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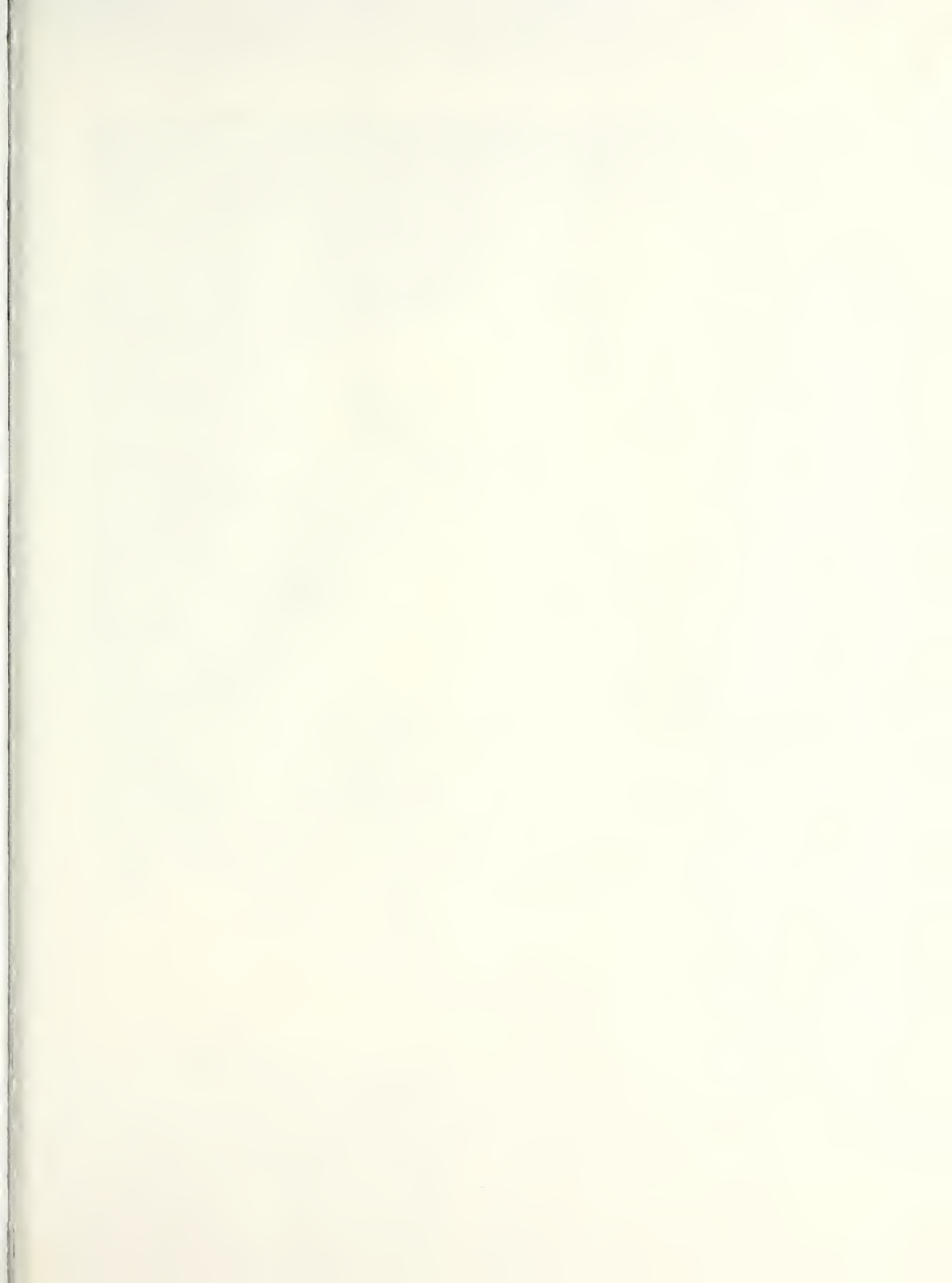
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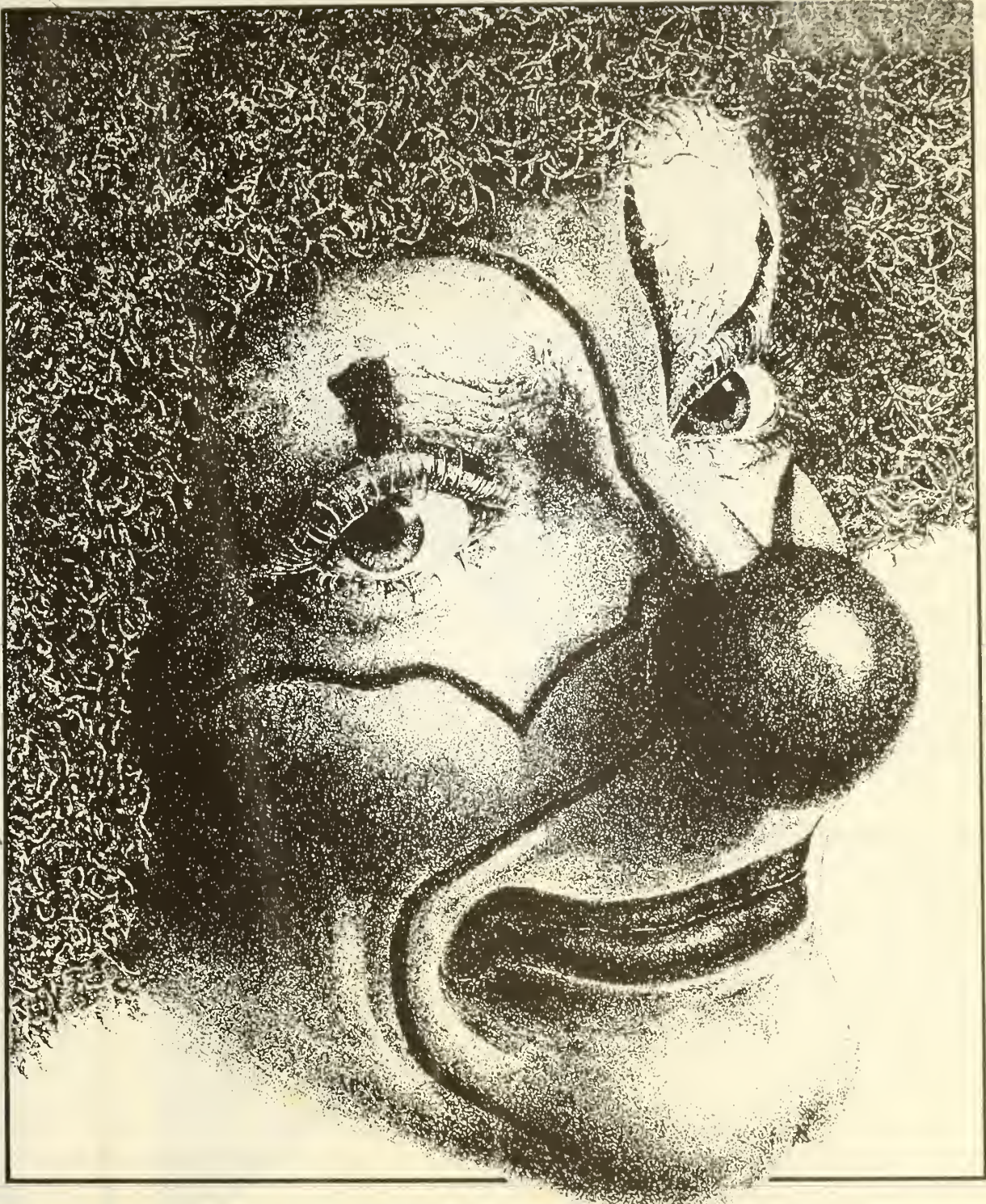


Fort Lauderdale, Florida





November 1985



P'AN KU '84

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P'an Ku is
the ancient
Chinese
god of creation.
Anyone
who is
endowed
with creativity
is possessed
by the spirit of
P'an Ku.

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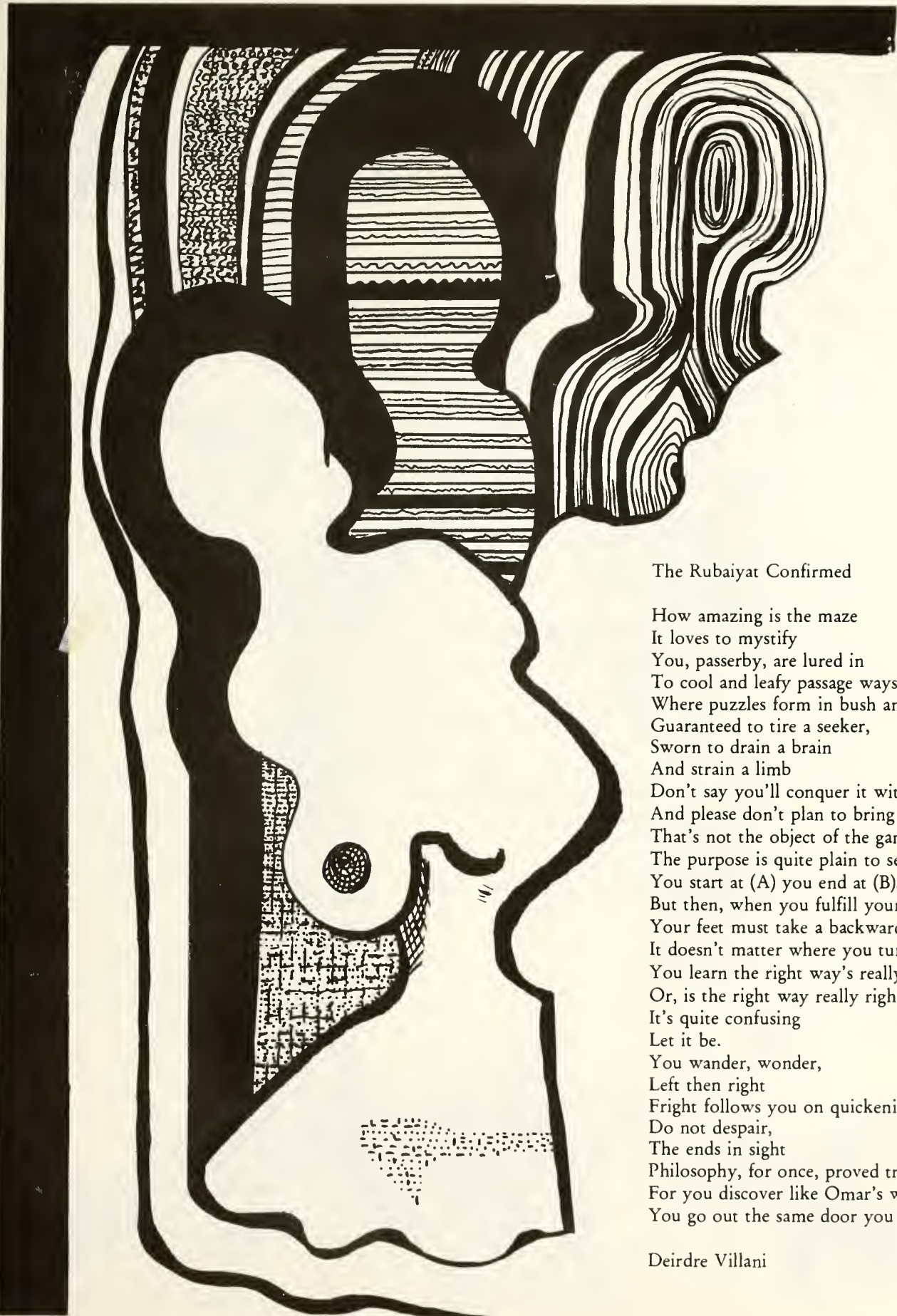
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The Rubaiyat Confirmed

How amazing is the maze
It loves to mystify
You, passerby, are lured in
To cool and leafy passage ways,
Where puzzles form in bush and briar
Guaranteed to tire a seeker,
Sworn to drain a brain
And strain a limb
Don't say you'll conquer it with ease,
And please don't plan to bring a map,
That's not the object of the game
The purpose is quite plain to see
You start at (A) you end at (B),
But then, when you fulfill your aim,
Your feet must take a backward track
It doesn't matter where you turn,
You learn the right way's really wrong
Or, is the right way really right?
It's quite confusing
Let it be.
You wander, wonder,
Left then right
Fright follows you on quickening steps.
Do not despair,
The ends in sight
Philosophy, for once, proved true,
For you discover like Omar's whim,
You go out the same door you came in.

Deirdre Villani

Woodworks

I wish we could talk
but
our minds keep bumping
and banging into
each other
like a hammer and nail
pounding
until the wood is split
and nothing is left
but splinters.

We gnash and grind
each splinter
into pulp.

Why can't we just talk?

Karen Brown

The Shelter

Up among pink apple blossoms,
In my wooden treehouse I sit;
Protected from the world
By dilapidated boards
And rusty nails.
I do not fear the monsters of the orchard
Lurking in the weeds below,
Or my brother's anger
At his favorite sweatshirt's loss
Somewhere between Betsy's house, the playground,
And his dresser drawer;
For I have the comfort of *Wizard of Oz*,
A half-eaten peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich,
And a fluffy, marshmallowed sky
Melting onto the branches
To keep me safe and happy...
Until I must venture down the creaky ladder
When mother calls me for dinner.

Susan Hammond



Seasons of a Young Boy

Watching leaves blossom green,
Asking why they do,
Hunting colored eggs on holy sunday,
Chocolate bunny smeared 'cross my face

Swinging in the sun,
Splashing waters in a pool,
Jumping a stream,
Catching a frog,
Watching stars glitter to life
As I yawn to sleep.

Putting on a pirate's hat,
Yelling 'trick o. treat'
Under a glowing moon,
Watching uncle cut the turkey
As the dumplings cool.

Bundling in warm clothes,
Lifting feet high to
Clear new fallen snow,
Perched on a jolly man's lap
Mumbling of toys and of being good.
Waiting for a babe to cry
And an old man to end his year.

Greg Obaugh



Counterpoint

The piper played his lyric tune
And melanic music
Filled the air.
"Come dance with me,"
You said, "come move,
Come step within the song
And join the throng
Who dance
With such accordancy."

I took your hand
And followed where you led,
You said,
"The music soon will help you find
The path to perfect harmony.
The notes, the cords
Will show the way,
That day by day
You'll follow to the end."

I couldn't join your piper's song,
The tune was wrong.
Too high the key.
The pitch, the range
Could never change the need
For my own melody.
I left you there,
For I could hear a different sound,
A distant note in minor key,
A flute in muted euphony.

Though I have found my own refrain.
And you have sung your piper's tune,
We can still meet
On distant shores and harmonize
Our different songs.
For each contain
Concordant keys,
Just rearranged,
To suit our different symphonies.

by Deirdre Villani



Paulette Bou Dreau

Parents Are Human Too

I can recall the exact date I discovered that my parents were human. For all of my eight years up to that momentous occasion, I had never realized or even imagined that parents, especially my own parents, had emotions just as I had. Of course I had seen them happy, or angry when one of my sisters or I had done something wrong, but they were allowed and supposed to display those emotions. They were not, somehow, permitted to be depressed or terribly excited, or worse yet, to cry or throw a tantrum. Parents were only allowed to be calm and in control, not hysterical as a child can sometimes be.

Those observations were made from a child's point of view, though, and I saw my parents not as normal human beings, but quite simply as above it all. But that perspective of mine was to change, for the better, I have since determined. Because of this change of attitude, I gained an insight into the wonderful world of maturity that not too many eight year olds encounter; I learned the reality that parents had feelings, and that having those emotions was normal.

The incident in question occurred just following my eight birthday in early December, 1971. It was a normal enough day, cold but sunny outside, snow on the ground, and warmth in the house. I was putting on my coat, boots, hat, scarf, and mittens, preparing to proceed outside to play and build in the new-fallen snow, when the telephone rang. My mother answered it, she usually did, and her conversation began cheerfully

enough. I had halted what I was performing to nonchalantly eavesdrop, when I heard my mother's tone of voice change; it acquired a pitch that I had never heard in it before. I saw a tear slide down her face, and suddenly she was crying, heart-wretchedly sobbing, and I had no idea of how I was to deal with the situation.

A memory flashed in my mind of the time that Cathy, my best friend, and I were outside playing and she had tripped, fallen, and gotten a cut on her head. I say the blood and panicked, not knowing what I should do. What I did was to run and summon help. This feeling was the same as that, a feeling of helplessness, that something was beyond my control. So once again, I repeated my motions:

I ran to get help. I went to get someone to handle the problem so that I would not have to deal with it.

My mother's sister had died. It was a sudden, unexpected death which affected my mother deeply. Her sister had been her closest relative, even though they had not visited each other for many years. The funeral, which all my family attended, came and went, and my mother became withdrawn and depressed, moping around the house with red-rimmed eyes, a sad expression on her face. My father took care of us children during that time; it was not a job he was used to, and combined with my mother's constant depression, was almost too much for him to endure. He became testy at times, but for the most part he was tolerant of us and of all the questions we, as children, asked.

I observed my mother closely throughout her period of mourning, and I saw in her things I had never perceived before. She became easily upset over small things, was readily annoyed, and neglected her children and home, leaving us in my father's care. She behaved in ways that I had previously behaved for which I had been scolded and told to act my age. Though it was astonishing seeing those things in my mother, those actions helped me to better understand my mother, actually all adults, and to not be in such awe of them. But at that point, I still could not fully comprehend this knowledge.

Realization came the day, a month or so after the dreaded event, that I cornered and mother and boldly asked her why she was behaving the way she was. My mother sat me down at the kitchen table, and now being able to deal with her favorite sister's death a bit better, explained to me that there was nothing wrong with her feeling the same emotions that I felt. She explained that adults were far from perfect, that they felt fear, sadness, disappointment, and anger; that everyone had these emotions, but some people hid them more than others. She informed me that while trying to instruct their children to mature to be stable adults, parents tried to display only their favorable aspects, not their unfavorable ones. My mother said that sometimes adults became confused, and wanted their children to think they were perfect, so they attempted not to show emotions that they associated with being weak. She also acknowledged that there was nothing wrong with exhibiting emotions, whatever your age, provided you did not become hysterical or make yourself ill doing it.



Nicholas D'Alleva

Seaberry Beach

Seaberry beach when I was five,
Had a merry-go-round with
sweet clanking sounds,
Horses with fierce eyes.

A Ferris wheel turns,
Tries to catch the sky,
Roller coaster rapid train of
screams,
Makes me afraid.

Waves boom and crash,
I like them,
and the sand that squishes,
between my toes.

Fat lady in flowers,
High on the ledge above the
corn-on-the-cob stand,
Laughs and laughs, loses her
breath and laughs again.

Green slivers of peppers
sizzle with onions and steaks,
I want a Black Moon ice-cream
stuck on a stick.

To spend pennies at the Arcade,
Looking at ladies in tights,
Cowboys in corrals,
My fortune told by half a lady
with long red nails.

Seaberry beach when I am thirty-five,
The merry-go-round is gone,
Ferris wheels far from the sky.
Fat Lady flowers faded,
no longer laughs.

Only video at the Arcade,
No pennies now,
Coaster's gone, a parking lot,
Waves boom and crash,
I like them,
Careful, don't let them wet my shoes.

by Tela Frances

Poetry in the Woods

Budding writers
strolled into the Secret Woods,
accepting a literary challenge
under majestic oaks.
Slowly the poets gathered
bearing words of art,
surrounded by nature
and a warming sun.
A forum of silent oaks
listened to the words,
some humorous,
some thoughtful,
some brittle and pedantic.
Some with clever ideas
flavored by a bit of dry wit.
They made a brave show
with casual idiom
of an image piled high,
sustained and thoughtful.
The thirsty audience
soaked up
the compressed intensity.

Lary Glazer



Beatrice Robinson

M is for Mecca, not Mechanism

Yesterday, I lost yet another battle in my ongoing war with machines. Now I know that machines can't think, at least most of them can't, but they are definitely hostile toward me. Please try to understand that I am not really paranoid but after manifold skirmishes with a multitude of machines, it is merely rational for me to be wary of them.

My first skirmish occurred when I was only three, yet it still remains a shockingly vivid memory. I unscrewed the burning globe from a table lamp and tried to become a light bulb by sticking my finger into the socket. While I didn't become a light bulb, I did learn caution with mechanical contrivances. Ever since that electrifying experience, no watch has functioned properly upon my arm.

When my husband and I were first married, he scoffed at the preposterous idea of watches having breakdowns when I wear them. In fact, he called the whole idea what I will politely term as "male bovine excrement." He attributed my watch problem to cheap watches, so for Christmas he gave me an expensive Bulova. He was right, too, because, although I wore it every day, it ticked

correctly for three whole months before it froze up and refused to tock on. The watch repairman could find nothing mechanically wrong with the watch but he did have to agree with me that it wouldn't work.

While the watch's tactic of passive resistance may be devious, it is infinitely preferable to the remote control color television's method of guerilla warfare. During a particularly terrifying horror movie at the precise moment of highest suspense as the fair, young heroine is about to be stabbed by the drug-crazed killer, the television literally blew up. The loud boom, accompanied by smoke and shattered glass rendered me momentarily immobile.

On the other hand, the kitchen appliances seem to prefer psychological warfare. For instance, my oven thermostat functions perfectly until I try to bake a cake. Then it maliciously delights in malfunctioning and ruining every cake that I try to make. Now the machines have not dented my sanity to the point that I actually believe that the oven knows when I place a cake onto its racks but I don't have any other explanation either. How can I explain why the large stand-up mixer, busy mashing

potatoes, waited until my attention was diverted to commence redecorating my kitchen with slung potatoes? All machines seem to hate me. I have had clashes with can openers, fruit juicers, washers, dryers and freezers, to name a few.

Yesterday, I had my latest clash with my newest enemy, a Texas Instruments computer. After I had programmed a complicated number game into it, the computer belligerently told me that it "can't do that." Knowing that it really meant "won't do that," I wickedly turned it off. Later, while playing a hot game of "Munch Man," I had to push "pause" in order to answer the computer's comrade, the telephone. The computer strategically seized its revenge and gleefully paused permanently.

