

The St Michael Steiner School

Friday Bulletin

15th May 2020

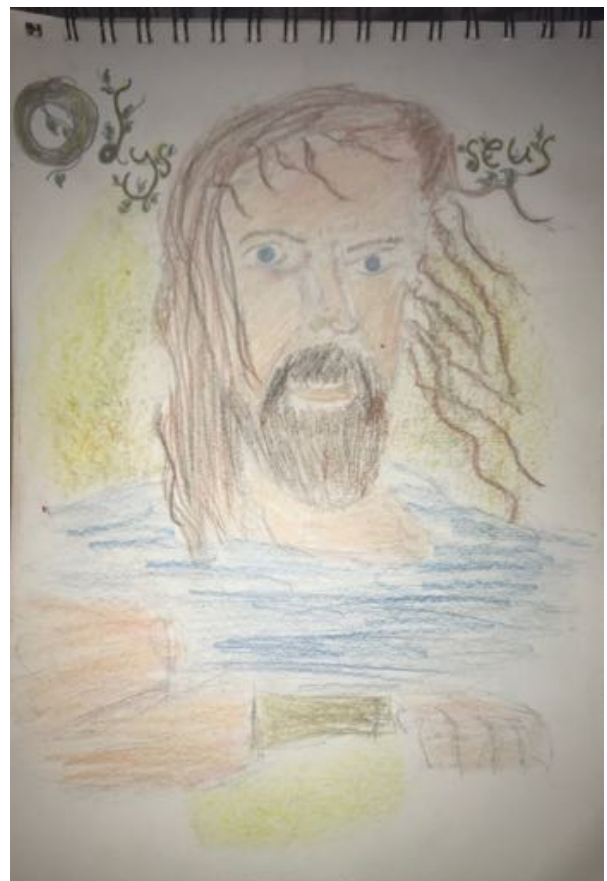


Class 3
Traditional
Shelters

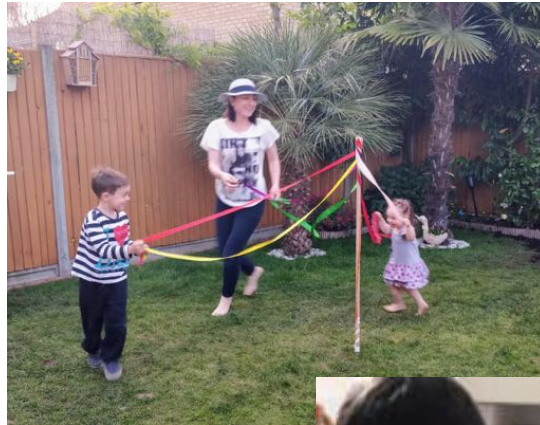




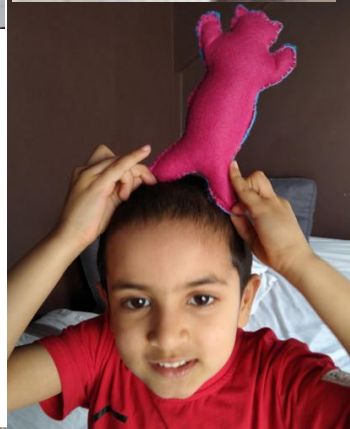
Class 3 Traditional Shelters



Work from Class 5's Odyssey project: Odysseus and his ship by Zeus



**Kindergarten
during lockdown:
Maypole dancing
and Spring
activities**



In last month's newsletter (10th April) you were treated to a story from Class 10 student Rose Dowsing, written during our Spring Term Short Story Seminar. I am pleased to be able to follow this up with another story from the same block, this time by Pearl Kelly.

— Stella Ottewill

Where the Train Took Me

Pearl Kelly

You wouldn't think that a train journey to Exeter would feel as long as a train journey to Carlisle, would you? Well, back in my early twenties, on a dull Spring day, I embarked on just such a journey. Although I was guaranteed a four hour trip, it seemed, from my viewpoint at least, an eternity.

