successful doctor but I had known him to begin with and he would let me come up and talk to him. Didn't charge me anything. I appreciated that. And so what had happened is finally on my birthday, July the twelfth, the Supreme Court had entered an order permanently suspending my license. And I knew they were going to 'cause I had no way I could fight them. I didn't have an attorney... appointed attorney, I didn't have anything. And so I had been arrested and jailed. I had been arrested. So I was in front of the judge, Judge Hey down here. While I was down there they served me with taking my license. You've got to remember I'm then in my forties and I had fought awful hard (to get the license?). When I was young, I had been born with a pretty high I.Q. and I had always pretty well taken care of it. I've always read well and everything. And it was an awful blow for a long time for me to ever admit that something was wrong with me. See, because that was my crutch, you understand, otherwise you could say that that was one of the strong points, and I was a highly intellectual person. As a consequence I was a person who...mysticism didn't make any sense, cause it doesn't supposed to. I tried to utilize...I would try to intellectualize my emotions, others things. I'm exaggerating to a limited extent. And Dr. Carter, I'm sure, would tell you that too; it was the type of personality I probably (purveyed?). And see I had then lost everything. The one thing...I did have. And then I had to acknowledge it.

So what happens when your license is suspended, it's suspended indefinitely but you can, once each year, at intervals of not less than a year, you can apply if medically your condition's changed such that the suspension can be lifted. Mine was so that they said that I couldn't function outside of an institutional setting. And I wouldn't be institutionalized. One of the things I tried to do was...I was afraid partly of being put in jail but primarily of being lobotomized. Whether that was correct...And certainly there were times when I was paranoid. And certainly there were times...You're probably too young to remember my law partner, Governor Barron. That was the governor that had the last...you might say we had the last political (organization?) in the state...and that was the governor that finally went to jail. In the sixties, we had in West Virginia a combination of Watergate and McCarthyism. The Red-baiting, when people were just hounded. It was unmerciful, unmerciful. (Unclear).

So anyhow, as a consequence I went up to see Dr. Lewis, to talk to him. And he would treat me as a human being. Very often back then at the time, I remember times I've had doctors push me to the ground. I had one psychiatrist push me to the floor one time. I was screaming. I couldn't control myself. I'd get these seizures but they wouldn't bi-lateralize, so I'd be in just unbearable pain. And I remember I was trying to get him to do...I don't know what. And he pushed me to the floor and he says, "You animal, you ain't anybody anymore." He says, "You go up (?) if you can afford it. I don't think you can. Go up to Spencer." And I used to try to think, "I'm not an animal. I'm not an animal." And I'd had the notion, "Well, perhaps all Charleston can't be wrong. Maybe I ought to be a good...maybe I ought to be a healthy animal or something." So anyhow, I go up to see Dr. Lewis and he was talking to me, and it was in the daytime, and I had been staying up at the graveyard. All my life I have infrequently frequented graveyards because I find it a place of solitude.

When I was young I would go up there and...a philosophical thing. I've often looked for somebody that's a hundred years of age. I just never seemed to run into them. But all my life I've done this, Various times I've gone up and drank in them with people. But it's a place of solitude and it's a place that doesn't bother me. And, of course, by this time now it's a place where the biggest thing I had concern about even if you're, they say, a tramp or a bum...Technically somebody in my situation would have been offended by that. I was what you call a scuffler. A scuffler's not a bum cause a bum's given up. A scuffler's somebody who's the poor man's Tom Jones you might say. When he gets up in the morning, he don't know where he gonna eat, or where he gonna sleep at night. You understand? He makes it through the day. See? Because when you're scufflin' you're just trying to keep your head above water. And you can't do much to...When you're on the street that's one of the worst things about it, or anytime of low economic situation you've always got this.. .pressure. It's hard to think you're going to rehabilitate or anything along that (?).

So I had been up to see Dr. Lewis and I told him that my license had been suspended and that I had to undertake somehow to get myself off the streets. See, I had no home, nothing. And to...let me give you...I keep them in here.. .this probably brings it home just as well as anything.. .my shoes. (Pulls out of his desk drawer a pair of tattered, flimsy moccasins). And I had a.. .I still have a styrofoam rubber thing, I called it my "home." I slept on (it?). Cause that probably better than anything else gives you.. .You know those shoes were there, and probably somebody was in there walkin'. (Laughs)

And so I had talked to him, you know, and I wanted to know, and he finally looked at me, and he said, "John, I'm not gonna kid ya. You don't have a year to live." He said, "You're ready for the box!" Well, I'd never heard that phrase. That hit me. Right hard. And when he said that I started going back. I myself, I could hear death calling...then. (?) was ebbing away. I am more...Men ordinarily...Men...And I've been with not only well-known men, but men that you'd call men whether they're well-known or not. And a man...A woman will slowly wear out or so, but a man will go full-stop. Full-stop, and I been in many a fight with one, see, until, they fall. They fall. Very often if they quit work, or they retire, like football coach Bear Bryant, they die. But they go and then they fall. And two seconds before you see them fall you look at 'em they'd conquer the world. And they are like the Frenchman said about the Germans in the First World War. They said, "The Germans have reached their extremity. Victory belongs to whoever survives the other." (Outlasts?) the other. Well, I'm apparently not that way. You understand? I wear like a woman. You understand? And I often thought to myself, "You'll go on forever. And I'll just be here; go on forever and I'll never stop. And never get better." And during this period of time, so I'm going up to the graveyard. During this period of time I began to...I began to have a... In my life I would consider myself.. .atheistic but in ways I sometimes.. .I used to have this saying that I would ask somebody, "You believe in God? You say you do, I don't. You say you don't, I do." But I had begun to become aware of a force...I'm trying to put it together now, you see what I mean? Over the years... It'll take me some time, you know, to... aware of a force in the universe which I could best identify with the traditional religions, with Islam. And a Moslem will understand...I think this is why all the great

religions in the West started in the deserts. Cause there's one thing about the deserts, see, you risk meeting God. You can't hardly help but see Him, see, not much out there except you and Him. And I began to (?) very much a sense of That. Beforehand I felt as the poem,

"I, a stranger, am afraid
In a world I never made."

I didn't particularly feel that I was afraid, I felt that there's no sense in talking about truth, and justice, and beauty and these small things unless you admit the big things in life. And one of the big things in life seemed to me that there was no personal afterlife in any sense, and that there wasn't any personal God in any sense, which would put me either atheist by Christian concepts or a good Buddhist. See? But my feelings were that it was an alien world and that the world was alien to Man. Manmade civilization, and life was as George Santayana said when he was criticizing Henri Bergson, he said, "What is this elan vital that a few degrees temperature wouldn't remove?" Change, you know, wouldn't remove from the universe. And it slowly begun...I used to recite that all the time to people, I had it memorized. What is this? This life, this force? And it happened to start to begin to occur to me but it is just exactly, those degrees. That's the other end of the (soul?). And where I beforehand, you might say...Again, reconstructing this, not just for tonight, I'm reconstructing it in my life to understand it, that's what I mean by that. I think you might say if somebody's a polytheist, I was a polytheist. You understand? There wasn't...I never thought of just one alien force out there. It was just an alien...It was just a Newtonian universe, in a Hobbsian world. Although I had these feelings, I felt that if...I used to say it this way: If God didn't write the sermon on the mountain, the sermon on the mountain was written, so if God didn't do it who did it? Man did it. So God's in man, you might say. Something like, now, the great Greek Kazantzakis. Are you familiar with him, the great Greek poet and.. .Zorba The Greek?...who has that concept, you know. And probably was alive •as well as any...The flame burned in him as strong as it did in any writer. In Zorba The Greek...Zorba's one of my heroes. Zorba was an actual man he had never met when he wrote that. But what you want to read is his "Odyssey." The newer, the modern sequel to "The Odyssey," if you want to read the big work, the greatest poem in the twentieth century.

