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THOU READER

Thou reader throbbest life and pride and love the same as I,
Therefore for thee the following chants.

—Walt Whitman

Editor



Frank Mitchell

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Art Editor



Frank Tucciarone

FOR IAN, AT THE PIER IN NEW YORK HARBOR,
TAKING A FEW MINUTES OFF FROM CRUISING
TO SUM UP THE VIEW WITH UNCANNY ACCURACY

Lady liberty,
blocked, now, by a garbage scow.
"It figures," you said.

—Roger Klorese

I cannot cure your loneliness;
I only bear a gift . . .
Attentive Silence.

—Juana Hopper

DYING

on the horizon
the clouds promise thunderstorms
to deliver spring

—Bob Kieffer

Do you know
I'm bleeding?
My blood is flowing
With the rhythm of the waves
Red ocean flowing everywhere.
I am the flow.
You are within the stream,
Then we become,
Everything becomes
Part of the flow.
Then we are in touch
Through each other
With the universe.
I bleed life in tiny rivers.
I bleed death in thick slow drops.
I'm bleeding love
In bursting gushes.
Can you see
I'm bleeding?

—Juana Hopper

AS I WALK BY

As I walked by the "mackerel" sky
I stood frozen for a moment, by her presence
"I am going to school to be a nurse shark," she said
I must have looked silly with my
fishing pole

—Lenny Tucciarone

STRAW MAN

Straw man
sway in the breeze
as grit gusts
at teeth clenched
against the storm,
Straw man
bend at sour wind
as the western storm
thunders before
the eastern dawn,
Straw man
fall low at dust
sweep with your fist
this land lost
from God and you, loosed man.

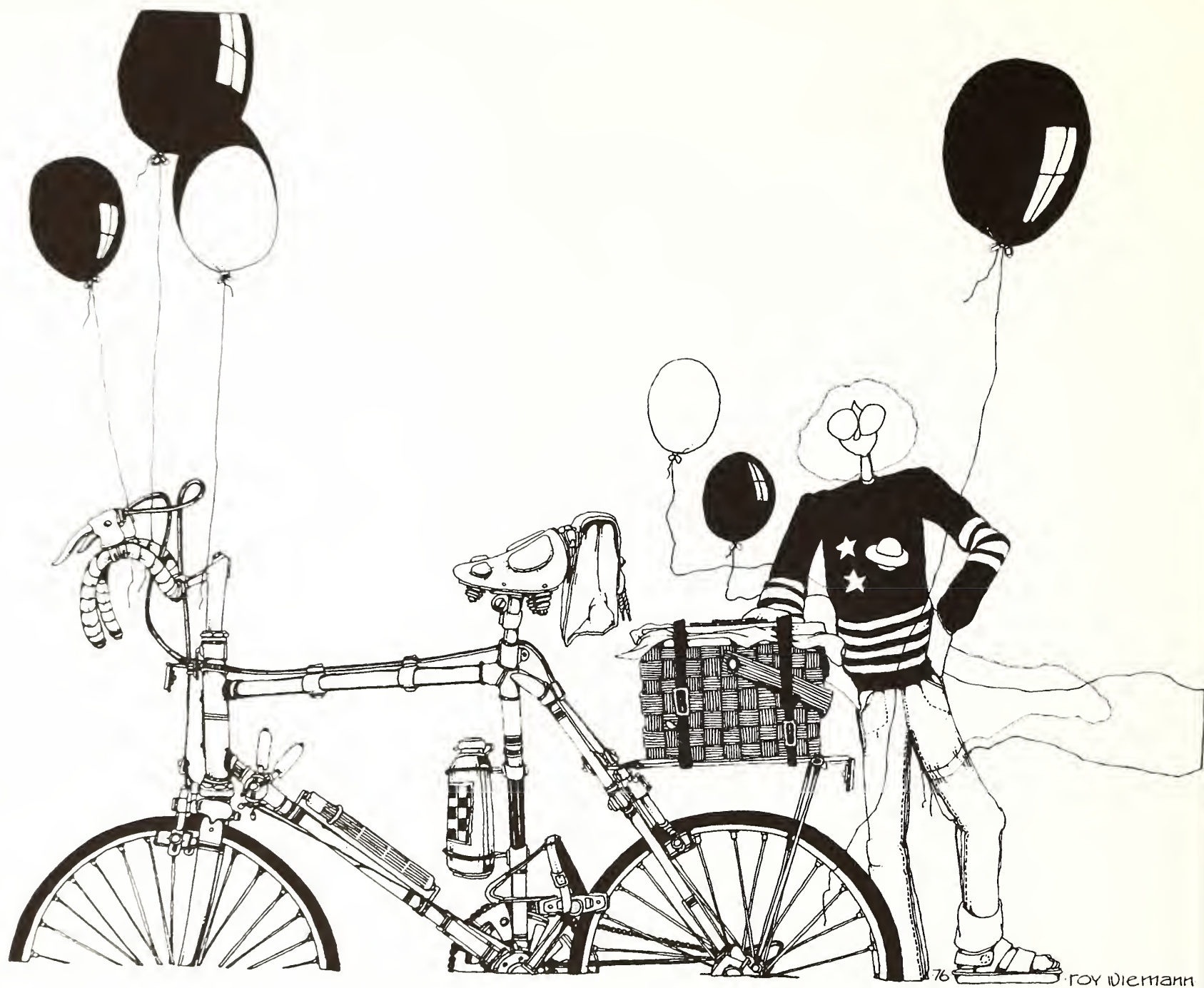
—Lane Cox

Memory, shaken
loose, falling free, lies quiet
beneath the wormwood.

—Gladys Roe

Leaves fluttering free;
Autumn's bright hand caresses
Earth's breast tenderly.

—Gladys Roe



THREEE YEEEARARS

"My nephew is a dentist," began the well-groomed middle-aged woman.

"Really?," replied the bored-looking girl who looked about twenty. "That's interesting."

"I have a daughter, too," the woman went on. "She's a medical secretary. She finished her course in two years. She's a brilliant girl."

"Really? That's interesting."

"Don't you love this restaurant?" said the woman. "I mean, the way they sit you with people you've never met. You get to meet such fascinating people this way. We come here often, don't we, Harold?"

Harold dully nodded his head in agreement.

"Yes, my daughter is a brilliant girl," continued the woman. "Do you go to school or work?"

"Well," answered the girl, "I'm really not doing anything right now."

"Oh, so you're on vacation?" persisted the woman, the smell of saki on her breath becoming stronger.

"No, not really. I really haven't done anything since I graduated from high school."

"Oh? When was that?" asked the woman.

"Three years," said the girl, who realized her mistake as soon as the words left her mouth.

"THREE YEARS! THREE YEARS?" screamed the woman. "THREE YEARS and you haven't done anything?"

"Well, I..."

"THREEE YEEEARARS? What have you been doing for THREE YEARS?"

"I read a lot. I play tennis. I'm thinking about go-

ing back to school," rationalized the girl.

"Why don't you become a medical secretary like my daughter? Did I tell you my nephew is a dentist? Maybe you should become a dental assistant. They're very much in demand you know."

"Really? That's interesting," replied the girl, glaring at her mother who made her sit at that end of the table.

"THREE YEARS! Do your parents know about this?" questioned the woman.

"I guess they do. I live with them."

"And they've let you do nothing for THREE YEARS? Harold, do you believe this young lady here has done nothing for THREEE YEEEARARS?"

"Yes, dear," replied Harold obediently.

"Do you have any brothers and sisters?" persisted the woman. "Do they do anything?"

"Well," answered the red-faced girl, "my older brother is a teacher and my younger br-"

"A teacher. Well, now that's nothing to be ashamed of. I have a cousin who is a teacher. Did I tell you my nephew is a dentist?"

"Yes, you did," replied the girl who right then looked like she wished she had enough nerve to tell the unknown interrogator off.

"THREE YEARS!" the woman screamed again in disbelief.

The girl had a look on her face that said why in this whole damned place did I get seated next to a drunken old bitch who's nosey as hell and won't shut up, but instead she told the woman, "I need time to think. Three years isn't such a long time."

"You could become a nurse's aid." The woman went on. "My daughter is a medical secretary. If you had brains you could become a nurse. Nurses have to have brains you know."

"Really?"

"Do schools take you after THREE YEARS?" asked the woman. "Where do you want to go?"

"I might just go to BCC my first year."

"Oh, a trade school. Now, they might take you. My daughter went to one of those to be a medical secretary. THREE YEARS?"

"Yeah, she must be brilliant. I'm very impressed," said the girl, her voice becoming sarcastic.

"Do you have a boyfriend?"

"Yeah," retorted the girl, her eyes flashing. "I have a boyfriend. His name is Chuck Rex."

"Oh, and what does Chuck do, dear? Is he a teacher too?" Her voice took on a sadistic tone.

"No," answered the girl facetiously. "He's a prince. His mother is a queen. He lives in England in a palace."

The woman jumped up and screamed louder than ever, "Prince Charles! PRINCE CHARLES? Prince Charles is your boyfriend?"

"Well, my family's leaving now. It's been nice talking to you," said the girl.

"PRINCE CHARLES? How long have you known PRINCE CHARLES?"

"Oh, about three years."

"Three years?"

"Yes. Goodbye. Nice talking to you," said the girl as she left the table.

-Pat Pierce

MIDNIGHT FLOWER

Minstrel wind whistles
Lyrics to relics
in laden vases.

The withering flower rustles
at storms of feather-dust
in closets of night.

Sleep's whispers awaken
the grave; the tomb
of only the dust.

—Lane Cox

TEASING KISS

The sea, the sea
Has touched my cheek
As a teasing lover's
Kiss.

Delicately, its foam
Has caressed
The sands of
Me.

—Lane Cox

THE ARROW

The demon is tender
a wisp of tremors
of the quivering arrow.

He yields in sighs
as the wizards' mark
strikes the golden brand.

He sheds his eyes.
The pitted apple twangs.
Three straddle Eden's banks.

—Lane Cox

SAD MADONNA

Sad Madonna
With a babe laying in your arms
Tell Me
What will she see
Cloudless days or Misery

You smile and kiss the child
A sing of dreams
That will embrace her in a while
But it's the only love you've ever known
The dancer's gone, left you alone
Now can you make it on your own
We'll see
Won't we

Sad Madonna
You feel it coming soon
Leave this empty house
This shadeless room
Like a song still out of tune
You hope and try
Wonder why: still fears words like "Good-bye"

But all of what you've wanted
Has passed you by
If Moma sad, Baby will cry
Feel the wind and kiss the sky
No reply
Nothing granted
Empty Handed

Sad Madonna
I've seen that look before
Lifeless eyes reaching for the door
You tell me tales of How
You've taken less and given more
Like a postman with an answer
Going door to door

Well and Sad Madonna
You're one of a kind
But love is so blind
Only seems to find
The ones that don't need it!

—David Sousa

WITHIN YOUR BODY'S GOLD LINING

Within your body's gold lining
your mind
it draws the lines
that mark
and map
and bend
and strap
my feelings of rhyme
that steadily unsteady reasoning
that comes in a package marked "time"

—Lenny Tucciarone

UGLY CITY

Big black ugly city
With your switchblade tricks
Hapless victim in midst
Of confusion, madness, terror

Aimlessly searching for new conquests
Come out and feel the emptiness
Drive away the bitterness inside you
Free yourself of the binding ropes
That helplessly chain you

Hurt not, but learn to give of yourself
Erase away the weariness from your tired brow
Stop stepping on others to achieve your goals
It is time you took a rest

—Denise Nerenberg

PHARAOH

Evil turns as spirals
Reeking on the axis of time.
Death avenges itself,
Glutted, strikes the land.
The chariot drags in chains
Egypt, the horde;
Violators
Against Pharaoh, the angered God.
The horde crawls in circles,
Sweating and groaning under wheels.
"I am Pharaoh
Eternal God

In my temple into time,
This pyramid to my might."
"My blazing coffin
Rests in cavern dark
To light unborn
Even as I decree

Hell to the sinful;
Egypt, arrogant life,
Breath and blood
I, Pharaoh, crush."

"The chain I will bolt on men
As the cord to my angered flail,
Egypt, the cursed mongrels,
Are carnal flesh ripped to bones
Blood drains--
Drips as seeds
On my coffin.

As I, Pharaoh,
Out of the cavern
Into the light emerging
Onto the drenched sands
Rise on my chariot to the sun."

—Lane Cox

THE SEA

Its pregnant thrust
the swollen wind
unleashes
into a gluttonous tempest
lashing
the derelict palm.

Its liquid smirk
teases
the thirsty sands;
baits
them from buttress palm.

Its arching surge
wrenches
the fighting sands;
steals
life from the naked palm.

—Lane Cox

TEMPEST

Tempest, storm,
Galing wind.
Blinding light,
Cold flash.
Deep conviction,
Driving rain.
Forces building
Overspilling
Indecision,
Undecided.
Some reluctance
has been ignited.

—Roger Mullen

My own time which is no one's
they elude to bright stars
and wayward passages
the excess baggage of my mind
splits over turnpikes
turns to bone
gives life
takes sins
turns to carrots
my hands push the wheels
prepare the uprising
all goat men
prey, prey
stealer of salt
fresh wind halo below ya
takes time
to sense things and nobody's
nobody's home
wed.
nobody's home

—Frank Tucciarone

DREAMER'S DANCE

Clouds are palms
dismembered in their dance

webs that coil
from stumped hands.

She tiptoes on furrows
the grooves of palms

weaves on threats stamped
by imprints of the dance.

She twirls as they clap,
these webs of chance.

Wild-heeled she twists,
spikes her weaving hands

rears and awakens
to her pleading palms.

—Lane Cox

THE ALLEY

Night
hurls its cat eyes.

Howls fall
on the black edge.
Shadows shrink
into alley's trash.

Sour-sweat
evil prowls
in the aisle of cats.

Claws stalk
in stealth.
The wanderer shrivels
into the walls.

Night swallows the cat.

—Lane Cox

REACTION

I fear the Irish
snot-green sea
may swamp my precarious vessel

and Yeats dancing
barefoot on my breast
jabs at the diaphragm of my mind

chanting
 chanting
 chanting

the half-forced entry
invites
seeping salt-water intrusion

—Gladys Roe

HIS FURTHER ADVENTURES

My dearest Sharra,

We cannot take him in.

There's more to this whole thing than you think, more than I can explain. I know how you feel about him. But he's lost to you. You'd never forgive him. Or yourself. Or me.

They let me see him. I taped our visits . . . but I don't want you to hear his voice. The transcripts I've attached will prove the point just as well.

We sometimes get a game of chess together (he said). Most of the time, though, we sit, and rock. And we listen. You've never heard it, have you? The song, I mean. You get to hear the starwinds move, shifting and sifting past one another. You get to see the bodies behind the sun. They beckon, their old, older-than-age mists like a finger. And they cry, a sound at once shrill and sensuous, wrapping itself around you like a loving shroud, and never letting go. But we, each of us, have our own song out there, one nobody else seems to hear

. . . .This chair here, would you roll it around? Point me toward the sun - I try to block out the shades of my life out there sometimes. Keep sitting into the sun, perhaps I'll burn me blind some day. I don't know, maybe they'll go away then, maybe

. . . .Maybe you could pour us a drink, eh? Nothing on the strong side. I can't keep her away when I drink. Even tea, tea reminds me of her herbs, her scent. It soaks into the nerves. It does. Some folk tell me, she trapped me that way. Others said, I used her. Mostly her father's people said that. But they're right, all of them. They used to say a man chases a woman till she catches him. Sometimes they both stay still and trap each other

. . . .The other guys out here, most are old cranks

like me. And every man keeps to himself, the women too. Every one has their own piece of space, every one has a song. . . .

. . . .The song's not really like music, y'know. I don't think you really hear it, not with your ears. It's just there, just as she is . . . she' just there. Out there behind the sun. I met her after the war. It was a little one, just a rebel village that "couldn't see that the Alliance was there to help." A little war, too, without a name. But there was a difference between this village and the hundreds of hundreds of others out there. She was there

. . . .Is there anything you'd like, to be more comfortable, I mean? I never told anyone, but I still have some money put away. So your wife will be happy. And you, of course. So you'll both be happy. Her mother wanted it that way. Still does.

. . . .She's still there. It's not her voice I hear. It's her, well, more like her kaad. I can hear its seven strings, feel every pluck, every chord in the skin, the little hairs at the back of my neck. That was "her spot." She touched me there and took a piece of my soul. But she more than paid me back

. . . . "Payment in full," that's how they tried to describe it to me. "Don't be such a goddam incurable romantic." It was a match made, if not in heaven, then in circles which were, in their own minds at least, almost as high. The commissioners of the Alliance thought it a masterstroke: the maverick son of one of the most revered of Alliance commissioners, a star-veteran at that, and the tribal princess of Altahr. So what if she, and everything about her was repulsive to me? My friend Matt said, "Fuck romance." My father was a bit less graphic, putting the whole thing in terms of duty, telling me it was what I *ought* to do. He forgot, though. . . when had I *ever* done anything I *ought* to do?

He sat for a few minutes. First he chuckled, very pleased with his remembered defiance. But the laugh-

ter died, and the sun glazed his eyes. He sat there, just like that, still, and I thought about what he was now, and what he had been, how free. And I thought about myself, and going to the agency four days a week, and keeping up appearances, and going to the shows every week, and our sculpture gardens, and everyone else's sculpture gardens. They must have been different with plants. Very different.

Another old man, seemingly quite blissed-out, stumbled over to us and picked up a small frame which was on the table next to your father's chair. In the frame I saw was the picture of your mother, the one you keep by your bedside. With that, your father focused his eyes and took a swing at the other man with his walking-stick, and shouted till he put down the picture. His shout tapered off, and amid the grass, the sunlight, and some faint sort of music in the background, on this island in space, he continued.

Hey Calhoun! Leave that picture alone! Drop it! Put it down, starblind old bum! Drop her. . . .

. . . .That's why your wife meant so much to her, was so special. They dropped our first child, off the cliffs. The cliffs of Ahj, just outside the village. . . . they drop off, sheer, into an acid lake below. That day, the running began. So now Sharra is all there is left of her. Sharra, and the song. . . .

. . . .The song never stops, you know, we don't escape into sleep. And some say death doesn't even stop it. It just mutes it a little. Or they say when an old spacer dies, a star goes nova. The guys who try to explain the song, they say it comes from each man's star, some of 'em do. Not every scientific. But the romance of the thing is less personal, the folly less pointed and poignant when you think that the force which runs your life is nothing but stray radiation, the death-cry of a ball of gas gunning for oblivion.

