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Exile Vol. XVI No. 2

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Exile Vol. XVI No. 2

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FILE



Take thought:
I have weathered the storm
I have beaten out my exile.
- Ezra Pound

Spring 1970 Vol. 16 No. 2
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Editor-In-Chief Keith McWalter
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If I could turn you on
If I could only drive you
out of your wretched mind,
if I could tell you
I would let you know. . .

- R. D. LAING

PREFACE

To whom these presents may come greeting:
The sound of winter laughing,
The silence out of Barrington,
The dreams of dogs and children,
Lovers,
Exiles, all of you;
Fools, for Christ's sake.

In a doppler way,
the sound of coming time
rises
to the crushing pitch of presentness. . .

If you cannot love me,
then laugh at me.
It will serve for now,
And now is all I own.

Don't describe the vision,
make it:
Kisses,
ticklish shadow of a moustache,
pimples and perfume. . .
Rather, much rather,
the glistening body,
torso like a glass cylinder
atop the bolt-fired mountain,
Naked in the wind and promethean rain,
knowing only the leap,
and never
the fall.

And yet, in a doppler way,
Each moment passes in a descending moan;
We reel,
by love making,
by love destroying,
Midas-cursed,
And everything we touch
turns into
words.

- k. g. m.

OBSERVATIONS AT THE GAP

The editor of this worthy anthology has bid me commit to paper some of the speculations that have surfaced in our three year running dialogue on the state of the world. One can well tell from the subject of our dialogue that neither he nor myself is a man prone to humility. We, like so many of our sophistic peers, are brash beyond our means, our minds careening about, overturning intellectual furniture and rarely stopping to pick it up again. Our impatience has the unfortunate consequence of leaving us few places to sit when our minds seek some rest. What is offered here is a sort of ten-second Polaroid picture tour of one of the rooms we have visited in hopes that the clutter will be provocative.

Allow me to speak to that subject which is most immediate, the university. My generation has, it seems, thrown its soul (or should I say its glands) into reforming this institution. Her ivied walls have had to bear accusations of stagnation, complacency, and that sin of all sins, irrelevancy. Our villain, it appears, has deprived righteous youth of that higher truth that is reported to originate in fields somewhere south of the Rio Grande (Which would lead one to expect that the Mexicans would be the most enlightened people in the world). There seems to be, at least among the most vocal cadres of our generation, an a priori condemnation of all that is traditionally the university, all that is old. If it was not invented before last September, it cannot be meaningful (and likely it is fascist). The new criteria is immediacy, there is no market for the past. I wonder, though, how many of us have stopped to realize that those things which our generation most often condemns are those things which are most often difficult; the professor who would rather be right than popular, the book you have to pull the truth from rather than having it gift-wrapped, the course that demands you know the facts before the theory, the comprehensive that forces you to know your subject rather than offering an opportunity to gloat over each other's rhetoric at

a sensitivity session. I think that curious disease that has affected (yes, affected) our generation could be best called anti-intellectualism, an allergy that reacts to any effort that demands discipline, precision, and logic. We have forgotten that to be truly creative, to write well, to paint well, to compose well, to live well, a man must thrust his hands into that dirty pool of unruly facts that give flesh to the fragile skeletons of our brilliant schemes. My generation, we have to pay our dues. We have to spend those endless hours among those heavy books, our minds dragging the truth out kicking and screaming, unwilling to be ours unless we are its master. If we really want to bring down the establishment, if we really want to go beyond the generations that have gone before, let us do it by being better than they, better physicists, better biologists, better historians. Let us beat them with hard facts and sound reason. Let us slash off our intellectual flab and get down to work. Throw away those innocuous texts that homogenize the truth for you and wade in among the books, read Homer, and Newton, and Kant in their own words. Digest those facts so that they cannot defeat us for our ignorance. We must do the leg-work. If the past is our enemy then we must understand it to defeat it. Let us be good at something besides rhetoric and empty passion. We demand respect, and we raise our hands to Budweiser cans and Cannibus Oblivious. We beg for the real but we are turning in droves to experience that denies reality. The revolution will not rise in our little rooms filled with sweaty smoke. We demand integrity from those who went before us, but then we forsake the integrity of that one thing that makes us more worthy than all other matter and motion in this universe, the sanctity of our minds. It is only our minds, disciplined and precise, that can create and construct a world that will somehow be more beautiful, and more just.

- Paul A. Dimitruk, '71



THOSE WHO CHOOSE WORDS: a personal premise

"Each word is like an unnecessary strain on silence and nothingness."
- Samuel Beckett

At the outset, one of the questions most likely to arise in the consideration of the act of writing is that of the very practicality, the intrinsic value, of the act. To speak to this very deserving question, one must, I believe, examine the very nature of the individual's psychological relationship to his environment, or what I shall call ambient realities. Those who choose words are most often those who recognize, through the mechanism of their natural imaginations, a certain dichotomy between the world as their senses perceive it and the world that MIGHT exist under slightly or vastly different circumstances. How the individual responds to this awareness, whether by ignoring it, rationalizing it, deifying it, or acting in some way upon it, distinguishes one man from another in life style, personal relationship with his ambient realities, and his very sense of identity. Reconciliation of the given with the what-could-be is an impulse that does NOT exist in all men. It is the determining factor, the crucial element, in the equation of creativity. If it IS present, then a certain tension rises, like the sudden stringing of a bow, in the human psyche, a tension that may best be relieved by the expression of that awareness. Nonetheless, release is attained by some through suppression of intellectual vision, rejection of its abstract world, often in favor of a cynical empiricism, or simple superficiality. Such men choose silence and passivity, as aptly expressed in the preceding observation by Samuel Beckett. Others are compelled to ACT upon their sensitivities, whether by formalizing and focusing their objects through the construction of ideologies, escapism, or by attempting to at least personally give VOICE to those inner workings. Such men choose words and action. The act of creative writing is, at its most basic level, a creation of that second world, the world, however close it may be to reality, of the intellectual imagination.

To this latter brand of intellect, putting thought into words is a process intrinsic to any productive mental activity, which would be severely limited without it. Even Beckett chose to verbalize his thought, however negatively, for each word, while it IS a strain on the noncommittal comfort of silence, is also an enduring embodiment of concepts that would otherwise go unnamed and unconsidered.

Why write? Because to choose silence is to choose a more limited realm of knowledge. Those who choose words do so because they feel compelled to move concepts that they believe to be valid from the intuitive to the cognitive levels of thought, to frame those concepts in their most tangible and communicable form: the written word. I believe that this movement from amorphous thought to the concrete word is a learning process in itself, forcing the mind to consider in relative, associative contexts what might otherwise remain half-perceived or only vaguely apprehended. This requires energy, effort, and not a small degree of objective self-effacement and courage. One who fears self-examination is also very likely to fear self-expression, for the fruition of the second cannot be achieved meaningfully without the first.

"Those who know, don't say, and those who say, don't know," goes a contemporary rubric, one that speaks volumes

on the extent to which the written and spoken word has lost the aura of self-substantiation and credibility that still clung to language throughout most of its history. The written word was a medium of the elite; few could write, and those that could therefore held true power. The pen was, indeed, mightier than the sword. Verbal communication has since diminished in prestige in direct proportion to its accumulative proliferation through mass media, with the result that much of the sheer plethora of words with which technological cultures are glutted is met with a cynical and not entirely unjustified skepticism. In a time when talk is cheap, sincerity is dear, and one must choose his words, whether in reading or in writing, with extreme care. The individual, grafted as he is to such a mass culture, often defensively and, I believe, mistakenly assumes that MEANINGFUL experience must be intensely PERSONAL, even to the exclusion of a verbal communication of experience.