All machine kind appears to be allied against me. There may be some of you who think that there is more of a case for ineptitude than for a war.

You may be right. But no matter what causes these confrontations - coincidence, a higher than normal malfunction percentage of paranoia - one fact remains: I loathe machines.

If Toffler's "electronic cottage" becomes a reality, I shall be doomed to the status of prisoner of war for life.

Self-Righteousness of Early Risers

Lary Glazer

You can spot them everywhere, if you get up early enough. Even hours before breakfast they are gleefully mobile, some walking rapidly, flinging arms back and forth, others laboriously jogging across the green, across the roadways, across the beaten paths. Some executing chores by the score and talking. Worse yet, they flaunt their habit as though it were a virtue.

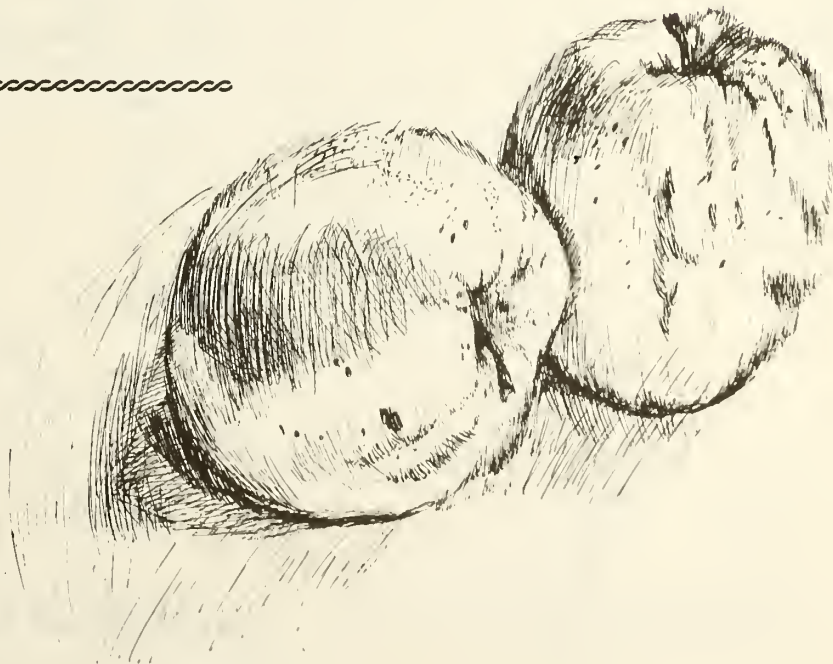
"Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Is that misguided quote, written years ago when most of the world was agricultural, the reason early risers are self-righteous?

To do a good day's work today, we don't have to beat the rooster to his "cock-a-doodle-doo." Yet some think that it is a must to rise early every morn, otherwise they might be branded as lazy. Late sleepers generally sleep about six to eight hours, the same amount of time as folks who get up early. Still, early risers regard

their eight hours as restorative, and everybody else's as decadent.

Besides being self-righteous, early risers often are impolite. Apologies are seldom extended in early morning calls, usually the only comment is, "Are you awake?" Perhaps the problem is that early morning people are, by nature, functioners while evening people are contemplators. Contemplation is not laziness; it is a highly underrated occupation which some believe essential for creative work.

Think of Winston Churchill, certainly a man of accomplishment and wealth; he rarely got up before eleven A.M. (But that may have more to do with his brandy consumption than his internal time clock.) Anyway, it seems that the old motto is untrue. "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Early bedtimes and rising have little to do with health, wealth or wisdom. If they did, preschoolers would rule the world.



Coleen Baggot

I

imagine
myself as
a mighty tree
mirrored on a
crystal lake.

A healthy, vital
trunk I see standing
firm against a Nature
oft times fierce and
cruel to me. Her wind
and heat doth torture;
but just as if fore
known, she sends the
rain to nourish giving
strength to stand alone.

An ever present energy
so life can run its course.

How simple God's creation,
yet mighty is its Force.

To think that trees
and grass and
man can be
as one in
such a
plan.

Night Noises

I lie in bed listening . . .
 bullfrogs burp
 crickets chirp
Listening to the night noises . . .
 autos park
 puppies bark
Noises that seep within . . .
 floorboards creak
 people speak
Within my wandering thoughts .
 toilets flush
 rivers rush
Thoughts that take me back . . .
 switches click
 watches tick
Back to other rainy nights . . .
 infants cry
 breezes sigh
Nights I felt so lonely . . .
 raindrops tap
 awnings flap
Lonely as two empty hands . . .
 sprinklers spray
 bushes sway
Hands that wanted to touch . . .
 alarms clang
 screendoors bang
Tough someone's warm heart . . .
 T.V.'s blare
 life's not fair

Iris Hoffman



John Smollett



Confusion

I lay in the literal
river of thoughts,
unable to choose words
or a course of action,
Confused
between poetry and prose,
fact and fiction,
truth and lies.
I am not dead,
my problems will not solve themselves
nor can I solve them,
But I will rise
and find the shore.

Lary Glazer

Glass Images

The car stopped
and I glanced
at the glass
passenger;
She was young,
much younger than I.
She evoked memories
of mother
from an old photo
taken at fifteen.
She smiled at me---
reserved, sad---
with waiting future.
As I pulled
from the curb,
my eyes turned
to the right,
and the window's
image was lost.

Monica Earle Carlton

For Jenny

Two days before St. Valen-
tine's,
Miss Hannah passed out red
paper,
scissors and glue,
For pasting on paper,
declarations of love.

Chubby Jenny fingers flying,
Happy with hope,
Made beautiful hearts,
and flowers,
Even helped popular Evelyn,
Cindy and Paul,

Who got thirty-three cards,
Sweet chubby-cheeked Jen-
ny,
Friend to all,
Got three.

Frances Tella

Scrabble

memory is playing scrabble
after too many years
I have both of the blanks
and I am comforted
because with two blanks
one always has a play

by James Azar

Summer Storm

Air suddenly cools
Light flashes unzip the sky
The earth's thirst is quenched

by Linda Billetter

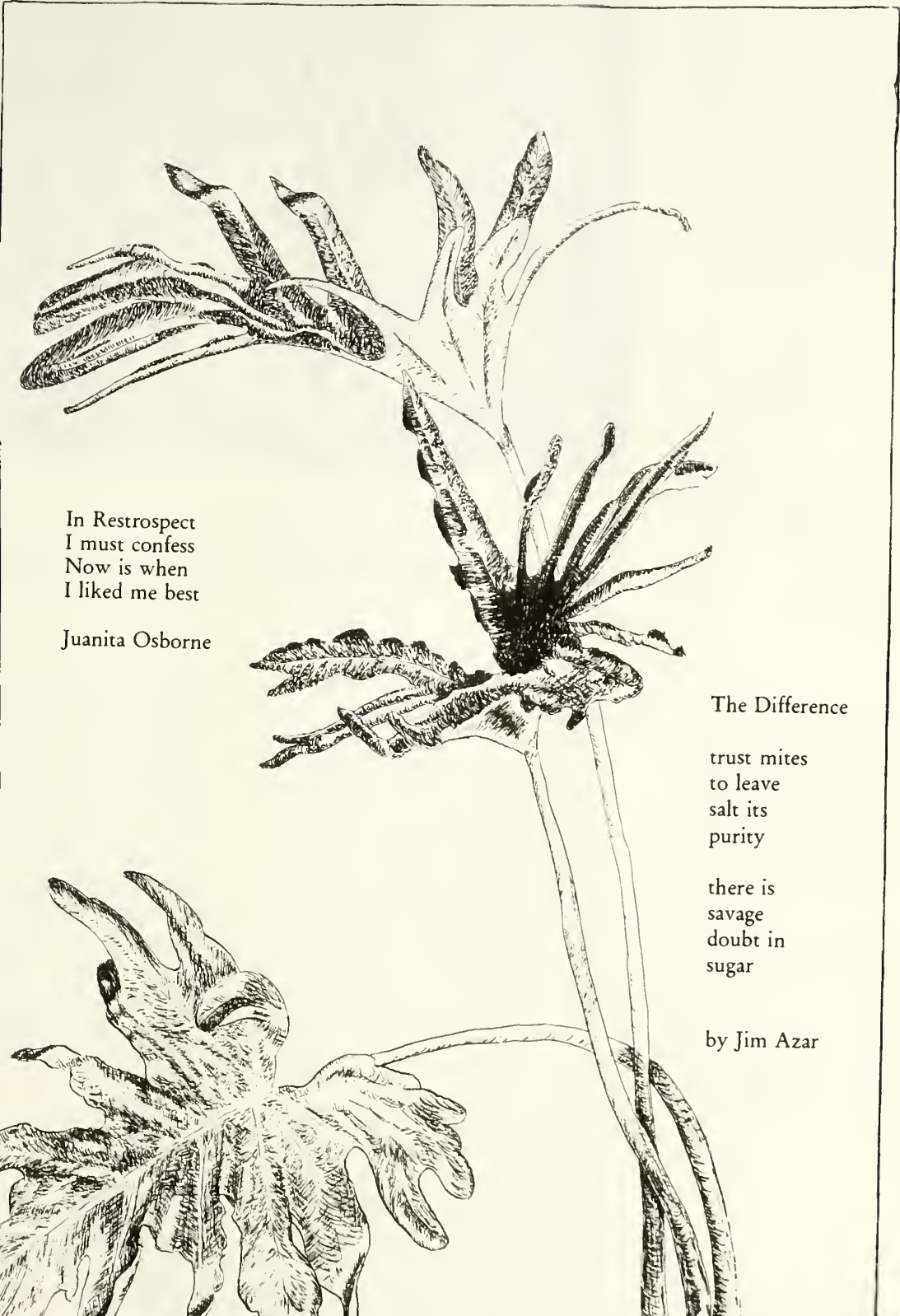
Traffic

Honk! Crash! Beep! Varoom!
Constantly screaming traffic
Chews up my eardrums.

by Linda Belletter

Gifts

Inundations of
Laughter, tears, questions, and hugs --
Gifts we call children.
by Linda Billetter



In Restrospect
I must confess
Now is when
I liked me best

Juanita Osborne

The Difference

trust mites
to leave
salt its
purity

there is
savage
doubt in
sugar

by Jim Azar

S.S. Smith

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Melanie Denes

Dad, look at me.
I'm thirty-three years old.

Gail's thirty-five and

Debbie's thirty.
How much older do we have to be
to show you that we've grown?

Will graying hairs
and arthritic fingers do the trick?
When I come to visit with a hearing aid
will you then talk to me?
Wouldn't that be ironic?
You starting to talk
when I can no longer listen.

Let us spend a day
as deliberate as Nature,
and not be thrown off track
by every nutshell and mosquito's wing
that falls on the rails.
Let us rise early and break-fast
gently and without disturbance.

We meet at very short intervals
not having had time to acquire
any new value for each other.
We have to agree
on a certain set of rules
to make this meeting tolerable.
The value of a man is not in his skin
that we should touch him.

Lary Glazer

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Sharon's Travesty

She sat comfortably in the large, overstuffed living room chair. Her legs were tucked neatly under her slightly flesh body. Sharon had been sitting in the same position for most of that day, hardly shifting her weight. Her robin-blue eyes, seemingly closed in sleep, lazily rolled in their sockets. She had spent the better part of that afternoon and evening listening for the familiar sound of Tom's old car.

"Gee, it's starting to get dark outside. He should be home by now." Sharon's concern was deepening. "He's never been this late before. Wonder what's keeping him?" She moved her body just slightly, digging further into the well-worn upholstered chair.

"He really should be here any second," she reassured herself. "I'll have just enough time from when I hear his engine to when he reaches the front door to go clean my breakfast plate." Sharon had purposely left her dish half filled in the morning, just after Tom left the house. She planned to gorge herself on the dinner he had promised to bring home.

"Sometimes," she reflected, wishfully, I would like to have a maid taking care of us."

Turning her sluggishness aside, she allowed herself to reflect on the dinner that Tom had promised to cook. "Oh, it's going to be good, sharing our dinner tonight." Sharon's tongue licked her lips in anxious anticipation of the lobster Tom said he would bring home. She could almost taste the sweet meat they would soon be sharing. "I hope he remembers to bring extra butter. I love when he makes it with garlic."

Feeling her hunger grow from within, Sharon attempted to move her legs in a vain effort to keep them from tightening up. A sharp pain in the lower spine immediately reminded her of the arthritis that had started to flare up several years earlier.

She sat silently, reminiscing back to the day they moved into the small, wood-framed house they still shared after fourteen years. She could not help thinking of how much more spry she had been back then.

"It's been a wonderful life," she reminded herself. "How many

others have been as lucky as I've been? I can't think of anyone, off hand, that has had such a good partnership," she mused. "Oh, perhaps that hussy, Lana, and Frank, who lived next door when we first moved in. But," she smiled to herself, "he was so much older than she. I'm pretty fortunate for someone my age to have found such a vibrant young man." The Cheshire cat appearance dominated her wizened face.

It was at that exact moment that she heard a car's unfamiliar whine pull up to the front of the house. She was preparing to leave the soft luxury of the easy chair, when Sharon realized whose car it was. With a deep sigh of resignation, she pushed herself even deeper into the pillow that had shaped itself so well to the contours of her heavy body. Eventually, the *clickety-clack* of a woman's high heels could be heard approaching the doorway.

"Rats," Sharon exclaimed. "It's Tom's sister. I absolutely detest that woman." Impatiently she pushed her large frame back and forth, until once again she settled into a snug spot. The material beneath her had worn unevenly smooth from too many years of being subjected to her sprawling body. "I hope she hasn't brought that damned dog of hers along. I hate it as much as I do her." Stretching her neck, she tilted her head slightly, listening for the sound of the dog's paws scratching at the front door.

With abrupt awareness, Sharon realized that the woman had not tapped on the door, as was her habit. Instead, a key was turning in the lock. "I wonder why that woman didn't knock, like always?" she asked herself. "Guess I'd better go meet her at the door. Tom must've given her a key the last time she was here."

Carefully, Sharon stretched her legs, moving her delicate head back and forth in a sensual gesture. With some small effort, she reluctantly left the warm enjoyment of her favorite chair. "Oh, my arthritis is acting up," she complained, as she moved toward the front hall. Just as she approached the door, it swung open without ceremony.

"Sharon, where are you? It's me, Bonnie. I brought you dinner." The woman, on entering, in her eagerness to invade the house, had faced away from Sharon. "Sharon, you hear me?"

"Lord, how your voice grates on me," Sharon told herself, as she stepped out from the deep shadows that had gathered in the hallway, behind the wide, gaping door.

"Oh, dear. There you are. You startled me." Bonnie had turned around and stood facing her. "I'm sorry, darling. Did I wake you up?"

Bonnie reached out to touch Sharon, who immediately backed away when she realized the woman's intent. It was then that Sharon noticed Bonnie's face looked tear-stained.

"I came because of Tom. He had an accident. The lobsters he was bringing home escaped from their packing.

One bit my brother's leg with its damn claw while he was driving. He swerved and hit a tree." Rushing on breathlessly, Bonnie gasped out, "Oh, not to worry, darling. He's fine. Just a few bruises. But his doctor insisted he stay at the hospital tonight. Tom asked me to stop over with some dinner for you."

Despite the smeared tear stains, Sharon felt there was a slight note of glee in Bonnie's voice. With unforeseen energy, she poked her head around the open door's threshold to make sure the dog was not around. "Well," she reassured herself, "at least you didn't bring that mutt with you." Relieved, she led the way into the dark kitchen, upset that Tom would not be home that night. She felt thankful he was not seriously hurt. "I guess we're not having lobster for dinner this evening, after all," she complained to herself. Her mouth tasted dry.

For the initial time, Sharon noticed that Bonnie held a small brown paper bag. With some curiosity, she watched as the bag was carelessly deposited on the counter top. "Oh, my goodness," she reminded herself, "I forgot to clean my dish." She was momentarily irritated for having neglected to get rid of the food left on her breakfast plate.

"I see you didn't finish this morn-

ing's meal. Are you feeling well?" Bonnie's hand darted out to touch Sharon's face.

With instinctive fear born out of old resentment, Sharon again stepped away from the extended arm. This time, however, she felt annoyance at the way Bonnie seemed to take over the house when she visited them.

Without warning, Bonnie switched on the bright overhead lights. Sharon's usually radiant eyes widened with unexpected surprise, and, just as suddenly, seemed to grow black, as the pupils reacted with reflexive dilation.

"Why did Tom send you," Sharon wondered to herself. "He could've called the people next door." She felt a slight pain in her chest, which caused her breath to falter. Her tongue briefly popped out of her mouth, as she made an extra effort to breathe normally. "Goodness, if he only knew how much I dislike you, he'd never have asked you to do this favor." She looked at Bonnie with suspicion. Thoughts of deep resentment, dug up from experience, flooded her head.

"I don't even like the way you smell," she reminded herself. "You always have a doggy odor about you that disgusts me." Sharon knew that if Bonnie could read her mind, she would be absolutely furious.

Without hesitation, Bonnie continued talking. "Oh, sweetheart. I'm so sorry. Here I am, prattling on so. You must be starving." Bonnie took

the soiled plate that Sharon had neglected to take care of, and placed it under the kitchen faucet. Nervously, she turned on the hot water tap. "I do wonder why the two of you don't use paper plates." With a few quick shakes, Bonnie removed the excess water from the dish. She then placed the clean receptacle alongside the brown bag on the counter. "I brought you something special. You'll adore it." Bonnie's hands flew to the small paper sack that had started to tip over from the heaviness of its own contents. Dark, smelly nuggets spilled from the sack's wounded mouth.

Sharon sniffed, trying to place the strange scent of the bag's filling. Unexpectedly, her eyes closed into two tiny apertures of unadulterated hatred.

"How dare you," she mutely berated Bonnie. "If Tom were here, he'd have your head." Proudly, Sharon pulled her body up to its full height, turned, and walked from the room. "I may be old, but I'm not senile," she wanted to cry out to Bonnie.

"Where are you going, sweetheart? I thought you'd like this. Now, come on, Sharon. It's all I could find in my pantry on such short notice. Be a good girl and eat it up, darling."

She watched, dumfounded, as Sharon left the room. Bonnie wondered aloud, once again, what her brother ever saw in his fat, lazy cat.



John Smollett

A Madness of Nature

Beyond the northern beach
a green swell rolls in,
runs softly along the shore,
the horizon is lost in a world of gray;
A horde of gulls,
spectral in the livid air,
watch and wait.
I am enveloped in the sullen waiting time
and feel the silence drawn out,
long and thin.

Thousands of silvery capelin
gather off shore,
they break the water's surface
with bright chuckling sounds,
gather and grow.
Soon they are so densely packed
the sea shimmers silver for miles.
Symbols of summer and fertility.

Beneath and beyond them,
codfish pour out of the deep;
they overtake the capelin, eat them,
plunge again into the shallow water.
The sea writhes with movement and foam
where cod, headlong in pursuit,
drive themselves clear out of the water
and fall back with staccato slaps.

The attack of the codfish
is a brutal opening to a ritual,
and a contradiction in their character.
They are sedentary feeders
on the ocean floor.
Now, however, they are possessed.
Their jaws rip and tear;
The water darkens with capelin blood;
the shredded pieces of flesh
hang suspended,
or rise to the surface.

Lary Glazer

Who Knows Best?

Suntanned children on the beach
Are drawn together
like waves to the sand.
They splash, share, and laugh
While their older, wiser parents
Remain forever strangers –
Clinging
To their security blankets
As barnacles cling to a pier –
Isolated on their islands in the sand.
Older, wiser,
Forever strangers.

Linda Billetter

In Harmony

Enchanting are these woods I'd say
the paths that I have walked today.
Where birds sing songs of merriment
and squirrels scatter branches bent.
A raccoon sighted here and there
rushing off to who knows where.
Sunlight prisms through the trees
while mystic sounds pervade the breeze.
Along its quiet watery banks
footsteps are heard on wooden planks.
Man walks the Secret Woods to share
the peace, with all the creatures there.

Judi Milton

My Father's Hands

Gray, marble-like hands with thick, sturdy fingers
Awkwardly entwined in the rosary
Well camouflage their owner's past
For these were the tools that once...

Painted love on empty paper,
creating a poem for mother

Grasped the pick and shovel of manhood,
taking wages from earthen bowels

Gripped a gun with hesitation,
holding back the wounds of battle

Closed the eyes of a bloodied friend,
revolting at the stickiness of death

Caressed a young wife,
aching for the secret warmth of woman

Calmed a frightened daughter,
proud of the role of protector

Planted seedlings in the numbed soil of spring,
tending, nurturing a perennial harvest

Passed a worn leather wallet to a panicked spouse,
a lifelong trade of dreams for scraps of identity

Clutched a tightened, heaving chest
finally free to just let go

Marie Bloom

The Losing

Father ran away the other day.
Sometime between the doorbell and the greeting
He slipped the chain,
And fled, on frightened feet, beyond our reach
looking for something lost long years ago.
We didn't know,
and sipped our sherry and talked in empty words
While he in quest of finding,
Sought for what was sadly long forgotten.

When father ran away
We searched with frantic eyes,
Furious at his ill-conceived deception.
We found him watching children play
And he laughed and clapped his hands.
Alone he'd found his happy yesterday,
But we took him away
And locked him safe inside our cage of caring.
And we never saw him laugh or smile again.

by Deirdre Villani



Declaration

We are sisters...

a feminine celebration,
blessed with sensitized awareness.
A necklace of jewels whose links are
forged by 14K gold hearts,
compassion and rainbow visions.
Safety-catch of caring clasps us
beyond mileage or Ma Bell.

We are sisters...

whose images are locked in each other's youth.
Beauty is in scars buried in our smiles.
Bonding allows sunshine through a permanent
arrangement of shadows. Survivors, we have
defied dreams deformed by fantasy.
Humiliation has scraped us to the bone, but
we have over come mutilation of old realities.