I had these feelings, see. But I began to get this sense, Moslem sense, as you'll notice (points to a tapestry on the wall behind him with a Moslem symbol on it), and I began to get this sense, and I think you'll begin to...and later I'll explain to you, is in this experience what I began to have, and I might write it out for you...I have to talk to you and get a feel for you and see how far I'm going to and (how far?) not, and how far I feel like (?)...is a sense, a sense, a profoundly sense of Other. Of other than whatever I'm identifying-my-own personality-with,-see; And-by-this-time my personality is pretty well beat down. You see what I mean? I mean in terms of.. .I was pretty realistic on the thing. You have to remember that one thing...Some of their studies that they've had of depressed people, they notice that depressed people, of course, do not see the future as bright as optimistic people. And you'd say that is, the reason that they do not see it properly, or correctly, is because

that they're depressed. But they found out that depressed people see the future much better. It's the optimists, see, who do not see it, and therefore survive in it and pass on their genes to other people who don't see the future better. (Laughs). But there've been some scientific studies on that. I mean very close to it, that's not just something that Ogden Nash'd come up with.

But anyhow, so what I did, I went up to the graveyard, and I'll get you the videotape that they put that thing down on, because I don't think I'll be doing it that many more times. But there's a specific place, that if you get the one (tape), it's just magic almost the way they caught it in the "That's Incredible" thing.

So I was walking down there. It was getting late at night and I was walking towards the older part of the graveyard, towards the potter field. And I was thinking, it wouldn't be very long, that I'd be buried up there. And I wouldn't have a tombstone. Nobody'd know my name. And then I had, and you have to remember there was in me, I'm sure, like there is in everybody, the Damascus sense, that you've got. The desire to fall down there, you understand, fall down on their head and rise! And that nothing...that life isn't really validated until that happens. And I think that's ultimately a very true thing. Very true thing. Because we all yearn for that.

What I'm getting into.. .what I can best equate what happened to me, and I'll come at it several ways, is traditionally been held by the, what's generally called the perennial philosophy, the mystical tradition which is found in all great religions. There's one good rule: "The orthodoxies separate, and the mystics unite." But in this experience you can (?), but as I say, I had a profound sense, say, of the Other. I had begun to almost...This is the problem that you may find with the...It's partly the Christians are going through this guru thing, and I understand why the Christians are going through the guru, see, cause Jesus does it for them. But finally, a man who's going to be a man finally realizes nobody else can do it for him. It's between you and the big boy. I used to try to say, see. Me and the universe. And we're using other terms. God's far and away the best. And most people begin to accept and use it now.

But what I'd done...Let me just go through and give you some of the descriptions. I was walking down there and there is an angel, big angel, six, seven feet and a Cross behind it. And we might go up there. We'll drive up on the way back. I'll drive up if we can get through. If they don't have the gates closed I'll show it to you. Probably you might want to do that. If things are right you might feel something. But... and I walked by there and I thought I heard the word, "Listen!" And I stopped. And then, and I can show you up there, I then had a series of profound Spiritual Knowings. Profound. The important thing to understand was, that right at that moment, certainly there was a gnawing inside...I'm sure, would have been. You see what I mean? Would have been. You know. That I wanted out of what I was in, see. But there wasn't at this time. You see what I mean? This was not somebody on their knees begging, praying...You've probably heard sometimes that very often with anytime that you have the "Aha!" experience, or you have a religious one, it's after you give up?... Immediately after you give up?... But even with

that, you might say it was that. You see what I mean? But I had never really...I had never anticipated, it didn't even occur to me ever, in my rational mind, at all, that anything could happen whereby I would be changed in an instant. Overnight.

For instance, I had this, I don't know what it was, it's so difficult to explain psychological pain, and most psychiatrists don't understand it when they see somebody insane saying, "Stop it! I'm going crazy! I'm going crazy!" and they don't see anything bothering them. I've seen it...you just have to understand it. But I also had, and it had to be equated neurologically, because I didn't have it beforehand, and...it's difficult I might maybe try to write it out... but it was an incapacity for the brain, for me to stop and concentrate on any one thing. Like a mind that's distracted. And obviously it can be because as I say, I can concentrate far better than a little baby can. So this baby, it's distracted some ways. You see what I'm talking about? What I'm trying to say is I had a series of experiences throughout the night. And each time, it was like a round, they seemed to me seven now, but you have to remember, this is one of the best things I should do, is for somebody like you or somebody that's willing to say here is an ideal situation where there's quite a bit of paperwork, and you're never going to find an instance where you've got somebody, by chance, that happened to be an old Newtonian (?) that doesn't believe in any of this. You see what I mean? It's not likely. And probably no one has ever been that far down, that's ever come back, knock on wood. Probably, I don't know.

I remember I often thought that if I could just get back in off the streets or something, and I could get some type of drugs or something that would control me. See what I mean? That was the most.. .I knew I couldn't do anything steady. I mean, if you would have asked me to set here and watch that thing go around (referring to the second hand on his watch), and let's say think about this I couldn't do it ten seconds. I can remember one time I tried to close my eyes, the transcendentalist meditations, like twenty seconds and say, "Om," or something. So finally, anyway, I could feel, as I say, my brain reorganize. Once... the next day... I never... onetime almost had a seizure, I could sense it. I started drawing up, and I was under a lot of stress one time, and I thought I was going to, but I didn't. And I never had another seizure. From then, of course, I had many ups and downs, a long way. It's just like in that last article the fellow wrote. He said, "I got mad." And I get mad at myself because I forget, you know, and don't talk plainly. Except, you know, it's a long stage (out of it?). But I never was the same person, afterwards. Once you have an experience, once you have it, it's totally authenticated. And also I know this: I know it's a knowledge, and it's the knowledge that you're a part of the universe. That the universe and you are not two alien things. As some of the mystics say it's a world out of which we cannot fall. "Be not afraid of the universe." It's a sense of Oneness. And also at that time a sense of being the (subjective?), not subjected, you know. Being in the grasp of a power much larger than me, and alien to anything I could call ego. (Pause).

I need you to talk a little bit to get words. I need words. I know what words you use, see. And that's what I'm trying to do. We're trying to talking to your nervous system and not talking to your...cerebral

hemispheres. (Laughs). Are you familiar with...Who are your poets? What do you...

M. - I've quite a background in reading and study along the lines of mysticism, poets. Have you ever read the book by Maurice Bucke called, *Cosmic Consciousness*?

DAVIS - That's excellent. That's one of the first ones out now. But on the thing.. .they've got things in there...the things about.. .remember when he says, "And everything was all right. It was perfectly so?" Well, that's right. There's things in there I could nod.