The creative writer is among those philosophical thinkers who reject silence in favor of words, who are less concerned with private rumination than with meaningful expression OF that second world, who must believe that if a sensibility CANNOT be put into words, it is not truly understood or has been insufficiently examined. To paraphrase our earlier axiom, "Those who know, MUST say; those who can't say, don't know."

I said earlier that the act of creative writing requires ENERGY, and I meant that in a very literal, almost empirical sense. I subscribe to what can only rather crudely be named an input-output theory of creativity. Consider, if you will, the human mind, imagination, consciousness, or what-have-you, to be a compact and highly-sophisticated binary computer, receiving a constant stream of information through the physical senses, sorting out certain inputs that are imminently crucial, discarding others as irrelevant, pigeonholing still others for further analysis or reflection. The sensory inputs of this third category enter what would be commonly called the subconscious, there to bubble about in the complex circuitry of that little-understood mechanism till it is regenerated, often in a mutated form, up through the channels of consciousness once more, and is used as some component of a "creative act." This, to further stretch the metaphor, is the output factor of our mind-computer. This is a highly inefficient process, however, in that a great deal of experiential energy is required as input to produce a comparatively small amount of actual artistic OUTPUT.

This explains why the compulsive writer is so often a reality-monger, a coveter of real experience. It is why he reads voraciously, often acts impulsively, often lives "eccentrically". To fulfill the prerequisites of his art, he can do no less.

Let me stress in connection to this topic of the necessity of variegated experience to the creative process that the aspect of reading widely, both for firm literary background and as an ongoing learning experience, cannot be over-emphasized. One learns, or should learn from each author a fragment of a continually evolving perspective on writing. This is not to condone imitation, but to point out that EMULATION, conscious or otherwise, of a fine author is the commonest, best, and perhaps only springboard for

the novice to use in the development of a personally unique and effective style. Even the most ancient philosophers recognized that all things had already been said and done in one manner or another; it was but their obligation, as it is ours, to say and do those things again, though hopefully in a more effective manner. Uniqueness is rare because it is so vulnerable. One must be prepared to adopt the position of a fool and a murderer if he aspires to that high objective; a fool in the sense that he must risk self-revelation of the most vulnerable kind, and a murderer in the sense that he must be callously objective, even ruthless, in the treatment of his own creative offspring. This is no easy aspiration, but one that quickly separates the dedicated from the dilettante.

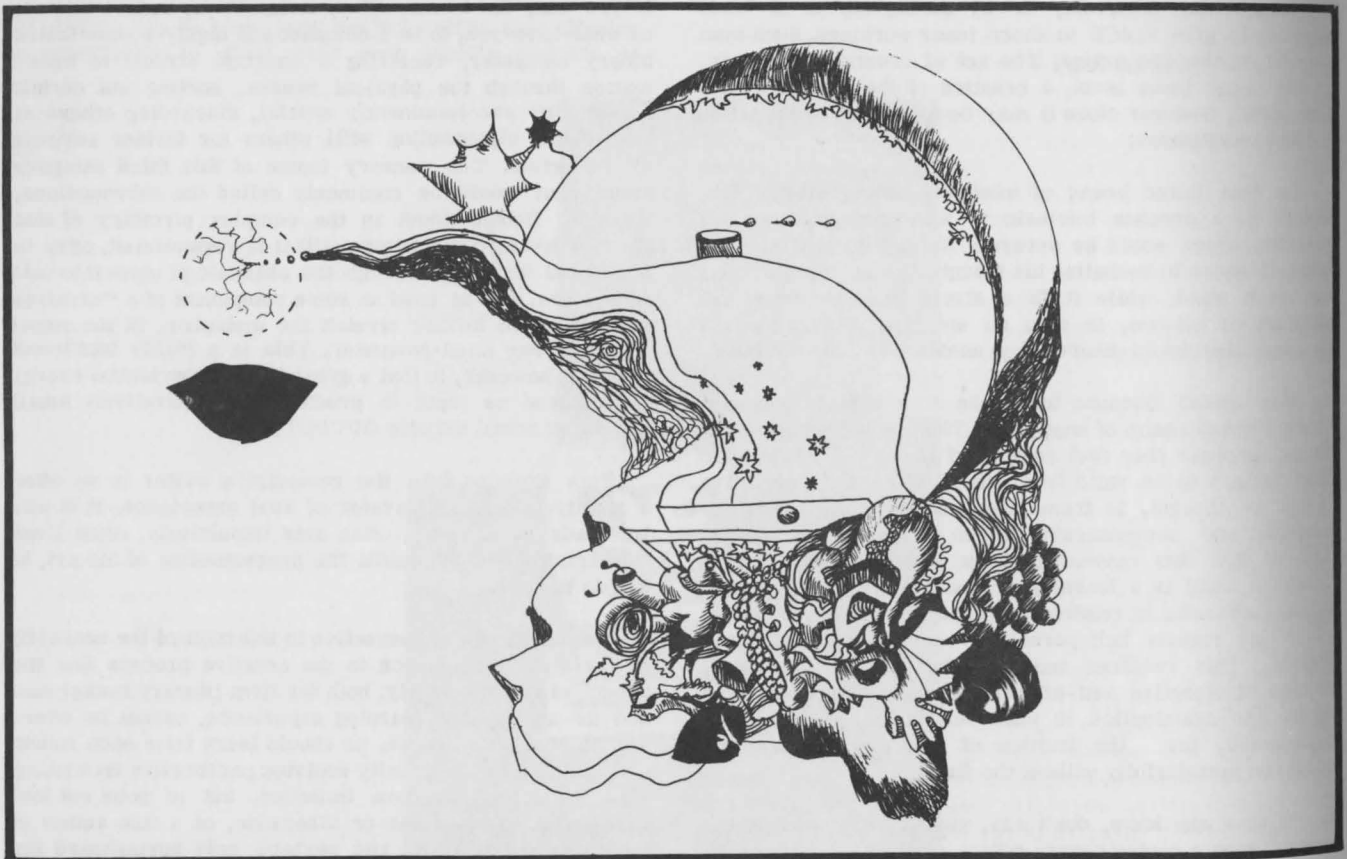
This personal risk factor is further complicated by the inevitability of initial failures of intent on the part of the beginning writer. There is a natural component of our egos that tempts us to believe that we can skip the gropings and fumbings, the overstatement and arch symbolisms of the novice and immediately begin producing manuscripts of mature and universal significance. I use the word "mature" advisedly, for we can no more leapfrog this period of trial-and-error than we can forgo adolescence or any OTHER segment of what is, by nature, a linear and continual learning process. Again, in most cases barring pure genius, experience and age are the only valid teachers and, as shown earlier, much more must be absorbed by the creative mind than will ever emerge from it.