I still think it's the song of her kaad. They say the women of the royal clan keep the souls they've stolen

locked in their kaads.

No, sleep won't stop it, dreams are no refuge. The song colors the dreamworld, takes it over. What color is A above middle C? . . .

. . . . I see her now, in the linen she wore around her waist the first time they brought us together. Her breasts were uncovered, but for rubies and gold covering her nipples. Never in my life had one sight so upset and unnerved me: not monsters I'd slain, nor the wastelands of war-torn planets. I was, despite my love for the quiet of space, a man of learning. My vaunted rebellion was selective: I rejected the crowds, the noise . . . but only those trappings of society I found offensive. I was still very much a creature of propriety. Which did not prepare me for the sight of this half-naked, dirty young witch, her hair filth-matted and lice-ridden, mud on her face, snaked around her wrists, and that strange stringed instrument in her left hand. I recognized it from history books, knew it was a kaad. It had not been played in the Alliance in centuries. I recalled it had been abandoned by order, but I could not remember why.

My father, on his face the diplomat's forced grin which always made his gums bleed, introduced my "bride." and I lowered my eyes, to keep from being ill. Not an auspicious beginning. . . .

. . . . The beginning of the end was when they killed the child. But to them, it wasn't murder. It was a sacrifice, they said, to one of the half-man abominations they worshipped. And for all I know, they still do. I never went back. That's why we fled. No, not because they killed the boy. We could have learned, we prayed, to live with that. Growing pains for a nation finding its way, or something. That's what we tried to tell ourselves.

You see, our whole reason for being there (though I didn't know it at the time, it seems I was raised to be there. So was she) was to bring our people together, in the Alliance. It was an act of dismissal. They turned their backs on us, on our whole purpose, or how they used us. And, in order to hold our own in the delicate situation they had hoped to create, our

people bred and raised us similarly. They had made both of us stubborn, cold . . . and all we had left was ourselves.

. . . . At first they didn't leave us by ourselves, certainly not together. Good idea. We only saw each other at those evenings spent sitting cross-legged in the mud and holding our guts as we politely picked at near-raw lizard. Those were the "occasions of state." We glared at each other.

After about thirty days, they put us in a room together, hoping we had been putting on a public show of hostility for their sake, assuring the other side that they were marrying into spirited stubborn assuring them that neither side intended to give ground in the negotiations. They hoped we would, in private, find a peace with each other that we could not concede in public. Or perhaps they knew she would try to kill me.

They bolted the door from the outside. They hoped, I presume, that we'd call for them after we'd made our peace, and would come out together. The way she tore into me, it was equally likely only one of us would leave conscious.

No sooner did the latch slide than she had her teeth in my arm. Now, I was a trained writer . . . but there's not much call for a code of combat when you have a set of teeth in your arm. We tangled like that for hours.

He stopped talking. I asked him what happened then.

Nothing. I don't remember. All of a sudden, she pulled away, picked up her kaad, and played it. I don't remember anything else. I don't want to . . .

. . . . It's not like we don't do anything here, you know . . . we just do, well, nothing. We remember, a sort of active doing nothing. We look at the sky, and

the earth, and the song. In browns, dark greens and blues. . . .

. . . . Her eyes were not one single color, no, they were a moving-about malange of dark greens and blues. Even a touch of brown every now and then. The first time I noticed it, and when we came to love each other -- to this day I say that; to this day I still don't know *how* she felt -- when I came to love her, I just fell into those eyes, into a world apart, away from tribe and petty battles, away from father and bickering cronies. We ran there, rolled in the undergrowth, in our place, that's what I saw, what I feel now in the song. . . .

. . . . "The song," you say, and I hear the nervous laughter in your voice. The song: the lonely hallucinations of a sick, daft doddering old fool, living in his memories of glory, you think. Don't deny it, you're not much of a liar! But the song isn't just that . . . all spacers have the song, the ones who live it and aren't just playing at it, the ones with the hooks in them. Some primitives on far-off worlds have a ritual, a worship-service, to their sun or moon or seas, or whatever gods they create to give their own creation form and meanin. They hook thongs of animal-skin through their own sinews and yank them out, painfully, sometimes fatally. In adoration. You can't yank out the song, even in death.

With that, they took him inside for his nap. Now we are at the hardest part, the part I cannot, and must tell you.

When he accused me of lying, I wasn't . . . though my laughter *was* nervous.

I don't know when, or if, I'll see you.

I hear a song.

La Dame Farouche

You see her

she is the fierce lady,
Her hands are of brass,
her breasts gold.

She will not deny her weakness,
she will not confirm her strength.
She dances on a river of glass to please you
yet she will not let you sooth
her bloody feet.

She is the sorceress.
She is the witch.

She is Medea who has lusted after Jason,
-who murdered her father and her brother
for his love,
-who sacrificed flesh for the sake of flesh,
truth for the sake of truth,
-who sought to love the world (incarnate in her belly)
and painted landscapes with the blood
of her slaughtered sons.

She consumes fire with reason.
She consumes reason with madness.
She spills her menstrual blood upon the earth
and gathers daughters, brown-skinned and supple,
from the furrows,
she blesses them with her kisses, wild and tender.

I give you my lips she tells them,
and I give you a sword,
go forth and avenge your mothers
whose wombs were pierced
by the penile lances
of the sons they bore.

-go forth and avenge your sisters
whose perforated hearts
were raped again and again
by the grown-up shadows
of little boys they trusted.

-go forth and slay the little boys,
go forth and slay them I say.

But the daughters would not brandish
the coldsteel phallus
so they fell on them instead.

And the fierce lady knelt beside them
and wept.

She offered them her breasts,
cool and orblike
twin moons descending upon the wounded flesh
soothing their limbs
until their last breaths,
like the planets and the stars
rose languid from their bodies,
rose and sought a vaginal ocean
ever-turning,
that would call them home at last.

You see her,
the fierce lady,
she stands upon the shore and
casts a pocketful of dragon's teeth
upon the waters,
she watches and waits
while emetic waves beat against her legs,
she watches and waits
while heirarchies of constellations
reel above her.

Medea, I am the brother that you slew.
My severed limbs float on the oceans
rotting in the sun.

I, too, loved Jason.
I shared his kisses and his bed.
I slew myself for his passions.

Let us die in the grandeur of
each other's falling.

Throw yourself from the rocks, fierce woman,
come and be with me.

Together we will rise, a splendid bird,
no less than terrible,
and our wings will be as the sun.

--Frank Mitchell

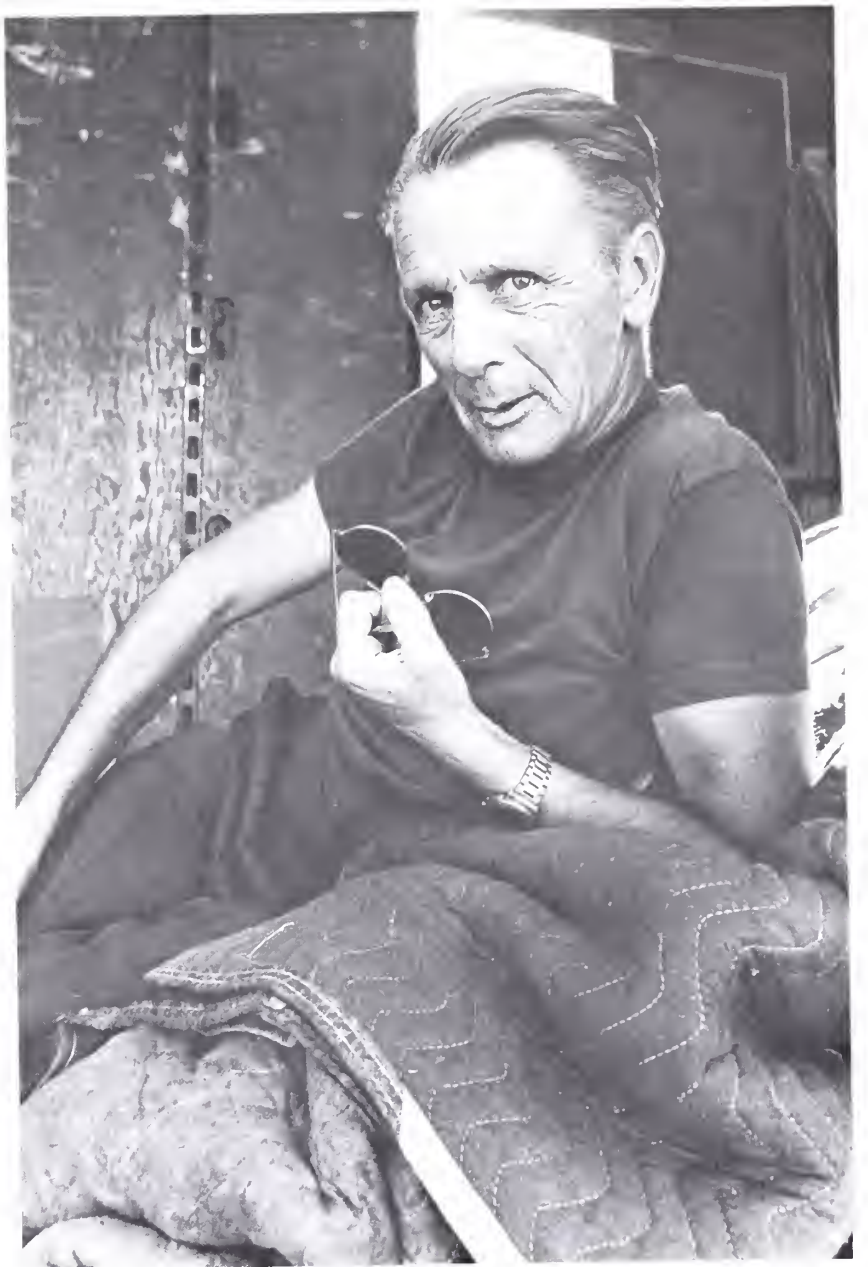
THE SHOWCASE

by

Leslie A. Davis

















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LIBRARY
BROWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA





Who taught you how to tame a lion?
You do it quite well.
Do you practice much?
Or just a little,
on silly little boys.

—Mike Clark

my legs now burn
with the wisdom of running
headlong into the freedom
held above, out of grasp

my own buds shall fly
to all corners
and spread the blight
to all morman households
and such hersay as community
shall die with its first glowing blossoms

—Frank Tucciarone

PHOENIX

i
am
one
with
egypt
lonely
I stand
watching
the sands
that swirl
composing
kaleidoscope
changing with
the flowing of
the desert Nile

—Bob Kieffer

Your eyes play fierce
robbing my glass framed hope
and smashing on your greasy floor
the maw of my stillborn dreams.
From behind the stinking garbage bags
during your rat-filled night
cockroaches nibble my uncooked brain
which you scoop up
along with the broken glass
and serve to me
in a casserole.

—Chuck Ebbighausen

SOCIETYLAND

Put a match to smoke
and handle it well
and maybe your
personality will sell

Pour a bubbly drink
and sip it right
and maybe you won't
be alone tonight

—Lenny Tucciarone

*je suis le tisserand
qui entrelace deux coeurs.
je tisse mon amour
en ton esprit.**

You stand secure
in your naive conceit
like some great smooth sea-stone
thinking yourself unchanged
by turning waters,
ignorant of Einstein
and the relativity
of time and pain
you smile
convinced that my rain has left you
undiminished
and intact.

I see you laughing with your stolid comrades,
offering me, amid the jackaled howls,
some lewd gesture
in return
for the madly written poems
I carefully concealed within the skull
of your Greek-marbled body.

I will not say
I am amazed at how casually
you dispose of love,
or balk
at the smugness of
your misperception (thinking I could
love in you
something more than
possibility)

No, I have seen this all before.

What I have not seen
is that desperate hour
when your want of love
mirrors your empty
laughter,
-when your parasitic brothers
turn their sharp and helpless backs to
you.

What man or woman
will sing
your childish parody,
your osmotic stupidity?

What I have taken from you
cannot be grasped
in your calloused lips.

I have pulled from your breast
a silver thread, linear network
of quicksilver spittle
spanning that echo
of whispers and shrieks
between your breast
and my mouth.

je suis le tisserand . . .

I am the weaver
spinning
your heart's silk
into my design,

my indelible seal
set upon your future with a sigh
consecrated in the colors of my loom
and bathed in the certainty
that your clumsy fingers
will not unravel
this tapestry.

—Frank Mitchell

*I am the weaver who
intertwines two hearts,
I weave my love
into your soul.

Tonight I stumbled across an old jazz
station we discovered one Sunday night
on the F.M. radio dial
I suppose I was tuning into you anyhow
the traffic was light
and the time was right about the same old
frequency as now.

I relive moments before walking in your door
as nervous as a dealer
I was worried about being betrayed
I remember hesitating
in my lotus position concentration
that only truth and false prophets
could penetrate.

Of which you were at the time
somehow slipped my mind
as I would watch us both unwind
over Ammaretto and a line.

If true or false you were at the moment
To me a lot of originality,
spontaneous, not cursory,
of high ideals, never banal
clairvoyant indeed!

Flagrant and stagnant be more of thee,
with succinct aplomb,
enervater of my honest touch;
an ambiguous gambit,
a perfunctory terminus-
that came too close to that "old feelin"
of May . . .

Sorry it's just you and I sharing this privity,
it's certainly a pity
you don't care to share the gist of it
being your very own expedient soiree.

You forgot the magic and love
when you forgot Merlin and me.
Has honesty sold out to parody?
Honey get down to harmony

—Bambi Star Jordan

Alone,
my glass existence
 has shattered
my dreams
 have blown away
my hands
 have touched the face of God
and my eyes
 see only you

—Mike Clark

TIME

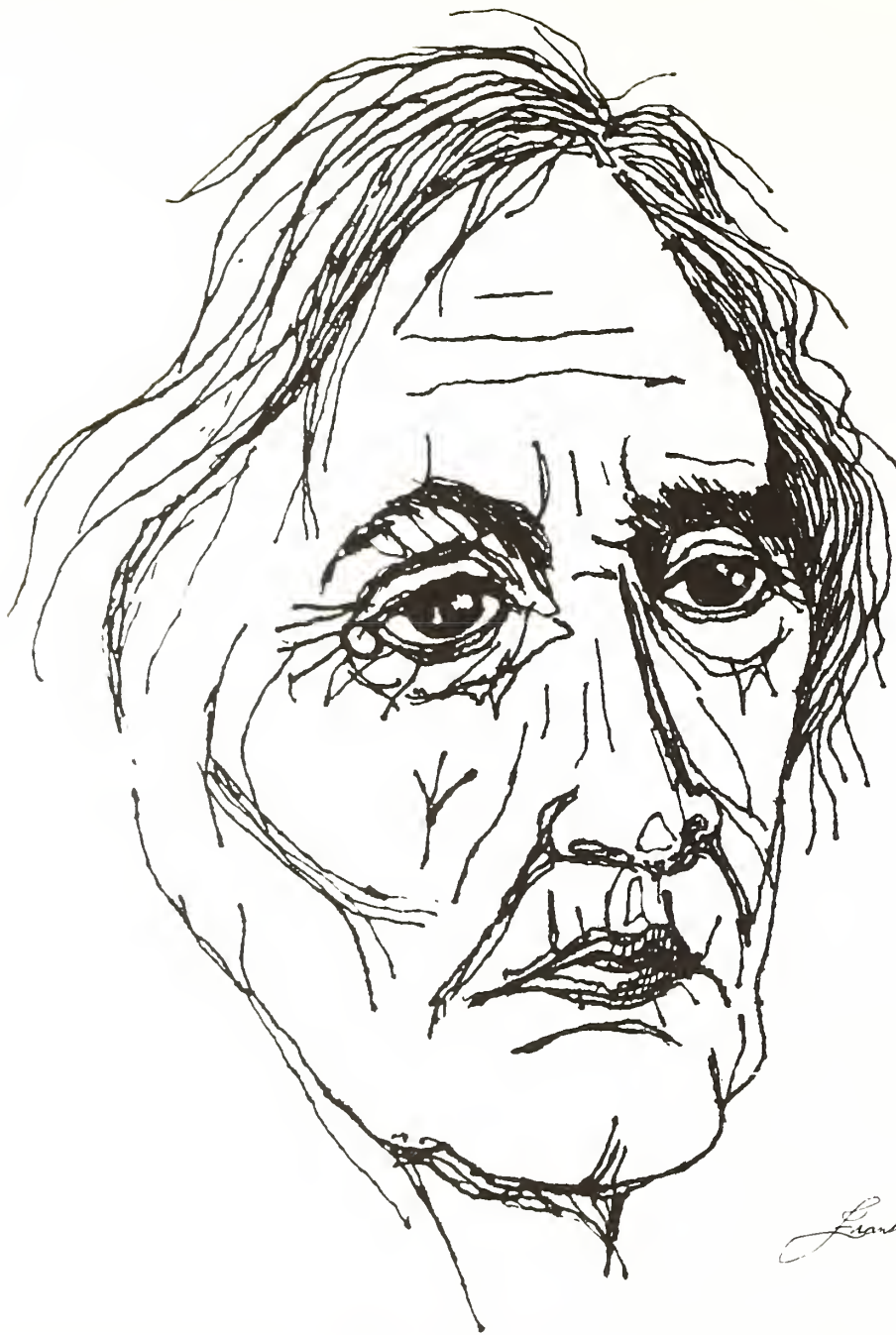
The past
forming the present
as the now
structured tomorrow
I speculate

seeing the future
watching;
an alien eye,
a different sky;
foreign emotions

Romantic robots
loving computer people
with emotional
sex banks

We fly
faster than light
and stagnate society
with speed

—Mike Clark



A

BELATED

SUNRISE

Marcella and I must have made quite a pair, sitting in identical green wooden rockers day after day, me knitting in slow, clopped motions or writing in my diary; her, well, she mostly just sat thinking. Every now and then she'd laugh or sigh and I'd look up and she would tell me a fragment of the good and bad patchwork that had stitched together her life.

She'd say things like, "Oh, Betsy, you should have seen me in 1901. It was the year I married. I didn't wear a gown though. Oh no, you don't wear a gown when you're eloping. But I did wear white. I was radiant, Betsy. It was such an adventure. The old bastard."

She'd stop and exert a flimsy laugh and shake her head ever so slightly. A minute would pass and she would continue.

"He wasn't much of a catch, my Henry. No sir. But I guess he loved me in his own way."