M. - No fear of death?

DAVIS - Yeah. And everything's right. You see what I mean? Everything's right. Cancer. You see what I mean? Cancer, everything. The things that used to bother me. See, the thing that used to bother me was the old, almost... the old (?) if there is a God He's the God of cancer. Maybe I ought to be on the Devil's side. Maybe I want to strike Him, you see. No, but now that thing I knew. The sense of the light, that's probably the chief one, the overwhelming blinding light, I didn't have. There are some things that happened to me that I can't now, see, I... When I mention about seven experiences, I now have been interested... you know, I really should have done this even beforehand, and I shouldn't wait any longer if I'm going to set it down. But I want somebody that will settle down and let's look it over, because of the fact that it'll get to the point that I won't be sure. That I won't remember. (Unclear) But I can remember there were things like... I can remember shootin' up, it seems to me, shooting up like a spiral in the universe. You follow me? I just remember this feeling and I think it was that night, and the overwhelming sense of the bad rap that evil has, as given. (Unclear) Or it might have been beyond the pair of opposites. Beyond good and evil. But it was the sense, you understand, of the bad rap that evil has. Of the bad rap that the left foot has against the right foot. The up, the down. Now that one I can't equate. I mean that one I just remember but I can't...I can't put myself in a graveyard, remember where I was at the time. I can't absolutely tell you it happened then. You see what I mean? There's some things that I...and I hesitate, you know. Now are you familiar at all...(Stops to get some water)

And now I'm giving you just this (?), you understand? Like this thing of shootin' through a spiral, see. This is something I'm telling you after I say, you know, I'd hesitate. I wouldn't tell anybody to put this in a book right now. Cause I don't... Remember I don't even know when that experience happened. There was a...I remember one other time, I'm shootin' and I'm grabbin' at things because I'm trying to... I remember one other time it was like I could feel like myself...I'll show you...like this...(Holds his hands up by his shoulders, like a stick-up, and trembles as if under great tension... OK, almost me lookin', lookin' at myself, see. Like there was a universe there, see. But there (wasn't?). You understand? O.K. And there was trembling. I don't know if you've ever see those (psalms?) But in the middle, perfectly calm. And I knew, in that among other things, I knew that as long as I helped the universe out, see, or something, and kept the pair of opposites , and was able to contain ambiguity, and right and wrong with no solutions, and no ultimate answers,

you understand, except the calm, that everything would be all right, that the world, the universe...whatever it was. See? Not that you found them, but as long as you can contain, as Nietzsche said, and that's of course, the last big boy going. You find it in all the big people. Everybody that's alive now that's worthwhile, say writers, in all of them there's Nietzsche some place along the line. They may have outgrew him, they think...(break).

(Resume) I'll give you... We'll get some right brain... we'll give you... poem. Some of the ones....And these poems...I had never written poetry, I had liked poetry. Many of these poems issued from the collective unconscious. I'll give you the example of one of them. I wrote a book, Out Of Darkness, which is probably an excellent document, not as a poem, see. Many of which...Some of the poems which I read (wrote?) the next morning. I've got one that I wrote right fast, at a time I couldn't write anything. At a time I couldn't conceivably, they just issued forth. Let me give you some of them and when I say them you can tell them. They're not great poetry but they grab ya, again, in the.. .(break).

(Resume). "The Lower Depths." Remember, if it means anything it shunts the cerebral hemispheres and hits the nervous system. "The Lower Depths:"

"I shall not go where I have been,
Though earth's foundations fled.
The lower depths of sin and guilt,
The land of the living dead.

There is a darkness not called night,
In the land of lost content.
There is a stillness not called rest,
Where the perished people went.

The Hawk, intrepid, from his nest,
On the dark, imperishable hill.
Implacable eyes, and starless skies,
Stares down on the World of Will.

Don't ask why, that you and I
Must to Hell, and then come back.
God decrees just as he please.
Make or break! Play the man! Act."

See that came to me at a time when I... I later, one time I was reading, I became very much interested in the life of Mohammed, who at the age of forty had his visions. I don't think I knew this at the time, remember I heard, "Listen!," he heard, "Write!" and I've often thought that might have been better cause I didn't listen very well. (Laughs). But I had read some of the favorite of the sura's, those are the chapters, and one of them speaks and tells Mohammed:

"By the morning hours, by the night
When it's the stillest,
Thy Lord has not forsaken thee,
Nor does He hate thee.

And verily the latter portion
Will better be than the former.
And verily He will give to thee,
And thou shall be content.
And the former shall be better
Than the latter."

And it goes on and on...and they observe that this was revealed to Mohammed at his darkest hour of need. And (?) the former was not...the latter was not better than the former. See what I mean? And then they said, "But this was a revelation from beyond... time." (?) And these poems spoke of a man...I'll give you another one...beyond the right time, see. And I remember reading about it at times, "Well, this isn't me," you know. Let me tell you one that came just a little later...that I had been over to a friend of mine's place. An older woman, not a girlfriend. Like a grandmother, you know, she'd just take me in and put up with me. And I was upset and nervous and I thought I was going to have a seizure or something, and I didn't usually do something like this but I said, "I'm going to go over," and there was a place fairly close by...I was afraid I'd have a seizure. Something in public. I was terrified of that. I liked to get some place by myself. And so I went over to a bar and ordered a drink. I'm from the coal fields so I drank straight whiskey, a shot of whiskey, and they brought me a napkin. They brought me a napkin. And the next thing that I did, I wrote it, and I'll recite it to you, but you'll notice there's an awful lot of structure in this poem, see. And the first time I ever read this was when I read it after I had written it. And I just wrote it down.

"I am coming, I am coming, Father, coming.
Though the night fall fast around.
I have kept the pledge I made Thee.
And I, now, am homeward bound.

Oh, you born me and you bred me,
And you bid me greatness seek.
And you cast me into darkness,
Far below the mountain peak.

Half a lifetime did I struggle,
With dark instruments below.
With my eye upon the eagle,
And the place I had to go.

Till, at last, I left the valley.
Climbed the mountain all alone.
Where the air grows cold and thinner.
Where you make it on your own.

To the peak, and reach for Heaven!
Which is just beyond our grasp.
Then, like Moses, look beyond there!
See the Promised Land at last.

And descend into the heartland.

There are others who need more.
Help my brother, and my sister,
Reach that far, far distant shore.

Then return into the homeplace.
And let others, glory find.
I am coming, Father, coming.
I have helped, a bit, mankind.

See, it's not great poetry. There's a lot of structure to it. Think of how simple the language is in all of it. Let me give you one of Bobby Kennedy who I was probably as close to as any of, certainly the Kennedys. Bobby was.. .One time I talked to John Kennedy and wanted to know why he ran for President. Well, it was after, you know. Now usually you have to know these people, I mean, you get to know them as human beings. And I said, "It's that Honeyfritz." This was the yacht that they had, see. And Truman had one...and "It's that Honeyfritz. You like it for that Honeyfritz." See what I mean? And one time he told me, he said, "Just to see how far I could go." But Bobby was after the stars. Like he was his father's son, something like my father was. I always wanted my father to say, "Old dog Tray. Oh, old dog Tray," one time. But then finally his father, you know...I could tell you some stories, but let me give you one with him, and you can see in the simplicity of most of them. Some are not. But so many of..