Great manuscripts are not written, they are REwritten, and many writers of every ilk develop words and phrases whose meaning may be personally very clear and powerful, but whose significance to his audience may be severely limited. For the sake of reaching the widest possible audience, then the writer must learn to purge the private

meaning out of his words and replace it with something commensurate to meaning-by-consensus. The act of writing and the act of reading are essentially worlds apart. A writer constructs, often very laboriously, chains of meaning, sentences, each link of which he may have searched and culled his imagination to forge. It is a slow, linear process. The reader, on the other hand, disassembles those word-chains at a much greater speed and with far less concentration than the initial creative act required. Information and nuances of meaning that seemed perfectly clear to the writer can be skimmed and jumbled by the reader. Whereas writing is a conceptual act, reading is often an impressionistic one. It is crucial, then, to write from the perspective of the reader; the effective writer develops a keen sense of what goes on on the OTHER side of the looking-glass, in the experience of READING what he has committed to the printed page. He objectifies his work, learns to approach it with the TABULA ROSA that his reader will bring to bear. He must trust creative intuition, surely, but not depend upon it to the exclusion of a certain empathetic honesty and realism. One final contention:

There is in man a subtle uneasiness, an often indefinable tension, that pervades his every striving and leaves its stamp upon his every accomplishment. Even in his quietest moments it keeps his fingers drumming on tabletops and his head cocking skywards as if in some primeval expectation. Call it Spirit, or reason, or imagination; it is the fee exacted by the gift of human consciousness. The validity of the impulse that motivates those who choose words is an ultimately irrelevant issue. Simply because they are men, they are condemned to pursue that consciousness to the utmost bounds of human thought, to continually test the challenge of "silence and nothingness."

- Keith McWalter, '71



ON VICTORIA'S ENGLAND

Not so very long ago there was a place where for one moment a brash faith in the possibility of perfection and an immodest energy to realize that possibility bore forth a new design for how men should live and be governed. That place was Victoria's England. Today that place and those men who inhabited it seem somehow curiously naive with their adolescent notion that through an act of will they could soothe and heal the sores of urbanized, industrialized civilization. If they be mocked for their innocence, at least allow them the recognition that they sacrificed much of what they held right and holy in that effort. Victoria's century was a time when ideas were pursued by ambitious men, ideas captured, corralled, and tamed. Ideas were never before so guilty of associating with real men, and real men were never before so guilty of embracing them. That association and that embrace provides history with a lode rich but most difficult to mine.

Perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of the Victorian Age is that while England was being transformed at an unparalleled velocity, it was never visited by the kind of widespread militant radicalism that became almost habitual for continental Europe. England participated in neither the convulsion of 1848 nor the conversion to Marxism. The English proletariat maintained its fundamental trust in institutions as the vehicle of change. The English had watched Paris take to the barricades; there would be no revolution in England. It is significant that the People's Charter did not seek the abolition of Parliament but rather sought entrance to it. For their patience the English workingman gained five of the Charter's six provisions, without bloodshed and without burning. What the ruling classes found abhorrent in the Charter of 1838 they would sanctify with law a generation later. It cannot be claimed that the resistance was not vehement or that the reforms came of clear willingness, but somehow the English governing class always managed to find the right man at the right moment to lubricate the machinery and make change bearable, if not comfortable. Peel, a Conservative, broke through Tory economics and the Corn Laws fell; Disraeli, understanding the moderate temper of the English workingman, offered him the ballot; Gladstone, once a High Tory, won himself the title the Great Liberal by carving out reform so revolt would not be attractive; and Robert Lowe, the devout aristocrat, fighting for mass education because good sense told him he must educate his masters. Their reasons were not always righteous but somehow from the morass of greed, self-interest and stagnant tradition they pulled up a freer, more humane way for men to live.

Ironically it was the conviction born of Evangelism that provided the means and the motive for much of this recasting, ironic because in so doing the zeal was drained from Evangelism, and the liberated man founded the secular order. Gradually the ageless dike began to leak, and the Manchester mill owners and their kind could no longer ignore the rising notion that Christian responsibility had a place in Parliament and industry. The barricades between Church and factory were breached. It was recognized that the government had more than merely a mandate to maintain order, government had a pact with progress; it had a covenant to look to the happiness of its people. In the process of fulfilling that covenant the two old parties took on new values and new voices, sometimes at violent odds with each other, sometimes indistinguishable, but fundamentally different creatures after sixty years of Victoria's reign. The old narrow lanes to power cobbled with bribery and

upper class prerogative could not carry the heavy feet of masses of men. Broad avenues had to be built to the people, images to appeal to nameless millions. The huge nets cast out to capture these millions had to be tightly strung so the independent member of Parliament was lost to the glamorous campaigning of the two giants. Members of Parliament were party men first, and increasingly the party's name was spelled with the same letters that were found the Prime Minister's signature. The profusion of laws meant a profusion of little men to carry them out, little men who made up big ministries. The cerebrum of the ministries was the Prime Minister's cabinet where policy and the machinations of governing were decided. When Gladstone appealed to all the people in the Midlothian campaign, he set a precedent whereby the people and not the members of Parliament would be the first appellate body. Government became too complicated for the individual member to understand much less control. Government became the domain of the professional and the specialist. The outline etched by Bentham and his clear-writing apostles, the greatest good for the greatest number, would inevitably in its detail assume a rampant bureaucracy. Human nature did not confirm that good flows naturally from freedom. Laissez-faire was doomed when men realized that there would be no intervening Providence and that if they wanted humane progress they would have to consent to activist governments. Progress, MacCauley's notion that, "We are wiser than our ancestors," was inseparable from paper-work and clerks.

The text book of agitation written by the philosophic radicals and such colleagues as the Clapton Sect was put to use by the working men who discovered the antidote to Marxism in the union movement. From the London Working Men's Association to the Trade Union Congress the British workingman held onto, if sometimes tenuously, his stake in both prosperity and peace until he realized real and independent power in the creation of the Labour Party. It is a tribute to the British workingman that he found for his leaders men like Robert Applegarth, men who were devoted to sane and intelligent reform, education rather than revolution.

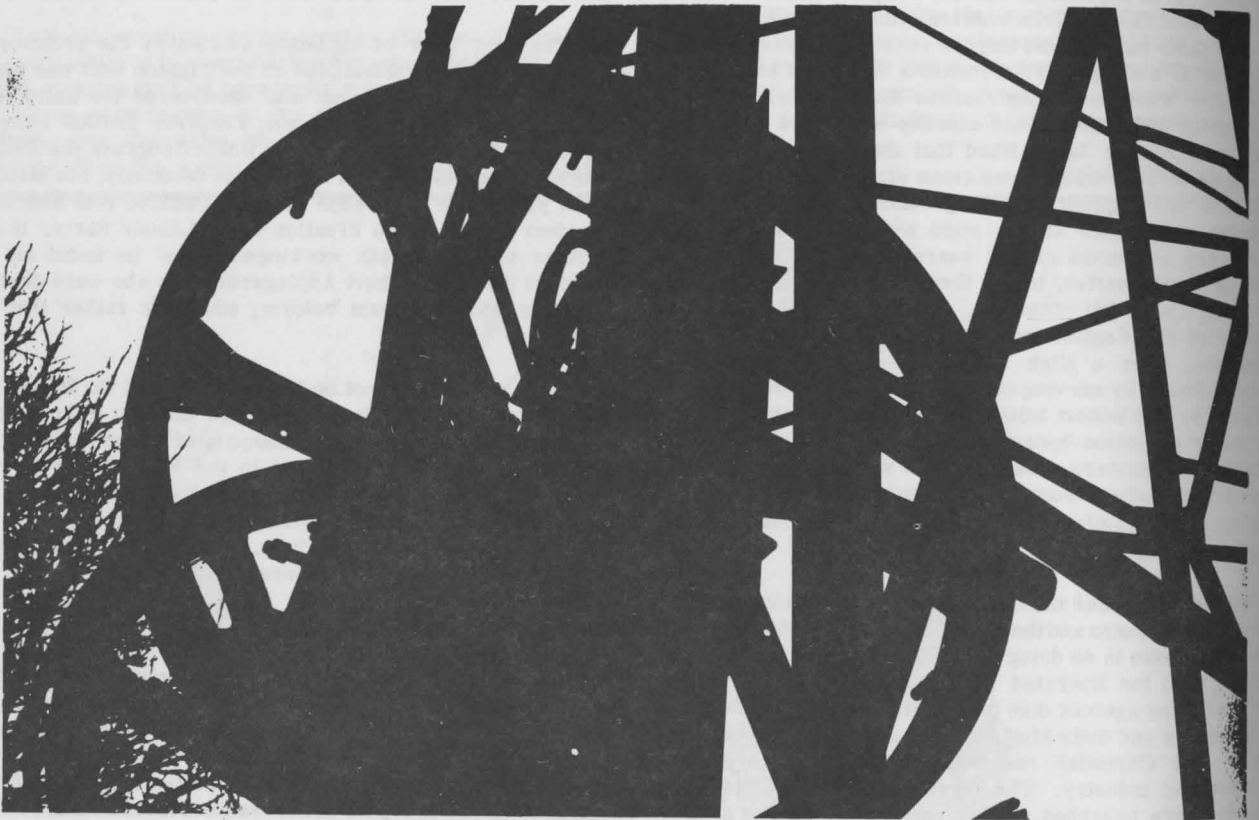
That much might not be honestly claimed for the feminist movement in England. Perhaps militant womanhood's putting down of the kettle and picking up of the axe is the most visible radical transformation in the Victorian era. Possibly this can be attributed to the female's latent flare for violence which when unleashed puts male barbarity to shame. This student, though, does not feel qualified to comment, historically or otherwise.