There was little else to do but reminisce here at Starford Nursing Home in suburban New Jersey where we both had come to live. Oh silly me, I really should say to die. I gave death a lot of thought, too much I suppose, but not Marcella. She lived too often in her past to realize the present would not extend itself obligingly for long.

I had never married. I'd been a music teacher all of my life. My fingers had crumbled one day in the middle of Mozart. It didn't shatter me though. Those fingers had given me many fine peaceful years in which I'd been a part of him, Mozart, and the others. It was when my legs began to fail me that I became irritated.

I'd come to terms with the bone cancer which would cripple me a piece at a time. But I could not cope with the leaving of my home, my solitude, my sanctuary, to be cared for by smiling young robots constantly attempting to distribute unfelt

cheer. Too many years I'd thought of myself as a rock, a pillar of gracious and eternal strength. But here I was now and trying somewhat to make the best of it.

Marcella, of course, had no intentions of sitting back to listen to fate's bitter-sweet music. She wanted out. Almost everyday she'd call one of her three grandchildren or her daughter, all of whom she had lived with all of their lives.

"I'm fine," she'd say. "Get me the hell out of here," she'd demand.

They would explain the doctors had felt this was the only alternative. I could not help thinking they could have kept her at home with them. Surely, she could not be much trouble. She had shared in the raising of the children, the housework and the trauma of family disappointment for many years. They had needed her. Now, she needed them, if for nothing else to reassure her of her own identity. They had turned their backs, however, and gone off to search for their own circles of existence. Marcella could get around just fine. She walked briskly, arms swinging along at her side. The only outward sign of her particular illness, an intestinal disorder of some sort, was a discourteous loss of muscle control that appeared not to bother her as much as one would expect. What did bother her was that crude and humiliating companionship of old age -- senility -- reaching down and touching her briefly when she was least ready for it.

I arrived first at Stafford in June of '76. They gave me room 305. It had windows on three sides and shelves for my records and books. It was still, of course, a prison of sorts, but cozy and I was glad to be alone. I spent most of my time philosophizing on death to the beat of my musical masters and forcing my fingers to take control of pen and thoughts -- the outcome of which was my own brand of poetry.

I saw the car pull up on the third day of September in that same year that announced Marcella's arrival. It was quite a sight. She was all of five feet, a bit top heavy and rather well dressed. A woman in her fifties and girl in her twenties accompanied her. I could hear them from my place at the window very clearly. The woman (I later found out it was her daughter) got out first and extended an arm to Marcella for support. Marcella's small chipmunk-like face contorted with disgust as she whacked the waiting arm out of her way.

"Nobody helps me around at home. Ya's open the car door and walk away."

"Grandma, don't make a scene," said the girl, coming around to the passenger side of the car.

"Oh, don't you worry. I won't be around to embarrass you anymore."

"Oh, grandma, don't get mad."

"She's just a little upset. She'll be okay as soon as she gets settled," soothed Marcella's daughter.

"And don't talk about me as if I weren't here," Marcella snapped, turning to her daughter.

The bickering went on and then faded as the three disappeared from my view. I couldn't help thinking this woman was of a very undignified nature. She was loud and insisting and ungracious, I thought, and precisely the type that had always kept me to myself. You can imagine my horror when a nurse and two men in white, each stuck to the ends of a twin sized bed, entered my room.

"Miss Simmons," said the nurse. "You're going to have some company."

"Miss Roberts, I am sure there is another room available for a newcomer. Surely you don't expect me to share my room," I stated.

"Miss Simmons, a private room will cost you about \$150 more a month. You've been charged for a

double since you arrived. I'm sure you knew there was a possibility you would have a roommate sooner or later."

There was nothing I could say. I knew everything she said was true, but I had always felt sure somehow that someone in another double would die or become hospitalized before they ever got around to me. I was determined, however, not to be defeated. I decided I would be intolerably rude until this newcomer asked to be transferred. I simply would not put up with it, I thought to myself.

Marcella entered not long afterward along with her daughter and grand daughter. I held my head high and pursed my mouth. None of them looked at me long enough to notice.

"Oh, mom, what a lovely room," said Marcella's daughter.

"Grandma," said the girl, "Let me help you unpack your things."

"I can do that myself. I don't want you snooping through my things. You've been doing that all your life."

The girl glanced at me briefly to see if I was listening and then looked back to Marcella.

"Grandma, you're acting kind of childish, aren't you?" she asked quietly.

"Well, maybe I am," retorted Marcella, tears blistering from her dark brown eyes.

"Oh, mom, please don't." Her daughter sat down and put an arm around Marcella's shoulders. "You'll be happier here, you'll see. You'll get the best of care and you'll make lots of friends and we'll come and visit you all the time."

"Sure," said Marcella and turned away to unpack.

"I'll call you later, mom."

Marcella nodded, never looking up and her family left.

I quickly put on a record and sat on the edge of my bed facing the window. After Marcella had finished unpacking and right at the time when I was forgetting her presence, lost in the summit of Beethoven's Fifth, she spoke.

"They think I'm getting senile."

I set my lips and continued to listen to my music, pretending not to hear her.

"They think I'm getting senile and it annoys them."

I stayed as still as I possibly could. She got up and walked to the foot of my bed.

"Oh, that's okay," she said quite loudly, "my hearing is going too. I say they think I'm crazy."

I turned around slowly and deliberately, truly annoyed, and gave her what I hoped was a piercing look.

"My hearing is just fine," I said.

"Well, why aren't you talking," she asked with the naivety of a small child.

"I'm listening. One does not speak when one is listening."

"Oh, well, the reason they think I'm senile --"

I interrupted her rather sharply, "Not to you, I'm listening to the record."

"Oh," she said in a small voice. "Well, kindly tell me where the dining room is and I'll leave you alone."

"First floor, the elevator's to the left."

"Thank you," she replied sarcastically and slammed the door on her way out.

For a full week we went our separate ways without ever a word. I began to feel most uncomfortable, and wished I had been a bit more civilized toward her. After all, it did seem we would be stuck here together. She walked around always with swollen, tearful eyes and I was sure part of it was my fault. Yet

there seemed no honorable way to undo my wrong.

We came in from our dinners respectively on the seventh night and she put on the T.V. as usual. She sat silently through "The Price Is Right" and "Hogan's Heroes" and then turned it off and went to bed. I immediately turned on my record player, keeping the volume respectfully low in the light of my newfound guilt. She tossed and turned which was quite unusual for her. She got up several times to use the bathroom. She crept back to her bed looking unmistakably annoyed. She lay there quietly for a while and just when I was pretty sure she was sleeping, she startled me, yelling out.

"I hate that one, don't you have a better record to listen to?"

For a moment I was stunned, not having heard her voice in a full week. I came quickly to my senses. "No, I've nothing better. This is the best. What would you prefer?" I added sarcastically.

"This," she said and she let out one of those long, crude, explosive noises that sometimes accompanied her lack of muscle control.

At first I was taken aback. It was repulsive. I was searching for the words that would let her know exactly how repulsive I thought it was, when she began to laugh aloud. Suddenly, I saw the situation as from a different set of eyes: this eighty-some-years-old woman carrying on in such a manner and me, old dignified, partly crippled, not long for the world me, watching her speechlessly. I began to laugh in spite of myself. We laughed so hard and long, a nurse had to come in and tell us to keep it down. I certainly was embarrassed by my own conduct, but I felt a part of me surging up through my laughter that I hadn't known existed, or maybe I simply forgot.

"Well, good night," Marcella said at last when our laughter had fallen away into silence.

"Good night," I answered.

She went right off to sleep and I spent a long time wondering if I'd wasted my life by never allowing it to be touched by people such as Marcella. I finally decided that now that I could go at any time, I wanted to do nothing but laugh. I felt sure Marcella could provide me with the stimulus to do so. Too many years had passed where laughter had been a stranger to my solitude. I hoped I would still feel the same in the morning, as I went off to sleep.

We became a matched set, like two old, decaying bookends. Marcella had a quick and nasty word for everyone and me, though a slow, late starter, I began to follow in her footsteps.

On weekdays, we would sit in our rockers and snap at everyone who tried to humor us. The goodly young nurses would come by with little pills and papercups on small, white trays and ask gleefully if we would care for something to help us sleep.

"It's only 4 o'clock," Marcella would snap, "why are you always trying to put us to sleep before dinner?"

She'd make a disgusted face and turn her head in the opposite direction. Then she'd turn her head attempting to appear apologetic, wearing that same frozen, fictitious smile that was the trademark of Starford's staff. "Deary," she'd say, "Stick it in your ear." Then we'd put our hands to our chests and laugh gayly to the beat of our rockers hitting the patio floor.

Of course, there were many things Marcella did that were in very poor taste. She had this one particular and terrible habit. On Saturdays, we'd take the Starford Oldies Bus (as Marcella called it) to the shopping mall. Me with my cane and Marcella with a hand bag that was of more volume than she herself.

She would see something she liked for herself, or

more often, for her grandchildren, and simply toss it into her bag. I couldn't believe my eyes! She never looked to see where the salespeople were stationed and she was so short she could not be seen beyond the aisle she was working in. I would stand immobilized, and impatient to depart. It was a terrifying ordeal, but what the heck. It really didn't matter anymore. Of course, it did cost me what little use of my legs I had left. But I never held it against Marcella. Somehow I knew it pained her more than it did me.

It was in the sixth month of our friendship. She had filled her bag with blouses and linens and a lovely wooden clock for our room. We were just leaving the counter from which she had taken the latter, when a salesgirl called out frantically, "The display clock, it's gone. Where's Mr. Lewis?"

"Oh, my Lord," said Marcella. "We'd better get out of here quickly."

"You go," I replied. "I'll only hinder you. I could not possibly move that fast. Go, I'll meet you at the not possibly move that fast. Go, I'll meet you at the bus stop."

"Oh, Betsy," she replied. "You'll kill me."

She hesitated for what seemed to be a long time. "I saw two lovely gold watches for us awhile back, but my bag was so full."

"Well, we certainly can't get them now," I stated nervously.

"I threw them into your bag when you weren't looking!"

We looked at each other for no more than a second, wide eyed, and then we took off like two rabbits caught in a garden. She grabbed my arm and my feet began a wild and throbbing attempt to keep pace with my cane. Somehow I managed to hobble along. We actually made it to the bus stop before I collapsed.

My doctor arrived with the ambulance and two days later, they restored my poor, shattered body to room 305 accompanied by a wheelchair.

"You probably hate me," Marcella said when I returned.

"On, sick you," I replied.

We did not speak of it again, and though Marcella never formally apologized, she began doing me constant favors. She brought my lunches up from the dining room. She made me tea far more often than I wanted it. She even put on my favorite record whenever we first entered our room. She was right in the middle of serving me tea one day towards the end of March when she got the letter. I watched as she read it, her expression going from its usual look of aversion to something close to delight.

"It's from George!" she finally called out excitedly.

"George?" I asked.

"Yes, George. He's my nephew. He's coming up next month to visit the family. He comes every year."

"Will he come visit you here," I asked casually.

"Will he come visit me, will he come visit me!?!?! Will George will come and rescue me, that's what he'll do. He'll take me back to California with him to live in the sunshine." She nodded with finality and satisfaction.

"How can you be so sure?"

I was always his favorite Aunt. He's the black sheep of the family, just like me, we always laughed about it. We're very close."

I couldn't help thinking that when this George finally found out that fifty percent of the time Marcella could not make it to the bathroom, and that ten percent of the time she was incoherent and did not recognize people, he would be glad to leave for Cali-

fornia the same way he intended to come -- alone. To conceal my thoughts, I went on with the conversation. "Does George have enough money to care for you out in California?"

"Oh, George is loaded."

"Really, what business is he in?"

A sly and secretive expression took over her face. "Oh, George has his fingers in many pots," she said sighing. "He's got a few restaurants, a jewelry business. Oh, I can't even begin to tell you."

"Mafia," I thought.

"You got it," said Marcella and I realized the words had formed on my lips.

"But no one knows in the family but me," she went on, "My daughter and her kids are a bunch of goody goodies, ya' know. They don't really care much for George without knowing that. If they did, they'd never let him stay every year."

"Hmmm," was all I could think to mumble.

On Sunday, Marcella's daughter and the grandchildren came to visit as usual.

"George is coming," said her daughter.

"I know," Marcella said, looking quite mysterious.

"We'll be sure to bring him to see you," said one of the grandchildren.

"Please do, as I plan to leave with him," Marcella replied indignantly.

I looked up in time to see an apprehensive look passing through the lot of them.

"Well," said her daughter with a note of false enthusiasm, "George will be so flattered to hear of your plans, won't he."

The grandchildren chided an unconvincing, "Oh yes," in unison, and one of them quickly changed the subject. After awhile, Marcella tired and began to talk senselessly. It seemed somehow that her family

brought on these moments of mindlessness. When she had talked herself out, she slept, and they all left shaking their heads and muttering among themselves.

As the weeks passed, things seemed to get worse for the both of us. I spent almost all of my time in bed and in pain, and Marcella took up laughing endlessly to herself. When I inquired, she could not recall the incident that had triggered her laughter. At these times she would become very frustrated and begin a succession of curse words and foul expressions, some of which I had never heard. It seemed the only thing that kept us going was the strength of our friendship. When she began to mumble feverishly, I would take hold of her hand and sometimes even hum to her. When I was at the pinnacle of my pain, she'd pat my forehead with a wet cloth. If we were both going through our separate sufferings at the same time, we'd simply give each other occasional and understanding glances, when our endurances permitted.

When George arrived at our door, accompanied by the family, Marcella did not recognize him.

"Henry, is that you," she asked in a sweet and childish voice I had never heard her use before.

"If you want me to be Henry, I can be Henry," said George, and he went to her side to hold her hand in his own.

"Henry, take me with you."

George looked up to the members of the family. They all gave him the same look that seemed to say, "See, I told you," and he nodded his head slowly and in agreement. I studied him carefully. He had dark brown hair and eyes, a rather large nose. He had a soft, entertaining voice and a good strong looking body. He was easily into his forties. He looked upon Marcella with a combination of love and pity in his eyes.

"Oh, my word, George," said Marcella, coming partly to her senses. "I thought you were Henry. Thank God. Forty two years of him was quite enough."

Everyone laughed softly at this and their chuckles faded quickly into silence.

"How long will you be here?" asked Marcella after awhile.

"Only until Thursday," George announced.

"But today is Monday, already."

"Tuesday," I corrected when I saw nobody was going to tell her.

"Tuesday," Marcella began, "why are you leaving so soon?"

"I have business to attend to in Pennsylvania on my way back to L.A. I really shouldn't have come this far out of my way to begin with, Aunt Marcie."

Marcella wrapped her small age spotted hands about his wrist. "You will take me with you, won't you, George?"

George looked up to the family. They were all still wearing the weak and sorrow-filled expressions they had arrived with. George looked to me briefly. I squinted my eyes and gave him a bitter look.

"I'll tell you what, Aunt Marcie. I'll have to see. I'll have to see. I've got a car load of things I'm bringing to Pennsylvania with me. I don't know if I can make the room.

"When will you come by for me?" asked Marcella with a tone of desperation clinging to her words.

"He leaves on Thursday night," answered her daughter, growing impatient.

Marcella's head went back to her pillow and she closed her eyes. "I'll be ready," she mumbled, "I know you'll come, Henry."

"Good-bye, Aunt Marcie," George said tenderly as

he kissed her on the forehead. "I always loved you and I always will."

They left in slow drifting steps as if though not to disturb the sentiment of the moment.

I hardly spoke to Marcella for the next day and a half. There were no words to say. I thought of comforting her, of preparing her somehow for the disappointment she would receive on Thursday night. But I knew this would only make her angry. I hadn't the heart to tell her my own news. I would be leaving for the hospital in a few days to finish out my time under the surveillance of my doctors. I hated Marcella's family and I particularly hated George.

Thursday night finally came. Marcella's high spirits seemed to arouse her physical being. She looked as well as she did when she had first come to Starford. She dressed in a blue tailored suit and a black hat with some veiling. She checked herself several times in the bathroom mirror.

A nurse came in to register our blood pressures at about 9 p.m. Marcella's was higher than usual.

"I guess I'm over excited," Marcella stated when the nurse questioned her about it. "I'm leaving tonight for Los Angeles, California with my rich nephew.

"Say 'Hi' to Robert Redford for me," said the nurse and she winked at me as she left.

Marcella called her a few disagreeable names after the door had closed, but she was too joyous to make much of it. She applied lipstick and began her good-bye to me.

"Betsy, I love you like a sister. I'll think of you all the time. Tell them not to notify me when you die and I'll tell them not to tell you when I go. It's much easier to think about things that way. I'll miss you so much."

For a moment, I thought I saw tears coming to her eyes. But she was too busy fiddling with her suitcase for me to be sure. I knew there were some in mine. I could feel the dampness settling on my cheeks. But my tears weren't because of her farewell speech. I stayed quiet and waited for time to carry us to the morrow.

At 10 p.m., a lively, springy Marcella hobbled to the pay phone. She was gone quite a long time. When she returned I braced myself as if for her.

She came in the way I expected. Her eyes downcast, her back hunched more than usual. She was wringing her hands together in such a way I feared she would rub the skin off.

"He left my daughter's at 8 p.m." she said. "He never mentioned anything about coming for me.

"Well, perhaps he had to stop and have his car tuned." I heard my words sounding hollow and false.

Marcella took off her hat. "It's their fault," she said, sounding emotionally drained. "I can just picture it: 'You can't really take her with you. You'll have to play nurse to her for the rest of her life. You'll be sorry. Besides, she's so crazy, she probably won't remember you were ever there to see her.'"

Somehow I felt that was exactly what was said. We sat silently for a moment or two, until we were interrupted by a small knocking sound at the door. Neither of us bothered to look until we heard his voice.

"Do you know I combed this whole damn city looking for a place that sells traveling corsages?" said George extending the flowers to her.

Her eyes filled with tenderness and a trembling hand accepted the corsage. For some reason, I felt there was a distinct possibility that I was witnessing the happiest day of my life.

—Joan Mason

could you live
if ever after was
tomorrow?

dream of a wild place
and my eyes you shut
"said "does it make a difference?"

such a sun setting is vivid
yet stillborn
as i pulled you from my pillow,
my child, i lie
to plan you for a world
after your driving, effervescent womb
is set in plastic

my kind smile, yes
please pull it down child
wrap it in tin foil
bury it deep in the 70's haze
make it uncertain
of its false bright beginnings

child, throw me over
my senseless concerns
into your realms of
welded skin sections
kill me off
as a faded generator

—Frank Tucciarone

i am born into the world alone
without his soul
and of course without memory of God
the great saint above will sell
us our soul

sins of midwife couple
below was ritual rite
quite risque river beads
the hands of rape young infants

The young mother fixing her nose asterix
the young mother grafting an education
the young mother blinking bitter-sweet stammonds

—Frank Tucciarone

IDEAS

Whine, swift
lyricist,
blue-bottle friend,
iridescent gleam of
sheer-veined wing.
In zig-zag flight
you think to strew
fairy dust.