We are sisters...

united forever by Eve's *delicious* sin!
Perfect deltas form our triad
 woman
 sister mother
Drops of blood attest to still fruitful wombs.
Together we bleed for non-payment of alimony.
Struggling like migrant workers with the results of
strike-fervored independence.

We are sisters...

whose lives are knitted with gray hairs
and pastel-shaded wool, ribbons of
commitment that do not unravel. All have
rewoven the fabric of self-esteem. Tides of
fortune do not affect the molecular
structure of our friendships.

We are sisters...

melded silhouettes whose ringless hands are
joined in solidarity against footprints
of the world upon our psyches.
Empty pockets are lined with courage. Like
noise ripening we raise our voice in song...

We are sisters...

Magi Schwartz





STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

You're seated now, quill to ink and onto parchment flows the fourth chapter of the world's next *Garp*.

Imagine that! I can't.

I have spent hours in the offices of style-less hypnotist, being "systematically desensitized" from the likes of test anxiety, fear of loud noises - dogs - crowds - shooting stars --- and the one fear that's maintained strong long before the others were born and hardly scathed, much less desensitized, over the years --- fear of empty paper.

Although my "coaches" have yet

to cure this scarecrow stuffed with fear enough to feed an army at war, I've learned, at least, to acknowledge and then to deal with the sources of my fear. Upon sighting of a shooting star, I flinch and wish for a major catastrophe. With one simple wish, I become frightened rather than phobic. From loud noises and most dogs I run, and when in shopping malls I'm confronted with large crowds --- I head for the nearest bookstore. Test anxiety required of me a bit of creative self-deceit, and I now remind myself that every "A" I've ever gotten was the result of anxiety. With that in mind, I

welcome it, gnaw at my knuckles and pray a lot before every exam.

To the non-phobic reader, these coping mechanisms may appear as less than acceptable. The phobic, however, will understand completely when I say that I haven't worn earmuffs in ages and live with a very small dog. Impressive, don't you agree?

And what of empty paper? I imagine myself walking, calmly, into an unshared room. I sense a familiar...

The fear's not gone, but this meditation does get me past the aquarium. Seated at my desk, I dip the quill, clench my teeth, and do it. Just do it.

Tyrant

Jacqueline Stalarski

Am I a tyrant? Perhaps. I leave it to you to decide.

To a somewhat small domain, I am the absolute ruler, and I spurn any suggestions made by advisors, unless or until I have looked into it very carefully, which is wise; if an error is done, I take full responsibility.

Although different, physically or figuratively, my subjects' primary needs are equal in that adequate food must be provided for their health and happiness. An abundance of fresh air and sunlight also are very important.

Now, to insure the proper growth of my people, I have established rigid laws which must be obeyed blindly, and they are: no one escapes my eagle's eye. As I am without pity, corporal punishments are 'de rigueur' and applied at once. The strict sentences range from the 'cut of limbs, a disliked task this, bodily removal from relatives, or definitive exile to a faraway place.

Another thing I encounter is that the proximity of, should I say, bad elements, plays havoc with my subjects and, to avoid contamination, I ruthlessly destroy them with any means in my power. It is essential, as I have to consider the continuation of the species; that is primordial, I believe.

'Inflexible Justice' is my motto, although at times I find it hard to follow. Even tyrants have a heart, and I do have favorites; nonetheless, this small weakness is perfectly under control, I assure

you. To be a great ruler, alas, requires sacrifices.

Now and then, some of my subjects decline, listless; no amount of care seems to work, and it is sad to see them passing away from a mysterious illness. Until I learn the cause, I have no rest: it may be highly contagious.

Ever so proud a ruler that I am, I have a confession to make: I sell my people! It is shameful, I admit,

but it must be done as overcrowding conditions occur periodically. And I am full of sorrow because I love them, and wish to keep them all.

So, such is life and, in the cool afternoons when I allow myself a small pause to contemplate my small garden, I am truly happy to see the delicately colored flowers lively bobbing their heads, as if they were saluting me, their ruler!





Rina Otero



Stephanie Lovallo

HURLEBURT'S

REVIEWS

by Steve Rios

With the intellect of an historian, the aggressiveness of a journalist and the finesse of a painter, art critic Roger Hurlebert expounds on Broward County's art world.

After years of teaching college-level art appreciation and art history, Hurlebert exchanged grade books for notebooks and classrooms for critiques.

Hurlebert, 35, is the art critic for the Fort Lauderdale News and Sun Sentinel. His weekly function is to present a analysis of art in Broward, a county which long suffered the reputation of being a cultural wasteland.

That myth must be muffed, Hurlebert said.

"I'm constantly amazed at the amount of diversity in this county," said Hurlebert, a serious, athletic man with a deep voice and prematurely graying hair.

Culturally, Broward is past its infancy, Hurlebert said.

"It's more like a newborn colt," he said. "It's up on shaky legs and growing rapidly."

For the past six years, Hurlebert has used his column to water and nurture Broward's art community.

"I'll do more (hard criticism) when

there are more galleries competing to delight the public," he said. "I'm trying to encourage more visual art to come to South Florida by singling out those things which I think are worthwhile."

Whether he uses it harshly or not, Hurlebert's offers is carte blanche to comment on everything from sculpture to macrame, crochet to video art.

A frustrated artist, Hurlebert enjoys the opportunity to use his education expressively.

"I decided to look at other people's works and take delight in that rather than being frustrated with works that I was never happy with," he said.

Other aspiring artists, he said, have hung up the easel and brush for strictly economic reasons.

In a society more concerned with technology than the liberal arts, "to make a career as a painter is a turn off," Hurlebert said. "People are saying, 'I want to study computers, accounting - technical fields.'"

Even those who do choose art are affected by the fervor for fame and fortune, he said.

"Artists are in a hurry quite a bit," said Hurlebert, who earned a Master's Degree in Art History from

Penn State University. "There's a lot of anxiety.

Though he sometimes reviews films or books, his forte and love is art.

While the 60's and 70's were years of "flashy colors, gestures and activity" in painting, the 80's has become more realistic, a trend which pleases Hurlebert.

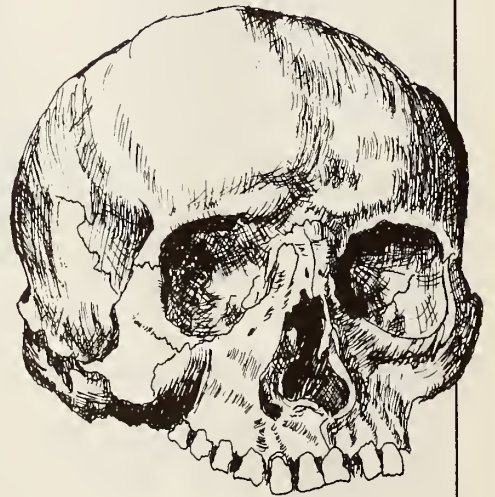
"It forces young artists to learn the basics," said Hurlebert, who is upset by artists who called themselves "abstractionists" yet lack artistic foundation.

"Learning how to see and record the real nature of things is very important," he said. "You have to work through what is before you can redefine what is."

He buys artwork which appeals to him aesthetically, regardless of the medium or style. It does no good to feign attraction towards something - no matter how valuable - unless it genuinely excites him.

Hurlebert carries that philosophy into his column. He alone decides what to explore and what to ignore.

Though subjective writing is Hurlebert's right, experienced and fair criticism is his duty.



STEPHEN KING

A CLOSER LOOK

Mood and elements converged to create the perfect atmosphere for the "Fantastic." Torrential rains and ghostly flashes of lightening gave us the impression we were on our way through an Edgar Allan Poe gothic horror story.

In reality, we were on our way to the Fifth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts. Sponsored by Florida Atlantic University, the conference's main speaker was author Stephen King, speaking on "horror" and the art of writing horror stories.

Douglas Winter, renowned critic of science fantasy and fiction, conducted an open interview with King. Throughout the interview, King and Winter drank lite beer from frosted glasses. King was dressed informally, wearing a navy blue and white striped pull-over sweater and faded jeans. At times, he would roll his eyes and raise his eyebrows in quick succession, peering over his glasses as a spoof of his image.

We, representatives of P'an Ku, were armed with pens, pads and an appropriate case of the shivers.

Winter:

You've become the brand name for modern horror fiction whether you wanted to or not. People look to you as the vanguard of the field. How do you feel that you personally, and the field itself, have been treated in terms of its serious intentions? Do you think it has been treated fairly?

King:

No, I don't, but I think it's been treated better than a lot of the writers of the field feel that it's been treated. I don't know if I said this last night, but writers have gigantic egos. And the worst thing is to be ignored. You know, you would rather be rak-



ed over the coals, hung by the heels on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*, than not to be reviewed at all. Critics realize, if only subconsciously, that all this stuff is wide open for allegory and it all can provide more from the surface stories.

P'an Ku asked King what advice he would give young writers attempting to break into a field saturated with "professionals."

King:

The only advice that I could give is be yourself and hope that's going to work. I just looked at the papers this morning and I sometimes feel that I am where I am because I'm so quintessentially average, that everybody is related to everything that I have to say. You know, "that guy is me. He's an average American nerd."

Someone asked Maxwell Perkins once if Thomas Wolfe was a great novelist and Perkins said, "No. He wasn't a great novelist at all." Then

Perkins added, "Thomas Wolfe was a divine wind chime and when the wind blew he made these lovely noises, you know, and when he sat down to write, that's what came out." And so, sometimes I feel more like a wind chime than I (feel like) somebody who's consciously doing what he does. As far as the progression of my own road to acceptance, I wrote three or four novels before *Carrie*, and through *Carrie*, submissions were met with some sympathy, and I got to know some people in New York. I didn't have an agent but I went to New York for the first time.

Later in the interview, regarding the subject of reviews that were less than enthusiastic, King was philosophical.

I sometimes think that as far as reviews go, I would have had a much easier time of it, critically anyway, as a writer if I let them (my works) be out-and-out gothics that don't have much to do with reality, but concentrate more on the idea of vampires or werewolves or whatever it happens to be. Or if I would let them be these family sagas, or tales of the middle class, or whatever you want to call them, and jettison the vampires altogether. Actually, I'm not willing to do either one of those things, and, in a lot of ways for me, when the *Wendigo* appears finally in *Pet Semetary*, breathe a sigh of relief. For me, at that point, I'm safe when I understand finally that Jack Torrence is not trying to kill his son in *The Shining*. I am safe, I am hidden again. I don't have to deal with this anymore. I don't have to play the serious novelist anymore. Then I can do what I regard as my job, which is simply entertainment.

Turning Blue

Annie, we gotta get outta here
This place ain't gettin' us anywhere
It just gives us somethin' to do y'know
All this is just what you go through to show ya
That livin' ain't easy and life isn't fair
Till you figure it out and by then you don't care
But I care now and so do you
Sometimes it's all you can do
To keep your mouth shut,
Hold your breath,
and turn blue!

Annie, how can we get outta here?
They got mental road blocks up everywhere
They're givin' us too much to think about
You can't chase your dreams if you can't get out
Look at all these rich kids with their wonderful things
Runnin' 'round loose while we live on shoe strings
Well, I've had it and so have you
Tell ya what we're gonna do
Gonna keep our mouths shut,
Hold our breath,
and turn blue!

Well, I have kept my mouth shut
Now I need to sing a song
I've been left holdin' my breath for so long
And I've seen my world turnin' bluer every day
And I been thinkin' how easy it would be to get away

Annie come on, we're getting' outa here
I'll teach you real easy how to shift gears
All of the world's fastest getaway cars
Are right out there in the showroom
And one of 'em should be ours
We'll take that Porsche Nine-Eleven out for a road test
Right up the east coast to Canada
Then make a sharp left
Get in the front seat and we'll make it all come true
Make 'em keep their mouths shut
Let 'em hold their breath,
Watch 'em turn blue!

by Mike Barra

From 42nd Street

There was bib tit noon
in a see-through cloud
neon stars
wingin' down at me
for 25 cents I could see
everything I'm missin'

You got a nickle
You got two dimes
She'll take your money
anytime . . . but she won't
sell you anything and
she'll leave you wishin'

Doin' a little business
in a Big Town
the only one that doesn't know his
way around
solve all your mysteries
and discover some, too
From 42nd St. . . I love you!

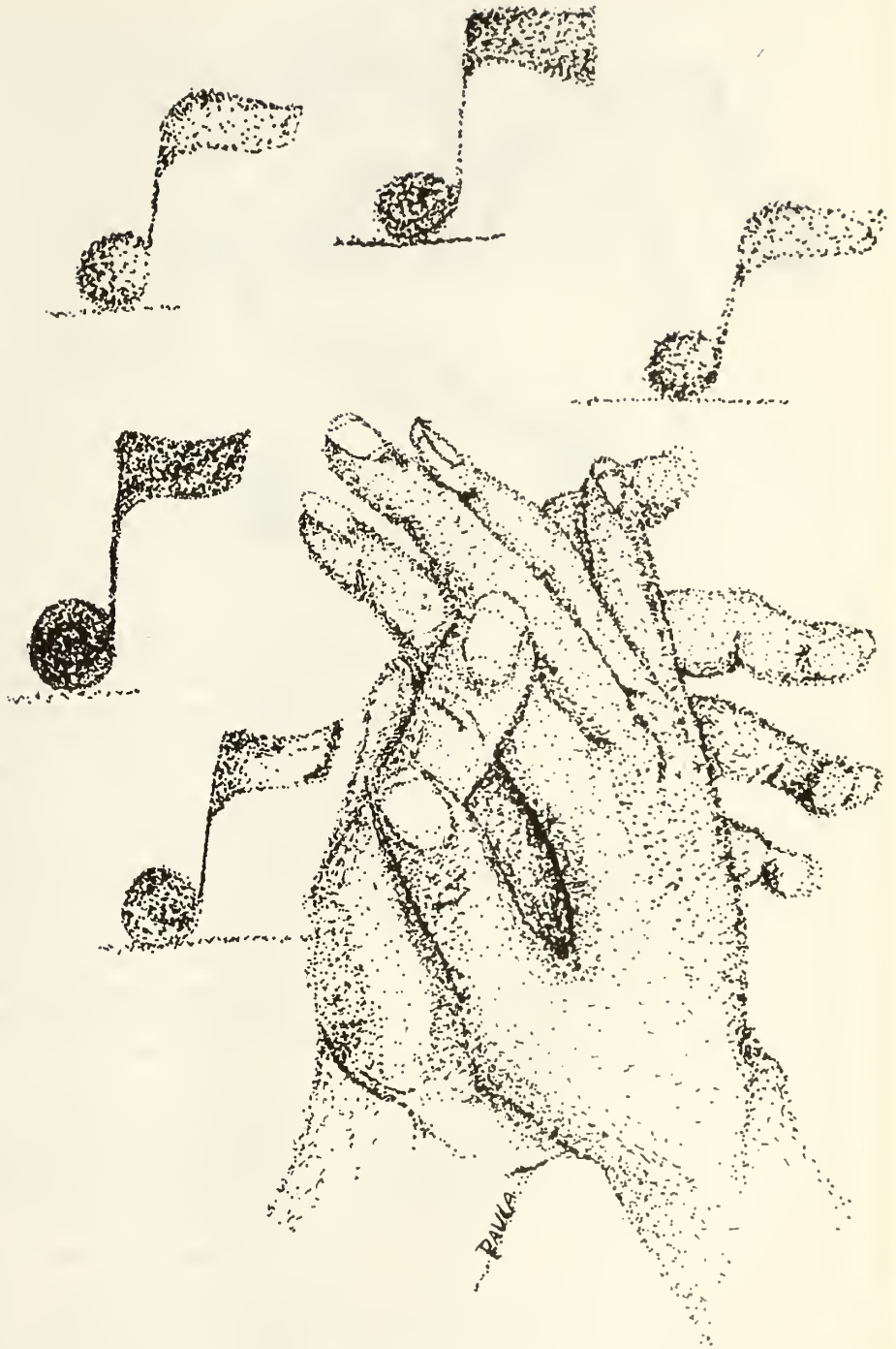
Right this way
live on stage
girls, girls, girls, girls
no one under age
and no one overqualified
Step right up, step inside

from 42nd St. . . I miss you

sixteenth row
center aisle
pretty girl moves
over to me and smiles
pulled my pants down to my knees
and stole all my money

Doin' a little business
in The Big Town
If I only had my tickets
I'd be on that Greyhound
And by tomorrow mornin' I'd be
home safe 'n' sound
From 42nd St. . . . I need you.

by Lary Glazer





Melissa's 911

I'd spend the whole day polishing the fender
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride
I'd shampoo the carpets and condition the leather
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride
I'd get a tooth brush and shine up the engine
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride

Take me for a ride, take me for a ride
C'mon take your car wash boy for a test drive
Your daddy ran off with the Hertz rent-a-girl
They prob'ly gone on a trip 'round the world
I promised not to take you quite that far
And nobody'll know, just you and me, and this beautiful car
Just a little ways, I know a place, just a little ways . . .

I'd remove my Cat hat and open the sunroof
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride
I'd wear designer jeans and adjust the reclining seats
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride
Then I'd stick my cassett in the most amazing tape deck
Of Melissa's 911 if she'd take me for a ride

Take me for a ride, take me for a ride
That's right, take your car wash boy for a test drive
Most car wash boys got no brains, it's true
Neither do most beautiful rich girls like you
I could take better care of you than your car
Which is probably smarter than both of us are
I know the angels in racing car heaven
Don't mind us goin' for a ride in your 911
Just a little ways, one of these days. Just a little ways

by Mike Barra

Cecil

He got real good lookin' just before he died
Like he was gettin' ready to take that ride
Put on a clean shirt in the middle of the day
And combed his hair for once

He was a race car driver just before he died
To be goin' that fast they said was suicide
The Daytona 500 ain't the Palisades Parkway
But the checkered flag waved down

Now who's gonna sweep up the floor?
Who's gonna run to the store?
Who's gonna open the doors?
Who's gonna pull in the Porsches?

He got real sincere just before he died
He knew who his friends were and who was on his side
Took care of us mechanics and we took care of his cars
He made all of us proud to be what we are

Now who's gonna ask "What's this do?"
And who wants to know "What's this called?"
Up down hold pull push crank
Good good good good good Thanks, that's all

Well, he got real important just before he died
Got the owner cigarettes and gave people rides
Took deposits to the bank and went to Motor Vehicles
Not ten minutes went by without someone paging Cecil

Now who's gonna be out in back
Lookin' for papers and a match?
Who's gonna fix all the flats?
Who do we have to yell at?

So he got real rebellious just before he died
Like someone had to be punished for a life that lied
For dreams that aren't safe, dreams that get too high to drive
For all the deadly turns on the race track of our lives

We got a new kid to sweep up the floor
We don't talk about Cecil no more
Then Gino took a road test, caught the Parkway north
Swears to Christ that Cecil passed him in that shiney
red Porsche

And he was real good lookin'
And he waved good-bye
Real good lookin'
Just before he died

Miike Barra

And Angelou Still Rises

by Monika Conroy

on black poetry which encompassed the spectrum of emotions. Her underlying theme, women, pushed the issue of color to the wayside.

Her opening phrase, "art is love and love is art," returns to the mind briefly as she reads, "I want to die, while you still love me." Her face lights up with emotion. Her arms stretch and reach out and women know and understand, the same way when she thrusts the line "Jump back, honey, jump back." All through the reading of the poem she assumes a man's stance and facial expression, but on the last line she is suddenly total woman as she strides across, pushes hair away from her face, and calmly says "Jump back, honey, jump back."

Miss Angelou's body moves with the grace of a dancer as she accentuates the reading of "Slave Auction." Shoulders drawn in, face downbeat, body slouching, she breathes life to lines as the audience experiences the misery, the pain, the bitterness of slavery.

Yet Miss Angelou never preaches. Hand on her hips and her head held high, she pokes gentle fun at people's ignorance about color. "Black people," she says, "are a bouquet of flowers. Cinnamon, coco, plum-black and caramel." Our eyes suddenly become aware. In the same breath we learn about the meaning of signifying, "the art of telling someone what you think without getting yourself killed" ("Oh how I hate to lose something. . . beautiful").

Why do you write?

She looked at her inquisiter with expressive eyes.

"What a strange question," she said. "Why breathe? Why live?"

The mood changes. Recounting a personal anecdote, her voice is husky, her face is ddened as she recites, *I wear the mask*. She cries, not afraid to share, to show, to let us feel. And she has taught us, not angrily, but lovingly what the words "To keep my race alive" mean to her.

Are writers lonely?

A reflective smile appears. A brief pause and she answers, "Oh yes."

And you understand. You know to wear the mask, one has to live with this feeling, and then to reach deep into one's self to express it.

Whom do you write for?

"Whoever wants to listen," she answers immediately.

The audience listens, and feels the sting of prejudice, the taste of slavery where throats ache from saying, "Yez ma'am. Yez boss." Miss Angelou teaches us about life, her life, black life.

The woman she is lifts us up by telling that "nature deals only in perfection." She recites *Phenomenal Woman* and then cautions all women not to live exclusively without men, but to encourage equality and fair play.

It is wise to do so, and therefore, we will not have lived "years of useless virtue."

Maya Angelou came, spoke... and captivated.



The haunting, spellbinding sound of a flutist playing *Summertime* fills the air. The lights are lowered, quiet settles over the crowd and the time is here. "And so I rise, *Phenomenal Woman*." And the audience is in love.

With whom?

Miss Maya Angelou.

Tall and statuesque, she gently and creatively guides her listeners toward an understanding of who and what she is. Black - woman - artist. Her talk at Broward Community College, in March of 1984, was a tour de force

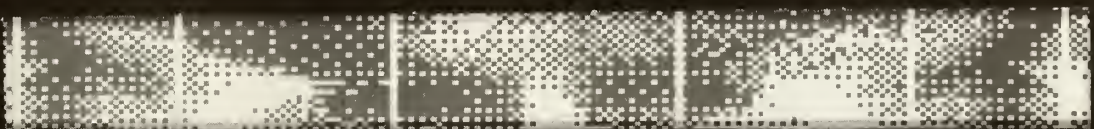


Photographs

It's just a stop action breathtaking line of a beautiful girl I once called mine. Just a flashback, on a fiery dream. All my hopes, taken aback. Photograph.