As the old modes fell when reason and energy were casting new political and economic forms, tolerance came to art and morals. Any civilization that is mobile, progressive, and educated can bear the burden of crepe and stuffiness for but a short time. Men for whom prosperity becomes habitual and the good life is not only possible but probable will not long disavow temptation for the strictures of some confining morality. The prospect of hell seemed to lose its heat when men were fat and content. When affluence winds into it second and third generation, men have the time and the budget to appreciate and support art. As hell becomes more distant beauty replaces morality as the artistic rationale. People become bored when the living is not so lean, and the sensuous and vulgar come up from the subterranean to thrill and shock. Whistler can confront Ruskin, Pater can say, "morality is nothing, beauty all," and Beardsley can commit to paper the

erotic imaginings for so long recluse in the recesses of the mind.

The tumult and zeal of the Victorians can perhaps be best explained by simply saying that it was a time when men came out of a darkness to realize that they could fashion their own heaven or their own hell, that sweat, ingenuity, tolerance, and reason would somehow make tomorrow a more worthy creation than yesterday. They came to believe that progress was inevitable, and more, that it was good. Victoria's England was a pageant in celebration of that belief.

- Paul A. Dimitruk, '71



"FACTS ARE THE ENEMY OF TRUTH"

"Facts," pronounced the actor, "are the enemy of truth!"

The audience laughed; it was their cue. They were sophisticated, well-educated members of upper middle class America and they recognized a laugh line when they heard it. It was a good line, and the actor, playing Don Quixote in Broadway's THE MAN OF LA MANCHA, said it with great expression and laudable zeal, for which the audience rewarded him with a scattering of applause along with their automated laughter.

True, the line, even out of context, exudes a certain humorous quality; for even a school child knows that facts are certain statements that are genuine and authentic, and that these statements are, if not the truth themselves, at least parts of the truth. And yet, what is this knowledge that even a school child possesses? Where does it come from? Who or what is the basis, the criterion, for such universal knowledge?

There is no answer for such questions because, in actuality, the kind of knowledge described does not exist. It exists only as pedantry, as the smug arrogance of the self-complacent, as the egotistical close-mindedness of those who are, in TRUTH, now knowledgeable at all, but merely addle-brained. Such "knowledge" serves to sanction and thus increase the actions just described: the automatic registering of a laugh line, the automatic response, the automatic blindness to the meaning and worth of the statement itself.

"Facts are the enemy of truth." Such a simple statement yet with such depth of meaning! It reveals the basic difference between facts and truth: that facts are mere STATEMENTS about the world while truth is a CONDITION, a STATE which exists neither in or out of the world, but independent of it. This interpretation sheds a whole new light not only on the play itself, but also on the type of automated world for which the play is performed.

In the context of THE MAN OF LA MANCHA, this philosophical premise is spoken by the Count Quixado to Dr. Carrasco, his chief antagonist. The Count has supposedly lost his sanity and taken on a new name (Don Quixote) and a new occupation (knight errantry). Dr. Carrasco attempts to effect his return by logical reasoning. However, Don Quixote responds with his magnificent philosophy, thus bringing to an apex the conflict of appearance versus reality, which had been implicit in the play until this scene.

Thus what "seems to be" not always "is" -- "facts" are not necessarily "truth." The Count's insanity might not be the madness it seems, but a higher vision of reality, a vision denied to humans without the Count's belief in the "impossible dream." In essence, Don Quixote, by accepting his vision and striving for his dream, is living in the state of

truth, and by denying his dull, meaningless existence, is denouncing the world of facts. He has chosen truth over its enemy.

The same philosophy can be applied to "real" life, the life that goes on after the curtain has dropped in the final act. Ironically, THE MAN OF LA MANCHA exists in the very type of world its hero seeks to escape. This contradiction is best illustrated by the situation initially described. There is no doubt that this scene in the play invites and deserves the laughter it received. However, the attitude of the audience bears criticism. It is one thing to react with laughter to an amusing line. It is another thing entirely to react in the same way to a line of satire, especially when it embodies a philosophy pertinent to the viewer. The laughter should also be accompanied with a feeling of self-knowledge, a recognition of the evil satirized.

The audience described does not react in this way: it merely appreciates the humor without perceiving its message. An action such as this can only be a sign of the moral decadence pervading American society today, the moral decadence that has sprung from the basic evil described in Don Quixote's words, that is, the refusal to recognize truth by willingly accepting lies and replacing what is true with platitudes and factual, yet pointless, phrases. In this manner, "facts" can easily hide "truth."

Other examples of this shameful evil are easy to discover: the extreme poverty in America today is the social responsibility of every American. Yet it is easy to hide behind facts: "I pay taxes, that's enough." "I give whenever a drive is held by a worthy charity." "It's taken out of my paycheck every week." Facts? Yes, but the truth remains that the dreadful poverty exists. Facts, in this case, are only the enemy of the truth.

A second example can be found in the touchy racial situation in America. Fact: "I never snub Negroes in any business or social contacts I have with them." Fact: "Some of my best friends are Negro." Truth: "I agree that Negroes are not inferior to the white race. I wouldn't mind if they lived next door to me. I just don't want my daughter to marry one of them." Here, bigotry and condescension are the truth, hidden by the facts of superficial discrimination.

The "knowledge" exhibited by the audience in reaction to Don Quixote's famous line is a product of the decadent environment in which the audience must live. Whether they are makers of this environment, or mere victims, is a mystery. Whatever the situation, a catalyst is definitely needed to jar them into action, into at least a recognition of the truth, as well as a recognition of the evil at hand. "Facts are the enemy of truth." A disease? Certainly. Curable? Only time will tell.

- Nancy Gutierrez, '73







**I wish my poems had been
born dead
Instead I find them in the
bathroom with their throats slit
open.**

- Susan Hallock, '71

COUNTER-FUGUE AT SIX-THIRTY

I awoke,
Looked about me,
And seemed, just for a minute,
To recognize
Things I thought I had long ago misplaced and forgotten.
"You see?",
I said to myself,
"You see?",
And I answered "Yes".

