

was a very special person to mountaineers in Texas. He was quiet, humble and kept to himself at home. But once Gil reached the mountains he underwent an amazing transformation. He became alive, animated, and drove himself relentlessly to the top. This earned him a "summit-at-all-costs" reputation that he partially deserved, especially after his climb of Nanda Devi with Eric Roberts. But perhaps the Air Force was partially to blame. More than once Captain Harder, a pilot, was declared AWOL and only a splendid letter congratulating the Air Force for Gil's climb of the tallest mountain in India, written by the Indian Ambassador saved him from court marshall proceedings. But there was more to it than just "go to the summit" or "go to jail." Even in college, where Gil first started to climb, he would continue to the top of most of Colorado's fourteeners after the others had turned back because of storm. Just how many summits Gil reached we'll never really know but the list includes McKinley, Robson, Logan, Noshag, Huascarán, Aconcagua, Pik Komunisma and Nanda Devi. It must have been especially hard on Gil being stationed in Abilene, Texas. Since the mountains were so far away, he would train by spelunking and long distance running. In his last year Gil ran three marathons and completed a fifty-mile road race in the Dakotas. He was a humble man with a powerful soul that burned with desire to stand on top. We're going to miss him.

JOHN G. MCKEEL, *Abilene Mountaineers*

TURLOUGH O'BRIEN

1954-1979

Only those are fit to live who do not fear to die; and none are fit to die who have shrunk from the joy of life. Both life and death are part of the same great adventure.

Theodore Roosevelt

Toby, are you there? Can you hear me? May I have the strength to live life with the same robust and intense passion as you did. But your departure strangles the will and leaves a void within that hungers for your warmth, beauty and love. Do you know how many tearful friends yearn over your departure and refuse to accept the idea that you will not, once again, return to bring joy to their hearts with your radiant presence? We loved you, Toby. Why did you go away? There was still so much to do and say. Does nothing survive?

Toby, forgive my self-pity. Your spirit, benevolence and joy for living will remain in all whom you touched. Whenever I climb, your

enthusiasm will be there. Your reverence for the wilderness will forever be a part of my mountain experience. And my joy and love for another human being will emanate from the warmth you gave me. Toby, you gave all of us so much in your short time that your spirit will have a life of eternity within us and those we touch.

Do you remember our first great adventure together in 1973 when we made the first ascent of Mount Fairweather's southwest ridge after having driven non-stop from New York to Alaska in your overloaded VW van? I'll never forget how you taught me to drive a stick at three A.M. on the Pennsylvania Turnpike with one of your three cassette tapes blaring in the background. Nobody thought two 17- and two 19-year-old kids could pull off such a climb, at the time, but our enthusiasm proved unstoppable and a fantasy adventure came true along with an unbreakable four-way friendship. Your comforting chatter and ready willingness to do one more chore was as appreciated as the sight of your imposing size belaying at the rope's other end.

And how about those unending fall and spring weekends we had together at the Gunks. The happy evenings and delightful dinners spent with you and your future wife, Liz, back at Vassar are as warmly remembered as the crisp days spent climbing at the cliffs. You and Liz were such great people to be with that one couldn't help but be infected with your enthusiasm for life. I have climbed with many others since those weekends, yet there have been few whom I have treasured being with as much as you, Toby.

But in the last 3 years the time we spent together had been too short and too infrequent. I knew that you, while attending law school in San Francisco, envied the amount of climbing I did. Yet you were never aware of how envious I was of all you had accomplished—a marriage and beautiful relationship with Liz; an honor graduate of Vassar; Editor of the *Law Review*; and you still managed to squeeze in occasional ski and climbing trips, always with such joy. I remember how you and Liz drove all the way to Yosemite from San Francisco in the pouring rain one weekend just to see me and deliver some homemade chocolate chip cookies for my journey back to Colorado. My ride was just departing upon your arrival and we had but time for a few words, a hug, an embrace, yet you did not regret the eight-hour round-trip journey. My companions jokingly commented that you must be crazy, to which I retorted, "No, just a true friend who really cares." Your joy at having done several of the Valley big wall classics and especially the Nose of El Cap, prior to passing the Bar Exam, was contagious. I felt as if I'd been with you. Scott said of you recently, "For Toby, climbing was at once an expression of his intense passion for life and living as well as a testimony to it and an achievement of it. He simply loved it as he loved life."

Toby, you and Liz were going to go so far together. With your scholastic achievements, high idealism and joy for life, I knew you would succeed in making the world a much finer place for the rest of us. Truly your departure diminishes us all. "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee."

When the Mountain Gendarmes brought the news of your death to our camp at Les Bossons, it ripped through my heart with the ferocity of a barbed dagger. Though I was unable to hold back the grief of a thousand tears, I was proud that you had successfully climbed the Swiss Direct on the North Face of Les Courtes. It just seemed incomprehensible that you, who were the safest climber I've ever known, should be hit by a freak rockfall while descending the northeast snow face. But, as I said earlier, Toby, you are with us whenever we enjoy the splendors of life, for you were so much a part of that splendor. I know you have no regrets for a life well lived. But, Toby, I still see your smile and hear your voice. . . .

"I have not lost the magic of long days,
I live them, dream them still.
Still I am master of the starry ways
And freeman of the hills."

Amen, Toby.

(poem by Geoffrey Winthrop Young)

PETER METCALF

RAY GENET

1931-1979

"What is the source of this man's energy? He runs everywhere, even at 20,000 feet while I labor over every step. Above Archdeacon's Tower it occurred to me that if I should stop for some reason, Genet could—and would—carry me up and back." I made this entry in my journal the day after Genet and I stood together on Mount McKinley's summit.

Genet's physical strength and endurance on his McKinley expeditions are legendary. Beginning with the epic first winter ascent in 1967, Genet's expeditions were a life-style of arduousness and self-discipline. He climbed the mountain three, often four, times every season. Many more times counting the relays. In Talkeetna and Anchorage between expeditions, Genet would not slacken pace. Frame pack on his back, he ran and bicycled on errands with seemingly inexhaustible vigor.

Genet built and maintained a competence with the mountain that matched his pure physical capacity. By specializing on McKinley, he developed an intimate knowledge of its terrain and weather. Genet under-