The waiter lifted the pot, causing the light from the overhead lamp to bounce off its silver exterior. A steady stream of dark liquid flowed from its spout, arching through the air and landing in my cup. When he reached for the milk jug I raised my hand in protest. I always drank my coffee black. I settled back in my chair and took a sip of the bitter drink. I sighed, and welcomed its warmth. The shrill sound of a whistle was followed by a violent shudder. The train roared to life and slowly moved out of the station. I turned my head to the window and watched as the red brickwork of King's Cross disappeared from view. Four hours, I thought. In four hours I will arrive and my life as I know it shall change.

Perhaps I should give you a little backstory. My name is Elliot Bane. Since the age of eight I have been victim to an expensive and rigorous education, Eton and consequently Oxford. Now I know what you're thinking but no, I'm not particularly clever. I am, to quote my dear Professors, 'an average student' with just enough brainpower to get myself through two units of formidable education. Since leaving Oxford I had done some travelling, a lot of sitting in bars and generally very little thinking. Last summer I stayed with some friends in a house just outside of Exeter. The house in question belonged to a girl I'd never met before, but to whom upon meeting I took quite a liking too. Her name was Lucy Alistor. She was kind, and funny and behind her dark eyes, there was an astonishing mind.

In the time I was there we shared a single kiss, which although pleasant I soon forgot all about. After a month back in London I was summoned to my family home and told I was to travel back to Exeter and ask for Lucy's hand in marriage. I didn't object. I had been expecting something like this for a while. So I packed my bags, collected the family ring and bought a train ticket. That I believe brings us to now.

I've always been one to live in the moment. I suppose that is why when my father told me I was to marry Lucy I didn't quarrel, or disagree or even for a second ponder what it would mean, I simply accepted. But as I sat on the train and watched the stony grey magnificence of London melt into the distance, I began to think. It was not that marrying Lucy was something I didn't want. But what would become of me, and her and us if I did. Was that all there was to life, marriage? I'd never thought about it until now. What if I wanted to travel some more, hang

around in bars, and generally do very little thinking? What if instead I took a train to Dover, from there a boat to France and saw what became of me? Yes I would disappoint many, but why should it matter. Surely if it was my life, I should be the only one fit to command it. Four hours I thought. In four hours my life as I know it shall change.

I noticed the waiter had left me a copy of *The Telegraph*. I picked it up, unfolded it and began skimming through the current news. Just as I became fixated by an article I was interrupted.

“Is this seat taken?” asked a tall, well-dressed man.

“No, of course not, please...” I replied and gestured to the place opposite me.

He nodded his head in thanks and turned away, beckoning to someone. Promptly, the tall well dressed man was joined by an equally well dressed woman, and the two sat down in the seats facing me. They were my senior by no more than a few years, and clearly both infatuated with each other. They were sitting closer than the train seats permitted, arms intertwined, wholly content, oblivious to the countryside passing outside. The woman wore an elegant diamond ring on her left hand, similar to the one which I was to present to Lucy. They noticed my avid gaze and the woman laughed.

“It's a recent addition,” she said. “It's taken some getting used to.”

I smiled and offered my congratulations, inquiring as to the length of their marriage.

“Oh...it's been a matter of... maybe a month? Month and a half,” replied the husband.

“We just got back from Cherbourg where we had our honeymoon,” his wife chimed in.

“Cherbourg must have been lovely at this time of year,” I added.

“Oh it was. But we wouldn't have minded if we'd gone to the Scarborough Inn in Hackney,” she laughed “As long as we were together. Isn't that right darling?”

This last part she said more to her husband than to me. This was my cue to return to my paper. A little while after this encounter, the couple got off the train. The woman blew me a kiss and the man acknowledged me with a polite nod of the head. The train moved on.

I buttered my second roll, and used it to soak up the remains of my coq au vin. I swirled the dregs of my wine around the stemmed glass and downed it, cleansing my palate. I looked out of the window and watched the scenery blend into an indistinct green blur. I let my mind be lulled by the tranquility of the countryside and felt myself slowly drift off into sleep.

“Ow!” I exclaimed aloud. “What on earth?...”

If I was not mistaken, it felt as if someone had just pulled my hair. I swivelled in my seat to look behind me and my eyes landed on the mischievous face of a little boy.