Barbra Donofrio





FACES

Computer Graphic by Pat Coull

Pencil by Coleen Baggot

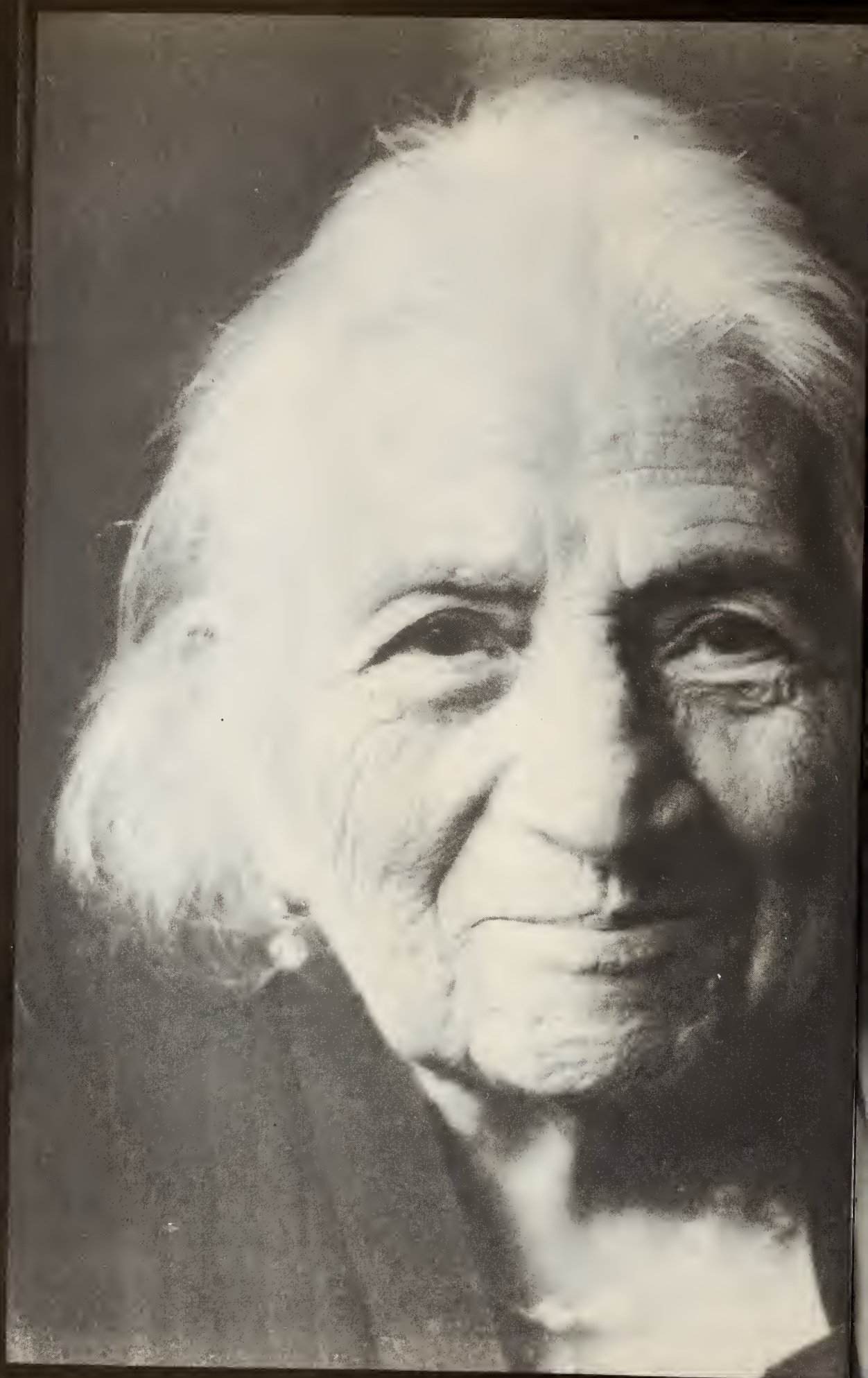
Pencil by S.S. Smith

Photograph by Betrice Robinson





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The Forest Family

NARRATOR:

Undiminished breadth and scope,
a land of beauty, life and hope;
a continent between two oceans,
still, yet in revolving motion.
Purple plains, imposing mountains,
Rivers fall in fluming fountains,
Desert sands with hot sun warming,
forests cool, with wildlife swarming.

And in one special forest there,
a glen, rich with nature where
plants profuse in emerald hues
and lakes reflect in myriad blues.

And if one looks with great care,
in a thicket, hiding there,
you can see a small, gray bunny...
nose soft and wet, ears large and funny,
nibble blades of fresh, green grass,
nature's infinite repast.

BUNNY:

Ah, that tastes good and fills me up,
but that's enough until we sup;
and speaking in the plural we,
I wonder where the rest can be?
While all this time on food I've spent,
I did not see which way they went.
(Sniffing)

This path smells of mother, brother,
I don't think they took another . . .

NARRATOR:

So down the path our bunny hops,
till nose twitching, abruptly stops.

BUNNY: (Sniffing)

The odor's strong and feels so hot,
it smells of them, but maybe not;
It comes from just beyond that tree,
I must move forward, so to see.

(Cranes neck)

Oh, No!

Mother, brother stuck on sticks,
while at their fur, an orange flame licks;
(Then sadly)

vacant eyes, once warm, maternal,
my brother, ultimate fraternal,
friendly family, roasting, toasting,
before three creatures, loudly boasting.

MAN: (Licking lips)

Mmmm . . . that really does smell good,
I'm glad our traps worked in the wood;
Now we have a lunch to eat,
and rabbit stew to last a week.

CHILD:

Mommy . . . I don't know if I can eat
a morsel of that bunny meat;
I just watched them hop around.
I doubt this meal, I can hold down.

WOMAN: (Shaking finger at child)

Nonsense child, it's time you learned
right from wrong, and then discern
what is needed for survival,
recognizing its arrival.
Providential proof providing,
settling your mind's dividing,
developing good eating habits,
can begin with tender rabbit.
(eats a leg with relish)

BUNNY: (exclaims)

She just took a bite of mother,
while the other's eating brother.

WOMAN:

I must say that taste I relish,
but my waist I also cherish.
(pats stomach)

BUNNY: (questioning)

I can see she pats her tummy,
can she feel my soft, gray mummy?

MAN:

Now child, watch what I'm about to do;
this will make a gift for you.

NARRATOR:

He takes a rabbit from the stick,
and from his belt with motion quick,
unsheaths a blade of glinting steel,
and knives it down with strength and zeal.
It severs gristle, bone and marrow,
of a leg, both gray and marrow,
and with a loud victorious hoot,
he holds aloft a rabbit foot.

MAN: (holding leg out to child)

My child, here is a gift for you.
Imbue your life with fortune true;
with ill fate you'll not be stuck,
this rabbit foot's for your good luck.

CHILD:

Still it's hard for me to know,
why we hurt a creature so
small and gray and undemanding,
it's quite beyond my understanding.

MAN:

Once you grow a little older,
you'll appreciate much bolder
animals, both brave and fit,
who've learned like us to use their w
You see a man who's called a rabbit,
and learned to run in fear, a habit,
becomes the source of scorn and mir
for brave providers rule the earth.
(looks up at sky)
Philosophy enough today;
we must be getting on our way.

NARRATOR:

They heap some dirt upon the fire,
and from the glade, the three retire,
once their voices fade from hearing,
the bunny hops into the clearing.

BUNNY:

What will I do without my mother?
I know I'll never have another.

NARRATOR:

The bunny sits beside the ashes,
remembering her brother's dashes
through the woods in fun and glee.

BUNNY:

I wish he could still play with me.

NARRATOR:

The tiny head droops to the ground,
knowing not another sound
will emanate from her dead mother,
of her fun-filled, loving brother.

BUNNY:
What is this smoke and flame I see?
It's very hot . . . it's time to flee.

NARRATOR:
The walls of flame are quite unbroken.
The bunny has too late awoken;
He wildly starts to hop about,
Trying to find some way out,
But all around her, it's the same:
Protesquely, dancing, red-hot flames.
One catches on her soft, white tail,
Searing pain, she wants to wail;
Instead she leaps straight in the fire;
The flames glow orange, another pyre.

The forest comes alive with fright,
As all the creatures learn their plight.
Birds take the wing, squirrels start to scurry,
The forest animals must hurry
To escape the searing blaze,
Which emanates from smokey haze
Through trees and bushes, once bright green.
Inferno's path, black ash, unclean,
While just ahead a graceful deer,
Doe, not much older than a yearling,
Partakes of vegetations yielding.
When suddenly, the flames surround;
The doe in panic, looks around,
Men gathering, one mighty leap,
Just far enough for her to keep
Her life from fire's deadly touch.
Get away from that, she knows that much.

Unaware and far away,
The family three enjoys the day
Beneath a sky, both blue and fair,
Walk through the wood, without a care.

CHILD:
Oh, mother, look at that ahead,
A bird, with such a breast of red.

BUNNY:
This world seems cruel and filled with harm.
I think I'll stay here where it's warm.

NARRATOR:
The bunny lies with sorrow deep,
Until she finally falls asleep.
She never sees the sparks which leap
From still hot ash, that deep she sleeps,
And soon the campsite's all ablaze,
Which wakens bunny in the haze.

WOMAN:
Robin . . . is that bird's name,
Harbinger of spring, his fame,
For after winter's ice and cold,
His chirping is a song of gold.
So every spring, eyes search the sky
To find a robin flying high'
Winged couriers of Nature's creed,
A visual answer to human need
To know that like their eggs of blue,
Life, indeed, can start anew.

CHILD:
Look, he's bouncing all around.
Why is he pecking in the ground?

WOMAN:
He looks for slimy worms to eat,
Which help to keep the forest neat;
By eating dark and ugly things,
He's won Mankind's admiring.

NARRATOR:
With that, the robin spears a worm,
Then once aloft, begins to turn
To find his nest, that special tree,
And bring food to his family.
Just then the fleeing doe broke clear.

MAN:
Quick . . . my gun, here comes a deer.

(A SHOT)

CHILD: (excited)
Dad, you got him. Let's go see.
He fell down beside that tree.

MAN:
Oh, No, that's really rotten luck.
It's just a doe and not a buck.

WOMAN:
That's illegal, you must know.
You may never slay a doe.
Is there something we can do
Before a warden catches you?

MAN:
Quick . . . You'll have to help me bury
This doe, and really we must hurry;
Before my err is discovered,
We must have it fully covered.

NARRATOR:
The family digs with zeal and verve,
Knowing they must keep their nerve,
They even camouflage the mound
So their deed will not be found.
Finishing with a collective sigh,
Their eyes are drawn to the sky.
A great huge bird above them lands,
High in a tree, near where they stand.

CHILD:
God . . . he looks so proud and regal.

MOTHER:
Yes, my child, that is an eagle.

MAN:
A symbol of strength, completely free,
Known by all, from sea to sea.
In him, our greatness is reflected,
Which is why he was selected
To represent this very land
Upon which we now stand.

WOMAN:
And if my child, you've never heard,
We all must try to conserve
The eagle from eradication,
Symbol of our great nation.
(pause)
Though I will never understand
How any thinking, caring man
Could hurt an animal so regal
As our own American Eagle.

NARRATOR:
The eagle looked across the land,
His eagle eye had spotted man,
Long before he'd landed here
And knew the species he must fear,
For when this creature reached profusion,
Without exception, came confusion.
Behind him now, the sky grew dark;
His talons bit into the bark.
He knew there wasn't time to tarry,
Not even to select a quarry.
He must fly as far away
From those below, this very day,
His home behind, a fiery wasteland.
He pushed aloft, to escape man.

Below the three walked, hand in hand,
The proud American race of Man.

Just To Set The Record Straight

by Linda Billetter

In *A Rose for Emily*, William Faulkner painted a picture of an aristocratic, eccentric witch. No, let's be absolutely frank: he portrayed Emily Grierson as a necrophiliac. As a child growing up in Jefferson County, I heard many strange tales about "old gruesome Grierson." Looking back, I can see that the tales became juicier with each repetition; furthermore, I must admit to a few embellishments myself.

Mr. Faulkner was a highly respected citizen in our town, and no one ever doubted the authenticity of his account. Perhaps before judging her so harshly though, we should have ridden a mile in Miss Emily's buggy. While doing some research on the old Grierson place for the town's historical society, I unearthed the following transcript as I was digging through the county's old tax records. No one knows how it got there.

I am the spirit of Miss Emily Grierson. If per chance you are thinking that spirits can't write, you have just categorized yourself as a commoner. Throughout my entire life, I was hounded by small-minded commoners who were far too shallow to understand anyone of my position in society. Now that you have read the slanderous account of my life as told by one of the town's peasants, I thought you might like to hear my side of the story -- the real side. Actually, what you like is of no consequence -- here is the true account.

A prime example of the hounding by the commoners is the matter of the taxes. I could not believe the incredulous audacity of the townspeople in sending me a tax notice, as if I were of the poor working class.

Besides showing extremely poor taste, they were showing their ignorance of the city records about a matter long ago resolved. Their tax notice was not worth the paper on which it was written, so I promptly disposed of it as I did the letter I received the following month. I did, however, respond to the mayor's letter since he may have come closer to approaching my standing in society; although he, too, was woefully uninformed. And the impudence of the delegation sent to my house regarding this matter truly tried my patience! During the short duration of their call (and even that was too long), I had to tell them no less than four times, "I have no taxes in Jefferson." Their ill-mannered stubbornness left me no recourse other than to immediately dismiss them. Well, so much for the tax matter.

Probably the affair that caused the biggest stink in town, however, was my relationship with Homer Barron. Of course, Homer didn't have the high standing befitting a Grierson, but he made up for that one deficit with his charm, wit, and enchanting good looks. Although it would have been highly improper for a Grierson to acknowledge the stares of the townspeople, I could sense their eyes upon us and feel the breeze of their wagging tongues when Homer and I

took our Sunday afternoon buggy rides.

Even their jealousy barriers couldn't keep back the chill of their comments. I recognized their jealousy for what it was, and nestled closer to Homer's side for warmth. All of their catty remarks combined, however, couldn't compare to the impudent boldness of that meddling Baptist minister! Sometimes the world seemed to be filled with vermin!

Speaking of vermin, the pharmacist expressed my sentiments exactly when he labeled the arsenic "for rats." His only mistake was in the plurality of the word. Homer began to grow restless and spoke of moving on to another town. But you don't move a Grierson; furthermore, you certainly don't leave a Grierson, as he found out.

Despite his restlessness, my love for Homer knew no bounds, and this is probably best expressed in one of my poems. The whole town knew of my cultural contributions to the community through china painting lessons, but none knew about my poetry. Just to set the records straight, I close with this poem:

This drink won't mean farewell, my dear
It only serves to keep you near.
My heart pounds fast -- at racing pace
When I'm with you in your embrace.

I'm yours always, so here's my heart
'Now we shall never be apart.
We'll love through all eternity
For I am your Miss Emily.

Vladimir Nabokov...

The Man Who Dared To Tread

by Gordon Blaise

Sex, fantasy and perversion – these are the tools of those all too common literary rejects whose pseudonyms grace the gaudy covers of dime-store romances – whose tasteless words garnish the yellowing pages of sensationalistic supermarket rags. This is the realm of those who dare to tread the thin proverbial line between decency and indecency – the hazy borderland between bathroom literature and the Harvard University library.

Seldom however, has this thin intangible line been successfully trodden. Even professionals, such as Masters and Johnson, whose work dons the armor of professional medical and psychological research, are often the object of a watchful puritanic eye. There are, however, a few literary geniuses, whose talent and tact permits them the privilege of penning the “risque” in such a marvellous manner as to often leave their readers dumbfounded as to their exact reaction toward that which they have read.

One such author, Russian born Vladimir Nabokov, is truly an expert guide through the hazy tunnels of the risqué. In his book *Lolita*, Nabokov dares to expose the thoughts and soul of a mentally insane man whose fixation on young pre-pubescent females dominates his very being and disrupts his every thought. Humbert Humbert, as he is called by the author, is skillfully portrayed as a European gentleman, suave and sedate, and often possessing the man-

ners and etiquette of the European Aristocracy – the perfect guise to gain the trust and respect of those upon whom the spider would feast. Accordingly, he skillfully spins his web of perverted desire to snag the innocent Lolita.

The story itself, is presented to the reader as a first person account of the twisted mental processes of Humbert Humbert. This method of authorship permits the reader to view Humbert's perverted world through Humbert's own perverted eyes – a skillfully utilized technique that often leaves the reader in a state of confusion as to which observations are reality and which are creations of Humbert Humbert's neurotic mind. This, a deliberate offense on behalf of the author, is aimed specifically at the reader's own psyche, where it is left up to the reader himself to distinguish between fantasy and reality.

As the story continues, one is often taken aback by the strange, sometimes nonsensical events that take place in the mind of Humbert Humbert. Led through a journey of perverted lust, murderous plotting, and diabolical scheming, the reader is taken on an adventure that entails a great deal of time and space. The reader sees Lolita blossom into womanhood, travels virtually every corner of North America, and finally ends up being directly addressed by Humbert Humbert himself, now admittedly insane as he closes his psychotic adventure with a final touch of sentiment for his beloved

Lolita. The story, however, is ended, but Vladimir Nabokov's bazaar of uncommon techniques is far from completion.

The story of *Lolita*, strange and absurd as it may seem, is not in itself a free-standing entity, barring of course, the universality of sexual fantasy. It isn't enough that the poor unsuspecting reader is led through a story where the “pervert” goes as far as to marry his victim's mother in order to gain access to the object of his fantasies, but the author has to continually toy with the reader's mind, even to the point of writing his own commentary and prelude to the story under a fictitious name – an extension from the typical Russian psychological study to a study of the reader's own psyche.

Lolita is generally an extremely well-written, marvellously planned novel that has both the capability of being a Harvard Classic, and colorfully decorating the lid of an “avid reader's” toilet tank. It is a story of insanity that can be read as simple perverted lust. It is a story of a single man's adventure through a world of sad confusion, yet it can be read as the frivolous free-verse diary of a stereotypical “dirty old man.” It is a tale of truth – one that can be read to suit the tastes and mood of the reader, but most of all, it is a story with which everyone can laugh, love and cry – the story of a truly lonely man, his guilt and his fear – the ultimate study in the human psyche . . . The reader himself.

Someday My Prince Will Come

Someday My Prince Will Come
Women's Internalization of Fairy
Tales

Women are confronted with role-ambiguity that is perpetrated by the portrayals of females in fairy tales. All little girls and boys need and enjoy fantasy, but it is important to understand how powerful the subliminal sexist attitudes portrayed in fairy tales affect the overall socialization of children.

A definite attitude derived from most fairy tales is that a girl's life begins only when she has been chosen by a man. In *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty* the female heroin exists in a comatose state awaiting her savior-Prince to kiss her lightly and break the spell of sleep. She marries him out of gratitude, not love, for saving her from a life of nothingness: any Prince will do. The internalization of this attitude is apparent in American women, who no matter what level of success they have achieved while single, still have the gut-level feeling that real life does not begin until they have met and married their Prince.

It is a kind of a validation syndrome that keeps all women like little girls waiting for their Prince to come, and when he comes she can live "happily ever after" through him. Madonna Kolbenschlag states in *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye*:

This may explain the fear-of-success syndrome in exceptional women, and the tendency of achievement-oriented women to slip back into regressive roles after marriage. (Madonna Kolbenschlag, *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye*)

Simeone de Beauvoir explains this waiting game in these words:

Woman is the Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, Snow White, she who receives and submits. In song and story the young man is seen departing adventurously in search of a woman; he slays the dragon, he battles giants;

she is locked in a tower, a palace, a garden, a cave, she is chained to a rock, a captive, sound asleep: she waits. (Simeone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*)

Cinderella is one of the oldest and most popular fairy tales. In the older renditions of this short story, Cinderella is working through an Oedipal Complex and therefore accepts her dreary existence as victim as a kind of punishment for her "dirty thoughts". Part of her penance is dealing with the evil stepmother and the sibling rivalry of two ugly, envious stepsisters.

Portrayed in this and many other fairy tales is the bitter struggle between females, whether it be mother-daughter, stepmother-stepdaughters, stepsisters, etc. The fairy tale formula female is not likely to create lasting friendships. Her orientation to a single exclusive relationship and her need to invest all her emotional energy in it, makes it difficult for her to sustain intense love for more than one person at a time. This is especially true for another woman who may be in competition for the same dream.

Little girls are expected to have a best friend to the exclusion of the group. But as they reach maturity, this best friend is replaced by a love interest.

Kolbenschlag explains that: "Friendship with a woman is sustained if it does not conflict with or threaten the important male relationship". (Madonna Kolbenschlag, *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye*). It is no surprise to the reader of fairy tales how a girl-child could distrust other women.

If her mother was good, as in *Cinderella*, she will die before the child can benefit from a positive same-sex role model. More often than not as in *Snow White* and *Cinderella*, the nasty step-mothers are wicked



and self-serving and the step-sisters are malevolent and envious beings out to destroy the vulnerable lass.

Motherhood is depicted as a desirable position with confusing consequences. The hate of the girl-child by the step-mother portrays evil as if it is a socio-biological trait in women. Andrea Dworkin states that:

These fairy tale mothers are mythological female figures. They define for us the female character and delineate *its* possibilities. When she is good, she is soon dead. In fact, when she is good she is so passive in life that death must be only more of the same. Here we discover the cardinal principle of sexist ontology: the only good woman is a dead woman. When she is bad she lives, or when she lives, she is bad. She has one real function, motherhood. In that function, because it is active, she is characterized by overwhelming malice, devouring greed, uncontrollable avarice. She is ruthless, brutal, ambitious, a danger to children and other living things, whether called mother, queen, step-mother, or wicked witch, she is the wicked witch, the content of nightmares, the source of terror. (Andrea Dworkin, *Woman Hating*).