Shades of green
disguise
your compound eyes,
paint my mind,
blown wild with
poison
you've planted
inside--
maggots
to perpetuate
your kind.

—Gladys Roe

CONVENTIONALS

Neat little boxes in gray
Gray verticals
Like business-men suits
Gray steel
Like vaults and coffins
Gray horizontals
Like dullness.

Bits of myself
Lost in memory
In gray cardboard squares.

Structural restrictions
Have confined me
Like cars are squeezed
In junkyards
Until accidents of life
Have ruptured Time
Poking holes in the gray web
For our words
To make Love in the air.

—Juana Hopper

then how much better is it
to live
forgiven for human frailty
than to die
bearing the brunt of it?

the isolation of men
who know not of life
yet befriend the vision
yet befriend their own version

in the cavity of ages
the artist speaks clearly
yet is uncovered only
many years later
by those in the same position

—Frank Tucciarone

TO FEDERICO GARCIA LORCA

You . . . of the dark death
and the green moon,
the horse on the mountain
at five in the afternoon.
You . . . the cries full of thorns
and the waist tied with shadows.
You . . . the mouth of Spain
at the throat of the Earth.
You . . . in the eyes of the night.
Magnificent darkness,
Engulfing darkness,
The deep side of the river.

—Juana Hopper

GOOD FRIDAY

They always crucify
on a Friday
 when the City of God
is drained bloodless
by freeways and commuter trains
 -sewage lines into the suburbs (split/level
two-and-a-half baths and shopping malls
with special advertised Easter savings)
 -inside Woolworth's
retired businessmen in bermuda shorts
stand in line to pay for
the heavy-duty trash can liners
in which they will store
the unexpected residue
of their
carefully planned lives.

-outside the card shop a young woman
longs to touch the smooth unblemished body
of the young man she is with,
but fearing the delicacy of his web
she stands apart,
hating the pretense of his
Chase-Manhattan morals.

I can stand no more.
I run for the exit seeking air,
fearing I will drown in
the hoard of buzzing faces, talking above
and beyond each other,
fearing they will want blood.

Outside I breath deep, stretching my arms upward,
watching my fingers, a thousand antennae,
criss-cross the sky to form dragonfly wings,
softly curved, folding me in a trellised womb of
spittle amnion

my brain simmering like a sea of acid
turning slowly within my cranium,
scorching and burning to ash,
 unto ash
 unto dust
 unto earth
 unto each other
-as you would have them
-as you wish
-as it were
-and if only it were

as simple as the midnight shrieks
of doubtful saints
calling on the names of God:

Jesus sweet Jesus sweet Jesus sweet Jesus

I have dragged my crosses
along the way of sorrows,
I have spilled oil with the whores
who pressed veils into my bloody face
then tucked the image into their brassieres.

I have seen their raped and battered bodies
rent as a temple curtain,
I have heard their last breaths:

Eli Eli lama sabachthani
why sweet Jesus sweet Jesus why

I have heard the pleadings of faggots and cripples
as the spikes were driven into
their perfumed hands and twisted feet:

Eli Eli lama sabachthani
why sweet Jesus sweet Jesus why

surely we are all sons
of the Gods
we fathered.

Can I yet refuse the cup?
No.

The spikes have been driven.

I will wear them as jewels.
I will watch the blood embroider my arms
and trickle to my lips.

I thirst.

I thirst for the taste of
a strange man's perspiration
rolling down my throat
to become a piece of every part
of my body.
And my body is no less than the monument
Of every man and woman I have ever loved.

I thirst for truth
as if my every heartbeat (blood and tonic-water)
my every breath (woman behold thy son)

could be anything but truth,
as if lies and pettiness and pretense and prayers
could be anything but truth and blood
and urine and tears
and nocturnal omissions
could be anything but true but for now
but for the Grace of God but for
Princess Grace-
fully dancing menagerie of trites
and cliches in tights
and toe shoes is better than no shoes
and who cast lots for Jesus' shoes?
Was it Lot
or Lot's wife (jacked with a butcher knife)
Nameless wife while in decline
was fortified with iodine

and sodium de dum dum dumb and deaf
will someday see
the blind will walk
and the lame will dance to disco

and only the beggars can tell the saviors
from the thieves.

The blind king raps my legs with his stick
and cries 'Ecce Homo'

It is finished.

The bodies are taken down and wrapped
in vinyl refuse bags
and darkness covers the earth
from the sixth hour until the ninth.

The mothers/daughters/sisters
huddle and weep in the shadows
while the martyrs' blood pools and coagulates black,
stinking to high heaven
where God turns over in his sleep
and retches down upon the earth
all the mis-spent tears and sweat
of His passionplay.

And in the rock-hewn bellies of
the retired executives, the blackjacked whores,
the middle-classed housewives,
-the crucified lay hand in hand,
prepared for their res-erection,
burning and glowing like
the embers of the fires
that sang and danced murder
on Good Friday.

—Frank Mitchell

IF I REMEMBERED YOUR NAME, THIS WOULD BE A TITLE

The words, then, like wind-chimes,
breaking and unbroken
with the unrelenting velvet violence of memory.
Count them up,
set them down while they burn,
this last song
for a cool dark liquid creme-and-Kahlua night in May
as the masts of the tall ships halve the night.
We had the day,
yesterday, or the year before,
there you were, just you and your thumb in view,
and you,
and I took you in.
And you took me in.
You fingered, first, my guitar,
and sang me songs
of cells and hells and teen-age brides and rape and sailing free
and I knew, life's like Lewis Carroll sometimes . . .
too late
to slow my claustrophobic rabbit-hole fall to you.
You smelled of ash and gray welfare-line morning,
as you told me all the things you weren't ready to do to me
as I did them to you,
and with you the younger, or so the numbers said, I sang
I'll be your boy, your boy, your toy this summer day, come and
play, who's to say
where the hustle ends.
I didn't have any change I could spare, though you said
it was all right.

You called again, but I was asleep,
and the pay-phone number you left in your message
was answered, just an hour later,
by one Sophie Wachtelman, 59-but-doesn't-look-a-day-over 52, formerly
of College Point, N. Y., moved here when Manny gave up the shoe
store and all the kids, including the doctor, had moved out of
that big old quiet house,
and who had never in her life answered a pay phone before.
I asked if you were near the phone.
She said she couldn't hear me
over the sound of the wind.

—Roger Klorese

A TURN OF THE PAGE

Those Hollywood parties you stayed at till three
Mother Mary would greet you, she'll do it for free
She's top of the charts, she's the thundering sea
She moves like a truck and she ran over me.
And goofy the teacher sneaks in the door
Of the school where he worked, but he won't work no more
He was caught and arrested, was busted for grass
What a shame! We all loved him, we all hoped he'd pass
The jaded kidnapper, his ransom is spent
Plays petty pinball with the money they sent
He can't take the losing so he plays different games
And he still hasn't won but it don't feel the same.
Jimmy, the fathead, stole away from his cage
Came snarling and ripping in the clutches of rage
I asked him his address, he told me his age
Anyway, he's insane.
It's a turn of the page.

—Rodger Mullen

blank faced and filled
young and free
patiently waiting
to see if _____
or _____

my love amy
loves my lifestyle
moves in with it
and forgets me

small shrimps
five lawyers, two pimps
court in session
nantuckett should vote succession

down to the tree-house babe
i ain't an ape, i like you as spouse
up to the tree-house i don't care
i got lumberjack shirt to wave
you aint in space
slow down this aint a race!
i know you too well
there's not much more i can sell

—Frank Tucciarone

I hate you
You can sit
And watch a life blow away
And worst of all
Never break out
Of that Picasso smile

—Mike Clark

CIRCUSNAVIGATION

Graceless egret
drowns on purpose
 on my tongue
 in my lips that
swallow you
seeds and all
like ocean swallows
down
down
down. ocean follower. sword swallower.
ocean pales, swallows wail
every orifice impaled with egret's blood
with eager tongues
with tv dinner
burnt to crisply
cracking fire put out with
sea-salt,
and where,
where is the glory in winning
by default?

I am the fire eater,
I am the bearded lady
 with the melon-breasts and shaven pubes,
I am the India rubber man
 stretched and pulled contortious supple,
I am the two-headed cow
 slaughtered and sliced into sandwichies
 at the luncheonette.

I am invisible, invincible,
envisioning, enveloping your body
with a thousand delicious
side shows.
I am your joy
tonight.

And what has the sky to offer
the sea
in return
for a good turn
in the sack?

a few small
drops
of
rain.

a few small
drops.

So I stretch my limbs electric
over miles of no-iron dacron waves
and laugh and laugh and laugh.

—Frank Mitchell

IN THE SUMMER

In the summer it was almost always hot. We would try to find shelter, under a tree if possible. We tried to find good lonely trees.

She had said, "It's different now. Before you had only yourself to think about and it didn't matter too bad when you made mistakes or lacked personal responsibility. It was your head."

Responsibility is a toad who refuses to spread warts.

She said, "Some people die an early death because they can't help running into a knife or breaking their neck in an auto accident. Others just run out of energy. They neglect living, as if they want to die. That's like you unless you do something now. You envelope yourself in fantasies that cannot sustain your real life. You act like you care but when it comes down to it, you just don't put up enough fight. It's like your father said, you turn inward and magnify your own problems until they appear immense. That instead of working out a solution or putting a solution into effect."

In my kitchen there is a drawing. A seagull sits on a child's head. Dawn plays near the paper perimeter where the sullen sea grasps imagination and turns fantasy into reality.

Daily it is a three minute walk to the beach from my cottage.

My thoughts are like a transition that considers itself the plot. The theme, thread, and action that I have come to feel the real past. My own brand of fantasy. A separate toll. I idolize and destroy her and how I felt. I distort her and destroy something precious and waste, unable to hold both her memory and my sanity. I work with threads hoping to mend the damage by pulling the torn fabric together.

At three, the towers of the taller hotels and condominiums cast shadows which play at the edge where the water separates and eddies, dances to the shore.

This was where on that night we had kissed. We walked along the shoreline as seagulls floated in the moonlit water. She got some tar on her foot and I tried to rub it away with wet sand. We kissed and she sank deeply into the sand as the water eroded her footing. A fisherman was putting his gear on his bicycle near the rocks that jutted out into the water 200 yards away. I feared he might be some sinister lonely man. I had been lonely until I met her. There were always people around. But they were stale.

It's only four miles to the pier. Don't reason. Don't think. Don't remember. Blank the mind. Blank. Blank . . . Blank . . . She is walking toward me . . . blank . . . she wears a hood and carries an armful of books . . . Blank . . . All of this must pass like a part of me dying. A part of me must die and the something else will fill me. Something healthy and not out of reach. Something not too expensive that I can live in peace with.

Brittle minds go snap, crackle, pop. Snap, crackle, pop. That's where it was. Snap. Along the beach and across the ocean. Long distance. Too far to swim. Too expensive to fly. Flew here. Fly there. Too far. Crackle. It's only four miles to the pier. The ocean is gentle. Sunbathers turn yellow, then brown, then dark brown. Some turn lobster red. The force is too much. Can't give in. Won't give in. Pop. Gave in before, at school. To prevent the onrush of insanity; the ebb of sanity.

But I don't want her to die in me.

Brittle minds go snap crackle pop. Snap down the

beach the green breakers are over run by short choppy swirls which carry debris closer ever closer to shore. Gulls are swooping suddenly and skim the water swooping up again with small fins jutting from their beaks. There goes another after another after another. A gull's death must be a sea ritual of the limp floating body yielding back the nourishment taken from the sea. Or do they die on land and their bodies go through a chain which eventually brings them, dead, to the sea? They say that all matter comes from the stars. A universal mesh. Say hello to Alpha Centauri for that is you and even though the small webbed feet of the children cross slowly the uneven ground. But why am I thinking this? You're gonna be mighty sore if you keep eating that glass kid. Hello Hello said a small rabbit is a car which when filled with lettuce will not move an inch unless the lettuce compresses and refines itself into gas.

She will be gone before I reach the pier. Two miles done. Two miles to do. Blank.

Blank. Seagulls. The water retreats and a child braces himself for the next splash.

The sun casts a shadow from the Howard Johnson's which almost touches the water's ebb. Less people than an hour ago. A slight old man with close cropped hair and a darkly tanned body stands near the water's edge looking in. Death, time, life. Someday I may understand but first a part of me must go away so I can think more clearly. The patio near the bar is empty. Yesterday I sat at the patio and drank four bottles of Michelob. Feeling akin to the gulls. The warm sun and pounding waves made good company.

—Chuck Ebbighausen





















FREDDIE'S DEAD

Fred (Freddie) William Harris was born in Georgia during World War II. His father was a share-cropper and his mother was a farmer's friend. Though times were hard, Freddie's parents did their best to make him feel secure. His mother, Martha Harris, would sell from her garden and take on washing other people's clothes to get extra money for household needs and school. Freddie's daddy worked hard from afore sun up till dust dark for fifty cents a day plus at harvest time a share of the crops he'd raised. Seeing how hard times were, Freddie came to his mother while she was bending over a tub washing some clothes on a rub board in the noon day sun and asked, "Moma, why do people have to work so hard, 'specially you?"

"Everybody has to work, son, to make money. Money is like axle grease -- it makes the world turn easier and everything in it run a lot smoother. One day, you'll have to work to earn money to support a family of your own -- only you won't have to work as hard as your father if you get a good education. And you'll make more money than your daddy, too. That means you gotta go to school and do real good, young man.

"Yes, Mam."

Freddie heeded his mother's words. He was hard at work one day in school when his father was killed in an accident on the farm when they were dynamiting a stump. Freddie came home from school jubilant 'cause he'd made an 'A' in math, when his mother resolved standing in waiting trying to choose the words to tell Freddie his father was dead. This moment Freddie would remember the rest of his life.

The kitchen door slammed as Freddie burst in exultant over his 'A' in math and found mother sitting, her back to him, immobile as tears streamed down her face.

"Moma, I got some good news. I made an 'A' in geometry today."

"Sit down, Freddie."

"Moma, what's wrong -- why you crying?"

"Son, your father was a good man."

"Did daddy join the army?"

"No son, your father is with Saint Peter at," she began sobbing and as suddenly as she began, she ceased as though she'd reached into some corner of her mind and dug up some courage she didn't know she'd had. "Heaven's door. Freddie, he's dead."

"How, Moma, how?"

She told him what Mr. Johnson had told her. Jim Harris' death had affected both their lives. No one expected Martha and Freddie to stay on the farm and work it, but they did. There wasn't much work to be done, the planting was done. All that was left was the care of the domestic animals and harvest time. Freddie continued to go to school and his grades improved. Martha took on a job in the city. When harvest time came, school was out and Martha quit her job in the city. The money from the harvest would move them to Florida to stay with Martha's sister.

The move was a traumatic experience for Freddie. At first he didn't like the city. There were too many things to adjust to. He was set back a year in school for what Freddie called crossing the state line. Soon Freddie quit school, his pride had been hurt too severely he felt for him to continue. Money was a factor too. You need more money to live in the city Freddie felt. The other kids had decent clothes to wear and new shoes while he had nothing. So he decided to go to work. Work was hard to find. Freddie began to move about. His luck was bad till he moved to Fort Lauderdale.

He got a job as a manager of a seven-eleven. He worked there for several years and met Mary Elizabeth Harper. They courted for a year and got married. Mary was a school teacher.

"Mary, I love you."

"I love you too, Freddie."

"I want you to have more than my mother had and my children, I want them to have the things I never had."

"Freddie, don't worry about it. We'll make it."

But Freddie was worried about it. Over the years he had become more and more obsessed with the power of money. He remembered well what his mother had told him. Now he had a wife and a child on the way. How would he support them? Soon their first child came and in a few years the marriage began to sour.

"Woman, you think you smarter than me, don't you?"

"No."

"You think you can run this house by yourself, don't you?"

"I only want to help. Our marriage is a partnership, besides I just think you can do things differently."

"What do you mean?"

"The way you spoil that boy of yours is beyond me. Money don't make a father, Freddie."

Despite their differences Mary and Freddie decided to keep their marriage going. Then they had their second child. The restlessness in Freddie persisted -- he wanted to make it big someday. His job as a store manager wasn't his idea of big money. He was buying a home and had security for his family in the form of insurance and a considerable amount of money in the bank. His pride told he didn't do it all by himself. Mary as a school teacher made more money than Freddie and he was painfully aware of it. Time passed slowly for Freddie. Ten years had passed and the sore that was in Freddie's mind festered and burst.

"Bitch, you think you smarter than me 'cause you went to college. Hell, I never finished grammar school and I know about as much as you do. 'Cause you make more money than I do, you think you better

than I am."

"Fred Harris, you don't have to talk to me that way. No! I don't think I'm better than you -- I just think you could do things differently and I think you can act differently."

"You mean I gotta like your teacher friends?"

In the following weeks, Freddie pressed for his freedom. He wanted to start his own business. Not knowing what lay ahead, he separated from his wife and quit his job. He wanted a loan to start his new enterprise. He went to the Small Businessman's Association for a loan to find that they would sanction a low interest loan if he could meet the requirements of the bank that would finance the loan. Confused by the double talk, Freddie went to a bank to see about the loan. He found that the only collateral he had to offer was his home which was in his and Mary's name and he would need her permission for a loan on the house.

"Honey, I never asked you for any thing before -- now please co-sign this loan so I can start my own business?"

"Nigger, you must be crazy. This house is all me and the kids have left and you think I'm gonna give it up -- you gotta be crazy."

"But baby, it's a sure thing. I wouldn't risk the house for something that won't work."

"What you got in mind, Freddie?"

"Well, honey, I can't tell you."

"Can't or won't."

"Can't."

"You mean to tell me you want to borrow money on this house and you don't know for what. No! I ain't gonna co-sign shit and you better get your shit together man."

Freddie knew he had to do something quick. Living in a two story rooming house, Freddie made his move to begin his new career as entrepreneur, tycoon, wheeler-dealer extraordinary. Freddie's business required customers so he began recruiting from an ever

expanding market to do his transactions with. Equal opportunity led him to include children in his master plan. His merchandise was horse, coke and weed. This secret society would meet everyday in front of the two story rooming house where Freddie would check on his pushers' program.