What tales, dreams and
Dreams,
What daydreams, and dark-deathdreams,
Deaf dreams,
Scuttled, pushed and hurried to the
Black seas of my brain,
To the back of my
Top-of-the-morning brain?

And my young, pink arms
Yawned and bloomed high.
The pinkcheeked morning sky felt cool
As it ran dribbly down my arms,
And flowed easy between and around and over
Two firm breasts, bug-eyed at six-thirty in the fall morning,
The free, brilliant, embracing morning.

What were the imaginings?
What is it the morning
Wants me to forget?
Something of my "yesterdays"
And "nows"?
And what was it the night told me,
Warned me to remember about
My "tomorrows"?
Is it wise to remember?
Dare I bother?
Is it right to bother to remember,
When,
At six-thirty,
The funnyfaced morning smiles bright?

My feet squeaked to remember
The cold, wooden, morning floor.
The window shades purred at my "Let me look!" touch.
And the sun met me at the window,
Always punctual,
Always on time,
Always waiting for me when I got there.
"You see?"

I said to my matter-of-fact self,
And then I nodded at me.

And what was the twilight's song:
"I must dwell in the darkness
And dream in the day.
In the sun one must watch
The whole city decay."

I grinned at the morning.
And the morning,
Looking once up
And once down the street (just to make sure),
Grinned back.

"From my window,
The naughty morning is
Rosy-cheeked
(From playing, I think, too near the sun).
And I can see the couples huddle
And fumble down the doorsteps,

Still warm with the secrets of

Their one night's hot hibernation.
On the corner of my street,
The humble melon man yells of his
Fresh Morning Melons!
And blows steam
From the nostrils of his pudgy face,
And hums."

Is it right

That I forget the fears of the night?
"From my window,
I can see the brown overcoats of little men,
Funny and serious,
The backs of their necks, cold and rosy,
(Looking like pomagranate skins, under their grey hats),
With their busy brown parcels,
Mumbling all, of the morning,
And the melons,
And Time."

Have I forgotten
The forboding
Of the setting
Of the sun?
And the terror
Of a promise
About another day?

I sit me down to hot tea,
Cozy in my pretty flannel nightgown and slippers.
"Now let us see.
It was to come with the sun.
Something was promised to come with today.
Something will come, I know.
Because I heard the evening say
That it was definitely so."

The clock,
My foolish clock,
Measuring out the meticulous destruction of the days,
Of my day
(Already dying with the coming of the dawn),
Tells me it is getting late.
And I cannot guess. It does not matter.
It is getting late. And I do not think I care.
And I shall not wriggle under the morning's promisory stare.
So, drink your tea while it is hot,
And wait.

The bugaboo
Must be dead.
(Or is he hiding).
"He is not come,"
The morning said,
"He must be dead".
(Or is he hiding?)

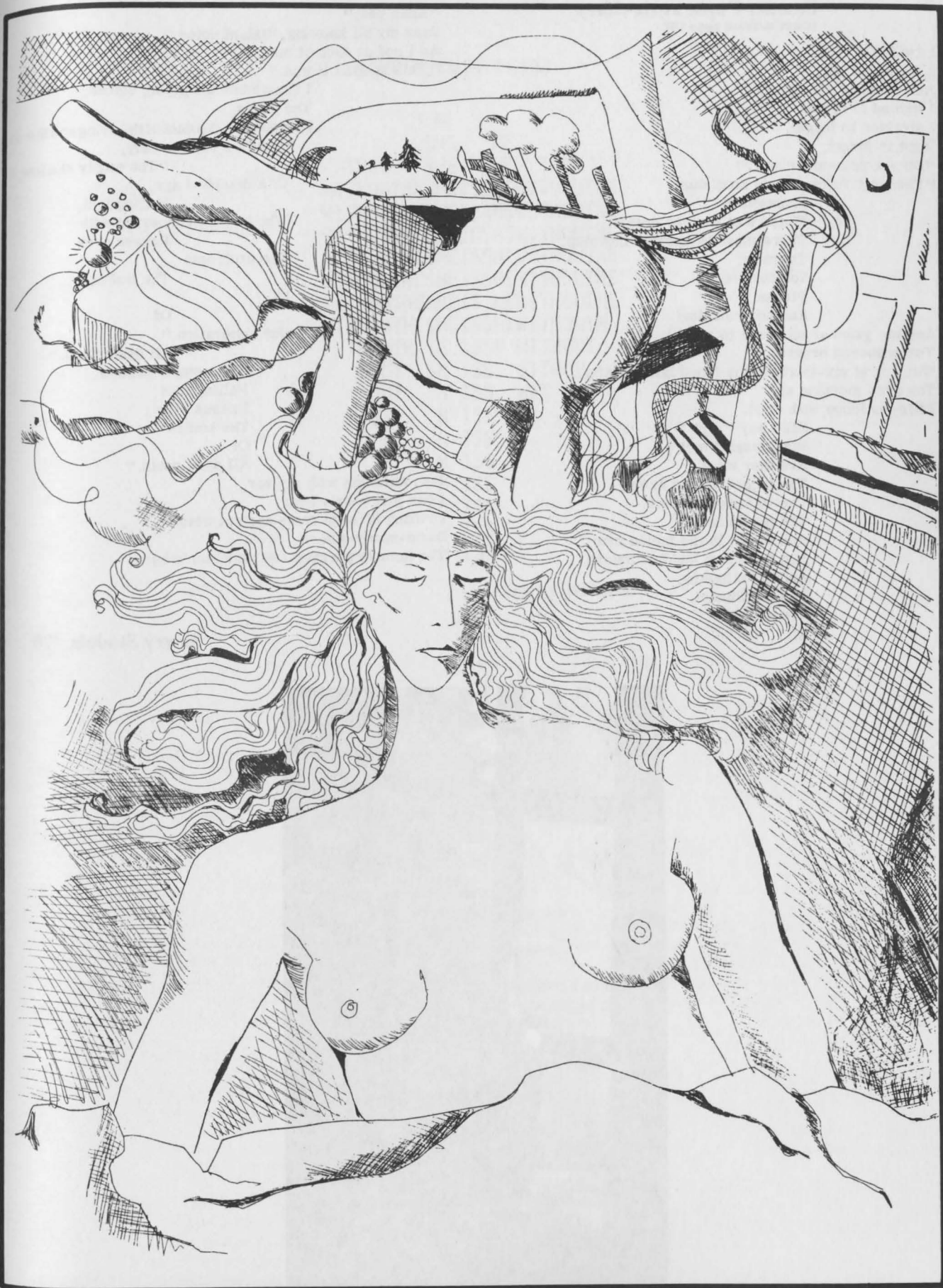
What promise was to be fulfilled with waking,
To come with the melon man,
And the humble pudgy-faced mumblers?

I am contented.
I have much time
Before my life is spent.
Much Time
Before my life is spent.

Something to come with my waking,
And the waking of
The huddled, hotnight hibernators.

When I was a child
I played on a swing.
From the top of the arch
I could see everything.

(Cont'd. to page 16)



Counter-Fugue at six-thirty
(Cont'd. from page 14)

I awake,
Look about me,
And seem to see things
I wanted to forget,
I strained to forget,
Wept to forget.
"Do you remember now?"
"Yes" my voice sounds so distant.
Somewhere
There was another dream.
There must be another morning.
There is,
Somewhere,
Please,
Another morning!
And my gaunt arms groan to reveal
Two withered breasts,
Weeping at six-thirty in the faded fall morning.
The grey morning air
Fills my lungs with crud.
Did I say "my"?
Did I mean "my"?
Are they mine,
The jagged yellow arms,
The withered breasts,
The putrid lungs?
And where is the melon man,
And the warm huddled lovers,
And the slippers,
And the flannel,
And all?
All?