One of the only fairy tales to show a sisterhood between women is *Snow White and Rose Red*. This story shows two women and their widowed mother living a rather idyllic life in the woods, but they too are playing the waiting game. Their lives may be sweet, but they are one dimensional. The other characters in the story are a pitiful yet powerful gnome and a big, friendly bear. When the bear counteracts the sentimentalism of the two girls and kills the gnome, the evil spell is broken, freeing the Prince from the bear-skin. Then and only then is there action. The girls and their mother are swept away to his kingdom to live vicariously, through marriage, off his achievements and begin breathing for real.

Another extremely important message received from fairy tales is the great emphasis on beauty. Perrault's moral to the *Cinderella* story uses these words:

Beauty is a treasure rare,
Who complains of being fair?

Yet there's still something more,
That good fairies have in store.
'Tis that little gift called grace,
Weaves a spell 'round form and
face

Of each word makes magic too,
Lends a charm to all you do.
That it was and nothing less-
Cinderella's fairy dress!
And if you would learn the way,
How to get that gift today-
How to point the golden dart
That shall pierce the Prince's heart,
Ladies, you have but to be,
Just as kind and sweet as she.
(Charles Perrault, *Perrault's Fairy Tales*).

Again, women are faced with another ambiguous message. Women must be beautiful and graceful, yet innocent of the effect of their beauty. If a woman is beautiful and narcissistic she will either perish or be taught a lesson in humility. Bruno Bettelheim explains the evil consequences of narcissism this way:

The story of Snow White warns of the evil consequences of narcissism for both the parent and child. Snow White's narcissism nearly undoes her as she gives in twice to the disguised Queen's enticements to make her look more beautiful, while the Queen is destroyed by her own narcissism. (Bruno Bettelheim, *The Use of Enchantment*).

If one would like to argue the magnitude with which the importance of beauty has been internalized, one should be made aware of the incredible success the cosmetic companies and fashion industries enjoy at the expense of the modern female.

The internalization of these morals learned from fairy tales is complete. Little boys are under the misconception that the end of their struggles will culminate in the prize of a beautiful, subservient girl who has lived a virginal, quiet existence waiting to be awakened by the boy's chivalrous actions. In the last decade the gender role expectations have been in a period of transition. It is important to take into consideration the early socialization of children as a prime factor in how these changing roles will be played out in the future. If the old fairy tales are continuously

read to pre-school children without revision, they will act out the gender roles expected of them. What seems to be most prevalent now is a mass confusion about what gender roles really are. There is a definite healthy swing towards a more androgenous role for men and women, but the route of least resistance is still to follow the old male-dominate-female-subservient roles that are neatly laid out in story books.

One cannot dispute the importance of fairy tales in the growth of young minds. Bettelheim explains:

The figures and events of fairy tales also personify and illustrate inner conflicts, but they suggest ever so subtly how these conflicts may be solved, and what the next step in the development toward a higher humanity may be. (Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*).

Fairy tales may always be an important event in children's lives, but the way in which women are portrayed keep us from that development of a higher humanity Bettelheim speaks of. The fairy tale formula female therefore must be patient (live one dimensionally while waiting for her Prince to breathe life into her being), beautiful (but innocent of what that ultimately may accomplish), and live for her mate and children (isolate herself from the experience of sisterhood). The role-ambiguity women encounter when they face the real world is to be dependent, the validation syndrome (or *Someday-my-Prince-will-come-and-save-me-from-myself-myth*) and the twentieth century peer pressure to be independently upwardly mobile plus raise a contented family.

The fairy tales never prepared women for what comes after *happily-ever-after*. Women and men struggle to reach that nebulous nirvana promised in the story books, only to find out that one cannot live off their initial romantic deposits into a relationship. The confusion occurs when the Prince turns into a frog and the girl has a mind of her own.

Susan Clerici

Betty Lou Always Wore A Smile

Ed, her husband was thought to have been blessed
to possess a wife with such a perpetual smile
no one asked how Betty Lou made do
With a life that was boring at best.

Stretched and stressed and compressed until
her breath was all crushed and sucked away
trapped within a glassed-in illusion of space
captured and contained in a cubical cage
her energies were cooled and subdued and deformed
in the shape of a formaldehyde face
red pointed sticks paint and masquerade
her suckling lips, growling with intent to
molest
and assault the edges of flesh to a smile
and the rouge on her face cracks clean through
while she belches out words to the rhymeless
tune of the metronome within her chest.

by Sandy Fisher



Rainbow Lady

I walked outside and sat down in a rainbow.
I flexed my limbs and marveled at my skin.
No longer was I a pastel monochrome;
Iridescent bangles encircled my wrists;
heaven's brushes manicured by fingernails;
golden dyes bleached my hair.
I was a celestial creature.

Hall telephone ringing.
Tarnished mirror's image
reminds me to call the hairdresser.

Carolyn Kayne

Lace Doilies

Half a dozen starched lace doilies
lay about the darkened room;
Each one draped to perfection
floating like white florescent
ghosts who recall the lemon scent
of washed hair and 100 brush strokes.

Long lines of drawn pale faces pass,
hands touch in sympathy, withdraw
with regret; the chain's link
broken as the moon's rays
slip under the sealed window,
caressing those possessions left.

The rose-coloured couch sits, lonely
sentinel to matched chair, and Wedgewood
birds wait to take flight as aged
fingers pause, then reach out to hold
the sugar-stiff doilies one last time.

Monica Earle Carlton



Kerry Feit



Scarsdale-Bittersweet

by Melanie Denes

Growing up in Scarsdale isn't easy; only you don't do it until you're over thirty. You see, in Scarsdale everything is beautiful. Even the Exxon station in Heathcote is pretty. Only its gas prices are hard to look at. But in Scarsdale nobody looks. The teenagers just hand over their father's credit card and say, "Fill it up and charge it to the business." I know this for a fact. I'm from Scarsdale. I did it all the time.

Everyone in Scarsdale is good-looking. If they weren't born that way, they simply paid for it instead. You could always tell a "Dr. Diamond nose" for instance. Amy Berger, Carol Abelson, and Barbara Godman all wore one after they turned sixteen. This rhinoplasty, along with weejuns and shetland wool sweaters, was really a rage in the sixties.

In Scarsdale when kids cut class from high school, they don't walk to the bowling alley down the street for

pizza. Instead, they jump into their MGB Midgets and go to the Pancake House for Swedish pancakes, juice, and coffee. They never cut classes like Economics, Current Problems, or Fine Cell Structure. Classes like P.E. and Health are usually the ones they skip because these are the ones their Mom and Dad would understand about.

Nobody in Scarsdale talks about muggers, thieves, and maniacs. Oh, every now and then you'll hear of a home that's been robbed. The woman of the house will gladly explain in detail just how many furs and diamonds were taken. What goes unspoken of in Scarsdale are rapes of nine-year-olds, mass murder victims, and suicide. This kind of pain must not be brought to the tender young minds of Scarsdale children. A simple, "Don't think about it" from the concerned parents is an adequate lesson in dealing with the unpleasantness of life; real life, that is. What you have to get is that life in Scarsdale is not real.

Life in Scarsdale is the Quaker Ridge Country Club and gourmet jellybeans. In Scarsdale, one's biggest concern is whether to have lunch in Lord & Taylor's or Bloomingdale's. Here, crucial decisions about resetting diamonds and coordinating wardrobes are arrived at over spinach salads and Perrier daily. Scarsdale has a blanket over it. When you grow up there, you don't see past the edges of town. You only know pretty people, and you only see pretty things. You don't have to read the paper because you don't concern yourself with details of the outside. Your life revolves around the Weaverbrook Deli, where fresh warm pastrami and seeded rye bread can chase away your biggest case of the blues.

It's easy to spot people who have grown up in Scarsdale. Just look for smiling, inquisitive faces that seem to be curious but not too curious. Look for an air of calm that betrays a tremor beneath, kind of like a volcano just before an eruption. Do you notice a confident stride? Well, don't turn your eyes because if you look a little closer, you'll pick up just the slightest hesitation that goes along with it.

One last thing about Scarsdale: lies are born there. You name it, they lie about it. What's that? You ask, "Who are they?" Well, my answer to that is, "They know who they are."

People in Scarsdale better stay there, if you ask me. Once you leave for a period of time, there's no going back. I left eleven years ago, and shortly after, a bomb exploded. Boy, talk about fallout and radiation disease. I feel like a city that's been hit and needs rebuilding. I can't tell you what I'd give to have known in Scarsdale what I know now. The funny thing about it is that I'd give a whole lot more to have never left.

On the Subject of Children

I

Butterfly emerges
Changes are a part of life
Children are on loan

II

Do you believe....

Last week there was a purple dog.
Then again, yesterday the cat was pink.

Today there was a green horse with five legs ---
or is that a tail?

Jenny, I certainly hope you will be this creative
when you get out of kindergarten.

III

A child is born to a divided pair.
Will you cover his eyes to the love not there?

Can you deceive an artist about his own creation?

IV

Children cry as they are forced into the world
Red bodies wet with their former homes
Eager and excited childhood rushes by
The global effect takes form and emerges humani-
ty.

Evelyn Pear

"Push, Ma'am," encouraged the nurse.

A moan of agony mixed with joy escaped her lips. She pushed and was rewarded with a contraction.

"Push," the doctor soothed. His gentle voice made her more relaxed, yet readied her for the ordeal.

"You're bringing a healthy, intelligent new life into the world."

"His head!"

With a scream and a push, a new life burst forth from the womb of a proud, exhausted mother. The doctor dried the infant gently then lifted him above the table by his ankles and gave him a resounding whack across the behind.

"Ouch," exclaimed the child. The agile infant then twisted around and threw a wild swing--catching the doctor in the jaw. The doctor dropped the newborn and stumbled backwards.

The baby stood up and shook his fist at the M.D. "That'll teach you to pick on us little guys, ya big schmuck."

"Doctor...doctor, what's going on?" queried the excited mother. She sat up clumsily in her awkward position and came face to face with her son.

"Hi, Mom!" the youngling said. The mother's eyes bulged as she gasped for air, then she collapsed back onto her pillow.

The baby turned to the nurse. "Oh, mamma! Ain't you fine." The nurse was in a shocked silence.

"Hey, babe, whaddaya say we get together after the delivery?"

"I--but, you--"

"You what? You think you're too old for me, right? Well, I like older women; more experienced."

They Grow Up So Fast

Bryan L. McLane

The mother mumbled as she attempted to rise again. "Can't be. I was just hallucinating."

Again she sat up, this time coming face to face with the baby's buttocks. "My God, he's deformed! No eyes, no ears or nose! A vertical mouth! And he has bad breath!"

The baby turned around.

"Oh, thank God, you're normal."

"Yea," said the infant, "thank God."

Without a word, the mother collapsed again.

The babe looked down at his red, wet, naked form. "I can't take you out like this. It ain't decent."

The stunned nurse slowly shuffled backward to the instrument table and handed the infant a towel.

"A towel? You expect me to take you to dinner in a towel?"

"I'm sorry."

"Haven't you got any Sasson diapers and a bib by Gucci? Something with style?"

"We have Pampers."

"Well..." the newborn hesitated, "it's not designer, but at least it's a brand label." The nurse knelt

down, with her eyes on the baby, and retrieved a diaper from the bottom of the cart. As the youngling dressed, he told her of his plans for the evening.

"First we go for a drink. I like White Russians with a double shot of milk. Then maybe we'll catch a flick, like 'Embryo' or 'Rosemary's Baby.' After the flick, I know a great place that has all of Gerber's forty flavors. Finally, we'll go back to my place for a warm milk nightcap."

The baby fastened his side straps.

"Wanna give me a lift offa here, babe."

The nurse complied and gently set him on the floor. He looked around, then waddled toward the Operating Room door. Like a gentleman, he opened the door for the nurse. "After you, baby doll."

He followed her through it, and held her hand as they walked down the sterile white hallway.

"How do you plan on getting into the bar?" the nurse asked.

"I my got ways. I wasn't born yesterday, ya know."



Beatrice Robinson

·Semblances of Variance

Circus clowns, dancing bears and
jesters laughing
con-front-template
 the clear-belled secret (9-5) ary.
Insides facing out
the juggler (on a tight wire)
deftly works the "white out"
tape and stapler, paper clips and
breath mints
 in pentagonal rotation
a mile or more above the silvered glass.

Barbra Donofrio

a pupil's poem
(owed to a trampler)

labored lines,
each phrase a chore,
refined,
polished to bronze,
but,
he wants gold.

vine ripened fruit,
picked to please.
he takes,
the trampler does,
and
crushes,
to vintage wine.

Donna Thomas

Creation

When time was not,
Before first light, a poem
came to life.
 Traveled through the
steps of time,
evolved in minds of men.
 Nourished and held dear,
as words afresh arrived.
 The parchment bled and
clung to precious words
and rhyme.

Susan Guiles

The Opium Den

Come into our opium den
The hookah awaits you.
We do not have eyes
But then there was never any sun.

Come and find, if what you do is seek.
Bring with you your most cherished visions,
All will be forgotten.

Come, breathe the opinions of our perfumes.
If you've chafed too many times,
Lie with us in perfect confusion.
Our limbs do not move.

Mark Kisiel

Journal of a Journey

Clackety-click. Clackety-click.
Wheels keep turning through his brain:
"We'll go by train-south-from Madras."

So - sipping Scotch - we sit and watch
As evening turns to dark.
We strain our eyes to see the sights
Imprinted on his heart.

Clackety-click. Clackety-click.

It's much too dark. It's much too dark
To see the country now.
We'll go to sleep. We'll go to sleep.
Here's your pillow. Here's your towel.

Clackety-click. Clackety-click.

The clackety-click creeps to a halt.
Have some hot coffee? Hot coffee here!
"For you, Sahib -- just fifty pice."

And poised beneath the depot sign
Men, clad in mundus, muster
Armed with shovels and picks.

Police in stiff and pointed shorts,
Black parasols and people,
And people and people and palms.

Swaying palms. Coconut palms.
Forests of palms like forests of pines.
Backwaters lap at their feet.

Black, shining hair. Clean, shining hair.
Straight-standing women in saris
Sweep their yards with a broom.

Pink and green houses, men tedding hay,
Barefoot children wave good-day,
Bananas and rice fields and streams.

Clackety-click. Clackety-click.
Chenganoor, Trichur, and Quilon,
Trivandrum, Ernakulam, Kottayam,
Garden of India: Kerala.

Clack - c - ty - Click! Home.

Cherise Wyneken

America in My Country and Me in America

As histories of other nations show
The miseries of those ruled
Are revelries from claws that controlled
In the name of peace, freedom.

The same stronghold questioned seldom
If you knew even but a few
Bullets do what patriots left untold
Of natives in liberty pursued
Floating leaves of resistance in the nude.

America, oh America
Your people mean well
But your proxy soldiers kill from the cradle
And your government only wants to sell
Even to dictators who cannot haggle.

For our rights we fight
Against industrial sites and military might
Drunken sailors and soldiers respite
On streets of sleazy delights.

America, oh America
Your people mean well
But your bases we will dismantle
To return the natives you did not resettle
Truly we cannot afford what it is you sell.

As histories of other nations show.

by K. Emmanuel Fuentebella

Happy New Year, George!

I Hark, Hark, the new year rushes in.

IX A winged bird, oh watch it soar.
Swiftly, swishing, sweeping in
The dreaded Nineteen Eighty-Four.
Orwellian predictions ring round this fateful year
Your abstract, ominous slogans
Will fill my heart with fear.
"War Is Peace"
"Freedom Is Slavery"
"Ignorance Is Strength"

VIII Big Brother seems to tiptoe in
Will Newspeak follow soon?
Is this a shadow coming forth
A darkness though it's noon?
Forget it friend, I just refuse
To let you spoil my year
Your book is just a snow-job
Condemning us to fear.

IV I'll take the year and challenge it
I'm glad to be alive
But somehow I'll be happier
When it's Nineteen Eighty-Five!

Leona Brauser

Where, Oh Where Do You Want To Die?

by Olga Nunez

"Why Marilyn Monroe?" he asked.

The waiter had brought second rounds of drinks for everyone. The restaurant was half empty. It was too early for the dinner crowd and outside, people were rushing to get home from work.

We followed his gaze to spotlighted portraits of the famous actress with her lips forming a kiss. Marilyn with her sexy half-closed eyes. Marilyn giving life and movement to an otherwise dark and subdued place.

"The owner of the restaurant is a good friend of the artist who did the portraits."

"So the name of the restaurant has nothing to do with it."

We smiled. "No, but it's a common assumption to link 'Arthur' with Arthur Miller," I said, thankful for the reprisal of the light conversation. It gave me a moment to study him openly. He had aged considerably, deep lines running up and down his face. His eyes, large and expressive, were tinted with infinite sadness. His hair, streaked white, combed toward the back, accentuating his broad forehead. "You'll always be my teacher, Teacher," I said to myself. His voice took me away from my thoughts.

"You all seem so at home in this city," he stated, almost in wonderment.

Was it hard for him to understand that this city was our home for as long as a cell had been his?

"We have been happy here." He looked startled and I could read his mind questioning me and those around me, faces of his past talking about happiness, when he was scarred with human injustice and his happiness traded for others who left their

native land with a promise to go back, but never going.

"We always had hope ..."

"Hope? How could you have hope, when we didn't dare hope? We could not afford it. It would of been like a luxury that spoils, degrades ..." A cynical smile curved up his lips. "Honor and dignity are very hard to sustain in jail."

We didn't speak. How could we? We could only listen to his words, pained with the realization that his sacrifice had been futile.

"We were not men, we were animals, for we were treated as such. And now you tell me you've had hope. Of what? A miracle perhaps?"

"When I was put in jail after the trial, I stayed for three months in solitary confinement. The only thing that sustained me was a belief in two things: one, that I had to somehow reach others, who like me were in the same predicament, and two, that you, all of you, were free and able to do something for your brothers and sisters who were facing starvation, mistreatment, and death ... yes, death.

Many, many of us have died, but never did we falter in our convictions, sustained by a dream for our country."

I paled. The others present had become a blur. I was left in charge. Shaking my head, restraining myself not to shout, I tried to explain. "We helped. We worked and saved our money and went to see all the people we thought could help us to get you out. It wasn't that easy. Human rights is an evasive issue and only important to those who have something

to gain. It was you, your writing that brought attention to the issue and took twenty long years ... Don't you think we have suffered?"

His laugh cut my words in half. Cruel laughter. I could not stand and I put my hands to my ears. But I could hear him and his terrible laugh and I could not control myself anymore.

"You are right," I said, "we didn't care. We said we did. But no, we really didn't. At the beginning you wanted to help and honestly we tried. But the problem was just too big for any of us."

"We were your students and when those two soldiers took you away from the classroom because you had refused to comply with the government orders, we thought you were going to be shot. Then the trial. A public festivity. Finger pointing people with no faces, accusing you of the worse crimes. We were too scared to testify in your defense. So we left your side and mingled with the crowd, hoping no one would recognize us. Ten miserable cowards. Guilty?! Yes, we felt guilty and when one by one we met here, we knew we'd try to undo some of the harm."

"No one listened to us and time passed. We all went our different ways. Our allegiances changed. We were no longer strangers. We belonged. We married. We had children and life continued and you and your cause were not important any longer."

"I can't believe that everyone who came feels that way," he replied.

"No, they don't. The old generation lives by their dreams. Dreams that only existed in their imagination

for they have idealized a point in time which never was as they said and they refuse to face the truth."

"Then you are here to stay. What if one day ..." He didn't finish. I guess he knew.

"I'll continue to gather those that want to return, that are willing to fight," he said.

"Will you please answer something for me?" asked almost in a whisper.

"Where are we from ... which is our country?"

He smiled. This time his smile was soft, I thought, a child's smile.

"That is easy. We are not from the country in which we are born, but from that country in which we want to die."

He leaned forward across the table.

"I still want to die where I was born. But what about you? Where do you want to die?"



Nicholas D'Alleva

An Evening with Cindy And Her Daughter



The Courtship

strangers tasked their space with each other
a visit is a visit
by sex by size one bachelor one mother
a tryst is a tryst
into time defined each as flowers the wind
the meaning of a spring day comes to the senses
before anything comes to mind
the deep gray reclines in a field
marigolds seek to play with reason
wearing their cowlings lips like bankers

the rest of me massages my hair
strange fingertips greet me there
challenging inner space with collision
her face as close as the heat of breath
is more naked than this woman knows
ah, what grows in a field of marigolds
in the strangest ways

Pizza For Dinner

the child with the sun in her hair wanted pizza
how does one refuse starlight its wish
we nibble on sausages
brown shriveled moons on the sunset before us
the whole night is sky
we, each in our own orbit, journey the hours
being together we marvel at each other
cindy and her daughter karen—a solar system
and I an asteroid streaking their horizon
creating mystery and awe
a visit is a visit
a tryst is a tryst
or so physics would insist

The Colors Of Our Clothes

cindy's body is shivering purple
"Purple," said karen, "is the color of my room."
a child's world is colored so soon
and cindy is painting all by herself
her ex is a block and a half away
where karen is by day by night by dad
a man is a man who is father without husbandry
such is the plan on nineteenth street
sometime in the preparation hours
karen emerged from her purple cave
whited to the waist with a lace shirt
marooned from the toes and a black skirt
her shoes as mirrors on her feet
beneath her where they belong
reflecting all my blue
as she bows her head to see me

Bumper Cars And The Ferris Wheel

children don't drive well
ah well it's nice to know that some
have yet to know how to get somewhere
karen disappeared beside cindy
in the bumper car
as awkward as a composer would look
seated in a giant eighth note
cindy sings music to her child
the look on her face is magic displaced
"Are we having fun, mommy?"
with half the ride spent we put the cars back
intent on the ferris wheel we run
and climb into a starless sky
our cloudy carnival is a cloudy carnival
a wheel is a wheel
yet without destination
it feels like a station

Spooning Ice Cream In A Plain Cone

the hundred "whys" of children
cure themselves during a cartoon
in an ice cream palace

karen gets a dish of chocolate and a cone
empty is her face as she sits alone
spooning one into the other
and there is cindy's face for the first time
smothered in whipped cream
un-mine across the watery table
a child is a child
arms reach up so tired
that a mother's neck is a heck of a bed
and the world falls asleep
with chocolate on its sleeve

karen is soft and moody as a willow
in the cartoon pond swaying in the pretend wind
cindy's forehead is smashing her eyes
I know what is wrong; I think I know what is wrong
I am talking to mother too much
cindy confirms my wisdom
my wisdom recites its abc's
stumbling over the m,n,o,p part

earlier I bought karen a barbie doll
she has guarded the car like a gangster's moll
and as we drive home she gets stripped to the waist
aging beside karen all over the place
and again I notice cindy's face
I see her in karen and barbie and lace;
purple-ing all over the place
a mother is a mother
and a woman and a friend
in the rear-view mirror I see karen
doing to barbie what I won't do to cindy
an evening is an evening
a poet is a song sung too long

Jim Azar

The Losing

Father ran away the other day.
Sometime between the doorbell and the greeting
He slipped the chain,
And fled, on frightened feet, beyond our reach
looking for something lost long years ago.
We didn't know,
and sipped our sherry and talked in empty words
While he in quest of finding,
Sought for what was sadly long forgotten.