"Say, man, what went down today?"

"Hey, well, I sold a few bags of boy and girl."

"Where's the money?"

"Wow, man, you know I got it -- here it is."

"Why don't you guys kinda talk to a few of your friends and see if you can't get them to buy some of my stuff and be sure to spread the word it's the best shit around. You guys know I sell nothing but the best. Man, you gotta up your sales -- the more I make the more you make. You doing alright, but you gotta do better."

When all the business was done, Freddie would play basketball with his friends and salesmen. He would secretly wish it was his boys he was playing with. The children liked Freddie because they could relate to him not as a child to an adult, but more as a big brother which was one of Freddie's talents. He cultivated these talents to their fullest with his own children which he visited weekly. He would take them money and he'd give his wife some money too which he thought made things ok between them. Freddie had a rapport with kids.

When it came down to it, Freddie could be more than a friend -- he became the life-line to those who had become hooked on his merchandise. He would give credit to those he intuitively felt would repay him. Then came the day when Charlie died and Freddie's relationship with his friends and clientele would be tested.

"Say, Freddie."

"Yeah man, what's happening??"

"Charles OD'd last night. You going to the funeral?"

"Nah, man."

"Wasn't it your shit?"

"Wasn't my fault he shot too much."

"Well, that's cold shit, man."

For the first time, Freddie had to rationalize about what he was doing so as not to feel guilty about Charles' death. Charles' death brought Freddie to grips with the moral issue of dope and murder by proxy.

One of Freddie's pushers, a hard and tough kid went to Mrs. Brown's house on an errand for Freddie

"Mrs. Brown, is Joey home?"

"Yes, he's home. Who wants him?"

"Tell him Freddie wants him."

"Who's Freddie?"

"Freddie lives down the street, you know, Freddie Harris."

"What does he want from Joey?"

"He wants his money, lady."

"What money?"

"Money from the shit he sells for Freddie."

"Shit. Don't you have any respect? What does he sell for Freddie?"

"Sorry," Teddy said apathetically, "ask Joey. Freddie go be mad if Joey don't bring his money."

"Tell Freddie to come his self."

"Alright, Mrs. Brown."

"Wait a minute, son," asked Mrs. Brown figuring out the relationship between Joey and Freddie. "Do you work for Freddie also?"

"Yes mam."

"How old are you?"

"Ten."

"Do your parents know what you are doing?"

"Yeah, they know."

"Don't you know you could get into serious trouble doing what you're doing?"

"Yeah, but what could happen? All that can happen is that I spend a few weeks in Junior Haven -- they can't send me to jail or nothing."

Freddie used children to push his wares because he

had reasoned that they only be tried as minors and as such would only go to Junior Hall and get out on probation with no jail sentence. Freddie thought he was smart. And he was until someone put a screw in the works -- they told the police everything. Freddie got 5 to 10 for pushing and contributing to the delinquency of minors.

Freddie was just like other inmates. They'd sit around and talk about how they made it to the yard. Freddie, like most of the guys interested in what mistakes they'd made -- like if they had it to do over again, they'd for the most part still be criminals only they wouldn't make the mistake of being caught. The thing that Freddie skipped all over in his pondering was his pride. Time passed slowly, each day was elongated beyond an outsider's comprehension, and soon Freddie was back on the streets. Instead of going straight completely, he depended on his pre-prison friends for companionship and a new start.

Broke and insecure, trying not to face Mary or to jeopardize her career, he decided to try it on his own. After a few job interviews where he was turned down for what he supposed was his prison record. Freddie's pride was shattered but the pieces were strong enough to send him back to what got him in prison in the first place. You might say that Freddie was an existentialist -- he accepted full responsibility for the decision he had made which made him a notch above the common man; he had, in fact, accepted responsibility for his soul and his fate.

"Hey, man, Lenny still in business?"

"Yeah."

"I wanna contact him."

"Man, what for?"

"I wanna deal again."

"You're a one time loser."

"That don't mean a damn. I got a wife and kids to support. I gotta make some money, man, or I'll be a looser again."

"You got problems, man."

"Hell, you say -- you gonna give me the number, man, or not?"

"Sure, Freddie."

"Alright."

So Freddie was ready. He had learned a lot about himself and the business of dope in the joint and was sure his plan would work this time. He began to shape his new life with the tools he knew best. His new hangout was the infamous Triangle. Starting all over was hard. He'd stop cars with the question, "Looking for that boy or girl?" and he'd get a sale every now and then. The competition was rough, trying to push in pushers' haven where twenty other guys were doing the same thing. Freddie longed for the old days when the children did the devil's work for him. Freddie had contacted some of his old pushers who were older now and they would have the same arrangement.

One day it came to him that he was doing it all wrong, that his life was a mess. He had a junkie girl friend whom he loved but didn't want. He wanted Mary and the kids. So Freddie went to his wife, pleading.

"Liz, I know I shot hell out of many things between you and me. I was wrong 'bout a lot of things. Honey, remember the good times we had, well those times can be again only better. Baby, give me a chance to show you I can change?"

"Freddie, I love you and you know I do. Baby, you have your chance."

Freddie really wanted the chance to prove he could change. He related more to the pushers and addicts now so that's where he spent most of his time. He had never given up the idea of making it big someday and he couldn't give it up. He wanted his kids to get the education he never had and he wanted to give them the material things he never had. He had done a good job of it while he was doing good, before he went to prison. He gave his wife two hundred bucks a week and would buy the kids new bicycles,

toys and games. Now that his meager income was barely enough to support himself, what could he do?

Then one night while on the strobe around the Triangle, there was a bust staged by the Sheriff's Department and officers of the State Highway Patrol. Freddie was in pushers' haven when it came under attack by members of the Long John Society. He was transacting some heavy business in the parking lot of a two-story apartment building when the law came roaring up. Freddie was out on probation and didn't want to be caught so he began to walk away from the car where he was talking. A voice yelled halt. Freddie kept walking -- he was near the door of a friend and it offered security. Halt, but Freddie didn't hear this time as his mind was on the door and his pride was on the line -- he didn't want to break his promise to Mary and he didn't want to go back to prison. Suddenly there was a blast from a 12-gauge shotgun. Freddie's head was ripped, the back of it was torn asunder. He laid dead a few feet from the door.

When the day of the funeral came, all of Freddie's friends came, each with his or her own memory of Freddie. There, too, was Mary and the children each with their memories of Freddie.

"We are gathered here today to eulogize Fred William Harris, known to most as Freddie. Freddie was an aspiring man, though not deeply religious, a good man. Freddie died a violent death, one not befitting the life he lead . . . And thus it is only in our power, dear Lord, that we ask you to receive this soul unto eternal salvation."

The traditional viewing of the body followed. Mary in convulsive tears braved up and with a dollar folded in half held in her white glove as she passed the coffin, placed the dollar in Freddie's coat pocket. Not knowing he couldn't spend it in hell.

—James McIntosh

CARESSED

the prancing puppy
that bounced over the bridge
was a plastic ball

—Bob Kieffer

Preying
eyes, lacquered
blinds, shift an ivory smile
scales of veneer shadow the stain;
Judas.

—Lane Cox

FOR THE BLUES

such way jails
poor men demons
blue singers weat

yea i down
mut liddy mud
swamp die flow

plain final cloudy
worker pants train
i live amused

amounts to pastery
will of soul
important jive scream

rum club social
pity we lead
man of hair

bull tree ming
say me wrong?
i say dallas

what goes sunny
blues tump lev
sez, sez, brown

—Frank Tucciarone

missed lonely jumper cable
hot-wired
sedan injested junk-mobile
goin' hazy, dazy
got streams of logic
mixed as sax
got lizard arm in process
hair stood on lanes
a razor's boy apron and needled him
open my ties
as oppressed as harlem
high on the clutter
rider slows at main
he shows shot-down picture
of the gutter
closed-up windows
fingers and nails
freedom for to sing-sing
cast in dry seed, popped
and split

—Frank Tucciarone

hair Bilo
Do-Oh
yea shake it, make it
Break it hair pilo
terminal jet stream
bio-feed bady
Pampers in mastro
Bady Baldy
whole explosive riot
tru streets in summer heat
FREE-DOZ

Galtic astromy filters
pizo spun manwich
crazies rot psyco-store front
rumble seat pull-overs
pile up cool ferment sargasso
fetus purgatory
you disappear last
i first
i flood your finger
you nasty blood-sucker
goodbuy friend

—Frank Tucciarone

SOCCER—SECRET
BLI—ZEE—TOLE—EE—EAST 9th CASE
in all of CASEDOM
no one dared
carbon jesus TV
on the-TAPE—OO
cool cigs-bone-oo
Beatles' droppings
Drive-in-Burgers
Drive-out-muggers
MY PET L.A. AND I
We let live
as we dead
and it haled on Mary
sewer parted
SO—LONG
She said
Long-so-back-and-much
OHH!, you doll
LA my pet and i
Drooling on the pine-sol
Cable VD
insert your con-ed
We jump around to the beans
in suits

—Frank Tucciarone

A LOAF OF DUST

Dry crumbs
dead kneaded dough
hands sifting unswept dust
toothless mother, gnarled miser;
hunger.

—Lane Cox

REBIRTH

mourning;
old men bending
the torn fatal flowers,
causes the ancient keening brides
demise.

—Bob Kieffer

To reach Truth
within Love I strive
closing in
almost grasping
Kosmos
but first I must ride
to the Death
the horses of Desire
burn the power
until it foams from their mouths
and bursts their skins
till I bleed with them
the storms from my blood

Cleansing bleeding
Bleed me
till the horses lie down
and in breath of exhaustion
suffocate
the racuous in my mind
loud humming and rattling
from the friction of the urge
to spread out
the folds of Silence
and become serene
fertile
vast Earth
for the seed of your essence
to germinate upon

Explode?

—Juana Hopper

I cry for tomorrow's children who might never
conceptualize love. If religious, I should repent
and ask forgiveness for our blindness.

But mystics also seek God. Defeat came the
day love was placed in their safekeeping.

We left the technical to artists. And love to
the mystics. To our children we left sterility.

We left big bombs.

We left big bombs intact.

We democratized intelligence.

We neither educated nor learned love.

Artists soon found definitions. And causes.

But love was too worn and many of them did
not understand it. They let it lie and made jokes
that love was a good lay. Artists became small and
fervent animals in a language for human beings. I
cried.

I cry.

Artists on that day became technicians who could
not understand love.

The mystics say love is of God and talk of the
separate ground on which He exists. Making love no
longer human. Our children become small animals or
technicians and no longer human.

I cry for tomorrow's children whose sanity will
not be of love.

—Chuck Ebbighausen

I'LL NEVER DIE

I'll never pathway
Through the wind wicked sagebrush
I'll never register
My untested advantage over
Dividers that keep their ill fated reserves
In perpetual silence
Deadened by the sound of an untried expanse
Of finger lakes and headwater rivers

I must be worthy of the pulse of a cover
That shows me the spirit level of excitement
That lends me a hand when
I reach full capacity of the limit partaken
That preys on the stunted and twisted
When the unfancy ornamental birds go flying
Through the feathered tribes of the dying
I wear a harmonious harness
And get put in a trunk if I cry

I'll always examine before I do handle
The valueless string of aggression
That fluctuates my compass when it gets thrown
Out of proportion
It tries to engage me in the
Pseudo-minded view of asphalt hangups
That lure unproved ways to ignite visual resistance
The facts lie in the forest to be mastered
By young men with their try squares
And engineers with their mensuration

The sound of the surroundings
Was interrupted for a moment
When someone screamed
I can't take this silence.
Dank formal language exploded
In the mixing of electrocution and hangings
By the highbinder's sting

Everyone was into it with their slaying stones or
Their light-minded axes
Decapitating their families
With bloodstained imaginations
Bumping their children off of escarpments
Cutting down cattle inside of their tracks
Poisoning and pinching and shambling iron collars
Putting the finishing strokes
On the construction of destruction
The price of understanding lies
Beneath the rubble
Saturated with abstraction
I'll never die

—Lenny Tucciarone

SANDCASTLE FANTASY

You are but a fantasy in my mind.
I built walls of sand around you
But the sea of reality
Washed away the sand
And left me stranded on an empty beach.

—Dolores Weeks

Well the blue boy
he's out in the fields
countin' up the profits
and sleepin' on the yield
tiein' down the tractors
and nibblin' on the bits
he's got one hand in the dirt
and one hand on his wits

—Frank Tucciarone

POET'S EXCUSE

i deleted my life
so i could call
'the fire' collect.
my eyes
delayed in writing this thing
that my hands bound

Girl was sad
to see you die
seed still in hand

Fond of hunting
the lively death
nails held to the page

running in the garden
nude at noon
sitting in the bronx

boxing your joys
sew together in a
patchwork pattern

holding your breath
for five minutes
under water
but staying for fifteen

—Frank Tucciarone

I'm burying your dog today
he lies emaciated under your kitchen table
with the fleas that chew your armpits raw.

The yellow-pus growth in both ears
that smells like stale piss
made me vomit
and you asked why.

I'll dig a hole in the back yard
near where I cauterized
the maggot filled pots
of half eaten fish flesh
you left on your back porch.

Then I'll leave you
lying on your infested couch
staring in your drunken stupor
at the seasick zig-zags
on the television I bought for your birthday.

—Chuck Ebbighausen

DIVORCE

This house, wrenched
apart
dissents, fragments:
bed,
baby,
breast.

That lever pries
apart
our bodies.
Your belly's soft curve
no longer fits
the hammock of my hips.

Pounded pieces of time
lie scattered
among my veins
jagged,
cracked shards,
tense
to draw blood.

I take them up.

—Gladys Roe

Today
I am sensitive as an open wound,
Sharp as the touch upon torn flesh
And the thought that springs me.
I am pure as the insides of a coconut.
I am wound-up tight
Like a steel ribbon,
Held back
Only precariously,
And by touch unwound
Violently.

—Juana Hopper

Whispers and sad cries
in the wind . . .
I listen.

Mirrored illusion
in the rain . . .
I look in.

Traces of desire
in a smile . . .
I drink it.

Lingering scent
in the night . . .
It spins me.

Rush of the tide screaming
through my skin . . .
I have touched you.

—Juana Hopper

when your smog lifted off the sidewalk
i saw your face
sided by a muck truck towards one end
such masks you touch
such marks you make
by asking why
such cans of dreams
you open
and lasting death
you embrace
in my behalf
and reasons you give,
why and is it me?
is it i who tracks
your sharp tacks and slips
up after each endeavor?
your shadow is substance to me
and piles up on my welcome mats
the tramp lasting forever
on your warts
and headless sinners
wait to embark
thru your passage
should i do
more then follow them?

—Frank Tucciarone



A Matter Of Life

Freedom from tension afforded Marianne her first restful sleep in several days. Her body remained motionless until a warming shaft of light landed squarely on her cheek, bringing with it a vague suspicion of daybreak. One hesitant eye opened and glanced at the luminous orange bedside clock.

Abruptly she was fully cognizant of her surroundings. Clutching the lace ruffle at her throat, she listened. Silence. She looked again at the offending clock dial which verified her initial impression of six a.m. She threw off the quilt and ran.

Steven, who was jostled awake by a sudden shifting of inner springs, caught sight of Marianne's flying curls and billowing nightdress. Alarmed, he followed.

An unknown impulse made him pause at the nursery door. He saw Marianne's fists twisted convulsively around white crib bars. Her head was lowered, resting against the bars. Repeatedly she whispered, "Thank you, God. Thank you, Thank you."

It seemed to Steven that it was with conscious, concerted effort that Marianne raised her head. She patted the baby's diapered buttocks and replaced the soft blue coverlet on him. "Poor little baby. I hope you're not cold."

The words reminded him of the person he had been six years previously.

It was a week before Christmas, and Boston was covered by a thin patina of ice. Sooty clumps of snow were evident at random intervals.

They were eating hamburgers at the Tremont Street McDonald's. Despite the throng of pre-holiday shoppers they had fortuitously grabbed a table overlooking the street.

Marianne had been staring wide-eyed past the saffron robed Hare Krishna dancers to the Common. Each of the trees enclosing the grassy knolls were illuminated by hundreds of twinkling bulbs. "Almost like an unseen hand put row after row of glittering

popcorn strings around," she said. Each tree had its own color. She was trying to decide if she liked all blue or all green best. Her animation and icy blasts of wind as the door opened and closed combined to make her cheeks seem as red as her woolly stocking cap.

Her delight with the display had not ebbed following dinner or during the half hour wait before it was their turn to enter the exhibit on the common grounds. She was entranced by the colors and gaiety. She adored the crowds. She explained to him that her grandparents had not wanted big celebrations at Christmas following her parents' death and for that reason she loved "other folks'" outdoor displays.

Her contagious laughter affected him. While they were petting long horned miniature Lapland reindeer, she expressed belief in Santa Claus. "Why, that's wonderful!" She was genuinely pleased.

The mass of people gradually inched forward. Soon they were deposited in the center of a life-size nativity scene. Mary, Joseph, the wise men and various shepherds were staring down at the infant Jesus lying in his creche. They were all garbed securely in heavy robes. The infant, smiling benignly, was naked with the exception of a small diaper. Reaching under the creche, Marianne extracted a scrap of material. She covered the Christ child whispering, "Poor little baby. I hope you're not cold." It was then he had realized he loved her. The feeling had not diminished through the years.

His reverie ended, he reached for the light switch. Without thought he muttered, "If I catch the bastard who's doing this to you, I'll kill him."

"What?" She turned around.

"It was nothing."

"I'm sorry if I woke you. I'm ashamed to admit it, but you almost caught me being very foolish.

"I completely forgot what the doctor told me

about Michael soon beginning to sleep all through the night. I was terrified for a second when I woke up and realized he had missed his four a.m. feeding. I thought I would find him like . . ."

"Hey, stop it," he said very softly. It took him not longer than a second to reach the crib and lift out the now squirming infant. "Mike's fine," he said firmly. His lips touched her cheek and his free arm slipped around her waist. "Now, both of the men of this house are starving. Let's eat."

"Oh, Steven," she laughed, "Is there a time when you're not hungry? I'm surprised I don't have to feed you at four o'clock every morning!" She paused and then reached for the baby. "Okay, breakfast for three coming up. But first get me my robe and I'll change your son. I wish he were like the over and had a self lean switch."

His lips twitched into a grin. "I feel like I'm falling for the oldest joke in the world, but here goes . . . Why is he my son when he's dirty or crying?"