I give my best,
I'll give my all.
In faith, I am assured.
That from this World we cannot fall.
No! Not at all.
We cannot fall!

So let me live.
So let me die.
A moth unto Thy Flame.
Light unto Light!
To Thee I fly,
Nor question why.
To Thee I fly.

My burden great,
My spirit free.
A goal I dimly see.
Almighty God-who healeth me.
All praise to Thee!
All praise to Thee!

The second stanza is the one I didn't write till like the next day or so, but during that period of time, and then it petered out.

M. - I get...When I had read the article it had said that you said you didn't get a sense of mission other than being a human being from that experience. But yet, I hear in the poems you're reading and all that there's a need to comm...

DAVIS - Probably...Probably. I did get a sense of mission. Probably that's not the thing to say right now.

M. -...to communicate it to other people. I mean, that comes through in what you're saying.

DAVIS - Well, you see what I mean? Probably, maybe the thing is not to say, you know...because it's just like the spiritual experience. You know, the beautiful thing about it is that it's the most pragmatic thing in the world. Try it. If it doesn't work, if I can't get to you, if you don't feel it when I say the poems, you don't have to pay any attention to them. And that's it. But the biggest, the worst thing I could do, particularly, say, with the "Charleston Gazette..."If you read the article, the same article... Let me show you. Give you an example...

M. - I was going to ask you, since that article had gone out, I don't know when you gave that tape here, whatever. But, I was wondering, had you received any...well, you know, like I just called you up out of nowhere...

DAVIS -...with the "Gazette." See, that's how much they cut it down. So you have to remember that I was a... I was very strong, they considered part of a very corrupt organization. And I was unrepentant. I never turned state's evidence or said that I had done something, and they...they happened to know I did some very naughty things. But they put it in, see, they are like that.

"Oh, Bobby, brother Bobby!
You are dead and I am not!
The stars have left their courses,
And the land we love is not.

Aeschylus and Alexander:
and ten thousand years to go!
And you waltz with the roses,
And I trod on in the snow.

Past Hell and its foundations!
Past memory, guilt, regret.
What drove us then, drives me now.
Forgive, if I love you yet.

This earth's just one to live on.
But-Bobby; it's where we're from!
Can we deny, neglect it?
After what we've said and done?

You do not have to answer;
now, you've measured to the score.
But I must face the morrow,
Must do what's been done before."

But you notice in them, many of them, the simplicity. As I say, and this was at a time...while they might not be great poetry, if they talk

in terms of will they move people...I know that. And it doesn't make any difference what the cerebral hemispheres are involved on with that. I know they do that. They also gave me an insight, I mean, how well you communicate with people, whether it is, to what extent at all you use them... cerebral hemispheres, you know, you shunt things.

There was one of the ones...I think I added one stanza to this I think. "Hymn to Almighty God. In Charleston graveyard upon Release."

"Hail moon! Hail sun!
Hail sacred tree."

Here I'm still intoxicated. You can see (unclear).

"Hail moon! Hail sun!
Hail sacred tree.
The center now shall hold!
Almighty God, who healeth me.
All praise to Thee!
All praise to Thee!

For Thou art One!
I know! I know!
As Thou art There above.
But Many in us Here below.
O yes, I know!
I know it's so!"

even if it is on page thirteen or something. The fellow that wrote the article called me up. He said, "John, I believe you now. What's going on with the Gazette?"

But they did little things like, (?) this Dr. Carter who... If Dr. Lewis said something about me, you know, you'd say, "Well, John, you probably wrote that." But I couldn't write Dr. Carter's script or else I wouldn't have written the one when he said that I was totally and permanently disabled. But he said in there, "miraculous recovery," and they said, "recovery."

But you have to remember on these things, one of the big lessons I've learnt in these things, if you start talking about lessons, is that 'nothing fails like success, and nothing succeeds like failure.' You learn with the pair of opposites. You learn to do like what the Chinese sometimes in diplomacy or something, you know, they watch for the roll. They watch for the Yin and the Yang. See? To turn when Nature's with you, see. And I know this. After this last thing came on the...I just discovered just in time, in my intuition, or I could let you talk to some people, you know, it's much, much more so. I can ordinarily read people pretty well, even over the phone, and know whether to pick you up or talk to you. See? And very often, I have always thought beforehand, maybe, that I can predict things, and I still say it's because, maybe, of the experience.

M. - The experience helped increase the...?

DAVIS - Well, yeah, and that if you've noticed I still can laugh at myself pretty well, and probably always will. You know, I'll probably never take myself too seriously. But other people can tell you that I can predict things, or see things, or know things that I can't account for. Sufficient so, even myself...I've got my girl now, who is a Capricorn, I'm a Cancer, they're the exact opposites, but who is a...I'm getting her to write now things out that I say are going to happen, or I think are so, or that I think there's a file, if you go up to the State house, there'll be something up there I need to get, I (don't?) know what it is, and I go up there...And I can tell you clients now that will tell you...it's the...I mean I'd could tell you a religious one that it's "God's with us." You see what I mean? But I'm just going to see how often it happens. There's a lot (?) to be, but so much of what I do, is, I say.. .let's get back to the Yin and the Yang...is the roll. You understand? Understand the pair of opposites. That's one of the major things to learn. To understand that there's no such thing...you know, there's no joy, no up with out down, and the bum rap. This is why the god Shiva, Shiva (na-harad?), the dancing Shiva...You've seen that picture, with the four arms? In fact there's a myth. Let me tell it to you.

There's a myth of India from the Mahabharata, it should be the myth of our time. And it involves, of course, the gods and the demons. And they decided that what they would do, they would get the "Elixer of Life." And so what they did is they took the great cosmic serpent that wraps the Earth, see, and they took him and they took the cosmic mountain, and they wrapped the serpent around it, and with the demons on the one end, and the gods on the other, they started milking, churning, see, the great cosmic ocean for the 'Elixer of Life.' the honey of Eternity. And after they had churned for a thousand years a poisonous black mist, smoke arose...which always happens. Anytime you go into deeper realms of power you first find the Adolph Hitlers before you find the creators, the Julius Caesars before you find the Augustuses, the (Che-hing-di's?) before (lin-pang?). Always you find the negative aspect always breaks forth, the destructive before the creative part does. And so this mystical black smoke...And so the great work had to quit. The great work had to stop. And so they said among themselves, "Who of us will absorb this miasma? Who will give of themself so that the work can go on?" And Shiva, who was a great yogi, master of yoga, said, "I will do it." So Shiva went over and he just breathed in, and he just breathed and sucked in all that miasma, that mist, that poison, but by yoga, he stopped it.. in his throat. Not like Adolph did, he didn't swallow it. See what I mean? He stopped it and his throat turned blue. And over in India he's been called "Old Blue Throat" ever since. And so then, with that, and him still around, see, stopping it right there, no gods were (?) for him, the great work went on. And they churned and churned, Shiva right with them. And then pretty soon some pretty wonderful things happened: the moon came up, the sun came up, and an elephant with eight trunks came up, you've seen those, and then finally, the "Elixer of Life." And that, for me, that's the myth for our time. We have to learn that. And you have to learn it through self-control, self-discipline. To take on, and give of yourself for humanity, and absorb the poisons. But not like we've always done beforehand...Whether we have conquered darkness, you know.. .and all the good boys around are in the American version of it...we do it and go into the West, or we die ourselves, and we

understand that we absorb it within ourselves, and that the evil...See, much of what I've found, much of what I've been able to do, after this experience, is not to project so much. And to realize.. .realize how much of the projections are outside, and how I'm not a knight in shining armor, and it's all white out there and these are all bad boys doing things to me. See what I mean? And how much that is...in one of the poems is:

"Lesser war with an army.
Less war with an enemy.
Greater war with yourself."