"Ahhh yes,"

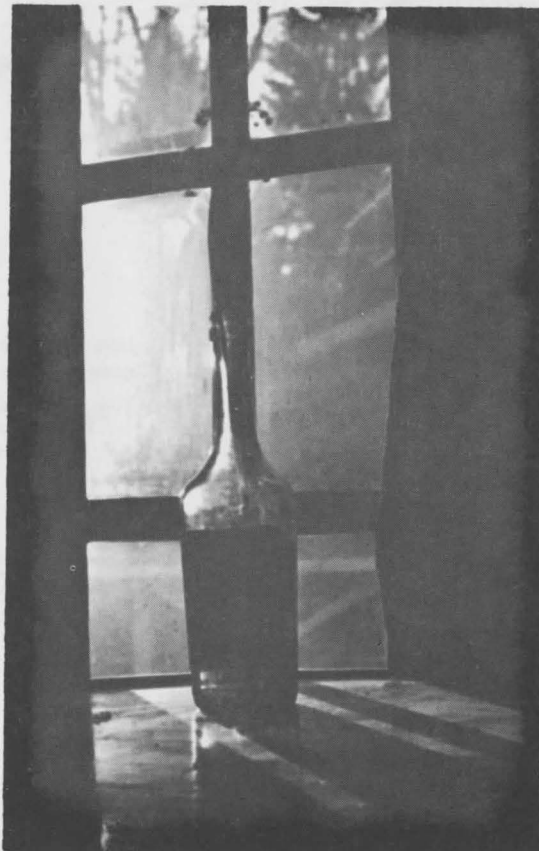
Says my all knowing, distant voice,
As I nod at each of me.

"This is what it was."

I remember the piping voices,
The songs.
I remember the duet of the dying and the day.
"I know a certain lady,
"The empty shadow,
Of a dignified age,
Falling fast,
Who is very concerned with
Passes over
The problems
The bodies
Of
Of
Our generation."
All dead souls."
"The empty shadow,
Falling fast
Passes over
The bodies
Of
All dead souls."

But, watching with my ear,
I can just barely hear,
Drifting through some ancient window,
Some-sunny-where,
The humble pudgy-faced mumbler's hum.

- Sherry Stodola, '70



APPLE TREE POEM

HE
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- Darby Williams

When snow falls into a pond
 it quickens
 just before striking the surface and then,
 touching, disappears in an instant
 dissolved again into
 the ancient union.

I crouched watching
 big, delicate flakes drifting down
 just as many times before. . .
 soon I noticed something else.

Through the window of the pond I saw
 shadows of snowflakes surfacing to meet
 their descending counterparts;
 and they touched.

I stayed till I was sure
 then got up and walked away.
 Pausing to look back,
 I thought of you.

- Bruce Kidd, '72

WOMANWOMANWOMANWOMANWOMANWOMANWOMANWOMANWOMAN
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 OMAN OMAN
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- Darby Williams



MOTHER AND CHILD

TRANSCENDENCE

Their green-bubble world
Floats above them
Sparkling at a distance;
Glass spitting
Bits of excited sun
Closer, Mud brown walls
Swallowed by yellow despair.
Gray forms huddle together,
Ears deafened suddenly
By the bullet ripping
Through the cogs of silence.
Shapes quiver, then still
But in their unity
They have found the strength
To assert their existence
Beyond the bullet hole.



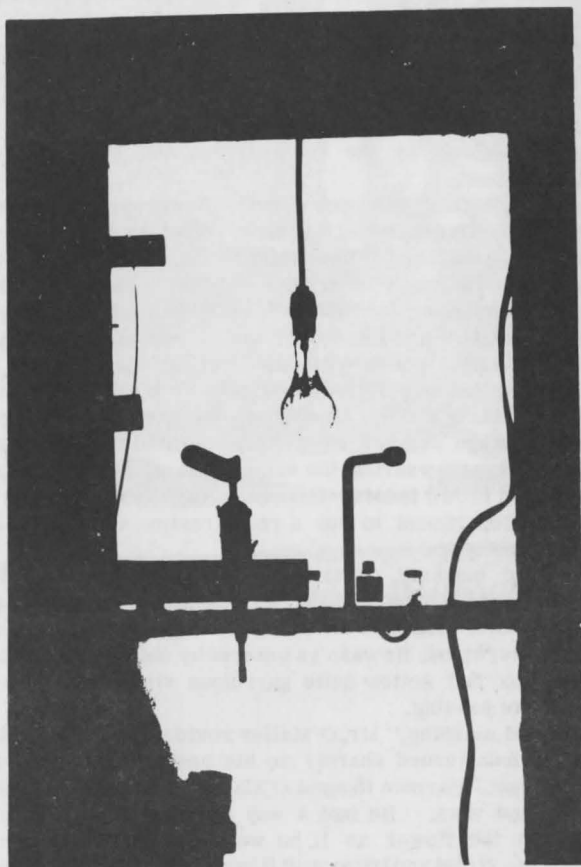
PARIS REFLECTION

Americans stuff the summer cities
But this one has little interest
In shopping for sidewalk souvenirs
A bar of Spanish soap for mother
An ashtray for grandmother
Indeed, it's not in my nature to be a tourist. . .
I resort to parks and sidestreets
finding diamonds among the ruins
Eyeteeth in the sand
Ice cream nourishes as I forget to wind my watch
Knowing that time is someone else's invention
Someone who needed punctuality at the dinner table
Someone who never savored shadows, boredom or bedrooms.
Americans stuff the summer cities.

- Wandí Solez, '70

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT IN VALENCIA, SPAIN

I occupy the space between light and dark
Wrapping packages of baby squid
In crumpled brown paper and twine
I pluck my eyebrows
And push the cuticle back from thin fingers
I study my face in the mirror, pore by pore
I sit on the toilet and let things happen
I read all the labels on all the bottles
The tampax folder is written in French
Through the open window I hear a street cleaner
Does he notice that the blossoms smell like
Freshly baked Christmas cookies?
As I turn out the lights I think
I can hear the blue stillness of a cow breathing.



Standing in my studio once
You told me that you liked to watch me work
As I paused to reflect on a canvas
Aching for acrylics
A canvas as changeable as my black pupils
How I want to believe that you thrive
On my cadmium yellow chaos
Knowing full well that I mix my love shades
On a fine wooden pallette
That splinters.

- Wandi Solez, '70

HARMON

Harmon had been employed by the Department of Sanitation for seventeen years. On this morning, as on every other morning for the past seventeen years, the alarm clock beside Harmon's bed rang at precisely six-thirty. Thus summoned to the activities of the day, Harmon bathed and polished himself with a minimal waste of time, and, having clothed his portly frame in a crisp white uniform, walked jauntily down the stairs to the street. His flat was located only a few blocks from the Department of Sanitation and Harmon, sparkling in his starched uniform and accompanied by the cheery staccato of his whistle, enjoyed the brisk walk to the garage where he picked up his truck. It was seven o'clock by the time he reached Mr. O'Malley's flower stand.

