

## "That's one small step for a fish ..."

In July '69, before Neil and Buzz touched down on Tranquility, a reporter asked Wernher von Braun the significance of the Moon landing. He said: "I think it is equal in importance to that moment in evolution when aquatic life came crawling up on the land."

In turn Epimetheus (whose name means Afterthought) saw himself as he really was: a little bit of sea life trying to crawl up from the deeps to become a man. Poseidon was wroth. This Wishywashy Nobody wants to sail new seas! "For if this spineless wonder could rise from shallows to sing on his feet, fishy schools multitudinous were sure to follow in the brit."

And so Earthshaker roiled Wishy seas, e'er storming, e'er reminding him of his Nothingness, whelming him in the heartless immensity. But other gods guided Epi for their sport, including Athene, Goddess of Wisdom, and Cynthia, Goddess of the Moon. In the early years Epi rarely had sense to invoke their aid, but he did heed prompts to read. High on the list, read in the Summer of Apollo, was *Man's Search for Himself* by Rollo May. Herein Epi embraced the phrase, "in the light of eternity." The notion prepared him to think beyond time and himself.

Before Apollo, when thinking of true dreams, Epi had always thought: "It can't happen to me." Now: "What would happen if I tried?" More dreadful: "What will happen if I *don't* try?"

The mystery of the buried talent, that one talent that is death to hide ...

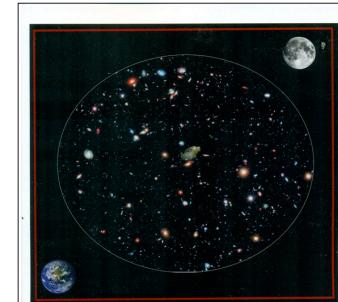
Wherefore, trembling, yet invoking epic spirits of yore, Epi set forth upon his Apolline adventure ...

\* \* \*

*Falcon Will Give Birth* is a work of imaginative nonfiction, an historical autobiography (with concurrent headlines and events), written in the third person: "O wad some Power the giftie gie us To see ousrels as itheris see us!"

\* \* \*

All typesetting done by the author. Scott Cruickshank helped design the cover.



### **Falcon Will Give Birth to the Rover**

To keep strong the will toward home; to sing the Song of Apollo  
*Slow Edition, revised May 2018, original title:  
Epimetheus Bound: A Comic Salute to the Epic Tradition  
(Or, how Wishy Epi grows older without becoming an assassin)*

Keith Fahey

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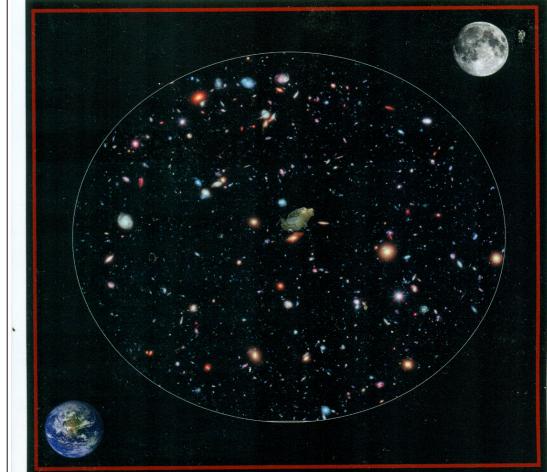
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### **About the *Falcon* cover ...**

The title is from a reporter's vision of the anticipated landing of Apollo 15 on the Moon. The lunar module was called Falcon, and the first extraterrestrial vehicle, Rover. After touchdown, the Seer affirmed: "A little later, Falcon will give birth to the Rover."

Epimetheus, who for nearly two years had been living in his car, a 1968 Ford Falcon, was quite excited to read that. O Loxian oracle! Auguries of rebirth! Soon!

The surrounding empty dark space represents the Nothingness that Astronomer Bob Williams asked Hubble to focus on. When, after prolonged exposure, the Nothingness was revealed, astronomers were astounded to see countless ne'er dreamed-of galaxies.

