

MICHAEL FILLERUP

*BROTHER ANDERSON COUNSELS
HIS SON THE NIGHT BEFORE
BEING SEALED “FOR TIME AND
ALL ETERNITY” IN THE SALT
LAKE TEMPLE*

“For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then ye are damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory . . .

“And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, I sent forth the fulness of my gospel, my everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity”

—Doctrine and Covenants
132:4, 133:57

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and

whatever you do, don't
go smiling

totally into it
because

after the wash and anointing, kneeling on velour pillows at the foot
of marble altars beneath the fairy lights, charmed
by your photogenic genius, dittoed
double down the forever funnel

of cross-firing mirrors, after

holy white hair, the gentle voices
beyond the veil

leading you down the brass
rod and back into flashbulbs, carnations, skyscraper cakes, the aisles
of hands and best wishes, the long tables
streaming with fruits and cheeses; after

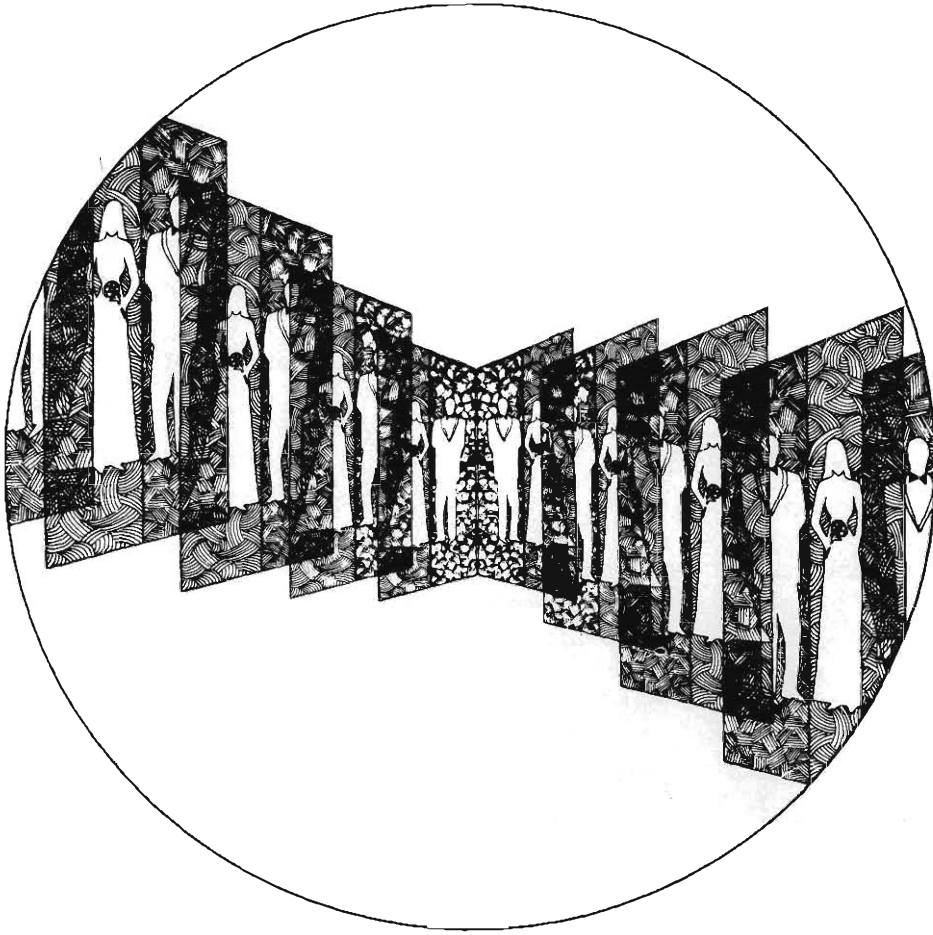
retreating, unwrapping the His & Hers,
stoneware, your bride,
six fondue pots; after mocking
the August rain, car payments, the seed
that still can't touch you; after

discovering headaches, celluloid
and Hamburger Helper; after washing the sheets, swapping
scuba tanks and shot guns

for Pampers and Winnie
the Pooh; after picking
hairs from the sink, the stony
nights smelling of gardenias; after rain
the sun sloped on your plate, the sky a burned out
bulb—

you can bag your fantasies
and sit

back down because
there's still this matter
of covenants, of reaching over shoulder
without reacting, offering your blind side—the ring, the rice
the lithographs: peripheral, filler
for the society



page. My father, never eloquent: Wyoming dairy
farmer, part-time surveyor, lost his legs
so he could better say what he wanted. Shot straight.

Made his point: summer night, just down
from pasture, moon cruising the canal, smell
of sage and muddy hands: "Don't
graze in someone else's pasture . . .

Your mother, she couldn't lace her boots
but I dragged her mumbling
in levis and plaid pendleton half way up Mt. Whitney
and she thanked me years later bursting

into an emergency room just
as the surgeon on-call

was smoothing the adhesive over
her brow—'Sara Mortenson-Anderson'—she'd
been getting that way, finicky about titles, activities—no more 'Mort'
or 'Smorgasbord,' the Balboa Classic. She

was heading for her night class
at Cody CC. They say she could have been
a concert pianist.

I'm still serving time: the sisters come in threes
and never stop
knocking. Remorse,

never regret.

You are Christ's

younger brother, God's child. But the cold north, a viking
in your blood: be tamed

when tempted. Remember

the promises. And when you stumble, no
hari-kari cop-outs. No
weekends at Tahoe. The sacrifice
simple and rinsed.
Love

before making love. Remember
the Third-Party Mediator of this world.

Pray often, in your closet.

Now go, and be happy. Forever's
a damn long time."