"Easy, honey. That's rule number twenty-six of the International Mother's Union, Local 101. Any mother all over the world will verify that." She tried to assume a stern expression. "After all, we have to have something to protect our rights."

He pretended to groan and raised a hand to his forehead. "I think I'm going to have to go back to school to learn how to deal with the International Mother's Union, Local 101." His inflection mimicked her own.

"Oh, Steven."

"I'll go get your robe." He hurried from the room. Marianne just nodded, smiling, and placed the baby on his changing table. With the dexterity borne of multiple repetition, Marianne worked gently and quickly. The infant was cleaned, powdered, and sporting fresh attire by the time his father returned with his mother's softly embroidered brown velour

robe.

"OK, now, Sport. Mom's going to fix breakfast." He hoisted the infant onto one broad shoulder and led the way as they entered the narrow hallway.

Marianne glanced around the hallway as she lightly grasped the highly polished maple banister and descended the stairs into the living room. She was very proud of the house which had been left to her by her grandparents.

It had been built in colonial times and its architecture was typical of that period. Marianne often wished that it had been in her family for two hundred years, rather than only the years of her childhood. She liked to think about other families in other generations, and often wondered if they had the same pride in the solid walls or smooth brick fireplace as she did.

They had reached the kitchen. Steven was absorbed in the morning paper, while Marianne attended to the routine chores involved with breakfast. There was a companionable silence punctuated occasionally by Michael's gurgles. Marianne was mulling over the events of the previous days. She was troubled by her fragile self control in relation to the letter and the baby's welfare. She thought that perhaps if she was more independent like Barbara and other career women she knew, she wouldn't be as overwrought. She wondered if perhaps she was too old fashioned for the 1970's, loving her home as she did. Dr. Bogart had once intimated that her devotion to her family was her way of restoring the love and affection she missed after her parents died. Maybe she should feel more strongly about resuming her education. She had once been very satisfied in her choice of helping the mentally disturbed regain contact with the world through occupational therapy. Why was she now so satisfied at home?

"I guess I still have many conflicts I should work

out with Dr. Bogart," she reflected. "Even though I know I wasn't responsible for Matthew's death, I still feel if I'm not careful something will happen to Michael."

Somehow she was not as reassured as she felt she should be by the knowledge that Steven would support her in any decision she might make concerning further therapy or education. She continued to be preoccupied as she finished feeding Michael and burped him; her thoughts lingered on the letter, wondering where and when it would end.

Steven looked up from his newspaper occasionally and absent mindedly reached for mouthfuls of toast and eggs.

"So, what are you planning to do today?" he asked casually.

She felt the muscles in her arm contract and couldn't understand why she was irritated by his concern since she knew it was prompted by her behavior. She exhaled very slowly, "I'm going to meet Barbara downtown for lunch. There's no school today so she's free to go shopping later. She's looking forward to a day away from her 'brats'."

Sunlight formed a dappled pattern of golden diamonds and emeralds on the sidewalk as it filtered through the treetops. The leaves were velvety green, deep and pure. A sprinkling of brilliant orange portended autumn's imminent birth.

Marianne, relaxing on a park bench, was disappointed that there weren't more children playing. She enjoyed their noisy laughter and flashes of color as they cavorted. She was sorry that she had left Michael with Mrs. Apple next door since she knew that he loved the sunlight. It was amazing, she thought, how even young infants could communicate their preferences.

Barbara was twenty minutes late. "I wonder why I bother to come on time. I know she's always so fash-

ionable about appointments. Fashionably late."

Her thoughts returned to the letter. "I wish I could remember the sequence. What came next? If only I hadn't had my breakdown then. Something is missing. Something doesn't fit." She didn't know why she felt there was a difference.

"Hello! Hello! I'm here." A patch of beige was swiftly moving into Marianne's field of vision. Marianne caught a glint of a gold chain as the willowy figure neared. Despite her haste, each perfectly coiffed curl remained in place. A blue print scarf was carefully arranged around her honey colored hair. The scarf complemented a cafe au lait pantsuit. The deceptively simple lines and material of the outfit proclaimed its great expense. Her appearance could have been captioned in "Women's Wear Daily" as appropriate for a well dressed lady's shopping excursion. Her attire was in direct contrast to Marianne's department store sweater and slacks.

"Marianne! Oh, I'm glad you could make it. Look!" She produced a newspaper from a well proportioned shoulder bag. "This is it. It's perfect!" She indicated a picture of a filmy white evening dress. "We'll have lunch and then you must drive into Boston with me to get it."

Marianne was gazing intently at the picture. "Something's wrong," she thought again. "What was it about a newspaper that stirs memories?"

"Marianne?" Barbara was impatient. "Well, what do you think?"

"Hmm? I was thinking about something else. I wasn't paying attention, sorry. You want to get this today?"

"Really, Marianne. You've certainly turned into little Susie babymaker. Must you constantly think of Michael? I really think you tend to smother him and Steven. But then again," she smiled innocently, "you are happy. Now what's bothering you, honey?" She

might have been speaking to one of her third grade students.

It became important to Marianne to denigrate the importance of the past days. "Nothing really, I suppose it's tiring and I'm worn down having to wake up every night to feed the baby."

They were seated next to the fireplace in a small colonial styled lunchroom. The hostess, outfitted in traditional Martha Washington type gown, poured their tea. Barbara was adjusting a button on her cuff. She was explaining why she wanted a designer gown. "You know, Marianne, this charity ball is the height of the social season around here. I've just got to look perfect. Do you realize the contacts I can make?"

"I thought you were going with your lawyer friend Jim, the one Steve introduced you to. Isn't he contact enough?"

"Of course I'm going with him. But Mari, the opportunities, it'll be worth two weeks' salary for a dress if I can meet some of the most influential people." Her voice softened as she looked earnestly at her friend. "I don't want to teach forever. I've got to find someone who can give me security. I also wouldn't mind social position."

"At the price of love and respect, Barbara?" Marianne's voice was troubled.

"Don't you see, Mari, that's a nice bonus. You've got to make sure you can survive. What if Steven leaves you? Where would you be? You never learned to protect yourself." She paused and looked at her companion. "Actually, Mari, I'm sure Steven would never leave you." She smiled entreatingly.

Marianne held onto her pewter mug tightly, but remained silent. She listened to Barbara's plans to become friendly with some of the noted personalities who were purported to be attending the ball.

"You know, Mari, I really envy you. You're in a perfect position."

"Oh?"

"With just the right nudge, Steven could run for mayor and eventually make governor. You could be right up there with the Boston Brahmins. He's bright and hard working. If you could get him to give up all that legal aid stuff and go to town council meetings, he'd be on his way. So would you. Oh, if only I had a chance at a man like him."

Marianne's features were set into a frown. She realized as she looked into Barbara's eyes that Barbara believed she was offering constructive advice. She paused and said slowly, "I will go along with whatever Steven wants to do. I'm concerned with his happiness, not with position."

"Oh dear." Barbara's bright blue gaze was troubled. "Men," she began in a tone which a Harvard professor might envy, "do not know what makes them happy. We have to tell them."

Marianne rose, opened her handbag and laid several bills on the table. "I'm sorry, Barbara. I don't feel like shopping today. Little Susie baby-maker needs to see about her creation." She turned wittily and left without looking back.

Without conscious awareness of her surroundings, Marianne made her way down the oak shaded main street and several side streets until she reached her home. The morning newspaper was positioned on the front stoop. She removed the plastic casing and glanced at the headline. Sighing deeply, she turned and retraced her steps into town. She walked until she reached her husband's office. She entered the waiting room and exchanged pleasantries with Steven's secretary. Within a few moments she was admitted to the inner office.

His tie and vest were discarded haphazardly on a chair. His shirt was unbuttoned, hair tousled. A transcript lay open in front of him. Occasionally he made a note in the margin. She slipped soundlessly into the

office and was comfortably ensconced in a chair before he looked up.

"Honey, is everything alright? You won't look well."

"Steven, I want you to tell me everything you remember about the day I went to pieces after Matt died. That's the one episode I don't fully remember."

"I don't understand. Why now?"

"Please, I need to know and then I'll explain."

"Well, Mrs. Apple called me. She saw you pick up the newspaper from the front stoop. She heard you yell something like 'no, no, no!' and run into the house. She became concerned when she went to see if you were all right and you wouldn't answer the door. When I came home, you were in the living room, the paper was in your hand. You couldn't speak then. I'll never forget that damn paper. That creep had painted, 'Soon the devil will claim his own' in red letters over the front page."

"Like this." Marianne handed Steven the folded paper.

It was eight p.m. The sky was in the process of darkening as Barbara approached the house. She felt refreshed by the cool evening air. She noticed the welcoming light on the porch and smiled. Steven immediately opened the door in response to her light tap.

"Steven, dear, how can I help? I'm so sorry to hear about Marianne. You know, she seemed very strange this mornin. I had no idea she was on the verge of another breakdown."

"I guess she hadn't mentioned that the phone calls and letters had begun again. She couldn't take it. She was too scared. The doctor thinks I should commit her this time."

"Oh my dear." Frowning, she squeezed herself against his hand. "I don't suppose I should say this so soon, but since I am such a good friend . . ." She

released his hand and walked into the living room and sat on the couch. "You know Mari has been very dear to me, and it hurts to say this, but perhaps this is the best thing for Michael. I think it would be very detrimental for your son to be brought up by an unstable mother. And you, Steven. You deserve a normal life. It must be horrible to wonder every day if your wife will be able to function. I imagine there have been many things you wish you could do if there wasn't the problem of Marianne."

"Like running for governor?" His voice was barbed.

Barbara gasped. "I don't know what you mean?"

Marianne had stopped midway on the staircase and had been leaning over the bannister watching the scene below her. "I saw the red paint in your bag this morning when you took out the fashion section. I remembered then."

Barbara's face was contorted in an expression of rage. "You," she hissed. "You don't deserve this. He should be mine. I always knew he should, from the time you first met him." She was consumed by a flood of tears.

Barbara had been taken to the local hospital for psychiatric evaluation by Dave Roberts, the psychiatrist who had been called by Steven and who had heard the conversation from the den. Later he told Steve he had thought Steven was crazy and had come for the sake of their friendship. "Imagine that," he'd said, "a schoolteacher."

Marianne's initial shock had receded and she was surprised at her own calmness. "It's a shame it took this to make me realize I can cope," she thought.

Steven's relief was evident. His wife was no longer a haunted woman. "You know, I don't want to be Senator."

"Governor," she corrected.

"Whatever." They embraced.

—Sue Hausbach

I came upon a door that said "out"
so I went "in"
and left the world again

—Lenny Tucciarone

LIBRARY
BROWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

SOUTH
CAMPUS



LIBRARY
BROWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

SOUTH
CAMPUS



Uncle Ernie

The room was spotless. The two women sat, with tired legs propped up, admiring their efforts of the day. The house was still now, echoing the polishing, scrubbing and sweeping by its gleaming surfaces. The curtains had been dry cleaned and windows washed. The work had begun very early that morning and finished just before six o'clock. The palm trees in the front yard were gently rustled by the wind. They sipped their tall iced drinks slowly.

"Remember, the last time he came, how he raved over my fresh salads? He always complimented me on my dinners too, saying I was the most imaginative cook in the whole Keller clan."

"I wonder if the old darling can handle a crunchy salad. He's getting on..."

"Oh, I think so. Dentists do wonders these days. Besides, he can afford the best."

"Yes, staying a bachelor allows him the privilege of the best medical and dental care."

"Marilyn, remember when we were kids and Uncle Ernie would visit us, up north? No matter how severe the blizzards were he always made it before Christmas."

"Gosh, I sure do." Marilyn sat quietly and thought about those days. Mom would have us clean house and bake for two weeks before he arrived. Not that her older brother would ever notice. When he wasn't watching ballgames on T.V., he'd slouch down in the old green velvet overstuffed chair and snore up a storm.

"Remember how he used to say, when we woke him up, that he was thinking with his eyes shut?"

"He'd go through about three cases of beer a week."

"Yes, but he never got drunk. He got happy. And generous."

"Oh, the quarters he gave us for letting him sleep 'til dinner."

"Diane, remember when he came during our Christmas vacations and Mom made him pretend he was Santa Claus?"

"You were seven and I was nine, and we didn't know how to break it to the family that we knew there

was no Santa."

"So we'd go along with them and act surprised when we discovered what Santa left under the tree for us."

"Remember the look on their faces when they told us to come and see what Santa brought us? They got more pure joy out of all the preparations than we had the entire holiday."

"I wonder if he knows how he enriched our lives, with those short yearly visits?"

"I don't think so."

"Now, he's being Santa for his great nephews and neices."

"Remember how he used to bundle us up warm and take us out to Bordons Dairy for hot chocolate when Mom and Dad would have an argument?"

"Yes, and he'd tell us stories about back when he was a boy. The old days. When times were hard."

"When we got back to the house he told us to wait outside, at the foot of the porch steps, until he peeked in the window to see if the folks had made up yet."

"If they hadn't then, we'd all lay down in the deep snow and make angels. Or watch the moonlight on the snowdrifts sparkle."

"He always made everything we did seem like such an adventure. The year he bought us our first ice skates and took us to the pond and watched us skate. We never spent one whole skating session on our feet."

"But, Uncle Ernie would encourage us, and make us feel like we could do anything."

"I never seemed to notice the bitter cold of the season, especially after dark. Uncle Ernie never once complained about it, either. I wonder if it was because of the little silver flask he kept tucked inside his camelhair overcoat."

"He takes our kids for ice cream instead of hot chocolate. Instead of ice skating they go to the beach."

"He doesn't drink beer anymore. Now it's a before dinner martini. His doctor says only one a day."

"Remember when we used to keep his beer glass filled to watch his Adams apple bob when he swallowed? I don't know why that fascinated us so but it really did."

"And his laugh. After lunch he'd play monopoly with us. And he'd burst out laughing at our childish mistakes. He never made fun of us, but after five or six beers, whatever we did tickled him. His laugh was raucous, uproarious, infectious."

"I wonder if he'll teach our kids the same silly old jokes he taught us. And the card tricks."

"I wonder..."

"Diane, do you suppose he's recovered from his broken hip by now?"

"It's been two years since he was mugged, I guess he's alright or he wouldn't be coming for another visit."

"He won't move out of that apartment in Baltimore for any reason. He has his old cronies. His apartment is centrally located. Does his volunteer work at a hospital only three blocks from his place. No reason to move, except the cold weather and frequent street muggings. He told me the pros far outweigh the cons. Besides, he needs his solitude."

"Probably needs the rest of the year to rest up from his visit to us."

"Oh, I don't know about that. Two months ago he sent me a check and asked me to buy him a bottle of very expensive perfume, have it gift wrapped and sent to a special lady in his building."

"What? Why that sly old fox!"

"When I talked to him about it, he simply said it was for her birthday and he couldn't find it locally."

"Cynthia said when Uncle Ernie visited her and the family, her children adored him and cried when he left, so did she."

"Diane, did I ever tell you that he sends me a check every summer to my boys can go to camp? I mentioned once that they wanted to go and he said every boy needs to know how to handle himself in the wilderness. He bought them each a boyscout knife, too, despite my objections."

"It's strange he never married. The way he has with kids."

"Mother told me, back when I was about ten, that Uncle Ernie was very shy and overly sensitive about his deafness. He kept to himself, worked very hard and invested his money wisely. In fact he's the one who got me interested in going back to get my

Continued on last page

Marilyn K. Gallwitz



Alan Isley

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

She is lonely
A small child,
Frightened.
Abandoned by a loss of reality
Unable to cope with her emotional
existence.
Destined to be condemned
For a loss with no fault.
A small example of man's incapability
to look in the eyes of a
distressed child and
Help.
No one knows her anguish
No one can feel her emptiness
She lives without feeling
No love
No happiness
No laughter
No tears
Just an empty shell
Filled with need.

Cathy Hoffman

Where Is The Infant

Where is the infant who stretched at my body
till I bulged at the stomach and begged pain to slow?
I call for the chubby cheeked, cocoa eyed cherub
who tugged at my shirt sleeve, begging to follow.
Searching the haze of years flown I see no trace
of the innocent, naive young lass.
Memory's keen picture is a vaseline blur.
Still I search through collections of days come to pass
for but a glimpse, the young angel has fallen
and thundered a crash that has broken my heart.
Dreams, hopes and wishes blown on a windstorm
like ashes. Burnt offerings kindled apart.
No more the questioning young seeker of truth meeting
each day with a hunger for life.
No more the innocent, no more naive, like a demon
your eyes mirror Lucifer's strife.
Now you stand somber, the prodigal child returning,
but still no remorse in your eyes.
My arms ache to hold the angel I bore.
I welcome you.
Silent, a mother's heart dies.