“Well hello there,” I remarked, instantly forgiving my sandy-haired assailant. “Would you mind terribly if I asked you not to pull my hair. It tends to hurt quite a bit.”

The little boy looked at me and nodded, slowly.

“Thank you so much,” I replied. Not a second had I turned back round when he pulled my hair again. In a momentary fit of rage I yelled, and turned around ready to grab him. Alas, someone had beaten me to it. The waiter returning to refill my glass was holding the boy firmly by his shoulder.

“Is this young man bothering you sir?” asked the waiter. I looked at the boy whose face still bore a mischievous grin. I couldn’t help but return it.

“No no, we just had a minor disagreement. By the looks of it he's gotten a bit lost,” I replied, looking around and failing to place the boy with any of the passengers in my carriage.

“I’ll take him back,” I said.

I got up, relieved to stretch my legs, and steered the boy towards the door. We walked down the corridor and through the next carriage. When we got to the end, the boy nodded signalling we had arrived.

“James! James, oh my goodness where have you been? Not bothering this nice man I hope? Oh James, I really was worried sick!”

I looked up and my eyes met with the frantic voice’s owner, evidently James’s mother. I would’ve placed her in her early thirties, she was tall, willowy and wore a long green travelling coat. She was holding a little girl of about two or three. She put her down and rushed towards us. She hugged James, then smacked him lightly on the back of the head.

“Now go and sit down,” she demanded. She turned to me and began her apology. “I really am so sorry. James is still young you see, and long train journeys do seem to get the better of him.”

“Please don't worry,” I replied. “It was nice to stretch my legs and I love children.”

“Oh that's nice. Do you have any yourself?” James's mother asked. Then she blushed and quickly retracted her question. “Well of course you don't. Silly me. You look as if you’re just barely out of school.”

I smiled and nodded.

“Well one day, you will get the pleasure,” she laughed and nodded towards her family. James was now jumping up and down on the seats, her daughter was crying and her husband was fast asleep under his hat.

“I can imagine,” I said

“Don't get me wrong it is hard,” She said earnestly. “But it's also been the best part of my life. I would do it again in a heartbeat and so would my husband, although he doesn't seem too keen now.” She laughed, thanked me again and began bustling about with her young family. I walked back to my carriage.

I returned to my seat, sat down, ordered a brandy and picked up the newspaper. This time trying to make a little more progress than before.

“Sir your drink,” The waiter interrupted me. “And can I interest you in the dinner menu or will you be leaving us before then?” I looked at my watch. It was 4 o’ clock now, Exeter was only a few more stops.

“No that will be all, thank you,” I replied. I sipped my drink.

“I say that looks jolly good, I think I’ll have what he’s having.” I realised the ‘he’ in this context was in fact myself and looked up to see who’d been talking. It was a man. Perhaps in his late fifties, bald, rosy cheeked and the owner of a magnificent walrus mustache. He smiled at me and his blue eyes twinkled.

“Is it good?” he asked. I was momentarily puzzled.

“Sorry, is *what* good?” I replied.

“The brandy my boy, the brandy! I just ordered one because you did so I should hope it's half decent at least!” I nodded in understanding and took a sip.

“Delightfully mellow,” I answered.

“Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful! exactly what I fancied. I say my dear boy do you-”

“Norman, Norman what's all this about you ordering a brandy?” He was cut off by a woman’s voice. She was short, bedecked from head to toe in peacock velvet, and walking down the aisle towards us. She sat down opposite him, opened her enormous blue bag and took out a pack of cards.

“Norman, really you know you shouldn’t be drinking, not with your health.”

“Jemima my dear Carsleton said one a day was perfectly alright, you needn’t worry yourself.” She made a disapproving noise and turned to me, now shuffling her cards.

“I hope you're not condoning this?” She asked, and fixed me with a hard stare.

“Darling leave the boy alone. He was not condoning my drinking habits. Besides he’s young, he’s not concerned with health or our steadily degenerating marriage might I add.”

This launched Norman off into a fit of laughter which soon enveloped me, as his charm was quite infectious. When we had both calmed down and Norman had apologised, and proclaimed his undying love for his wife a satisfactory number of times, he turned back to me.