Mr. O'Malley had operated the flower stand ever since the untimely demise of his wife, Isabella O'Malley, a pugnacious, red-faced woman with the sensibility of a steam roller and a heart of granite. Isabella had died a sloppy death (something for which Harmon had not quite forgiven her), her face and finally her whole body erupting in large, bloody, oozing sores until she literally disintegrated into shrieking insanity followed quickly by a gagging, glottal death. Mr. O'Malley, a retiring, sweaty man, was of course much shaken and now mournfully operated the flower stand alone, always wearing the same sagging sleeveless undershirt and brown fedora. Harmon always stopped on his way to the Department to buy a red carnation as Mr. O'Malley was opening up.

"Good morning, O'Malley," Harmon would say quickly and crisply as he slipped the carnation neatly into his button hole. Harmon didn't like to stay too long in front of the flower stand. He wasn't a loiterer by nature and, besides, O'Malley had gotten quite garrulous since Isabella's unfortunate passing.

"Good morning," Mr. O'Malley would answer beseechingly as Harmon turned sharply on his heel and continued down the street. Harmon thought O'Malley to be a desperate and weakened man. He had a way of fondling the quarter he got for the flower as if he were going to chase Harmon down the street and try to stuff it back in his pocket. Harmon sighed with mixed pity and annoyance as he straightened the fluffy red carnation and marched on snappily down the street to the Department.

The Department of Sanitation was housed in a large and angular sandstone building with a Latin inscription above the massive facade which read: "SECURUS IUDICAT ORBIS TERRARUM". The Department of Sanitation shared this structure with the dog pound and the marriage, driving, and animal licensing bureaus. Since Harmon worked in such close liason with all of these departments (indeed, in an interdepartmental capacity), the proximity of these other departments was a great convenience to him. Efficiency, thought Harmon whenever he considered this convenience, is the sister of delight.

Harmon swished through the revolving glass doors into the reverberating silence of the lofty lobby and central corridor. Although the underground garage was most easily reached from the rear of the building, Harmon always allowed himself the luxury of clicking his heels against the shining black marble floors of the main corridor. A feeling of pride surged up in him as he marched down the hall, his carnation an emblem on his breast, and darted sharp, scrutinizing glances into the polished, oaken inner offices of the Department of Sanitation. A red light bulb glowed dimly at the end of the hall and the black door marked "EXIT" sphooshed evenly and smoothly as Harmon swung through it into the drivers' locker room.

"No dignity," thought Harmon as he punched in his time card and saw another 7:15 added to the neat row of other 7:15's on his card. Harmon was always punctual. The other men in the room, with few exceptions, were red-faced and sweating. The young ones were laughing and punching each other in the arm. One of them, Harmon noticed with annoyance, had turned on a transistor radio and was dancing with several others in front of his locker. The older ones spit on the cement floor and belched deeply into the lockers as they plucked filthy uniforms from hooks and added the stale odor of dry sweat to the musty damp smell of the room. Harmon, whispering "Excuse me", pushed through the crowd and, opening his locker, quickly made sure that his gear was in order. Tall, black rubber boots, heavy black rubber gloves, a little black leather tool kit, and a small shiny red collapsible shovel completed the check list and Harmon, bowing quietly in his most dignified manner to the other men, hurried with his equipment from the musty locker room into the wet waxy smell of the underground garage. Glad to leave the uncivilized and odiferous atmosphere of the locker room, Harmon slowly approached his truck, inspecting it closely to make sure all was in order.

Harmon's truck was not a standard large garbage vehicle. Rather, it was a small, sparkling white pick-up truck. The back was covered smoothly by a black tarpaulin with "Department of Sanitation" stenciled neatly in white in one corner. The truck was spotlessly clean inside and out. Harmon had spent his own money for seat pads and rubber floor covers for the cab.

Harmon walked around the truck slowly, inspecting every inch for a possible flaw in its polished perfection. At last, satisfied that everything was in order, he placed his equipment in the cab and swung up into the driver's seat. Reaching into the glove compartment, he extracted a small, thick leatherbound book. This was Harmon's log. For seventeen years he had faithfully recorded in it even the minutest occurrence of his life with the Department. "A man should be held accountable" was one of Harmon's favorite maxims. This morning he entered another in a series of countless 7:30's in the upper left hand corner of a clean page with the date, June 21, 1970. The engine of the truck turned over smoothly and softly and, after letting it idle for a moment, Harmon signalled to the garage man to open the doors and drove up the ramp to the sunfilled street above.

Harmon felt safe in the familiar neatness of his truck. His clean creased uniform gleamed white against the black upholstery of the cab. Although it was hot, Harmon kept the windows tightly shut and so kept both the cab and himself safe from contaminating dust and city fumes. Harmon's district was the West End of the city and he drove swiftly and safely to his usual starting point, a middle to lower middle class residential area in the southwest corner of his area. From there he would move up through the freeway area and a business zone before he reached the exclusive Forest Woods section of town, where he liked to end his day. He pulled on to Horatio Ave. at precisely 7:45 and had driven well over a mile through his winding route before he made his first stop.

Harmon pulled his truck over to the curb and reached for the black rubber boots and gloves. Pulling them on, he also noted the exact time and logged it in his little black book. Then, he reached for the shiny red collapsible shovel and, snapping it smartly into working position, he went to the back of the truck and unfastened the tarpaulin. As the tarpaulin was rolled back, a heavy odor of disinfectant rose from the back of the truck. Harmon breathed deeply, sighed, and then walked down the street a few feet toward the flattened form



of the beagle.

Harmon inspected the corpse carefully and praised himself on his foresight in having worn the boots and gloves. Early morning stops usually turned out to be recent rush hour kills and often had not been in the street long enough to be dried out. They were, therefore, unfortunately messy, and Harmon's nose crinkled in faint distaste as he deftly shoveled the dog up from the curb and carried to gingerly to the truck. Harmon was careful, all the while, not to sully the perfect whiteness of his uniform with the dog's blood. Having dumped the dog as neatly as possible into the back of the truck, Harmon went around to the cab and fetched his tool kit.

Returning to the back of the truck, Harmon unzipped the tool kit and first withdrew a large forceps. Plucking delicately around the neck with this instrument he ascertained that the dog had no license at the time of the kill. He then wiped the forceps thoroughly with a clean towel and replaced them in the bag. Next, he removed two aerosol cans, one of insect repellant, the other a disinfectant, and sprayed the corpse, his boots, his gloves, the shiny red shovel and the surrounding area of the truck liberally before zipping up the little black bag and returning to the cab. Taking off the gloves and boots, he climbed into the truck again and entered a neat report in his log.

8:07 A.M.

Beagle dog - no license

2213 W. Mortimer Ave.

Animal dead when found

Harmon closed his black log book and started his truck again. As he continued through the pleasantly familiar route, he stopped often for dogs, cats, and some lesser animals such as birds and squirrels, but he found nothing worth noting with a special star in his log book. It was Harmon's habit, whenever he found a licensed dog of obviously good pedigree, to mark the entry in the log book with a star and later to look up the name and address of the owner at the licensing office in the Department's building. He would then compose a brief, formal note of sympathy, in order to inform the distinguished owner of the animal's death and to console him in his grief. Harmon was certain of the propriety of the note. It was the product of several evenings spent in the city library poring over Amy Vanderbilt, Emily Post and several other books of etiquette. The resulting note was, in Harmon's opinion, a smooth amalgamation of the best and most delicate qualities of each. He kept a copy of the basic form scotch-taped to the inside of one log book's cover. It read:

Dear (owner's name),

It is with deepest regret that I write to inform you of the passing of your dog/cat, (animal's name if available). Please be assured that your pet has been sensitively and mercifully dealt with. Our thoughts are with you in this hour of sorrow.