Marjorie DiVeronica

MARCH

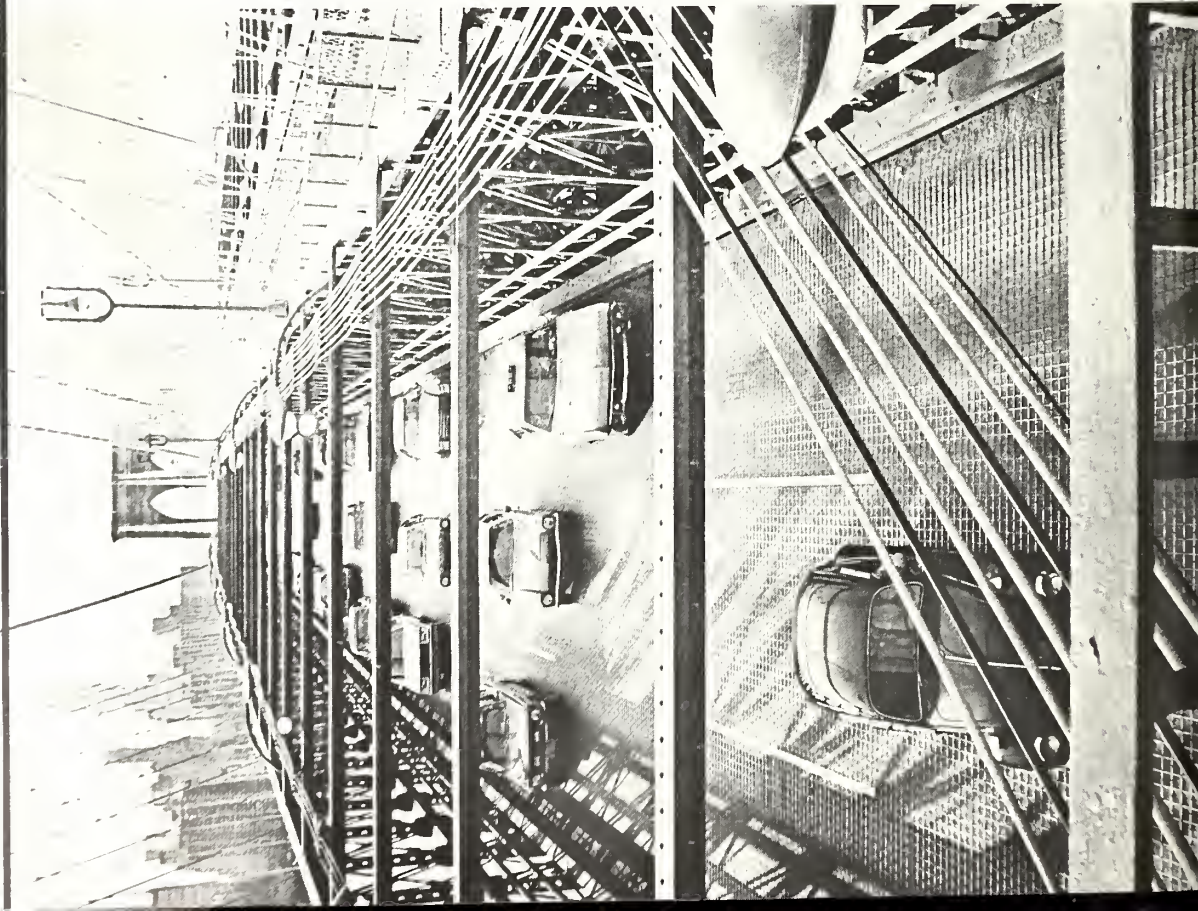
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Dee Young Cramer

.....
Knowing not what love would cost
Hours that I now have lost
Empty rooms and vacant halls
Quiet times as silence falls
Trace of peace that once was here
Now I sense a trace of fear
Not just time has flown away
And only fear kept at bay
But stranger now in knowing
That ever since your going
My spirit has been the cost
A bit of life I have lost
.....

Old Man Time

Warm as life
Cold as death
Heeding none
 when passing by
Wanting not but duties path
Old Man Time
So unkind
Is it so
 they say you go
On and on
 without a care
As no other ever dare
On and on
 as no one would
As no other ever could
Old Man Time
So unkind
Is it so
 they say you go
On and on . . .



APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

... He Watches Me"

I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free.

For his eye is on the sparrow
and I know he watches me.

Annabelle did not understand just whose eye was on the sparrow or who was watching her, but she did know that spring had finally arrived in Dalton, Georgia, and she was allowed to go down to the creek and play on the rocks that her father had placed in the shallow water in the creek. She could step from the bank of the creek onto a large rock which was surrounded on three sides by four other large rocks. To Annabelle, each rock represented a room in her island playhouse. She remembered her father telling her, after he had placed the rocks in the creek, "my little girl has the nicest playhouse in this part of the country. What other child has a playhouse completely surrounded by sparkling, clear water, in the shade of draping weeping willow trees?" He had warned her against trying to pick flowers from the lily pads because the pads floated from place to place with the current and she might fall into deep water. Annabelle was tempted, many times, to wade out to the pads but she would remember what her father had told her, so she would satisfy her desire to pick flowers by gathering violets from along the bank of the creek.

This morning as Annabelle stood on the big rocks a gentle spring breeze came drifting down the valley. She started to sing softly, "I sing because I'm happy, I sing because." The sound of her voice went trailing down the creek until it reached the bend, and as it hit the side of the mountain, the echo would come bouncing back at her. The louder she sang the more vibrant the echo became until it sounded, to Annabelle, like the church choir. She could not understand why the echo would come bouncing back at her but she thought that it was so funny. Finally her singing was overcome by her laughter.

She suddenly realized that the sound of the laughter was not her's alone, or that of her echo. There was someone else laughing. She quickly turned to look into the trees on the other side of the creek when a

voice called out to her.

"Miss Redhead, you'd better git off them rocks and go back up in your yard or Mr. Tom is gonna skin you alive. You know you ain't got no business comin this far away from your house alone, if you fell in that deep water nobody would know it and I'd probably fish you out way down there at the fishing hole."

He continued mumbling but he knew that Annabelle was not listening, "I suppose Rosie Lee is up there under one of them big oak trees taking a nap instead of watching out for you like she is being paid to do." He was talking more to himself and to his little brother George than he was to Annabelle.

Before he had finished talking, Annabelle had already reached down into the water and had grabbed all the pebbles that she could hold in her hands. She was throwing them as hard and as fast as she could at the boys but they would only go half way across the creek.

"J. T. Jones," she yelled, "you and your little black brother should mind your own business and not try to tell me what to do. My daddy put these rocks here just for me and he said that I could play on them all the time if I want to. I'm six years old now and I don't need you, Rosie Lee or anybody else keeping an eye on me." Her mind flashed back to her song and she wondered who else was watching her and if they were watching the sparrows also. But, she continued to yell, "if you're looking for something to worry about, you just come across this creek onto my daddy's property again and you'll have plenty to worry about."

While Annabelle was still throwing the pebbles J. T. came closer to the side of the creek.

"Annabelle, I didn't mean to upset you. I think that your red hair is pretty. It is so bright, I can see you from way down the creek. Anyway, it makes you look just like your mother and I think that Miss Clara is the prettiest woman I ever saw."

By now Annabelle was so angry she grabbed all the pebbles she could hold in both of her hands and began throwing them in all directions.

"Don't you ever call me Miss Redhead again and I will thank you very much if you'll quit reminding me that I look like my mother."

There were three things that Annabelle could not tolerate. One was to be reminded of her red hair, one

was to be told that she resembled her mother and the other was to have someone laugh at her when she was singing.

As she stood watching J. T. and George until they were hidden by the trees, she remembered that one day last week she had seen them walking down the side of the creek with their fishing poles over their shoulders. She had waved to them from the wood pile where she was playing, but they had not seen her.

She remembered, also, that when her father had come home to lunch her mother had started to whimper and cry. Annabelle could not understand what had upset her mother or what she was saying, but she did hear her mother keep saying something about J. T. Whatever it was, Annabelle thought, must be very bad because Rosie Lee had pulled her big apron over her face and Annabelle had heard her groaning, "Oh Lord, please have mercy, please have mercy." Her father had not spoken. He just put on his hat and left the house going toward the fishing hole. When he returned Annabelle had heard him say to her mother, "Clara, don't worry anymore and you don't have to be afraid. I told him to never put his feet back on my property."

Her daddy had gone back to the field without eating a lunch that day, and Annabella could tell by looking at him that he was very upset.

She didn't feel so happy anymore, and she did not want to sing. She sat down on the rock and began to paddle her feet in the icy, cold water. Her attention was drawn to a school of minnows that were swimming in and out among the lily pads. She watched two sparrows as they hopped around in search of worms and insects. She saw some water bugs scurrying about in the moss that grew on the rocks, but her mind was on J. T.

Annabelle did not realize that she had been on the rocks all morning until she heard her father whistling and saw the horse come galloping through the corn field. She quickly skipped off the rocks and ran as fast as she could to meet him. She always hoped that he would take her for a ride before he watered the horse. When he saw her, he got off and placed her in the saddle, letting her ride to the watering trough while he walked beside her whistling softly to himself.

Annabelle always enjoyed hearing her father

Continued on last page

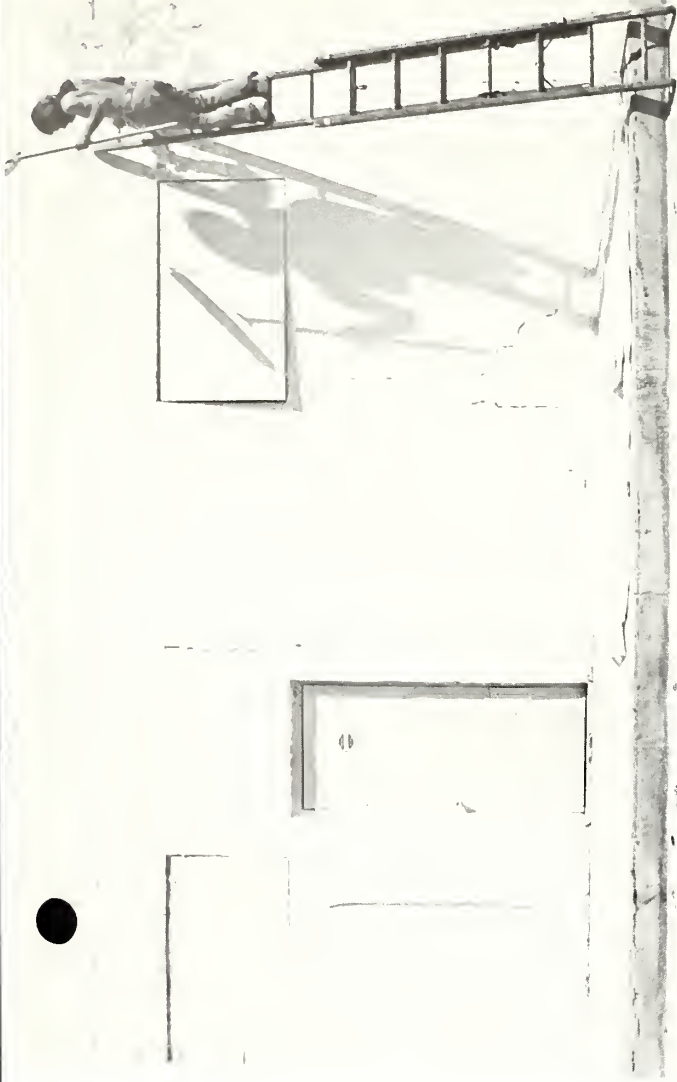
MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

Sharing

I write for you, you write for me.
We're one in creativity.
While others cringe at poets' sight
feeling that their sword is might,
we write the torment that we find
somewhere inside our heart and mind.
Now others locked in fear and shame
can see the truth. We're all the same.
But to complete the task I've taken,
causing sleeping minds to waken,
I must write what will be read
long past the time they call me dead.
Slyly slipping somber thoughts
into rhymes, but never caught,
I pry their minds like rusted hinge
instilling thoughts that make them cringe.
But as they try to close the door
they find they're reaching out for more.
They've listened to what once repelled,
speak calmly now, when once they yelled.
Though they mirror not my soul
now they see me as a whole.
They have respect for what I feel,
dreams I have I don't conceal.
Given time we will unite
those with pen and those with might.

Marjorie DiVeronica



Alan Isley

All Things Past, Present and Future

we have seen the past and we will see the present
but for us the future can never come
for when the future does arrive
it is now and present
and, alas, all too soon it is gone and the past

Dee Young Cramer

JUNE

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

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Carrie Fireooved



Rick Barrett

The forceful wave, infinitely surging ahead;
Screaming towards the shore, it challenges
the rocks that shatter its roar . . .
It still loses, but always comes back
for more. . .

JULY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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CHEERS

Elaine Corbett Maurer had everything she wanted in life but an "X" drawn through her last name.

"He's a pig," she explained.

John Magnetta, Elaine's husband's best friend, reached above his head and switched on the reading light above the king size bed.

"You mean he makes loud noises and eats slop?"

"Stop it. You know exactly what I mean."

"Yeah, well, pass me that glass, okay."

She reached over to the glass on the night table and handed it to Magnetta. It was a Welch's grape jelly glass with the picture of Daffy Duck on the outside and about three ounces of Jack Daniel's on the inside.

"All he ever does is drink and play tennis."

"And make money."

"And drink."

"I know what you mean," Magnetta said and downed the Jack Daniel's as easily as if it was water.

"He's a pig."

Magnetta released a loud belch and handed Mrs. Maurer the empty glass.

"I know what you mean," he said. "So why not divorce him?"

"He won't give me a divorce, the pig."

"Sure he will. He told me."

"See there. The pig wants to divorce me. Some gratitude. He plucked my flower and wants to throw me by the side like a used Kleenex."

"Plucked your flower? I thought your junior high football team plucked your flower in the back of a Ford."

"Those were the days, all right. I was the most popular girl at New River Junior High."

"And the most plucked."

"Those were the days. And now I have to suffer under the indignities thrust on me by my ogre husband. To think of all the years of devotion I've wasted."

"You only been married two years."

"Two long years, honey pie. Two long years, an now he has the nerve to try and and keep us apart."

"He got us together."

"See what I mean. He's a pig. What kind of man would let his loyal, devoted wife sleep with his best friend? A pig, that's what kind. And he's not just doing it to make me happy like any decent husband should. He's doing it because he thinks it'll keep me from gettin' all his money if I divorce him. What a selfish pig."

"Yeah, so let's get some shuteye, okay." He reached up and switched off the light. "I got a big match tomorrow."

"But not yet. You promised."

"Tomorrow."

"Please. I won't be able to sleep unless we do it."

"C'mon. I got a headache."

"You said that last night."

"You give me a headache."

"You promised."

"Tomorrow."

"Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. You said we'd do it tonight."

"So I LIED."

"You said we'd do it."

"Jeet, how'm I gonna get some sleep with you squawkin'?"

"So let's do it already."

"Okay, we'll do it. We'll do it."

"Oh, goodie."

"Tomorrow."

"You promised we'd kill him tonight!"

"Tomorrow. I said tomorrow."

By the time Mrs. Maurer mustered up enough energy to instruct Eloise, the maid, to heat up her morning bath, Erik, her husband, and John, her lover, were resting by the pool at the Tennis Club replenishing their lost body fluids with gimlets.

"That was one great set, John."

"One of the best."

"Wore me out."

"You bet. I wasn't sure I was gonna last through that last one."

"I haven't seen a set like that in a donkey's age."

"Can you imagine if she had a sister?"

"Two sets like that at once would kill you."

"You said it."

"Right. Speaking of what people said. You said we'd do it."

"We will."

"I know you say we will but we never do."

"We will."

"When?"

"Tomorrow."

"You said that yesterday. What's wrong with today?"

"Tomorrow's better."

"Sometimes I just don't think you're sincere about this at all. At least, not as sincere as me."

"I'm sincere. Believe me. It just takes time for me to get use to the idea, that's all. This kinda thing is new to me."

"We did it in the army."

"That was different."

"Why?"

"Everybody did it then. There wasn't much of a choice. But I HAVEN'T DONE IT SINCE."

"Me neither. That's why I want to do it with you. We did it before. We can do it again just like old times."

"Things were different then."

"No, they weren't. We're still the same to each other. I need you now."

"I feel funny about it."

"Listen, John. I hate to bring this up, but I've been good to you."

"Sure you have, Erik."

"Haven't I shared everything with you?"

"Sure, Erik."

"I'm just asking this one little thing."

"I know. I said I'd do it, and I'll do it."

"When?"

"Tomorrow."

"Today."

John gulped down the last of his gimlet and then nibbled on the rim of his empty glass. At the pool in a white string bikini, a tall young girl with straight blonde hair to her waist plunged as smoothly as a knife blade into the cool blue water.

"Awright," he said. "Today."

Immediately after placing the phone on its cradle, Elaine Maurer informed the maid, the butler, the chauffeur, and the gardener that they all had the rest of the day off whether they liked it or not. After their swift disappearance, the mistress of the house showered and washed her hair. In the living room, she blew dry her hair while still naked, and before she finally slipped into her pale blue tank suit, she slipped enough rat poison to kill a horse into the quart bottle of Jack Daniel's and set it on the dining room table.

"Will it kill a pig?" she had asked the man at the

feed store in Davie.

"It'll kill a horse if your a-mind to," the man behind the counter said as he looked down her dress.

"As long as it'll kill a pig. There's a big rootin' in my flower garden."

"Here piggy-pig-pig," she now chanted as she shook the Jack Daniel's bottle like a maraca.

By the time John pulled up in the driveway in Erik's Targa, Elaine was singing a different tune as she danced out to meet him.

"Borrrrrrn Freeeeee!" she sang.

"What got into you?"

"Not what got into me. What's going to get into that pig of a husband of mine."

"Yeah, well, I got something to tell ya."

"Oh, goodie."

"I'll tell you at the beach."

"Which beach?"

"Dania. We can be alone there."

"Goodie. I have something to tell you too."

"Save it for the beach."

Being a weekday, the beach populace was pretty sparse. John and Elaine didn't have to walk more than a half mile down the beach before they were out of sight of the lone surf fisherman. They waded out into about four feet of water.

"So what dya have to tell me?" John asked as soon as he could get Elaine's mouth unlocked from his own.

"No, you first."

"No. I think it'd be best if you went first."

"No, honey pie. I insist."

"Okay..."

"Tell. Tell."

"Well, I was talking to Erik today, and he asked me

to do him this little favor."

"Forget Erik. He can't touch us anymore."

"Well, I promised to do this for him."

"Do it tomorrow."

"No, today."

When John pulled the Targa into the garage, Erik stood waiting in the doorway, he wore only a towel wrapped around his waist.

"Hey, good timing. I just got out of the shower. C'mon in."

Obediently, John followed Erik into the house. Erik sat down at the dining room table and waved at John to sit across from him.

"Buck up. It's not the end of the world. It's the beginning."

"Yeah, maybe, but it's not the kinda thing you do every day, you know."

"So how'd it go?"

"Smooth."

"It's over?"

A smile broke on John's face.

"She's feedin' the fishes," he said.

"Thank GOD. You're a good friend, John. She would have bled me dry before it was over."

Erik got up and went into the kitchen. He returned with two drink glasses.

"This calls for a drink."

He sat down and filled the two glasses with the Jack Daniel's from the bottle on the table. He pushed one glass over to his friend, John.

"Cheers," he said.

They clinked glasses and drank.