“No no, you mustn't worry about health or marriage or any of that sort of thing for many years yet. Enjoy it whilst you can,” he said with a wink.

“Norman you’re being rude,” Jemima was off again. “You don't know a thing about this boy, he could have a serious health problem *that* I might add is none of your concern!”

“Well why don't we ask him then!” Was Norman's response. Now they both turned to me.

“I don’t have any problems with my health no,” I answered.

“Well there you go Jemima my dear I was right!”

“Well he could be married you don't know that.”

“Look at him, he's barely out of school, he's not married,” retorted Norman.

“You’re not married are you my boy?” he asked.

“No, I’m not married,” was my only reply.

“Well all in good time,” said Norman. “For now just enjoy what you can and..and...” he broke off and let out a violent sneeze. Without looking up he blindly reached for the tissue Jemima was holding out for him. She hadn't looked up either. He took the tissue and blew his nose. He didn't thank her and in turn she didn't ask for any thanks. I watched this simple interaction in wonder. She had anticipated him sneezing and he had anticipated her anticipation. It seemed such a simple process, but one only possible through years of learning another’s habits and ways. Remarkable I thought.

Norman and I talked a little while longer before he ‘borrowed’ my newspaper and became quite infatuated with the business section. The train chugged on.

“Norman? I say Norman is that you. My goodness it’s been a while.” The man speaking was standing in the aisle between the two of us. Norman looked up.

“Angus my good man what an odd coincidence. It has been a while you’re right.” Norman jumped up and vigorously shook the hand of his friend. He invited him to sit down and the two launched into a lengthy conversation. They began with the formalities, ‘how’ve you been’ and again remarking on the odd coincidence of their meeting. Then they reminisced about the past and the many ‘wild times’ they shared together, each to the disappointment of Jemima. Angus ordered a brandy and upon doing so reminded Norman of myself.

“My goodness I completely forgot. Angus this is my new acquaintance Mr uh... I say I don't actually know your name, how rude of me,” said Norman apologetically, Jemima tutted disapprovingly.

“Bane,” I announced. “Elliot Bane sir.”

“Well how do you do old chap?” Angus inquired. “I say you're not Seb’s boy are you?”

“Yes, Sebastian Bane is my father,” I replied.

“Well I haven't seen him since, since, goodness I can't quite remember. It’s been a while anyhow.” I smiled politely and let the two men return to their conversation.

Although I was raised never to eavesdrop on others, I couldn't help myself in this case.

“So,” Norman began. “Where’s Lily? Still up in town or down in the country house?”

“Norman,” Jemima hissed through clenched teeth.

“What?” said Norman. Confused by her remark.

“You didn’t hear, did you?” said Angus wearily.

“Hear what, what’s happened?” replied Norman.

Angus sighed and looked at the floor.

“Lily and I are no longer... well we got a divorce.” This was followed by a stunned silence.

“A divorce what on earth! when?” Exclaimed Norman.

“Just after Christmas. We thought it would be better to finalise it after the holidays but we’d been planning it for a while now.” Another silence.

“My god I had no idea. I'm terribly sorry old chap,” Norman sympathetically shook his head, and Jemima gently squeezed Angus’ hand.

“Not to worry,” replied Angus smiling weakly. “It’s not your fault.”

“Not to sound too forward,” Began Norman. “But why?”

Angus stayed silent for a moment, clearly deep in thought. When he did speak his voice held a certain sorrow it hadn’t before.

“Well, I still love her. More than I can express and she I. But we drive eachother completely mad, always have done. I don't think we could have lasted another year, even for the merit of reaching the 50th anniversary party,” he said with a chuckle. Norman chimed in and gradually the conversation moved on. I don’t think I’d ever met a divorced man before.

Norman, Jemima and Angus all got off at the same stop. We said goodbye and once again I was left sitting by myself, alone with my thoughts.

Exeter was two stops away. We would be there in no more than thirty minutes. I would catch a cab from the station and be knocking on the Alistors’s door in not much more than an hour. But if I got off one stop before at Taunton I could catch a train to Dover. Then a ferry to France and

well who knew?