That's where the battle's fought. For tomorrow's hero, the battle is fought within. That's the great battlefield.

M. — Let me ask you, cause this occurs to me right now, do have any ideas how someone like myself, or anybody, could get to that point that you got to?

DAVIS — The first thing to do, do what you're doing right now: follow your fascinations. Follow your fascinations. Dream in them. Let me give you an example in this thing that we're talking on (unclear). You might say to me I want you.. .This part remember. This part don't erase. Cause I just...It came across to me last week. And I would like to, particularly for religious people...In this "PM Magazine" I would hit the people I wanted just...they wanted to get in a little on the spiritual aspects of it, and I didn't. I said that, "I don't know that what occurred to me..." I didn't get into much. Said, "I don't know whether I was brain-damaged, I was hungry, and I was under great stress. I don't know whether or not it was caused by fasting." And then I just suddenly realized that, it may be true, what if it isn't true, that Jesus literally died on the cross, literally descended into Hell for three days, literally arose and ascended into heaven? It may or may not be literally true that the Egyptians (Israelites?) went into Egypt, fled Egypt, went down through the waters, and after the wilderness, went into Canaan. The Resurrection and the Passover, they're celebrated on the same day. They're the birth and the death of Adonis that was celebrated four thousand years before the Israelites ever even came along. See, what difference does it make what caused that experience, or where it was, or whether I actually saw it or whether I dreamed it, see. Or whether I've reconstructed it now, or whether I'm making it up! What is important: that man and his soul goes into the abyss, goes into darkness, into death, finds something...and comes out with it. When you find that, and when you find that...it doesn't make any difference what happened yesterday, or what's going to happen tomorrow, or what the world has for tomorrow. Let tomorrow take care of itself and them that want it, find it. You've got today, now. And when you live in that here and now a certain centering takes place. And then anything can happen. And that's the experience, and if you look for it you'll find it, or, as you'll soon find out, that you don't find it, God finds you. You don't search for God. God finds you, finally. See.

(Pause) "Take comfort," God said to great Pascal, "Take comfort. Thou would not be seeking me hadst thou not found me." You will find in the search... Follow your fascinations, and engross yourself, I would say, with the paradox. With the pairs of opposites. I think as you do that that's..

.you have to go beyond them, you know. My experience is, as I say, was to be...wasn't an experience that I didn't achieve, that I didn't have thrust on me but that (phrase is on?). Helps out. But it's an experience in the...an experience when I can read things from Bucke and I can say, "Yes.. .yes. I understand that." Remember I told you like with the lights? All that. (Unclear) Now that I can't say. You see? And I'd like that. That'd be a nice idea. I'd like to have seen that. See? But I didn't. And I'm afraid, you know, I'm afraid if you'd ask me a couple years from now I might have seen them. (Laughs). I often wonder. Why don't you come back and keep this recording, see if I can remember it maybe.

But it's like the thing.. .Remember the thing I told you about this (?), and the shootin' through? And this is beyond words, but it was something as I was telling it like I was shootin' through a spiral. The thing I would never forget, and that was the bad rap.. .was to vindicate evil. Or you vindicate bad. I can't, you know...to try to say it, see...But I can't put...I mean I can just remember this that I had this. When did this happen to me? I can, you know...I can't, I can't...I just know that experience happened. I don't remember when I first remember having it, and I don't know how I could have conceivably had it. I don't know where I could have been...See what I mean? There are things like that that I associate, the thing I told you about...the pair of opposites. And much of it...much of it are very simple, little metaphors. There's something to metaphor. There's something to it. There's something to metaphor as against simile, you know. There's something to that it takes you (places?) because it points. And remember, as the Zen say, remember the finger pointing at the moon? Don't stare at the finger. See? Look at that moon, see. But in that experience, you can...as I say, I have a sense, you see what I mean? But of course it's such an overwhelming...You have to remember, you go through something like I've been through, and to the extent that I'm more so...mentioned to other people...It'd be pretty hard for me to go back and buy me another thirteen airplanes, wouldn't it? See what I mean? I might be afraid to...to buy a car. See what I mean? But to the extent that I do it I pretty much plot my own path... It's got to be... you have to conquer yourself. I have to get myself out because remember when you start out, particularly in Charleston, West Virginia, the thing you have to remember here's somebody who didn't lose their license cause they were crooked, lost their license cause he was crazy. Brain damaged. Well, it's pretty hard, see, when you're gonna get people to come back to take that. This is one of the things where, with publicity, is sometimes, like with the "Gazette" or something, you have to go from the outside in.

See, in America...in America, Max Weber, the great German, at the turn of the century, he talked about the charismatic personality. You know, leadership. It's the biological thing in politics. The appearance. They call it the "charismatic person." But one of the ways you do that is because of our...perhaps genetically, and I'm talking now, I'm on socio-biology...our primate thing, you know, of attention? If you get attention, see. The one thing, if you're in trouble, say, with the law or something, if you can just make enough noise, and get attention, if you have those capacities, you sometimes can get out of it. If you can do that, you know. The attention. And sometimes with myself, I may.. .partly with this, to get the attention...you have to watch what you do with the thing, cause the pair of opposites get you right fast in Charleston, West Virginia

(Laughs)...but...at first to get myself out of the darn thing, then do something with my life. I have very definite things, I know definitely what I would like to do. I know what life's work I'd like to do. I know one major thing. I've things I want to do I've already written speeches for. (Laughs) But it doesn't mean ...you understand? (Unclear)...very long.

One of the things I did that'll help you very much, you might read...get Joseph Campbell. You ever heard of Joseph Campbell? Why don't you write his name down. He's...you'd call him a mythologist. He's the wisest man, maybe, goin'. He's written, *Hero With A Thousand Faces*. Get...it's in a paperback book, Joseph Campbell, *Myths To Live By*. Get that. Read that. He's written a thing called, *The Mask Of God*.

Think of myths as other people's religions, see, spirituality. And that's one of the first things that I did when I came back. And if I would tell you the unbelievable coincidences, things that now that have been verified just goes on and on. Sometime later on I could tell you with the...let me give you an example. You ever heard of Jean Houston?