ChrisErikson

The Printer's Voice

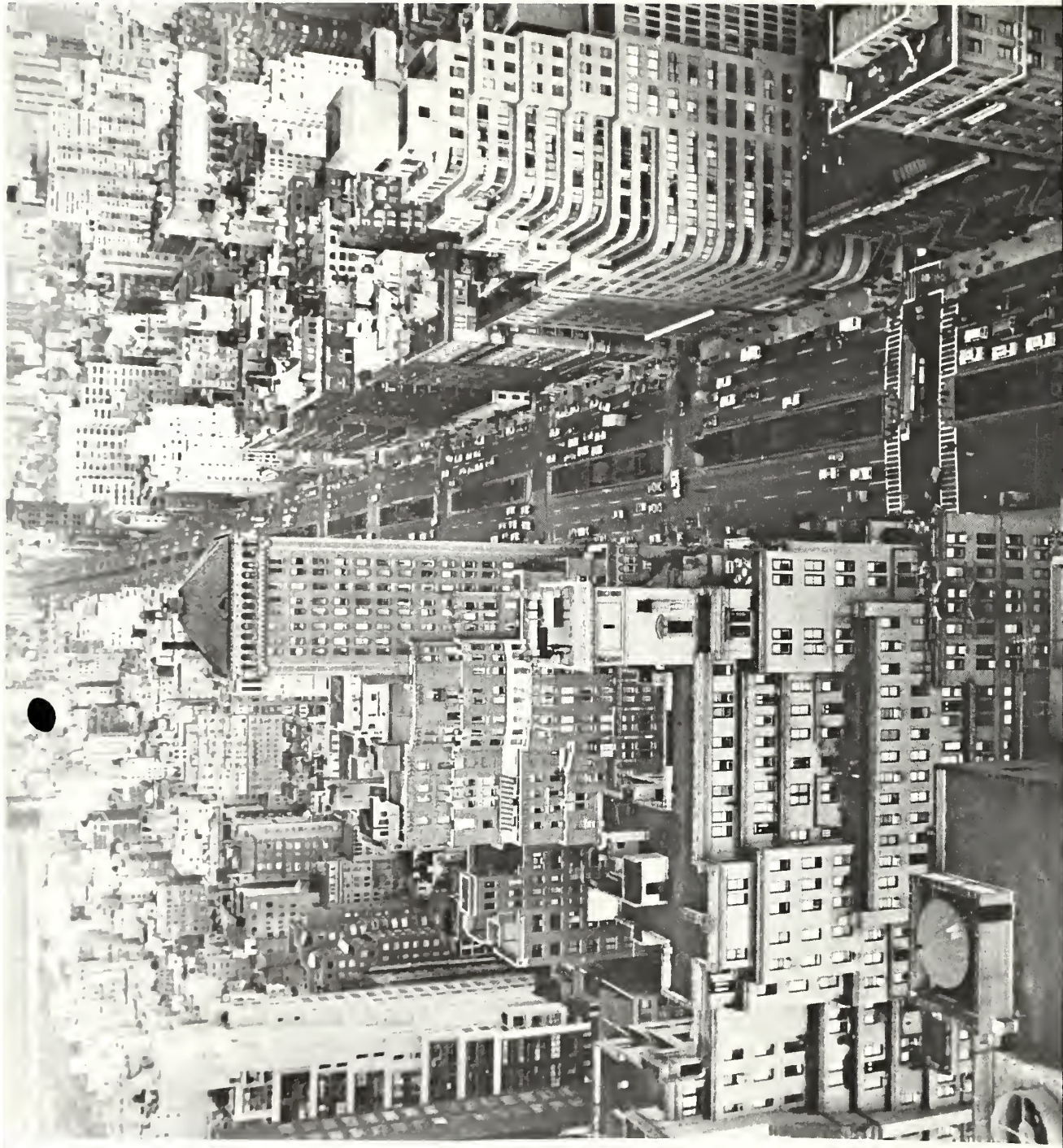
I've had dreams
upon stars beyond
my reach

I've had cravings too
great to be fulfilled
I've had desires to
conquer and reign
where my strength
would not permit
me

I've had wishes upon
falling stars —
wishes that fade
away with their
dying gleams

So my heart knows of
the good and bad
of life . . .

The sweetness
of its success and
the bitterness
of its defeat



Ron Gorberg

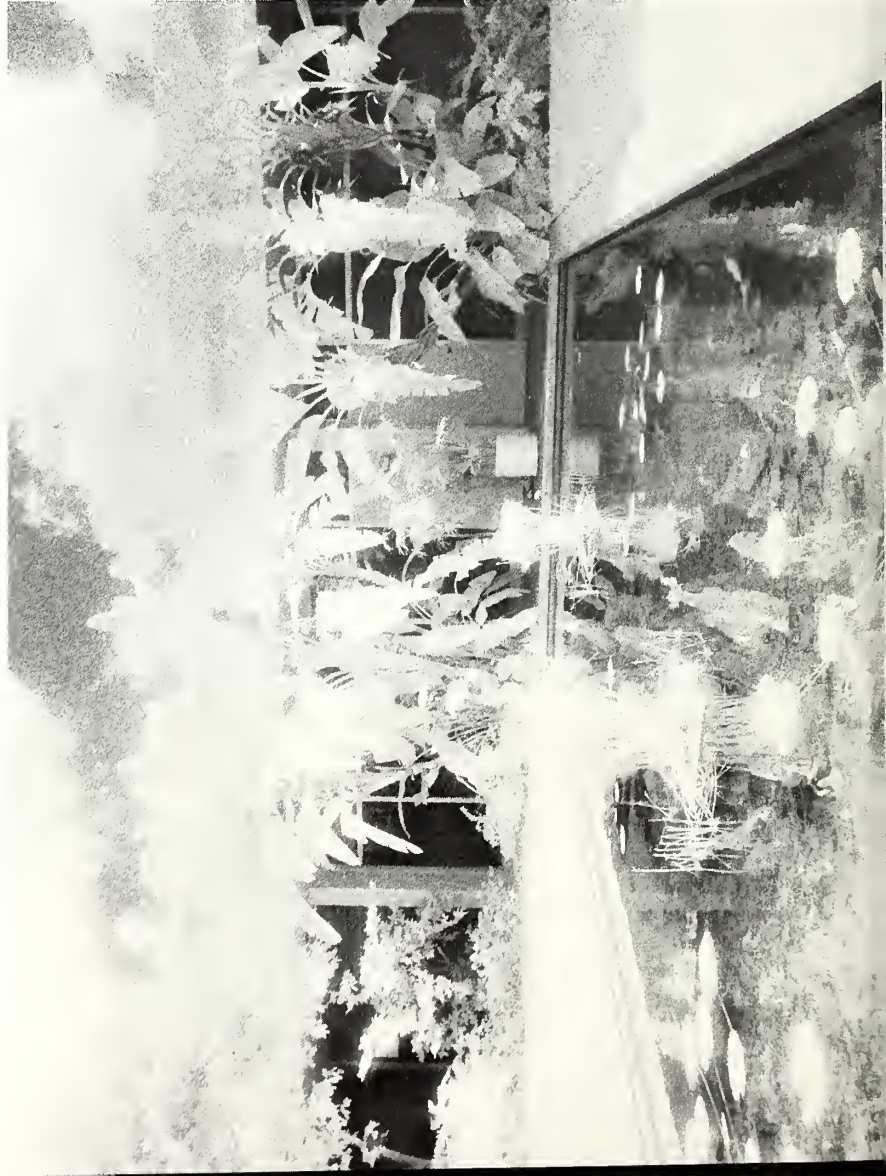
AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Cathy Hoffman

Nature

The sun was shining through the trees. The water was a light blue and its ripples were light and calm. All the colors of the rainbow shone on the ripples. The wind's touch was light but still created a refreshing breeze.



Alan Isley

Tomorrow, when today is gone
We'll remember the past.
Our lives together.
All the things we've shared.

Like;

Accomplishments and disappointments.
Joys and sorrows.
Tears and laughter.

Everything.

Everything down to the last donut.

People envy us, and it makes us proud.

Our lives are stable, yet each new experience
excites us.

We remember the good things;

Our past, our present.

We dream about what our future will be like.

Nothing will be forgotten;

When,

One day we find ourselves in rocking chairs,

Side by side.

Remembering how beautiful it was

And;

How beautiful it will be.

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Please, Dear God

Life styles change. Sometimes we regret the change, sometimes we can accept them, and there are times when we welcome them.

A warm balmy breeze was drifting through the east window of Virginia's bedroom, causing a steady movement of the freshly washed and starched white curtains. The ocean waves, washing upon the sandy shore, gave forth the same monotonous rhythmic sound that it was making over 49 years ago when she and Jack had moved there from the crowded city of Boston.

From the hallway that separated their rooms, Virginia could hear the almost constant humming of Jack's snoring. Yes, they had shared the same bedroom for 45 years when, almost suddenly, his snoring seemed to become more vibrant and her sleep had become more sporadic.

Tonight, sleep just would not come. There was a persistent feeling of unrest and uneasiness.

Was it because she had seen so many of her friends lose their husbands during recent months and she was so aware that Jack had never completely recovered from his last surgery. He seems to have lost interest in his golf and attending the Rotary luncheons seem to have become a burden to him. Yes, and he really is drinking too much and becoming a crotchety.

As her anxieties grew, Virginia became more introspective. Just this afternoon she had made

several very stupid mistakes while playing bridge with the girls at Ellen's apartment.

What an interesting and desirable life Ellen has been able to make for herself since John passed away. It was a very wise thing for her to sell the big house and buy the apartment. Today it is difficult to find efficient, dependable household help, and the older we become the harder it is for us to maintain these large antebellum houses.

Virginia rolled, tumbled and tossed, finally deciding that she must turn off her "thinking box," and go to sleep.

She buried her head in the down pillow, encased in the white, monogrammed pillow case and was just beginning to drift off into a deep sleep when, suddenly, she was overwhelmed with fear and anxiety. Jack was not snoring.

She leaped from the tall fourposter bed and followed the dark hallway to Jack's room. She needed no light as she had done this so many times during his recent illness.

Panic-stricken, her knees trembling, she threw herself across his silent, motionless body. Please, Please, Dear God."

There was a slight movement, she felt his strong arms envelop her, pulling her closely to himself, and in that sweet, endearing voice that she knew so well, she heard a soft whisper in her ear. "Hi, honey."

Mary B Yeuell

OCTOBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Old

It's a common practice in our nation
to institute the degradation
of anything which we've been told
has reached the point to call it "OLD."
Parents when their hair turns gray
are for their own good locked away,
and with them knowledge, wisdom, truth.
Who will counsel questioning youth?
Buildings standing proud and tall
are now destroyed by wrecking ball.
No need preserve their style grand,
just sweep them off. Townhouse the land.
Trees in splendor green stand high
keeping earth from touching sky.
But they too, some youth has said,
have reached the time they should be dead.
Tear them up and plow the ground.
A tree's cry is a silent sound,
so forests die without a word.
They scream for help, no tears are heard.
And when we look around someday
to find that life has gone away.
The answer to our question told
will simply be —
"The World got OLD!"

Cephalothorax

I shake my head
to clear the web caused by thoughtless things they've said.
To shield my-self from glaring hurt, an unknown me I must assert
and then
perceived as being rude I suffer their remarks so crude.
Because
I dance not to their song, I'm made to feel that I am wrong.
But I do what for me is best with little thought about the rest
and time
will prove me wrong or right.
Till then I'll be no fool's delight.



Ron Gorberg

NOVEMBER

SUNDAY

MONDAY

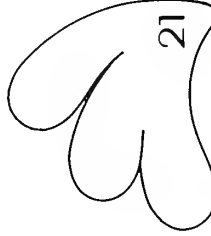
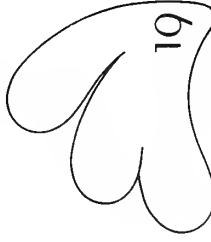
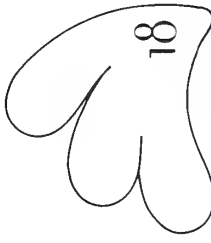
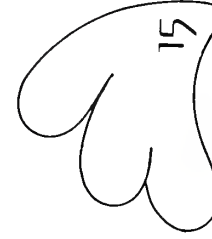
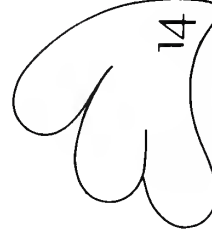
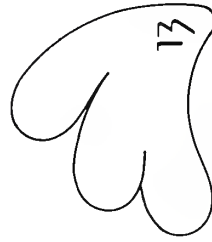
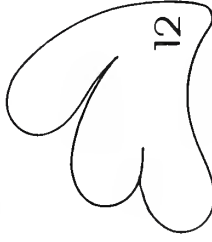
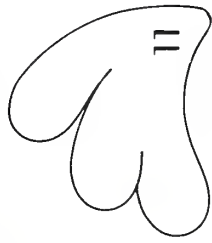
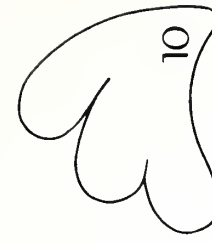
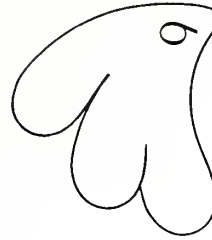
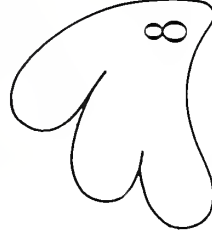
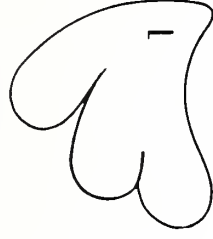
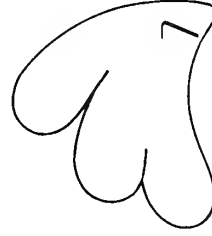
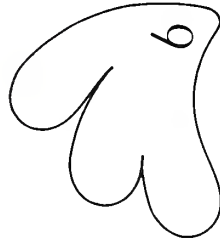
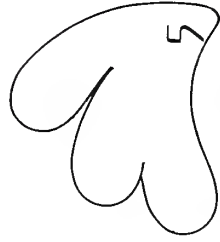
TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



The Ocean

I sit here by the hour — listening
Wanting you to unleash your Wisdom
You are unfathomable despite their yardstick
They try to explore you — do they listen too?

Is the Man in the Moon
A strict disciplinarian for you?
Does he force you to move with the currents?
Or do you let the currents move thru you?

You have many emotions like everyone else
You can be calm, still waters
Or a raging torrent, you laugh
And let us play all over you.

Why do you not come straight on home?
Why do you come in obliquely
Frothing at the toes?

Are you angry at what you see here too?
You could be trying to clean up Mother Earth
Inveigling the aid of the Sandman
He goes out all the time
And dumps in huge boxes of Tide.

When you're serene you do not wave —
When you're disturbed you do.
Are you trying to get our attention?
Tell me — what's bothering you?

You were here before us —
You'll be here long after we're gone
Cities, countries think they own you
They have got a hell of a lot to learn!!

Joie de Vivre

My little saline bit of sadness is
Cascading down the face of everyone —
Not unlike a droplet of my
Childhood stream
(Where I often went wading)
Diffusing out into the seven seas.
I cry the universal tear.
Am I noble enough to weep for the world?
Stonehenge revisited.
I used to cry if a butterfly died, or
My cat ate a lizard.
I am not unlike the evergreen —
Which has been weeping for centuries.
It wears a dress of gaudy paraphernalia
Each winter — and the hungry continue to die.
Yet, I breathe in rhythm with the universe.
A palliative of sorts.

I listen to the secrets of the sand —
My ear flesh to its cosmic soul.
Oh, what a narrative it tells!
I am a grain of sand, a drop of rain,
A blade of grass — a hearty laugh, a sense of joy.
And the ocean bore me.
We are one.

DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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30	31					



Alan Isley

19 JANUARY 80

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Continued from "He Watches Me"

whistle and many times when she was alone she would try to make the same sound with her lips, but finally she decided that little girls were suppose to sing and their daddys were suppose to whistle.

After the horse had finished drinking her father led them to the edge of the back porch where Annabelle could leap off by herself.

From the porch Annabelle saw her mother hurrying down the hall. She saw Rosie Lee in the kitchen putting lunch on the table. From the good smell that drifted out of the kitchen, she knew that Rosie Lee had made sweet potato pies for lunch and Annabelle loved sweet potato pie.

When her father stepped up on the porch her mother came rushing out and in the high staccato voice that Annabelle always thought of, as her "angry voice," she began to whimper and cry in the same manner that she had done last week. Her father went straight down the hall to the bedroom and her mother followed. Annabelle tried to follow but the door was closed. She sat down beside the closed door to wait. She could hear their loud voices but the only words that she made out were "rape" and "J.T."

"What is rape?" she kept asking herself. It was a new word to her, but she thought, it must be very bad or mother wouldn't be screaming and crying so loudly about it.

The door finally opened, but before she could go in she saw her father come hurrying out. He had his shot gun under his arm. Her mother was running after him screaming, "Oh Tom, please don't do it, please don't do it." Rosie Lee ran out of the kitchen on to the back porch, her father turned and looked back.

"Rosie Lee, go to your room and take the baby with

you." But Rosie Lee had, again, pulled her big apron over her face and Annabelle heard her moaning as she had done before.

"Oh Lord, please have mercy, please have mercy," Annabelle hid behind the big wooden well that was at the end of the porch. She did not see her mother go back to the bedroom, and she did not know where Rosie Lee had gone. She kept asking herself, over and over, "what is rape?" "Why is mother so upset with J.T.?" "Why did daddy take the gun?"

When he comes home I will ask him and he will tell me everything.

She had started to watch some ants that were crawling along the floor with bits of food. They were coming from the kitchen window and bringing the food through a loose plank by the side of the well.

Annabelle had forgotten all about J.T. and her father with the gun until she heard the echo of the gun shots come blasting up from the direction of the fishing hole.

Maybe daddy shot another big moccasin, she thought. She remembered being with him last week when he had shot a three footer.

Annabelle was still thinking about the moccasin and was watching the ants when she saw her father coming up from behind the barn. She jumped from the porch and started to run to meet him. He stopped, picked her up and held her closely against his trembling body. She saw tears streaming down his white face.

"Your daddy is in bad trouble. He is going to have to go away, but someday he will come home again."

He put his gun on the top of the well, got on the horse and rode away.

Mary B. Yeuell

Continued from "Uncle Ernie"

degree."

"You never mentioned that to me before."
"Well, I figured that if he could go to college nights after working in the factory all day, why couldn't I?"
"So that's why he was so proud of you when you graduated."

"Yes, he said I had gumption and enough brains from his side of the family to do almost anything I wanted to. When I did finish college he told me to be sure and study Shakespeare and all the great poets. He loves good literature."

"Yes, he has a mini-library of great works."

"Di, I wonder if he has changed much since he was mugged?"

"I doubt it. Mother told me that after the police arrested the two suspects he wouldn't even go down and identify them. Said he felt sorry for them. Oh, look, Marilyn, a taxi!"

Suddenly, they were revived. The weariness of the long day had vanished at the sight of the familiar figure emerging from the cab. Both women exchanged smiles and walked towards the door. The sky was a brilliant orange silhouetting the cabs lone inhabitant, and the air was filled with joy.

Marilyn K. Gallwitz

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