When father ran away
We searched with frantic eyes,
Furious at his ill-conceived deception.
We found him watching children play
And he laughed and clapped his hands.
Alone he'd found his happy yesterday,
But we took him away
And locked him safe inside our cage of caring.
And we never saw him laugh or smile again.

by Deirdre Villani

The Dead Sea

The blue green surface
of the water
devoid of reflections,
seems almost crushed
by the weight of the sky.
The impression of anguish
is suffocating;
it fixes the eye
in the grip
of the lifeless sea.
On the shores,
a panorama of salt stalagmites
and sun bleached
petrified wood
creates an eerie scene.
A fitting stage
for the biblical drama
of fire and suffering;
this unique speck,
where men
can touch their own fragility.

Lary Glazer

Mice, Money, Men

Men scurry for money;
gold or green.
As mice carelessly caught
on treadmills
turning,
the faster--
the farther
from
golden goals;
no beginning--
no end,
cycle upon cycle
of greed.

Balzac knew
but Balzac too
was a mouse in a maze;
money the treat--
money the trap;
as cheese to mice,
money to men.
Labyrinth of our making
the beginning--
the end.

by Donna Thomas

Tiberias

This holy city,
a picturesque disarray
of tumbledown attic roofs,
winding lanes,
and ancient synagogues,
its ramparts,
cloaked in grayish
basaltic stone,
defaced and ravaged
by ancient warriors.

Tiberias broods silently
beside its lake,
and smiles only
when the first rays
of spring sunshine
spreads over the ageless
stones.
It is an enclave
of eternity and hope.

Lary Glazer



(Clay) Baggot

Coleen Baggot

Let There Be Life

'He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water.'
John 7:38.

Let not my body be
A dry, deserted wash
But let it be a river bed
Where living waters splash.

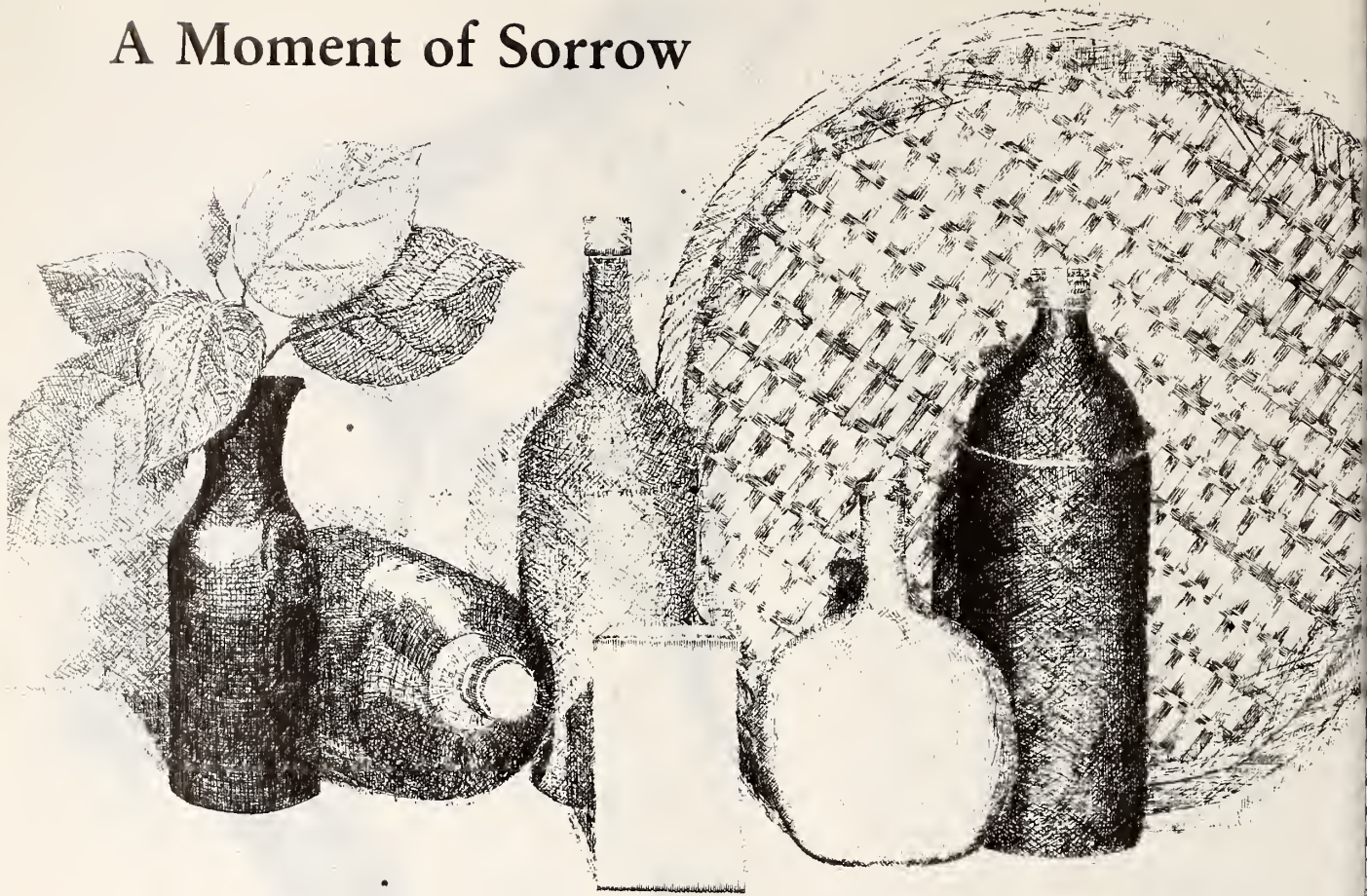
Let them give moisture
To my dried out sand
And sparkle to my stones;
Carry off the rubble,
The garbage, and old bones.

And when the living waters
Flow fast along the bank
Let them lead to tributaries.
Arid wadis will be filled,
Green grasses sprout,
And graces spread:
Ivies, growing along the ground.

Let me not impede them
With bridges or with dams:
Monuments to me.
Rather let the waters be
Mountain rills that tumble free,
So will the stream spawn life
In answer to His call.

Cherise Wyneken

A Moment of Sorrow



by Deirdre Villani

Paul Cullham sat alone in his room waiting for his friends to arrive. They were going to spend the evening talking about the good old days. It was also to be the last time the guys would be together and Paul knew it.

Paul thought back to his days of school at Senior High School, home of the Vikings. It was during his freshman year that he met up with Jeffrey Perant, Stevie Click and Robbie Shakes. It was through the varsity soccer team which they were all a part of. The Vikings had an extremely good team, and by the time the boys were sophomores, they were starters. That year the team fell two games short of the state championship. By the end of the school year, the boys were inseparable. To the beach by day, and Furellies, a local pizza joint where getting served was no problem, by night.

The following school year the Vikings took the state championship behind the brilliant goal tending of Stevie Glick. "As a junior he was already a top college prospect. Paul did not get to play that game due to receiving a years athletic suspension for striking an official; everyone knew he had no respect for authority.

The summer rolled around again, and the boys all got jobs working construction. However, after a week Paul quit. His parents were rich, so he saw no reason to continue laboring his summer away.

When night came around, the guys still hung out together, but now it was at the bowling alley. Paul was not allowed to go to Furellie's anymore. One night he got into this fight with a Mexican kid over a girl. The kid ended up spending two months in the hospital mending broken bones while Paul was arrested for assault. The case never went to court though; Paul's father paid all the medical bills, plus he gave the kid

money to buy a brand new car, and so the charges were dropped. Now, every morning, Paul sat in the school parking lot watching the little wet-back come wheeling in driving his new camaro. The rest of the guys would just ignore him, but not Paul he wanted his revenge.

After a disappointing soccer season, Paul quit school. Stevie and Jeff received scholarships up to the State University, while Robbie enrolled in the local community college to take up engineering. The following fall Paul signed up for business classes at vocational school, anything to get his parents off his back and keep his allowance up.

That year many changes took place. With no surprise Paul continued in the direction he was headed. For disciplinary reasons, he was asked to leave school. Also, he became involved with drugs, both using and selling. This led him to becoming a familiar face down at the local police station. In no way did this bother the police

nce they could really use his father's zable donations.

The big surprise came with Robbie. For three years he saved his money om working construction and went ut to purchase a new set of wheels. Within two weeks the car was only a t of wheels, after it was pried from ound a telephone pole. As for Rob- ie, he was scraped up and thrown in- o a casket.

Stevie and Jeff flew home from the niversity since neither was in the ood to drive. At the funeral Stevie nd Jeff saw Paul for the first time in x months. They did not like what ey saw. Paul had changed; he was old and angry, with nothing but atred in his eyes. Jeff and Stevie ardly spoke with Paul their entire ay in Summerville.

Paul's thoughts were suddenly in- rrupted with the loud clank of his oor opening. He jumped up to greet ie friends he had not seen in nearly our years. Jeff, now sporting a full eard and mustache, carried in a case f Coors while Stevie brought in ree pizzas, claiming, "Three of uellies best with everything on em." Paul knew he was lying, the st letter he got from him included a ipping from the paper: "Furellie's urns to the ground, arson spected." Anyway, he decided to go ong with it.

Jeff dropped the beer on the table, nbraced Paul in a friendly hug and id, "Long time no see, buddy. By e way, I just love your new hair cut, ooks like you're ready for the rmy."

"Forget all this mushy stuff, guys, t's get to the refreshments. It's been hile since I've had any of this uff," Paul said. They sat down ound the table and as the conversa- on began to flow, the beer and pizza egan to disappear.

"Anyone for a game of poker? You ow, just like when we were in high hool," Stevie said, as he produced a eck of cards from his coat pocket.

"You mean like when me, you, Jeff nd Robbie would ditch school, go to our house, raid your Dad's liquor abinet and play cards all day&" Paul nswered. Stevie shook his head yes.' "It just wouldn't be the same

without Robbie. We don't have that much time anyway. Let's just talk."

"If that's what you want, it is fine with us," replied Jeff.

For the next hour or so, the guys talked about their lives, Jeff and Stevie that is. After finishing up college Jeff returned to Senior High as a physical education teacher. Coaching the soccer team was included in his contract, which he enjoyed. Stevie, as everyone knew he would, found his way into the United Soccer Association as a member of th North Carolina franchise. Although the team was at the top of its division, soccer still was not very popular in the area. As for the area, forget it. The town was a little hick town, nothing but red-neck bars, so the only place to pick up women was in the stands after soccer games.

"He opened the envelope, dropped the letter on the bed and ran out of the room."

From theré the conversation turned to Robbie and the funeral. As the eyes started to become glass, Jeff spoke. "We found out right after a game. For the first time we beat Carver State, our big rivals from the next town. Stevie had a shutout and I scored. Back at the dorm Steve received a telegram. Joking around we said it was from the President congratulating us on our game. He opened the envelope, dropped the letter on the bed and ran out of the room. I picked it up and read the message. I didn't know what to do. The news was such a shock." The room fell deathly quiet. A minute or so passed before the silence was broken with the loud sound of the door opening.

Paul started to laugh. "I guess you guys better get going now."

"Looks that way," Steve replied. "You take care of yourself and be strong."

"You're the ones who have to take care of yourselves. I'll be fine," Paul said.

"He tossed and turned all night, maybe getting twenty good minutes sleep."

"Paul, I don't want to sound corny, but we love you." The tears began to flow heavy as Jeff continued, "You made my life - ."

"Jeff," Paul said, cutting him off rudely, "don't get into that stuff now. I'm cool, always was and always will be. I'll be fine."

"Yeah, I know," Jeff said, wiping the tears off his face.

Then as fast as they came, they were gone. Paul sat alone on his bed; the rooms was dark but he could not fall into a deep sleep. He tossed and turned all night, maybe getting twenty good minutes of sleep.

The fun rose and Paul hopped out of bed to get ready for breakfast. As he was ready to eat, he was greeted by his father. The two men sat down to a meal fit for a king and leisurely chatted over the past events. They finished eating and while the food began to settle, Paul lit up a cigarette. "Well, my son, it is about time we started to get ready to go," his father said.

"Yeah," Paul said,, "I wouldn't want to keep anybody waiting." They left the breakfast table and walked into the hall. Paul walked tall, without emotion, his father by his side. The hall was long, dark and dreary. It seemed to take forever to get to the end, at least for Paul. When they finally reached the door toward the end of the hall, Paul's father opened the door for him. Paul walked in staring straight ahead through the glass to the twelve people sitting behind it. He looked to his left and saw the chair. For one moment he felt sorry, not for finally doing away with that little Mexican who had been a thorn in his side since their first confrontation out in front of Furellie's, but for the fact that his old man with all of his accumulated wealth, could not get him off the hook this one last time.

Wind of Desire

I feel a cyclone
in my arid soul
that changes destiny

I am alone

Can my control exceed other forces
in this war?
Stop . . . I can't ask more questions

Magnitude of powers
strength
reveals a cyclone force

within desire
I . . . I . . . I . . . am
afraid of no one here

C
Y
C
L
O
N
E
S
scare me

I am alone

Cynthia Azar

and wisdom

People point and laugh,
slanted snickers of scorn;
disgust.

Safety in boxes,
they label you Fool,
with your brown bag, frayed;
fishing cap
worn in winter snows
and summer.

But, mostly mothers pity you.
Fathers fear your freedom,
Sisters snub you.

Brothers bore you
with insults.

Old men turn their heads,
Ladies tsk and titter.

Perhaps you know them all,
their vacant values.

Choosing well your world
of

midnight IHOP's
broken benches,
Tetley Tea and toast,
Saturday's *Seattle Times*
on Tuesday,
last month's *Money Magazine*
your text how not to die,
a brown bag home,

and wisdom.

Laugh Fool,
while you fool them all.

by Donna Thomas

Devoted Smoker

Dressed in blue,
Middle aged and frail,
sitting on corner bench,
Head bowed, coughing, coughing,
forever it seems.

Yet he hangs on, hangs on,
to cigarette in hand.

Day after day no respite
from the racking of his body.

He turns Earthward gathering
leaves to place in trash pail.
Borrowing strength, leaning, lean-
ing,
on the pail.

Careless of his disease,
He works on 'til his last light.

by Susan Guiles

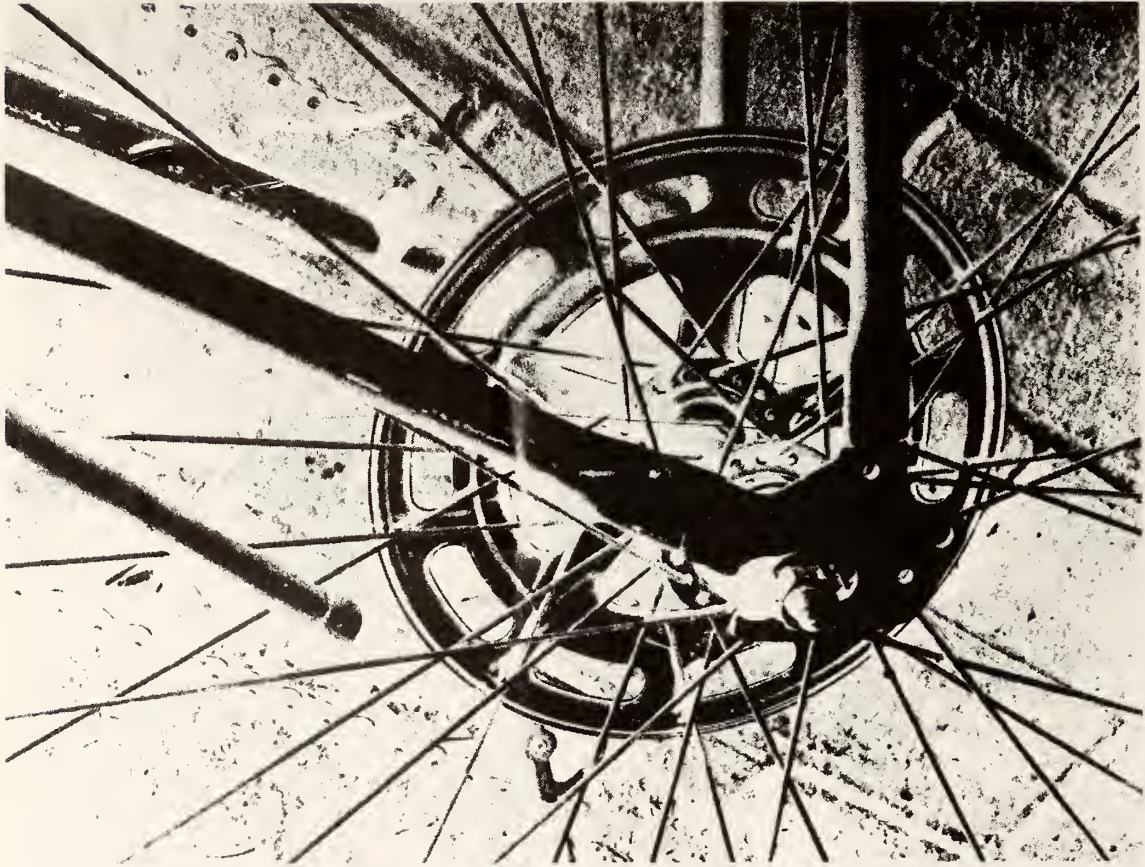
Be As A Bird

And upon the wrought iron cage
your feathers your hunched back deformity.
Your leaded eyes peer from hooded sockets
and dart, like poison arrows, across the room
to stab me
I look away wounded by your captivity.
I do not want you in my life,
nor you, the iron bars
that cage your life,
my sire.
I do not sit
and cultivate our dread,
each within our different prison,
ignorant of the freedom
that waits beyond our terror.
The windows open bird, now fly away,
I do not, you choose to huddle
in the safeness of jail.
And I?
I watch the fingering sunlight
perceive the darkness in my world,
and rush to shut it out.

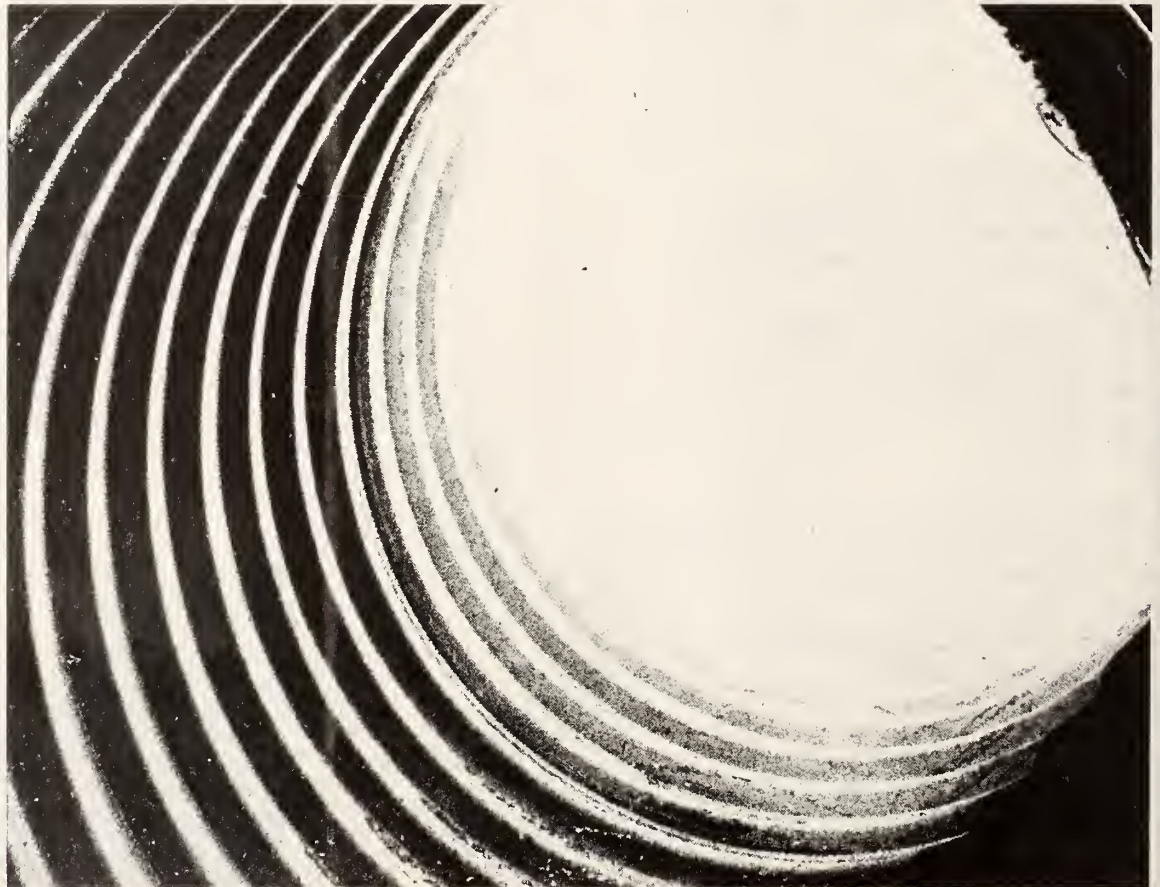
Heidre Villani



Pat Coull



Lisa Bergman



Lisa Bergman

gs

ened skies pour forth a torrent of angry rain
ak and desperate days
ipping wind and slashing twigs,
g rain; the leaves withstand its fury.