M. - Yeah. She does the seminars?

DAVIS - OK. Well, Jean's one of the big people goin' in the world. If you want to meet ten, top twenty interesting people I wouldn't have any question she'd be in it, see. And, let me just give you an example. Remember... let me give you this one. I went to a seminar of hers, and I told this story that I'm about to tell ya'. What we did, we celebrated the Aesculapian Night, you know, the god? Remember in the...Socrates's...in the death, Plato's death, when Socrates dies-he-says I will (?) Aesculapius?" Remember? Well that's the god of healing. He'd been healed of life. But anyhow, we reenact these things, see. And it's (?) various ways. And one of the last things you do is everyone dresses in white and you sleep all communally with, you know, head- to-head and foot-to-foot. And then you have a great dream. And the great god Aesculapius wishes you a healing dream...a healing of the pocketbook, of the soul, of the hopes, whatever it is. But one of the last things you do is tell miracles. And so I went up and I told this story that I had been a bum and I had finally, you know, I had thought, "Now, what am I gonna do?" And one of the things that got me, "What am I gonna do," cause everybody told me, "It's hopeless." You see, the big thing that got me, I knew brain cells couldn't regenerate. And I knew that...I essentially knew that I had progressively got worse. You see what I mean? I'd push it down. And my thought was, even when I was talking to the doctor, it was almost like...whistlin' in a graveyard, you know, "I'm gonna get outta here. Get on my...get off the streets. Get in a place. But what am I gonna do?" See what I mean? What's my step? How am I gonna...recuperate? How am I gonna do it? What's my plan? I'm a very practical person. So what had happened, I had this notion 'I'll be a healthy animal.' Remember me telling you that?

But, so anyhow, what had happened, after I had the experience I finally got off...I got into the Spring Hill apartments, it's Rosebury(?) Circles, it's right adjacent up there at the graveyard. We can go up there

and I'll just go by, you'll see them. And I got on the sixth floor in an apartment that was facing almost right where, almost where I could see where I had been. (Unclear). And so, what I had done, I had my home, my styrofoam rubber thing, just a few things, but somehow I had picked up and got...this is within weeks or so then after the graveyard experience, see. Within a month I got off the streets. Maybe within a week.

And I'm up there, and I remember coming in that night in a (?) to get off the streets. You know, like I just closed that door. (Unclear). And somehow, but I ended up with a black and white, portable TV set that I had...that I had purchased for my wife, ex-wife at the time, some time ago. And I ended up with that there, see. 'Course then I (?)...so that the next morning I'm gonna get up, and that's my first day. And whether(?) I'm going to do. OK. I hooked the thing up, and they didn't have HBO, but it took the three stations and I think it took public television, or something. Anyhow, the next morning, around six-thirty, turned the TV on, and this was at the time.. .I think it was CBS.. .and before the religious programs pre-empted everything, you know, early in the morning, they used to have "Sunrise Semester." OK. And there was one by Hazel Henderson, who's a futurist, economist and a futurist, about alternative futures. And she had, as her guest, Jean Houston. Jean Houston. And she was to talk on consciousness-raising, the way men...historically the way men have raised their consciousness and changed their consciousness, see. OK. And when it came on, I turned the thing on and she was telling the story of walking the dog with Mr. Tear(?) And if you want to read or run into it, I'd rather let you find out what that's about. You'll run into her in time. You'll never want to miss goin'... you want to go to...she's the most powerful speaker, probably, in the world. You don't want to miss not gain' to one of hers. I can assure you. And go to one where you can go for over the weekend, and then she goes.. .maybe about eighty of them or ninety of them, they go to some other place for about four or five days. That's the big...that's the workshop. And, say, one of these, see. (Unclear).

Anyhow, and so she's on, and I started watching it. And as I'm telling this I said, "I know you are," and I'm telling the story, you know, with my gown on, Aesculapian, and I said that, "I'm sure that.. .I'm sure that I didn't see it right, but it seemed to me like you started weaving your hair, and your hair started flowing like a banshee." I can remember that, you know. Backwards and forwards, you know. And I said that, "You said that throughout ages, man, in order to change his consciousness and change himself and heal himself, have done many things. They have spun, and they have danced. They have held their breath until they can't stand it. See? And they've gone on and on".. .you know. And this was all vindicated. (Was?) essentially. You remember when I told you when I said, "I'll be a healthy animal?" What I should do, you know. And I started off on that, see. With her. I would go and I would...even before I could read. And I would get rocks. I would spin certain ways. Stop. Get a rock. Look down and remember the infinite amount of directions in rocks. You know, in formations of nature. I would read from them, the barks of trees, that's.. .this is the way.. .this is what I did. And I can (?) tell you, you could see why I hesitate, you know. To a certain stretch(?), you know. And I told her, I said, "I know that didn't really happen that way, but I want to tell you that because of that.. .I am now here." You know. This was my story to her. And finished it. Well, that thing was on tape at the time.

Still on tape. And, of course, this doesn't really mean that much but maybe it does. And she said, "Well, let me tell you the rest of that story....(This section omitted from tape from which transcription was made).

(Picks up again) Journalists, you know, "as ye think, so shall she be." And the printing media was telling my story bad, all telling the story bad. The printing media cannot...inherently can't. Cause the printing media has to tell the word. And as Thomas Mann says, "The word can kill." The word kills. You understand? And you have to put the healing...You shoot the arrows true...you know, if you wanted to...if you want to talk about somebody you've got to distinguish 'em, and you distinguish 'em and tell 'em what's wrong with them. You know, pretty well. Most descriptions, you know. And Thomas Mann...If you want to be a great journalist, or great writer, you shoot the arrow true, but you put the balm of compassion. Well, the balm of compassion takes a lot of maturity. But as I say, the word just has to do that. I think this is why always the print, the print-people can never take it where the story of good can come from TV. That's where it's got to go. And we have to have it now, cause the world as we know it is much of what we think it is. In the old Coue they're beginning to find out that very much is true: "Every day in every way I'm getting..," either better and better or worse and worse, or that much happens. Well that's far too... we know that far too much now, psychologically.

But as I say, and the word is the jinx. And she beginning to realize, you know, this old hag over here, so she can show...so she can show you miracles. So what? Anybody can do that, see. She's got to get out and tell the story of good, not to the true believers, but to the infidels. She's got to spread the word, see, which I think she... I think this thing about leaving TV will have some effect on her. It's got to. It's the big reason why I, I mean, if you want to know the truth, why I want to get my voice. You know, when I say that I want to be the greatest orator that.. .that's really, even with the word. You know. I want to be able to do it: get it across. And I know...I can pretty well.. .I know you have to...I know your voice has to have very much resonance in it. (Unclear) something connected with that. I know unless you're doing that it can't get across to you. And if...and if there's a certain resonance, you know, and if you can entrain (entrance?) the person in a vibratory thing, in there you can begin to communicate and then when you listen to that...when you listen to the.. .what we've talked about? It won't make any sense. And you'll say, "Well, that was fascinating." See? But one thing you can start doing: turn it over to where I started saying the poetry? Where I entrained (entranced?) you. See? And then it'll pick up again. And, you know, there's some keys that I've discovered. I know that I...I know that I.. .I begin to see.. .see 'em there. And I think...(This section omitted from tape from which transcription was made).

(Picks up) ...he may be. And this monk's concept, see, were great. And many people felt that...at that time St. Francis of Assisi was the New Man. Not the way we think of him, see. See, you have to remember, St. Francis was almost the last of the Europeans who attempted to work the thing out within the system. Where with Luther and then you're tearing the whole thing down.. .or with Galileo. Everything. Beginning to tear the

whole structure down. St. Francis of Assisi tried to rebuild Mother Church. Remember when he was in there and said, "Rebuild this Church?" And he thought it was his local church that he had to build up. See. But you have that. I think very often though that that age has come upon us now. I'm getting back to what we said on the...on the Aquarian Age. If you remember the Pisces are two fishes. The Christians accepted this; good and evil. And now the Aquarian Age is. If you think about the Aquarian Ages which is held by Pegasus, the winged , that heralds the Aquarius Age. And if you remember, the Aquarius is the water-bearer. And if you remember the water-bearer is what we think of the unconscious, or beyond good and evil. And you see the , (balms?). You see, each of these things, see, they have symbols to tell us on the thing. When I said the thing about the "bad rap," another word but a stronger thing that didn't...fill the...was the affirmation of evil. That's another, a stronger...(This section omitted from tape from which transcription was made).