I gathered my belongings and in doing so knocked over my leather travelling case.

“Here, I think you dropped this,” I looked up and saw an old woman. She was slightly hunched over and dressed all in black, a veil covering her face. She was holding out a small ivory picture frame, the kind you can fit in the palm of your hand. Inside was a picture of Lucy. I hadn’t thought much about it when she’d first given it to me last summer. But upon my father’s news I dug it out and included it in my packing.

“Thank you,” I replied. “That’s very kind.”

“Don’t worry,” said the old woman. “She’s pretty you know,” she gestured with her head towards the frame, “Someone special?”

“Perhaps,” was my only answer.

“Well if she is, hold on to her tightly my dear. Life is a peculiar thing and it’s best to go through it with someone than without.” This was said more to herself than to me. I looked at her steadily, she met my eyes and continued.

“Sorry, I don’t mean to be odd. It’s just when you reach my age there are so many things you’ve seen and so many mistakes you’ve made, you find yourself trying to prevent others from making those same mistakes,” she sighed.

“Don’t waste your life looking for something you may never find, recognise what you have, and have that.”

I stared at her bemused. She clearly noticed my discomfort as she chuckled and continued.

“Don’t listen to me dear, I’m just a silly old widow with a bad habit of thinking aloud.” she smiled sadly, bid me good day and moved on. I sat there not knowing what to think after such a bold statement.

The train slowed, and came to a halt. Steam rose outside the window obscuring the station from view. Was I sure? Yes I think I was. I made my choice and stepped off the train onto the platform. What else could life offer me than what I’d already seen.



Dear Parents,

Thinking of you all during these times we find ourselves in.

Please find below information from Kim Payne about a series of podcasts he has recorded in order to support families .

Whether you are familiar with 'Simplicity Parenting', have attended a course or group or are coming to it new, I have listened to the podcasts and I have found them very helpful.

The 'Compassionate Response' is an extended version of the practise we worked with in our various groups at School.

The website has other short videos, podcast recommendations, courses etc... and a Free Simplicity Starter Kit. The Facebook page incorporates other very useful material including lectures and a link to a story telling platform. "CV-19Tales from Kids, Parents and Global Story tellers"

Warmest of Wishes,

Leigha Hipkin



SIMPLICITY PARENTING WITH KIM PAYNE

<https://www.simplicityparenting.com/>

Troubling Times: Anxiety Rising, Schools Closing, and Way More Time at Home With The Kids.

In response to anxious enquiries from parents, we recorded this special five-part audio series. You can listen here in the player below or download it from our podcast page and listen in your preferred **podcast player**.

In this challenging time, we feel it's more important than ever for each of us to do what we can to support each other, so we wanted to put this together and make it available right away. If you find the series helpful, please think of any other parent, organization, or school community who might benefit from this kind of support and send them a link to this page.

Now more than ever, our children need us to stay centred so that they can feel secure at home when so much is changing around them. *The Compassionate Response Practice* is a visualization exercise practiced by tens of thousands of parents, that is a key part of creating a safe harbour of family life.

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Thank you. Be safe. And our very best wishes to you and your family. Kim

Morning Movement Sessions with Kevin Davidson

I'm offering morning movement classes weekdays 9 - 9:15am to support families. I'm trained as a Waldorf games and Bothmer Movement teacher and have been working for 10 years at Greenwich Steiner School. The sessions are somewhere between a Class 1 games lesson and a rhythmical time. I'm getting lots of families joining in together as a way to start the day with lightness and movement.

Warm wishes,

Kevin

Family Time

Morning Movement with a playful spirit

9-9:15am weekdays with Kevin

Details:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6293571756>

Meeting ID: 629 357 1756

See previous episodes at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TC7Bw2IUHg>

HEALING EURYTHMY

On Tuesdays, I have been giving sessions of therapeutic eurythmy for anyone who wishes to join.

It is a sequence which Dr. Steiner recommends to strengthen the "I", build up the immune system and protect from viral infections.

You are welcome to join.

This will be at 4.30 pm on Zoom.

Please email me if you are interested in participating so I can send you the invitation: mhunter1life@aol.com

With warmth,
Michèle