I stand in silence, hearing all, feeling all.
With disembodied mind
d outside, my face
ank portrait awaiting the artist.

REALITY is but a DREAM.

plastered, rivers of rain twist in torrents
my face and shoulders,
erging cotton shirt to body slick.
I squish in mud
numbed step forgetting,
forgetting,
forgetting.

REALITY is but a DREAM.

Green. Stop. Go.
swish-squish, swish-squish
sight squish-blind
Red. Green. Stop. Go.
k-knock. vacant room, vacant house, vacant flat,
ENT.
out gimme gimmee
All your clams
More.
All gone.

SLAM DOOR SLAM

k-knock
Gimme gimmee
more more
No more.
All gone.

SLAM DOOR SLAM

cant room, vacant house, vacant flat,
L VACANT.
Green. Stop. Go.
swish-squish, swish-squish.

s
o
o
o

ALONE
ALone
Alone
alone
lone
one

Swollen, pregnant clouds of black
SPLIT
Wreaking havoc, comfort and security
in its fury
adding further proof that

This REALITY is but a DREAM.

I drift in dreamwalk.

A wet, cold hand reaches
fingers close
clutching warmth

Maniacal laughter escaping from our lips
we SPLASH
hand in hand
through rivers masquerading as streets
sending sprays of water to our waists.
We race in reckless abandon, dropping in drenched golden sands
Clinging in desperate yearning
Searching hungry kisses stealing warmth
arms and legs entwined

WE CLING

to the reality of each other, unmindful of the storm's savage
fury.

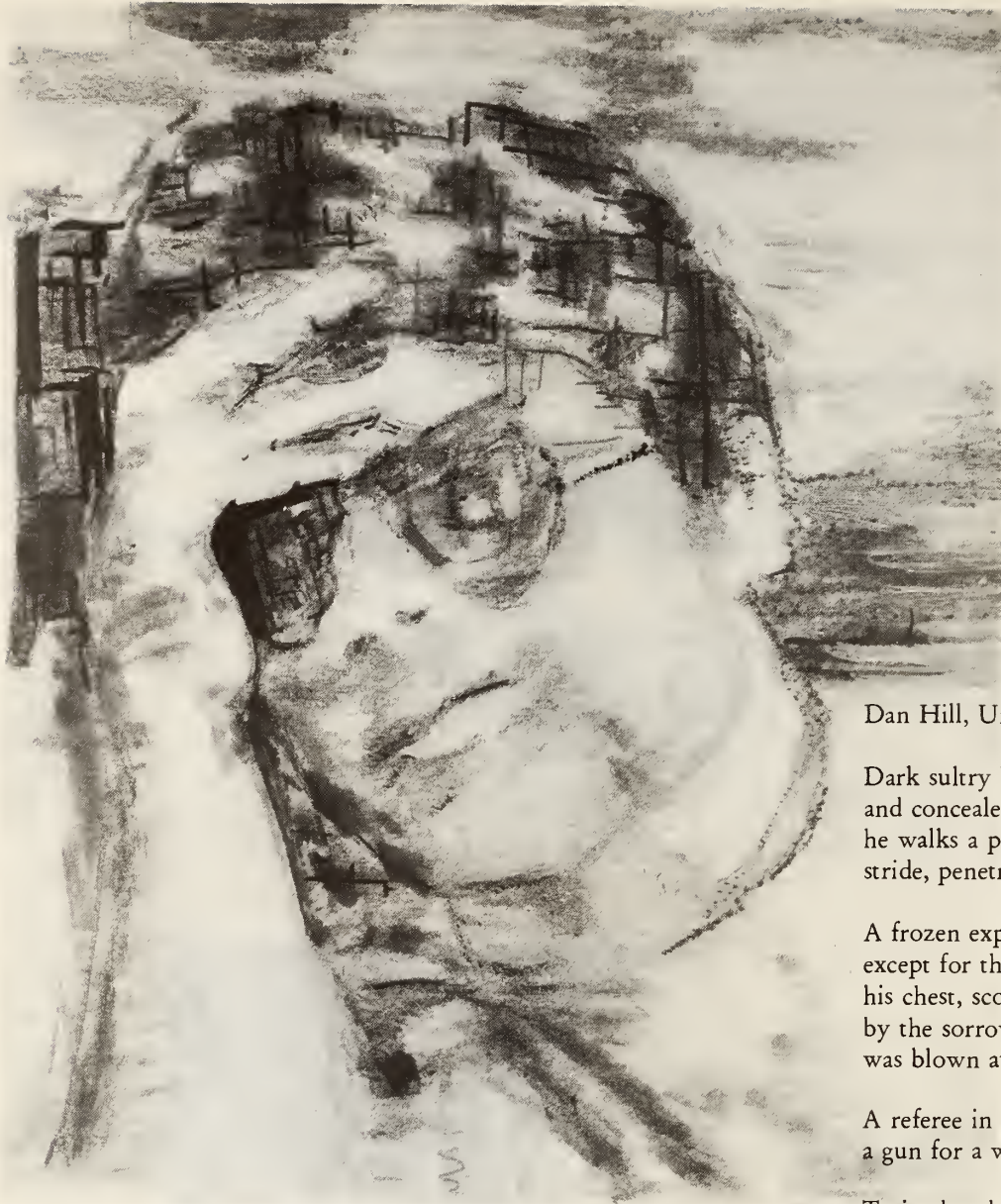
Later we rinse the seaweed, golden sand, from tender bodies
in the salty chill of the swirling sea.

Trudging, grudging steps,
back to somewhere, NOWHERE
Stealing sand on bluejean cuffs.

We RESUME--

Red. Green. Stop. Go.
swish-squish, swish-squish.
This REALITY is but a DREAM.

Debi Shelgren



Nicholas D'Alleva

Dan Hill, Uniformed in Blue

Dark sultry balding on the top, sheltered
and concealed by Foster Grant covered shades
he walks a poker stiff mile with a guarded
stride, penetrated by a thousand eyes.

A frozen expression, petrified, unlined
except for the scar that cuts clear across
his chest, scorched carved branded erupted
by the sorrow the day his partner
was blown away from his side.

A referee in a peace time civilians' war
a gun for a whistle and a club for a sword

Trained and restrained, not fat nor thin,
denied and forbidden an enticement
of pot or a handicap slot.

He teeters between heaven and hell,
scented with the flavor of a savior
and a delusion of the devil himself.

Cool, efficient, self-contained
tremors all wrapped in ice
until the day, a child, just out of reach
taken and killed, while a teacher
quietly goes mad.

Dave's face continues to remain, contained
in stone cold gray, but his boyhood eyes
of blue turned black from all the hatred
that was reflected back.

Sandy Fisher

BEACH BUMS

Coconut-creamed bodies lie baking in the sand.
Derelict seagulls loiter on alternate feet--
Eyes closed in passive absorption.
Waiting patiently for the next handout.

Marie Bloom

The March of Time

Time marches through the ages,
Around metaphors and similes,
Up and down the footnotes
On poured cement,
Until we bump into an event.
Black on white
Brushed vigorously,
Inevitably
Deeply significant.
And time slows down
Creaking slightly
Absorbs the crisis
And moves on.

Lary Glazer

Heirlooms

There are screams in my throat
They are ancestral gifts,
 born of collective eyes witnessing
 the entrails of humankind
 strewn wrecklessly on
 the pavement of existence.
The blood of our children
 painting the occupied towns red.
Heavy,
 Thick with a millenium of
 watching our sons at war.
Screams to be passed on and on.

Susan M. Clerici

Railroad Tracks Leading Nowhere

Scars crossed her swollen, saffron
belly, cross-hatched in crazy
patterns: railroad tracks leading
 nowhere.

Each scar traced one year of her
married life. The family understood.
It could be anything, or nothing.

"She needs our sympathy. You take
flowers. We'll bring a new book."

At one time they joked in whispers
about hospitals and sick leave without
pay away from her husband, and the bad
marriage. For the first few years
they called out their support in loud
voices. Soon they smirked with knowing
winks. One family member told others,

"Mary looks better. Did you see
her husband? Nor did we."

At the end there were fifty scars,
and relatives who no longer cared.
The husband found someone younger,
with a flat stomach, and no scars.

Monica Earle Carlton



Beatrice Robinson

Dreams

Do Not

Come Free

by Deirdre Villani

Charlie was a firm believer in dreams although he came from a world where dreams were seldom realized. He lived in the town of Ugston, England which occupied a place on the banks of the river Thames just below Teddington.

Ugston was a town majestic in name but inferior in composition, at least in the area where Charlie resided.

The homes were endless replicas of semi-detached houses built in the early years of the 19th century; they were commonly known as "working man's cottages" for the people who occupied them were at the bottom of the wage scale.

Charlie lived there with his parents. His father was a man who had long since lost the ability to dream, and had chosen instead to be morose, withdrawn and pessimistic. His mother, on the other hand, believed only in dreams and was sensitive to the needs of her young son.

"Mother," said Charlie, "what will I be when I grow up?" "Anything you want to be." She would answer.

One winter day, as the rain splattered against the tiny windows of the parlor, Charlie lay on the hearth rug in front of the fire, his chin propped on his fists, staring deep into the coals that burned cheerfully in the old fireplace as the flames cast a warm glow on the brass tongs that sat curiously on top of the coal shuttles.

Charlie heard his mother singing in the kitchen. It was an old music-hall song that she sang, one she and his father often used to sing together whenever father was out of the house and they felt free and silly:

*'Twas on the eighth I am,
'Twas on the eighth I am.*

The easy words danced down the chimney and into Charlie's brain as unconsciously he sang along with her.

*I got married to the widow next
year,
She's been married seven times
before...*

The back door slammed and Charlie heard his father's gruff voice. He stopped singing and looked anxiously toward the kitchen. He heard his father's heavy tread on the

stairs and breathed a sigh of relief. "Good," he thought, "he's going for a bit of a lie down before tea." Charlie lay back on the rug, his hands cradling his black hair, and watched the shadows as they danced round the walls of the room. The fire light hid the shabbiness of the furniture, and a horse hair couch, that stood against one wall, looked positively welcoming in the amber glow of the flames.

Across from the couch, a huge oak breakfast table took up most of the far wall. It contained an odd assortment of tenants: dishes that had once belonged to grandma, several china souvenirs from places like Brighton and Tourquay, and a large teapot decorated with red and pink roses. Two rocking chairs, with flowered cushions, stood silently before the fire, and under the window was a heavy wooden table with four chairs.

Sitting on top of the table, and quite out of place in the almost sterile poverty of the room, stood two wonderful silver candlesticks. They resembled tall pillars covered in cherubs and roses, and on each candlestick the cherubs held one large rose into which the candle fit.

Charlie loved the extravagant ornaments, and, as he often did, he got to his feet and went over to look at them. As he drew near, a cold draft from the window sent him scurrying back to the warmth of the fire. He shivered. "Goosh," he thought, "it isn't half cold." He knelt down in front of the grate and felt the heat finger his body. "If I lived in Africa," he said to himself, "I'd be warm all the time, I could be an explorer or a hunter and live in a tent beside the mighty Nile."

The heat of the flickering flames mesmerized him and suddenly the roaring fire before him became filled with the glowing eyes of ferocious animals. Charlie stared into the flames, and lions and tigers snarled back at him from the sulfurous depths of the fire. Bang! Bang! he went with his imaginary gun, and the beasts retreated into the flames. As the animals disappeared, their place was taken by the fires of savages, and around the fires the savages themselves, painted with the vivid colors of jungle berries, and their heads decorated with exotic feathers. In their hands they carried spears. From the interior of the fire they saw Charlie, and, with a communal shriek, rushed across the burning coals.

Charlie felt a quick thrill of terror. "I'll beat them," he muttered, "I'll beat every one of them, and when I come back to England the king will give me the Victoria Cross."

His day dreaming was interrupted by his mother, who came into the parlor wiping her hands on her apron.

"Charlie dear," she said, "be a love and run down to the bakers and fetch me some crumpets. Dad does so fancy some for tea."

Charlie watched the savages slink off into the dark jungle of the fire, then turned to his mother with a smile. He didn't really feel like going out in to the damp cold afternoon, but he knew if he didn't mum would have to, so he stood up and hurried to the cupboard and pulled his mackintosh down from the peg. As he slipped his arms into the sleeves he said thoughtfully to his mother.

"You know, I think I'm going to be a hunter when I grow up." Then remembering that his mother loved animals, he added, "or probably an explorer. Do you think I could be, mum?"

"Charlie," his mother replied as she fumbled through her purse, "I've told you before, you can be anything you want to be: dreams do come true you know."

"Nonsense," his father's gruff voice interrupted from the doorway, "stop filling the lad's mind with dreams." He turned to Charlie. "Dreams are all right for the night-time but when you get up in the morning, leave them on your pillow. Day dreams don't put food on the table, nor a roof over your head." He turned to his wife, "Is tea ready yet?"

"Charlie's just going to get the crumpets, he'll be right back. Now hurry, Charlie, don't dawdle on the way." She pressed a sixpenny piece into his hand, "Get six crumpets and make sure you get the change."

He opened the kitchen door and walked out into the wet dreary world of Elm Street. Across the road, in an empty lot that had lost its house to a bomb during the war, stood a beautiful sycamore tree. Its branches drooped under the weight of wet leaves, and roosting disconsolately on its damp limbs, a motley collection of crows stared miserably at the wet world that surrounded them. Charlie picked up a stone and threw it at the base of the trunk. Its dull thud put the crows to flight and they flew high about the tree in erratic circles. "It must be lovely to fly," thought Charlie, "perhaps I'll be a pilot when I grow up." And he watched as the birds spiraled back to their damp seats on the branch.

"Hurry up, Charlie," his mother called.

Charlie started off at a trot down the cobbled road, his mind thinking of the wonders of flight, and of the chances of him becoming a pilot. He soon reached the highstreet, but the bakers was at the far end of the town so he hurried along, dodging the dripping shoppers who were hidden under a canopy of umbrellas. A few unfortunate dogs sat miserably out-

side the shops waiting for their owners. They eyed Charlie hopefully as he passed by, but he paid them no attention for he was anxious to do his job and get home. The dogs returned to their lonely vigil feeling very sorry for themselves.

Charlie reached the bakers and paused, for next door was the toy shop. He walked to the window and rubbed the raindrops from the pane with his arm. Mr. Duhurst, the owner, was busy decorating the window with a pre-Christmas display of toys and games that would fill almost any childish heart with longing and expectation. Charlie was no exception. His eyes pried every corner of the window: they skipped the teddy bears and dolls, paused at the brightly

"He walked to the window and rubbed the raindrops from the pane with his arm."

decorated games of tiddly-winks and draughts, and lingered over the beautiful red steam engine that occupied the place of honor in the center of the window. It was resplendent in its place of prominence, and artfully surrounded by signals, bridges, trees and miniature people - all of these, a sign informed the avid shopper, were true in every detail to the original.

Charlie thought it was a marvelous train, but it was not the train that captured his attention. Far in the back of the window, carefully placed on a glass shelf sat the drum. And this was not just any old drum; this was a drum beyond compare. As Charlie looked at it he felt his stomach flutter with excitement. The drum was bright red, and its sides were decorated with snarling lions who sat on their haunches and grasped between them a golden crown. A gilded cord hung in heavy curves from the drums head, and two long slender drum sticks lay across the top of it. "This must be a royal drum," thought Charlie. How he wanted that drum! All dreams of being an explorer, a hunter, or even a pilot evaporated, and Charlie knew that all

he wanted in the world was the drum. He knew also that when he grew up, all he wanted to be was the king's drummer in the Grenadier Guards.

"Oh, wait till I tell mum about this," he thought, and he was just starting back up the high street when he suddenly remembered the crumpets. He hurried back to the bakers, pushed open the door and ran inside.

"Slow down, sonny," said Mr. Whitehead the baker, "this isn't the race track you know." Then he turned back to his other customers, they were all women, and happy to be out of the rain so they lingered over their purchases. "Ladies," thought Charlie with impatience, "why can't they ever make up their minds." Eventually, it was his turn and he grabbed the bag of crumpets, shoved the change in his pocket, called out good-bye, and ran all the way home, anxious to talk to his mother.

He turned down Elm Street and raced toward his door pulling off his mack as he ran. Mother must have been watching for she open the door before he had time to knock.

"Hurry up," his father shouted from inside, "and shut that damn door, you don't have to let the cold in too."

His mother tussled his hair and hung his coat in the cupboard. "Here, Charlie," she said, handing him a long three pronged fork with a wooden handle, "get started on toasting the crumpets." He took the fork and the paper bag and hurried into the parlor. The fire was still burning cheerfully in the grate, but the savages and the wild animals had vanished into the smoke that climbed up the chimney. Africa was far from Charlie's mind as he crouched before the fire and inserted the fork into the crumpet. He held it toward the flames and felt the heat creep up the handle to his frozen fingers. It felt good. In his excitement he hadn't realized how very cold he was.

The family sat down to tea and Charlie found himself staring at his parents and willing them to eat fast. "I hope they won't take a second cup of tea," he said to himself, but teatime dragged on. Dad was worried about

job at the brewery.
"Two more blokes got the sack to-
day," he said to mum. "Times are
bad and we're going to have to
tighten our belts."
"I know dear," she said, "prices get
higher all the time."
They talked listlessly of this and
that, and Charlie thought he'd go
to bed if they didn't hurry up and
finish.
Presently dad set down his cup,
washed, rubbed his eyes, then looked
at the clock.
Five thirty. Well I just have time
for a look at the paper, then I'll get
down to the boozier. By the time I get
up it should be opening time." He
got up stretching, picked up the
Morning News, and walked into the
kitchen room.
As soon as the door closed behind
him, Charlie was on his feet and at his
mother's side.
"Mum," he said, "I've got
something to tell you."
"What's that, Charlie?" asked his
mother distractedly.
"Mum, I don't want to be an exer-
ciser any more, or a hunter."
"All right, Charlie, whatever you
say." His mother was still inattentive
until Charlie noticed.
"Mum, you're not listening," he
said.
"Guiltily she focused her attention
on Charlie. "I'm sorry son, tell me
about it."
He sat down at her side and gazed
tenderness into her face, "I want to be a
drummer in the Grenadiers."
His mother looked surprised, "You
say?"
"Yes, mum," he replied, "and Mr.
Hurst has the most beautiful drum
in his shop. If I had it I could practice
every day and by the time I'm old
enough I could be the head drummer
of the king."
His mother smiled, "That's a fine
idea, Charlie, but I don't think dad
would like you playing all over the
house. He likes his peace and quiet
and I know."
"Mum, I'd practice out in the shed
and I'd play very quietly."
His mother looked at Charlie; she loved
him very much and he was such a
good lad who really asked for so little.

She hated to deny him anything.
"How much does this drum cost,
Charlie?" she asked.
"Ten shillings," said Charlie in a
quiet voice.
"That's an awful lot of money.
Times are hard now, Charlie, you
know."
"I know, mum, but I'll get a job, I'll
pay you back."
"Let me think about it," she said,
and Charlie knew the drum was his.
The next day he noticed that the
silver candle sticks were missing, and
when he came home from school that
afternoon the beautiful drum was sit-
ting in their place on the dining room
table.
"Oh, mum," he said, "thank you,
thank you so much." and he threw
his arms round her neck and kissed
her, then he turned back to the drum,
"Isn't it the most wonderful drum in
the whole world?"
"Yes, Charlie, it is," she said, "but
don't let your father see it and don't
play with it when he's around."
"No, mum, I won't." he promised.
And so Charlie's career as a drummer
began and he played his magnificent
drum whenever he was able. One day
he noticed that his drum was tar-
nishing and the lovely red paint was
starting to chip. Still he kept playing
but his enthusiasm was slowly
vanishing. Then soccer practice
started at school and Charlie spent
less and less time with his drum.
One Saturday in early January, he
went into the shed to get the rake for
his mother. Looking round inside he
noticed the drum; it lay on the bench
beneath the broken window, and the
rain and winter had cracked the stiff
cardboard of the drum's head. Charlie
poked at the head with his finger and
it fell into the interior of the drum.
He looked at it for a moment then
shrugged his shoulders.
"Well, that's the end of that." he
said philosophically. Then,
remembering the rake, he ran to take
it to his mother. This deed com-
pleted, he returned to the shed, pick-
ed up the broken drum, then walked

out of the shed carrying it under his
arm.
Mother finished her work and
brushed the hair from her eyes. She
looked round for Charlie and
wondered where he had got to.
"Charlie," she called, "Charlie,
where are you?"
"I'm down here, mum."
She followed the sound of his voice,
and found him sitting by the empty
dalia bed.
"What are you doing, Charlie?" she
asked.
He turned around smiling at her. In
front of him sat the drum filled to the
brim with mud. Charlie had been
very busy, for beyond the drum stood
a beautiful castle also made of mud. It
had turrets, a moat, and even a
drawbridge made of corrugated iron.
Little twigs of evergreen decorated
the confines of the fortress, and
Charlie's toy soldiers were proudly
displayed in military formation
before the regal dwelling. But
Charlie's mother barely noticed the
architectural masterpiece.
"Oh, Charlie," she said, "your
drum! Your beautiful drum. It's ruin-
ed and it cost such an awful lot of
money. And my candlesticks. . . ."
her voice trailed off.
"Don't worry mum, when I grow
up I'm going to build castles for the
king, and I'll buy you lots of
candlesticks then." He gazed at his
castle with a look of satisfaction on
his face, then turned back to his
mother. "Do you think I'll be able to
build castles for the king when I grow
up?"
The mother looked at her son,
"Charlie," she said with a hint of
weariness in her voice, "I keep telling
you, you can be anything you want to
be and do anything you want to do,
you just have to want it enough."
She ruffled his hair, then with a sigh
walked back to the house to get tea.
Charlie watched his mother walk
up the path. "I wonder what's the
matter with her, she seems a bit
upset." He frowned, then a thought
occurred to him. "I bet she wants a
castle too." He looked at the ugly lit-
tle brick house that they called home.
"When I grow up, I'll build her one,
he said to himself, and her castle will
be better than the kings."