(Picks up) If you hear this, this is full of symbols.. .full if, you know, if you want to get messages from it, see. And when you read the.. .if you read this.. .the more you read it and remember this.. much of came from the collective unconscious. So, you know, you can learn as much as I can from it. You know what I mean? It's called, (Greek lettering), it's "The Unknown God," taken from St. Paul, you know, (unclear). Listen to the tone, the beat of this...

"I am the voice of the Symbol!
Listen, all you who would know.
Parsifal, Merlin and Wotan,
Wandering Jew and Negro.

Of the old king who is suff'ring,
Wounded, but powerless to die.
Of the stone grave where the heroes,
Meet to plan ventures on high.

Aged old Child of the Mother.
Cleft spring where madmen must drink.
Lo! Heed the Voice of the Symbol.
Listen, don't ask, and don't think!

Now ends the Age of the Fishes,
Darkness, at war with the Light!
Pegasus brings Water Bearer,
Ridden by El Khidr, the Black Knight!

Khidr, the loner, the stranger.
Gog and Magog, he'll defeat!
There on the plains, Armageddon,
Comforter, Self, you will meet.

Conscious redeemed by Unconscious.
Left side of brain by the right.
Secret of the Golden Flower.
Marriage of Day with the Night.

War not for me in a Vietnam!
Damn not another man's sin!
Seek not for me in the Heavens!
I'm the still, small voice within!"

That's one that I, I didn't hardly write, did I? (Pause as he searches for a particular poem) "Le Service Del Graal."

"He, who would read my works, know me entire.
Are you beyond guilt, regret and desire?
Resolved to do whatev'r God may require?
He, who is near to me, is near the fire.

Pursuing true Self, higher and higher.
Your life to stand as Truth's indemnifier.
To be the People's great simplifier.
He, who is near to me, is near the fire.

Being your own judge and crucifier.
Endless, inner trial by that judge of ire.
Pain for mortal things, your purifier.
He, who is near to me, is near the fire.

No charted ways, no rest, no time to tire.
Alone, always alone, your Quest transpire.
Your death alone, your life's sanctifier,
He, who is near to me, is near the fire."

But since the thing I have no doubt that...When I think of myself often now I think of myself very much as a leaf. We're all leaves on a tree. That men did not come down from heaven, you know, but that human beings sprung from the earth. We're the bouquet of the earth. We're the leaves on the tree. I sense that the things I want to do, you know, when I'm pure.. .are not a sense, you know...When you talk about power, see, power is wanting to do something, to be something. I want to see things done. See? And I think maybe I can see things I think maybe another person.. .you know. Does anyone know to do that done(?) But what I want to see is to see it done. Things in my life I want to do. Things in life to do. See? I don't have that sense of power trip beforehand then I don't get blinded so much. I'm very conscious with myself of the roll of things. You can ask some of the people that know me better now. They say that, "It's when John's got everything coming up roses then that's when I get scared."- I start lookin'. I start nosin' for the roll, see. And it's a very.. .it 's a good thing to do. And when things are bad and dark as I know I'll say, "Well, it's comin', Buddy..." (Laughs).

This is why they say, and there's about a twenty page introduction in there (referring to his book) that hadn't been corrected because what...it was written partly by a Moslem friend of mine who died and it was added onto. You can see it's written...But there's some good insights in there, but they mention one thing that...This is why I'm probably the only person I know that planned the impossible. Planned to do it. Based my life on it. I've got a saying that, "In the long run only the impossible

happens." Not the impossible, you know, can happen, you can make it...it's the only thing (that) does happen.

Go ahead and go up through to West Virginia University library and read the world's or the national experts' "Time Magazine" for the last twenty years. Compare that to the real world.

And I plan that, see, because I know that each step along my life.. .see, had I stopped, and I had been an expert at one time, you understand, and if I had made my decision as the experts would, there was no possible chance of doing it. No conceivable chance. But I know that each victory, each victory or each defeat, changes reality. I know now that...there's a curious thing about the human will that's maybe unique in nature. When I will the impossible, or I will the ideal, or I will unreality, whatever you want to call it, a very paradoxical thing occurs. I am, in reality, willing something, aren't I? That's true. Yet what I'm willing isn't there. Well, I've got some clue to my mind, that I hadn't thought of this too (?), see, that that somehow is the shunt between the two. Cause once you do that, each victory you have, you know, and it is a due victory, you know, when you sense, and you get on the roll, each one changes reality. See? And I know...and each step...and then you take another step, and another, and another. And it's always one leap backwards, you know, to leap forwards. Two steps up, one backward or one backward and two steps forward. The old, classical ways that you'd make a step backwards. See, everybody, Jesus went into the wilderness, Paul did, everybody goes, you know.. .you do anything. That's the nemesis of creativity is what Toynbee calls it in history. You always do it. It doesn't mean just because you did it you're going to be a great man.

I was born the same day that Julius Caesar was, but just now because that I have bribed war leaders, seduced women, and written poetry doesn't mean I'll be a Julius Caesar, see. But apparently it's that way. You see what I mean? And that's where you get.. .But, of course, people like myself, I also know this, that I don't have any doubt that trouble's coming you might say. That we're in a cataclysmic world. As one scientific paradigm falls another rises. As one establishment class falls...you know, the big things about the sixties that the young people learned is that the lion, it don't have any teeth! (Laughs). And so as one's falling, it's so, and then there's a new one rising. As I say, I am sure of that, and I sense the thing. But when I say I sense the thing, you can discover it as well as I can. See, I know that history, that reality, always leaves the experts far behind. I know that, see, so I'll take that step. And do it, see. You could do it just as well as I can but it won't happen. You know it's impossible. You see the difference? There's nothing I've invented, anything I'm talking about, everything I've discovered that...and it's just about like when you said that Columbus discovered the New World. Well, the New World had been there, you know. The people that were in the New World didn't need to discover it. And it was there for anybody to find it, and anybody wants to go there can go there, and they do it all the time. And that's probably the important things, you know, some of the things was (me?). I think that's the important telling of the story. That's the importance of something...making something out of my life. Or going in that direction. Or trying to embody what I'm saying. That is much, much more difficult, see, to make a buck in the short run,

when there's things you will not do. See? Because, the very reason I just will not do it, I'd be sometimes, maybe, terrified to. But there's just some things I could not do, you know, and I'd destroy myself. And I know there's certain things. And I have to (evolve?) them. And sometimes.. .that's why I can help out a lot. I can save a lot of people a lot of extra steps. And you can try them because it's there. If it works for you, it works. But I've seen that.