Amidst those galaxies, somewhere between the Earth and the Moon, Nobody Epi in his Falcon looks to his own Moon—first asking his enduring Falcon to take him to Vroman's to give *Falcon* a proper launch ...

## Falcon Will Give Birth to the Rover

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- Help! It's a sprawling epic!

### A note on the epic style

In the autumn of '63, college sophomore Epi took a general requirement class on the Survey of English Literature. It was taught by Mr. Teddy, who later told Epi to major in English.

*Me? A C+ student (A- in bowling!), one who—*

Mr. Teddy introduced him to the epic tradition. Epi was especially thrilled by visions of the hero's descent into Hades. His hair stood on end when Milton's Happy and Pensive Selves contemplated Orpheus descending to reclaim his beloved Eurydice ...

Traditionally, the epic poet invokes the Muse to begin his adventure. Two decades later Epi began his own epic game. Invoking the Muse, he was just playing along: He didn't really believe, it was just tradition. Yet in his insecurities, he felt an urgent need to keep calling on the gods. And in the process, began to feel guidance: Wow, where'd that idea come from?

Ideas would often come as unexpected connections: "Oh hey, that's like ..." He would include it, yet wondered if it was excess. In time it became a way of getting out of himself, letting others in. Their inclusion gave him perspective: it was not just about him.

He learned more about the epic's evolution: from oral to written tradition. Epic singers were called rhapsodes, or stitchers. They stitched stories together: a living art that could change with each performance. Scholars are no longer sure if Homer was an oral poet or among the first to transcribe his epic—though writing, of course, is not consistent with legends of his blindness (unless he had an amanuensis as did blind Milton).

In either case, Homer had a phenomenal memory, and could stitch stories like no one before or since. Epi's memory is both strong and weak; his Falcon stitching is possible only by grace of the Search-Find computer and by the neutral Internet.

An epic is an epic not because of its length, but because of its inclusion: stories that include many tribes and city-states, and speak to many nations. Many *Falcon* inclusions required reweaving: some passages were altered or cut to make room for Muse-ical guidance.

And who knows, maybe some inclusions give hints of your own story?

### Wherein Epi makes an epic of every little thing

Canticle 1 opens with an invocation to the Muse: an appeal to guide the rhapsode in singing the adventures of Epimetheus:

*Of dreams and delusions, I sing; of Epimetheus, who lived in his car because he wished to be a singer. O Cynthia, Goddess of the Moon, announce me as your acolyte: I bring news of Apollo, who loves a joyful noise. ...*

### Headlines:

- The gods are discussing Epi's Quest to sing the Flights of Apollo, and his longing to revive the epic tradition: Wishy Epi, still seeking homecoming ten years after Apollo 11 called him to fly to his own Moon
- Epi's rage at failure wakens the assassin within; he knows he must master his furies before he can become a singer: "If they can get to the Moon, why can't I ..."
- Epi submits an essay on the **Tenth Anniversary of Apollo 11** to the op-eds of the Laistrygones Winds, one of the world's great newspapers; he's dismayed by the editing, but blames himself for not being bolder
- In turn Epi submits a teller essay, asking: "Please: No changes without consultation." Whereon begins his great ordeal: involving great patience, a stunning setback, a humble rebound, and ... bottomless fury
- Epi, rousted by cops in his car, gets a ticket for **sleeping in a red zone**, wherefrom great convulsions, as when Mount St. Helens blew, or when riots erupted in Miami after acquittal of cops who killed Arthur McDuffie in a traffic stop
- **Not Much of a War**, Canticles 5 to 8: Epi tells Alkinoös of his draft into the Winless War, of his first-year return, his glooms, his Apolline awakening
- **To Sir ...:** Wherein Epi remembers his greatest teacher
- **Thirtyfour Canticles:** Epi is further guided by Dante's *Comedy*, a story with a happy ending. Dante's journey through Hell in thirtyfour cantos gives structure to Epi's quest for his own happy ending: when he too can come out once more to see the stars

*Falcon Will Give Birth* includes stories of countless strangers, how their spirits help Epi keep strong the will toward home; how Ishmael helps him find his own substitutes for pistol and ball; how Epi will ever sing the Song of Apollo ...