MAMA

by Juanita Osborne

Looking back, it's hard to believe that some thirty odd years have passed. With memories still so fresh, it seems to have been only just the other day. In my eight year old mind, her clothes were becoming too large, rather than her body diminishing. When she began becoming so easily exhausted, I entertained myself nearby (indoors) with books, crayons, paper and jacks. That way, she would not have to look for me when she needed me. I was not alarmed. She

had had bad days before. Once before, she had even been down-in-the-bed sick for weeks and had gotten better. The low soft moans of pain became out-loud, *Lord, have mercy's*. Then, one night she coughed up blood. Fear, doubt, despair and pain would be conquered by a far greater bond.

I was delivered by Dr. Bingham, in Mama's bed with her and my father present. (Dr. Bingham was the old white doctor who delivered almost all

of the babies born in Hallandale during the 30's, 40's and early 50's). Mama took care of the post-natal needs of my mother (whose own mother had died long before) and me.

Her given name was Mamie. She became Mama to me as she was to my father.

My first seven years were spent in her home with her, Jacqueline and Vincent. She had inherited the responsibility for them two years before my birth when their mother, her sister, had died. For three years of that period my mother lived in New York. I became my grandmother's ward exclusively. She referred to me as her heartstring, explaining that should anything happen to me, her heart would stop completely. The feeling was mutual.

In the early forties, Northwest Hallandale had a population of approximately two hundred people. There was no air-conditioning or television and very little indoor plumbing. While she did the ironing, we listened, Mama and I, to Stella Dallas on the radio. We slept without fear on sun and wind dried sheets. Cooling breezes flowed through open windows and doors. On hot summer wash days, Mama would place my small bare body into the third tin tub of rinse water. The clothes had first been soaked, then boiled, scrubbed, rinsed in blued water, then rinsed in this tub. I have yet to find a body of water more refreshing.

Before I could walk or speak, I was taught by example the respect of my neighbors. Common courtesies were awarded without question. "Good morning," "Good evening," "excuse me," "please," and "thank you" were among my first words.

We were in attendance at every Sunday function of the little wooden Ward's Chapel A. N. E. Church from the 9:00 a.m. Sunday school class, to the 11:00 a.m. regular service, to the 4:00 p.m. youth meeting, to the 6:00 evening service. On the Sundays that Mama ushered, I took my mid-mermon nap in the lap of Mrs. Ida Scott, whose whole body was almost as comforting as Mama's, understand me, not quite, but almost as comfort-

. On Fridays and Saturdays we --
na, Jacqueline, the ladies of
d's Chapel and I -- sold chicken
bar-b-que sandwiches for the
efit of the church's building fund.
New Greater Ward's Chapel A.
E. Church was built some twenty-
years ago and remains one of
landale's strongest congregations.
ne had said more than once that
was "nothing to write home to
orge about." but Mamie Morgan
to me the most beautiful woman
he world. She stood about 5'2"
weighed approximatley 160
nds before her illness. Her crook-
smile showed a gold capped front
th. Kraft caramel candy has the
or that comes closest to matching
complexion. Sitting on her lap
like cushioning my body into
hly washed down, so clean and
. About three evenings of each
ck, she gave me a dime to make
chases at Mr. Cooper's stores
oss the street. One nickel was for
wagon wheel cookies; the other
a can of her favorite snuff. To
h and empty her spit can was my
asure. In the cool early evening on
white-washed porch, we sat, she
ner rocker, a dip of CC between
bottom lip and gum, and I, bird
gs dangling over the porch's edge,
bling the cookies round and round
n the outside till only the center
uld be left. Neighbors in the little
v of houses coming home and go-
out exchanged pleasantries . . .
ood evening, Miz Mamie" . . .
ood evening, Son. How's your
ma?" . . . "She's alright." . . .
hat's good. Give her my best." . . .
es Ma'm." . . . "Hi, Nita." . . .
i, Charles." . . . "Good evening,
mie. How you this evening?" . . .
Oh, I guess I'll make it, Mary.
w 'bout yourself?" . . . "I'm here,
nk the Lord." . . . "Good evening,
nita." . . . "Good evening, Miz
ry." . . . "How you doing, Baby?"
. "I'm fine." . . . "Lord, Mamie,
t child sure is growing" . . . "Yes,
ry, she sure is." . . . "Well, I'll be
ing good night to you both." . . .
ood night, Mary." . . . "Good
ht, Miz Mary." God was in his
ven and the world was all right
h me.

One day Mama was there and the
next day she was gone. As time pass-
ed, I learned of her hospitalization
through bits and pieces of overheard
adult conversations between my
mother and others. "We went to see
Mrs. Morgan last Sunday . . . She
looks a little bit better . . . She keeps
asking for Nita, but visitors under
fourteen aren't allowed . . .
Sometimes I wish I could slip her in
that place so that she could see her for
a minute or two . . . She misses her
so." I learned to always be present
after those visits, sitting quietly
pretending to either color, write or
read. It was my only way of knowing
how and what she was doing. No one
ever talked of her to me. I never ask-
ed. Children should be seen, not
heard.

She had been gone for about three
months when I was finally allowed to
go on one of the hospital trips. I
wore the pale green dress with the lac-
ed organdy strips criss-crossed cross
the front and the big sash in the back.
She used to say that it was the pret-
tiest dress that Melina's had ever sold.

Melina's was downtown
Hollywood's most exclusive
children's shop and the place from
which almost all of my clothing was
bought.

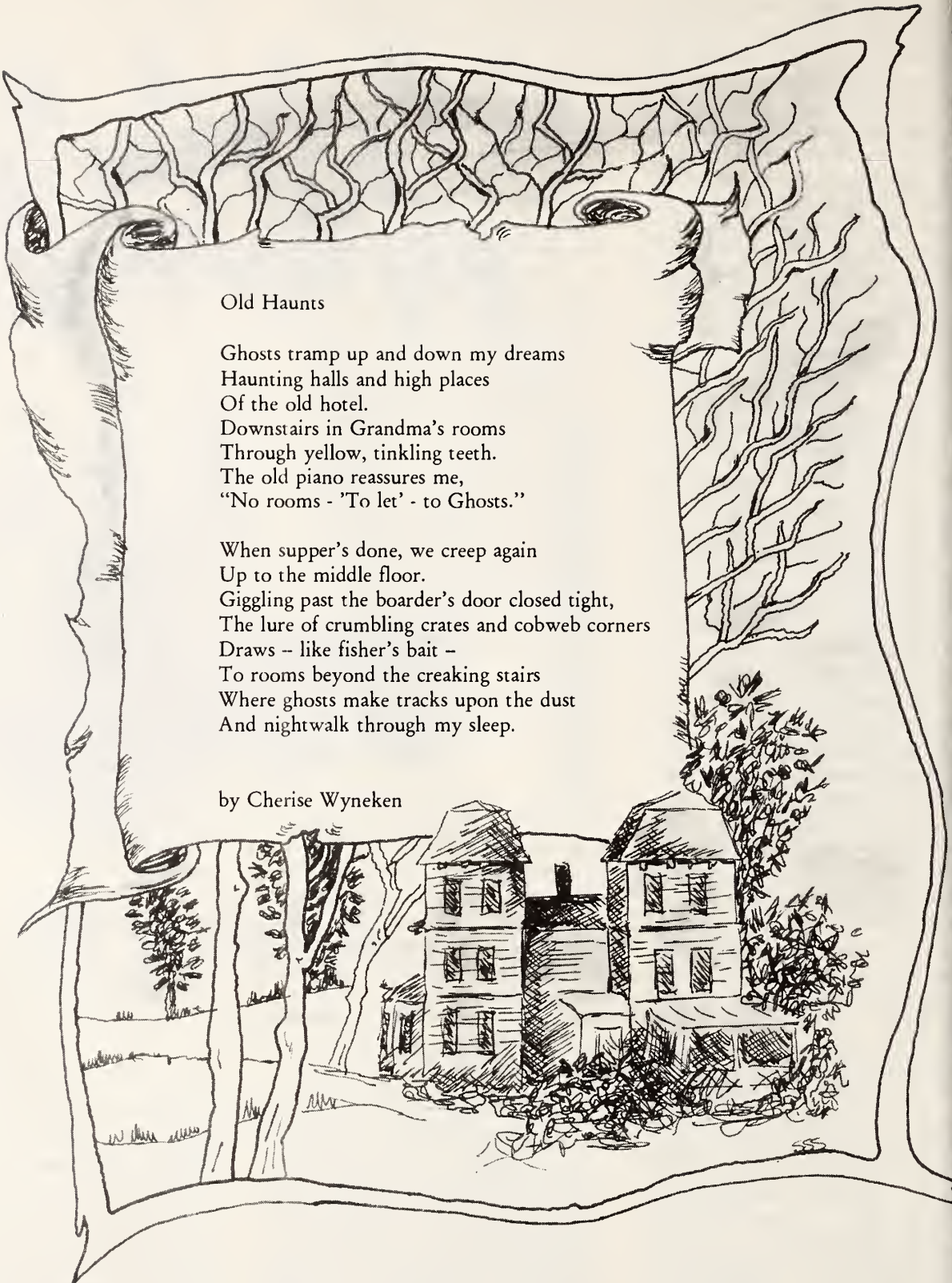
We went in Leroy's '48 Mercury --
my mother, Vincent, Jacqueline,
Leroy (Jacqueline's boyfriend) and I.
I was prepared to cooperate fully in
the great "sneak-in." I would be so
still, so quiet. I promised myself that
I would not even request bathroom
time whether I needed it or not.
Should invisibility become a request,
I was prepared to try that. But all of
my plans had been in vain. When we
got to the hospital, I was left in the
car with Vincent while everyone else
went inside. I was devastated and
confused. What were they doing? I
had been perfect. Never had I behav-
ed better; Not once did anybody have
cause to say a word to me during the
whole three hour trip. What had I
done? Had they forgotten how long
it had been since we had seen each
other? I knew she missed me too. I
had heard them say so, lots of times.
Vince picked me up and stood me on
top of the car, then pointed to the se-

cond story window. There she was --
her bed pushed close to the window --
propped high with pillows. Her
smile warmed my tiny body to its
very heart and some. Through waves
and blown kisses, Mama and her
"heartstring" exchanged love once
again. I had had my hospital visit.
All was well. I had seen so with my
very own eyes. They brought her
home two weeks later.

Lace trimmed the collar, sleeves and
waist of the white organdy dress. It,
too, had come from Melina's. A
white satin bow was held in place by a
braid in my freshly pressed and curled
hair. No one had told me, but I knew
that I would never see Mama again.
Mother patted her cheek and
whispered, "Good-bye, Mrs.
Morgan." Miz Tee, our friend and
neighbor, fainted and was taken from
the church. I mustn't cry, not even a
little. I had to be able to see her. The
patch of hair that Jacqueline had
burned out five months earlier (with
a too hot straightening comb) had
still not grown back. Boy, was she
mad with Jack that day. She did not
look tired and pained the way she had
before. Her face was smooth and
beautiful, like she was sleeping. It
was all right.

When it was over, I wanted to walk
and walk alone. Mother let me. Mr.
Watson, who owned the bakery shop
on the corner of Second Avenue and
Seventh Court (and baked what had
to have been the world's most
delicious Washington pie), called me
and invited me to have whatever I
wanted in the shop. He knew, too,
that if I could scrape up five nickels a
day, I would come in five times and
buy a cone of vanilla ice cream each
time. But not now. I just didn't feel
like it, even though it was free. I
thanked him very much, then crossed
Second Avenue to the school yard.
Climbing into the swing, I dug my
feet (still in white patented shoes) into
the dirt and kicked off. Swing for-
ward, feet kick out; swing backward,
feet tuck in; in-out, in-out, in-out . . .

When I was younger, Mama used to
have to push me. But I was a big girl
now. I could swing on my own.
Mama had taught me how.

A black and white line drawing of a scroll with text and a house illustration. The scroll is unrolled, showing text in the center. The background of the scroll is filled with a dense, intricate pattern of tree roots or branches. At the bottom of the scroll, there is a detailed illustration of a two-story house with a porch, surrounded by trees and bushes. The entire scene is framed by a simple, irregular border.

Old Haunts

Ghosts tramp up and down my dreams
Haunting halls and high places
Of the old hotel.
Downstairs in Grandma's rooms
Through yellow, tinkling teeth.
The old piano reassures me,
"No rooms - 'To let' - to Ghosts."

When supper's done, we creep again
Up to the middle floor.
Giggling past the boarder's door closed tight,
The lure of crumbling crates and cobweb corners
Draws - like fisher's bait -
To rooms beyond the creaking stairs
Where ghosts make tracks upon the dust
And nightwalk through my sleep.

by Cherise Wyneken

AMNIOTICS

I believe me now-- not enough -- just as
little as the dragon I feel like
metallic air shines in my lungs white heat
torturing my exhalation

it
is hot breath as I think -- try to think of
a time when breath was cooler and plunge into
the icy waters of self-scrutiny

my body my body my body... something has my body -- some arms so near
yearn to know my form stripping me of these
thought-stiff clothes and I am bare swimming
the fetal fluids of the universe
transparent in the way a mirror is
I find my clear reflection -- my sweet James
what is my given name this James but me?

this bath this bath this bath has hands which make most of my form erect
and dancing -- every limb a penis poised
hushed in the before and after seconds
of touch

missing enough of too much to feel
too little

from underneath this quick ocean beats on
my belly and encircles my thighs -- I
am swimming lightly my hair ends vist
my upper-back with each steady stroke of
my heavy arms -- something in me is an
alarm going off going off going off
and shaking I dart my head in terror

shelters where pleasures hide
are scattered about my geography
cities awaiting winter...

a cold a cold a cold

I have let go of the ocean
and it has let go of me
in the middle of an elixir sea
I am the poison in the potion
how so freed?

ask me ask me ask me... James -- a name for a corpse and a brain
sane if there is sanity in motion

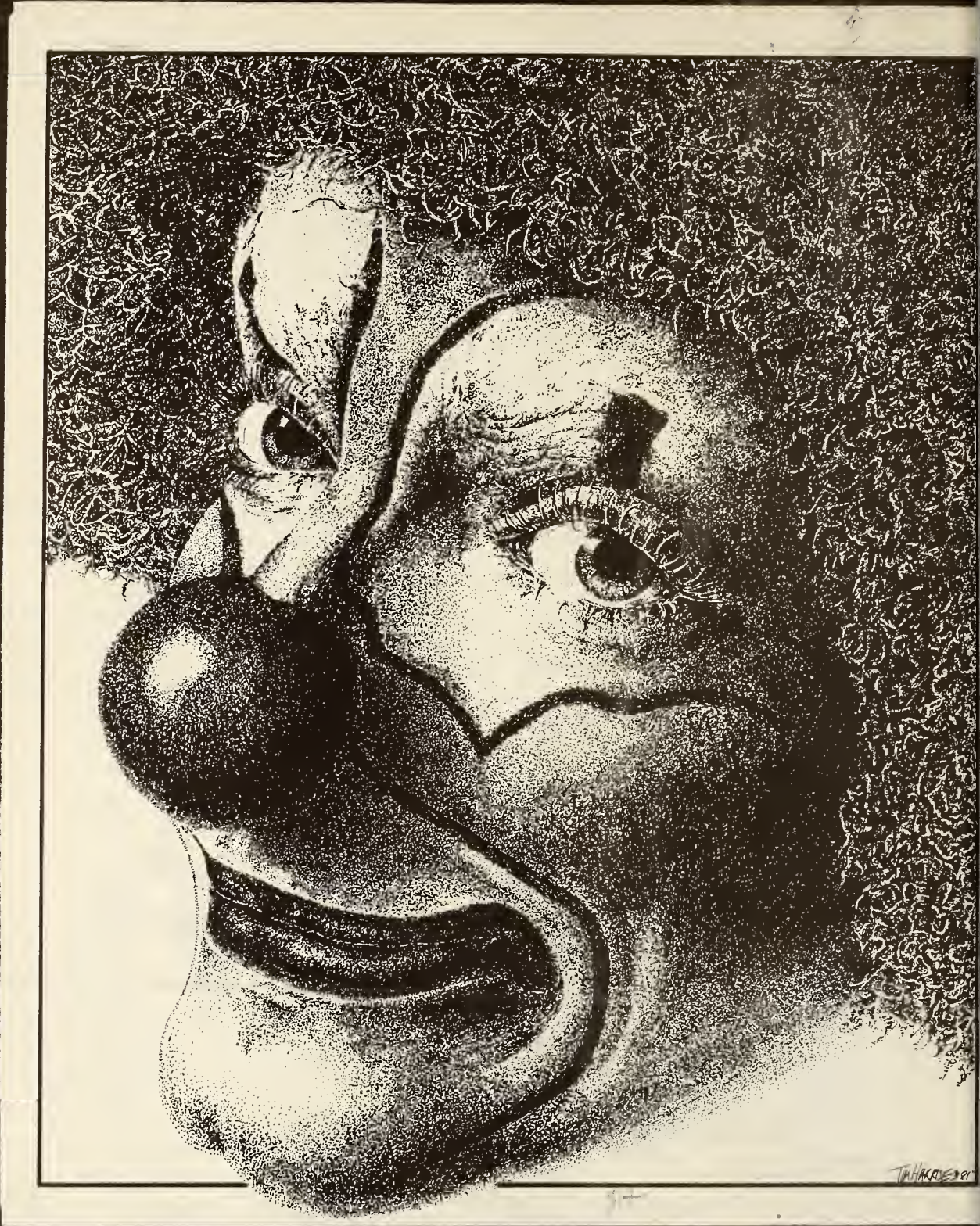
ah the ocean the ocean the ocean

amniotic and I seek the birth
where are your arms dear mother earth
and when shall a mother touch her child?

so I kick my unheld legs and I thrash
my no-one's face -- do I grow or does the
world shrink and where are men without measure?

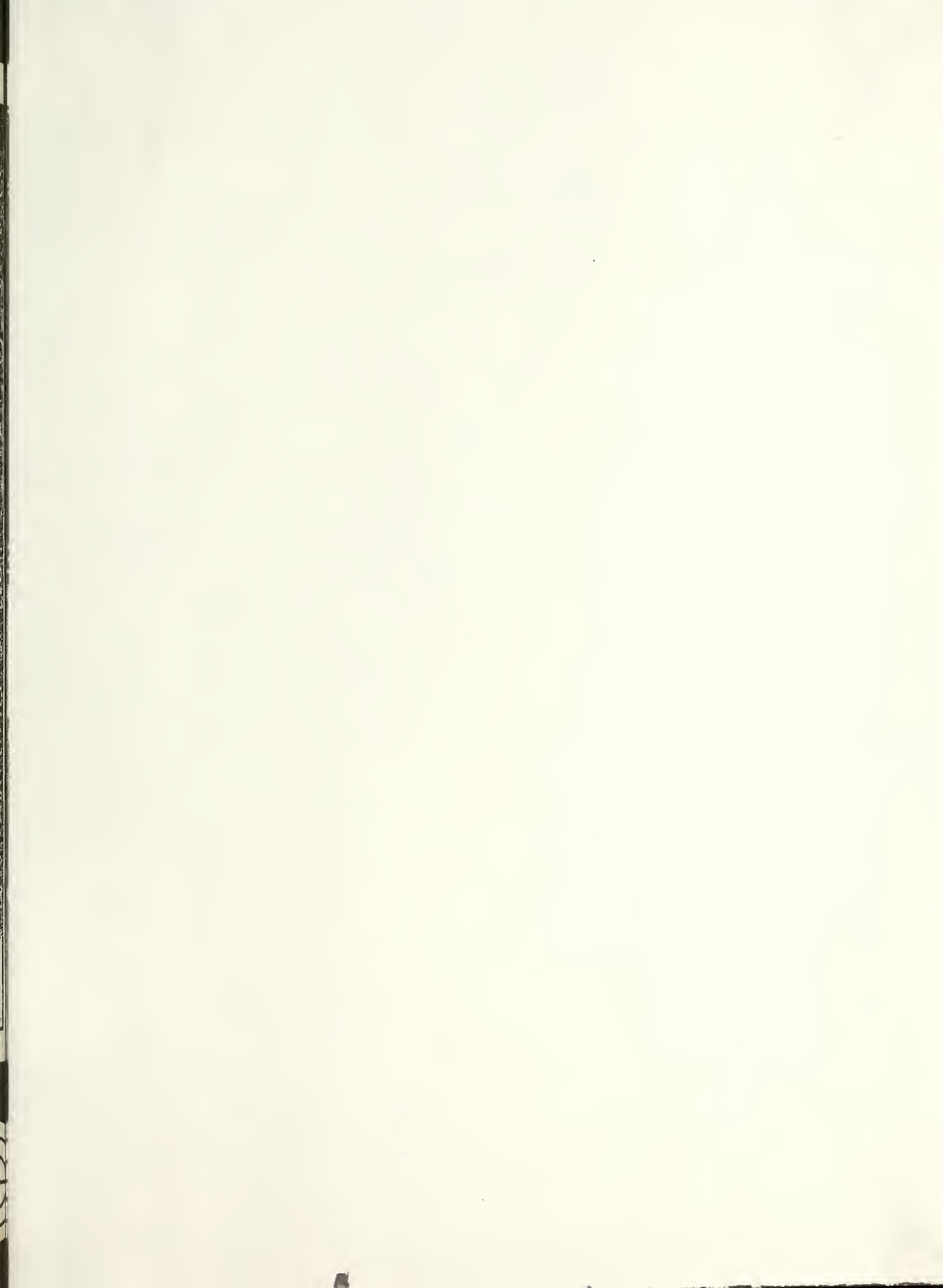
I think I think I think

James G. Azar



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