I can get people, you know.. .and very often what they'll do, they will, they want to be close to me, you understand, to do it. Well, they can do it as well as I can. Remember that advertisement, somebody from Maxwell House coffee or somebody?...Folger's coffee?...and she said, "Well, you can do it as well as I can." But people don't want to do that. I think that's what heroes are. People feel as though they have something that they want. And that they can identify with them. That's why we sometimes identify with the.. .But whatever it is, you know, I'm well aware of. I'm well aware of the...of the things that we're talking about. I didn't invent... This is one of the better things about using the old myths and symbols. It keeps yourself from getting wrapped up in thinking you thought this up. See what I mean? Or that it exists for you.

A man that's...If I was your age I would have...I'd carry two coins in my pocket. I'd carry one in my right hand. I'd carry a coin that says, "The world, the universe was made for me and me alone." And that is true. It is! You understand? Nobody else. It's waiting just for you. I'm serious! And I'd carry another one that says, "I am but dust and ashes." And that's true. It's a strange irony of life. There's a...there's a Indian story, and it talks about a magician. I won't get into it now. It's a tremendous story. Sometime remind me and I'll tell you about it. But the magician's name is Terror-Joy. And I thought, "What a name for life." See, there's this joy, pure joy, that's just there. And there's this stark terror...you know. I can, right now, right in the midst of catching something, having something, you know, that I know's (?). I can look in people's eyes, you know, get cancer and die. Hideously, as I think is a waste. And it's both there. Could be gnawing inside of me right now, maybe doing it. Maybe causing the (effulgence?). Death. I might be the bright flame. You know, if you light a rubber ball and put it in an ashtray, light it up, you'll notice it fights, and when it reaches and...and reaches its height, that's the next time for when it goes down. Watch that with a flame. See, this strange end to life...and we don't understand it. But again, it's the paradox. If you can keep anything handy, with yourself, if you can keep that, this is why acquainting yourself with symbolisms, as you see as I did, I got myself in...this thing like Joseph Campbell. But don't try to read it like Bullfinch. See what I mean? Try to get it...Campbell's somebody that understands it. Read those things and begin. And do this.. .and remember that the supreme, the supreme arbiter, the judge is your own soul's opinion. Always. You've got each...it's got to leave, enter the dark forest...you know, thinking it would be a disgrace to enter it in groups. (This section omitted from tape from which transcription was made).

(Picks up) Take those things, see, and not split up with your egos about this or that, and go with it, see. Get you some good metaphors. See, this is what I did. And go with it. Don't split those many hairs along the

way. Remember the thing...why is that...creativity, to create a human being, to create life...why is it the egg just lets in one sperm? Why don't it let in as many as it can and get as many controversies.. .as many genes, see? And when you're doing this, you understand, get yourself a broad consensus. See what I mean. Stay there. And move. Proceed. Follow your fascinations...and go. And remember what I said, to the extent that you can, like with your eyes.'. .I often think that when you're truly meditating, is when your eyes listen. Try to remember that...to listen to them. Remember in that one phrase, "Listen,... don't think!" The rooftop chatter probably doesn't mean much. I very often...I'll get to the point now, I can get depressed, and rationalize, I can look at something and I know what I do. I just stop. And I know my brain.. .I know what would happen, and I go out and I workout, I run, do yoga...see. That's another thing you want to learn.

I can see from Jean Houston, if we're gonna live in the next century, you understand, if we're gonna go in the Aquarian Age, what we want to do, see, is we want to learn to be able to utilize the other eighty-five percent of that brain, that personality. And a basic thing to do.. .do not think of the brain there (points to his head), think of this as the brain (solar plexus). Think of this as a center of force where the universe comes in. Think of...think of DNA. What does DNA do? DNA's a pattern, isn't it? It's a pattern.., and we think about the organic life, but what it does, it's a pattern, see, that somehow makes other.. .somehow makes other organisms dig lime someplace, see, dig ore. Makes these other organisms dig this other inorganic matter, and it pushes them together and turns out products. Doesn't it? And the DNA is just as inorganic as it is organic. Isn't it? And think of yourself as that. Think of yourself almost as a center of force. And if you think of a center of force, a center of force...all the center of force is...and get your Einsteinian physicists to tell you...a center of force is a force only because of everything around it. And that's somehow what the psyche is, see. And once you do what you tune into I feel certain, that say, telepathy, is not so much me reading your mind, as one mind readin'...as a mind having a thought. See the difference? Some ways...

M. - The same mind having a thought.

DAVIS - It's the same mind having the same thought. And I suspicion very much, see, it's the same mind that's had the thoughts over and over again. Takes on clothes...as they talk...it puts on bodies, as Rama. Puts on bodies and throws off bodies. The same thought. This is why you can have the same idea as.. .and this is where Aurobindo is correct, when we think of the world as inorganic matter, you know...as now, finally, beginning to be conscious of itself. One time I was running, and since I had moved in there by the graveyard, see, I had fixed up, it's almost a two-mile track. And I was running there one time, and I was going up the grade and I suddenly...I was aware of the fact...that I am the present state of the universe. Right there, running, see. I am the universe. Everything's in me! See? The changes, everything.

It's the hologram. And I suddenly realized that...I am the universe, right now. Everything that's ever happened. As I begin to.. .I had forgotten, or didn't know anything. I didn't even know they went to the moon. It's

almost unbelievable to think I went through that, see. That was one of the lowest points. I didn't know they'd gone to the moon. I remember one time seeing a picture, it must have been on the front of "Time" or "Newsweek." It was just very distinct pictures. I remember looking at that and saying, "Was that a mock-up?" But it never occurred to me. And remember, I mean I missed the greatest thing in the history of the world, the history of the universe, maybe. At least this corner of the universe. But, you know, when I started studying, I was just mad for knowledge and I began to realize that to make me, the higher elements, you know, that you had to have, a super nova had to be the engine, and I began to realize how one part of the universe brings other parts in. You know, that's the big DNA out there. You see, that's the laws of the universe that Einstein... they're beginning... That's just another DNA. I began to realize that; put that together, see. And when you do that everything becomes a metaphor. And you stop and say, "Who am...what means I?" And you can do that. What does it mean to say, "I?" Not; "Me," or "It." What am I? What would I want.. .what would I want to be eternal...immortal?

I'd like to see the things done or I want to be sure that's done, you know, it's got to be done. As I more and more see that. And I more and more sense that that also is a strong sense I have, that the concept, the spiritual concept of being made in the image of God, created in the image of God, or the spiritual man...is the man that survives. Is survival of the fittest. See, you have to remember, I am a survivor. How would I come out with all these spiritual notions unless they worked, and worked a lot better than the Hobbsian world that I was down in? And remember my poem:

"Don't ask why, that you and I,
Must to Hell, and then come back.
God decrees just as He please.
Make or break! Play the man! Act."

And why do I grab onto these spiritual things? Well, I'll tell you, at times I'm terrified if I don't. They must inherently be powerful things. And what we always have to do, you know, all these times, we have to take intellect, and experience and brains as far as we can go with them, see, and when they cease, cease we must. We have to reach on the broader powers of intuition; the great wisdom of the race. And if we've hit it right, we will survive, or what's worth us will survive. And if we betray it, I think this is when we do become egoistic, we betray a deeper self, and a deep truth. This is why, as I say, things that happen to me that at times terrify me. I know it's for real. I know it's so. Now what do you do with it? You take a chance sometime when you're real tired, late at night, and you been at a trial since ten o'clock. Somebody calls you up and you go to the wrong Holiday Inn (Laughs)...OK. We better go.

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