Kindest Regards,

Harmon Jones

Department of Sanitation

However, by four o'clock, when he entered the leafy environs of the exclusive Forest Woods section of town, Harmon had found nothing that merited the star and the note. Of course, his chances of finding a pedigreed dog or cat were much better in this part of town. However, the one hour he allowed himself in Forest Woods was not much time, and the immaculately groomed avenues of the area rarely yielded what Harmon was looking for. It was almost 4:30 when he spotted the stained and matted body quivering and bleeding under a magnificent boxwood.

Hastily pulling on his gloves and boots, Harmon grabbed his shovel and sprang out of the cab to the dog. The animal

whimpered softly. An opening in its left side ran from ear to tail and had transformed the purebred miniature poodle into a steaming, bloody mass of matted fluff. Harmon could tell just from looking at it, though, that it was a valuable dog, and he thrilled with anticipation as he thought of writing a note to its owner. He could see the name tag glittering in the sun and, in his haste to see who the owner was, Harmon momentarily abandoned the merciful idea of killing the poodle. Running around to the cab, he snatched the forceps from his black tool kit and scurried back to the now still form of the dog. Kneeling over it he plucked the name tag from the collar and wiped it clean with his towel. It read:

MITZI

I belong to:

Miss Olivia Longstock

Fairgraves

of

Forest Woods

Harmon could scarcely believe his eyes. The Fairgraves' were, without a doubt, among the most prominent families in the city. He saw their name every Sunday in the society section of the newspaper. Harmon could scarcely believe his good fortune.

A small moan from the oozing fluff ball at his feet brought Harmon's thoughts back to the immediate situation. The dog was still alive. It looked up at him with blank, dumb animal fright and pain in its eyes. Perhaps he should take the dog to the Fairgraves' himself so that they might take it to the veterinarian and save it. The appreciation and admiration that they would feel for Harmon then would far exceed the consolation they might receive from a mere note.

Harmon made his decision quickly. He would take the dog to the Longstock Fairgraves' home in person. It was only a block away. He passed it every day on his route. But he needed something to wrap Mitzi in so she wouldn't bloody the cab of his truck. Harmon made a further sacrifice. Removing his spotless white coat, he placed it carefully on the ground next to the dog. He took the carnation out of the button hole and stuck it hastily in the neck of his undershirt. Then, taking his shovel and snapping it into position, he carefully picked up the dog and rolled it, bloody side down, onto his coat. He knelt and gently wrapped the coat around it and, now dressed only in his undershirt, carnation, boots, gloves and spotless white pants, he placed the precious, dripping bundle in the cab.

As Harmon drove up the long tree-lined driveway of the Fairgraves estate, he tried to plan what he would say in response to their appreciation, but as the imposing stone house loomed up in front of him, Harmon felt a mixed twinge of pride and nervousness that made his squirm with anticipation and he could think of nothing adequate. He could hardly wait to make the record in his log.

Lifting the dog gently from the cab, Harmon turned to the door and rang the bell. A minute passed and a young girl answered the door.

"Yes?", she asked, eying Harmon with noticable distaste and some annoyance. "What do you want?" Her skin was brown against a brilliant white sun dress. She was clean, blonde, rich and healthy. Harmon was speechless. "Well? Who are you?"

"I've found your dog. Run over in the street. . ." Harmon felt awkward. He extended the dripping bundle toward the girl and attempted to smile graciously. "I've brought her to you."

The girl looked at him angrily and disgustedly. "My God. My God, who in hell do you think you are?"

In response to her angered voice, a group of young people entered the hall and stood with tinkling glasses on the rich parquet floor. Eying Harmon, they looked at each other and

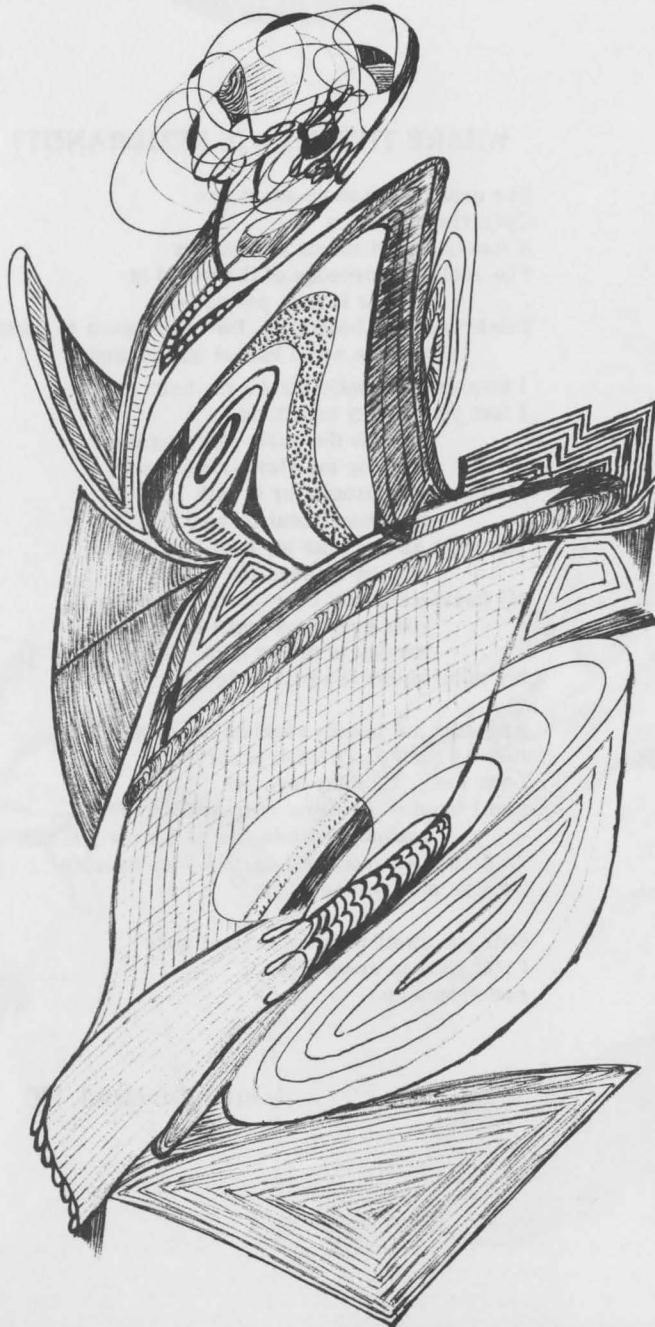
smiled soft secret smiles. A young man walked forward and stood behind the girl, eying Harmon amusedly.

The blonde girl looked at the bundle in Harmon's arms in disgust and then stared up at the boy behind her. A small smile began on her lips before she turned again to Harmon. Her hand was on the door ready to slam it. She stared at Harmon. Her eyes and lips mocked him. She laughed aloud.

"You filthy beast!"

The door slammed, leaving Harmon mortified and standing dumbly at the threshold, the dead dog's blood dripping thickly through his white coat.

- Barbara Mackey, '70



STRANGE LADY

A rounded glass of necessity
Reflected once the orange
green exit sign; funny.
I've got this dropping
Sensation (that sign is always on)
because she's a
Swede and I know no
Swedish; she's crippled
I suspect though she
Walks well
it's merely
A case of successful
Rehabilitation.

STRANGE LADY II

Oh God! she screamed
And I hadn't said a word.
It must have been her letter.
My fly was zipped
She just slumped over and cried, while after checking
I continued.

- John Gillespie, '72

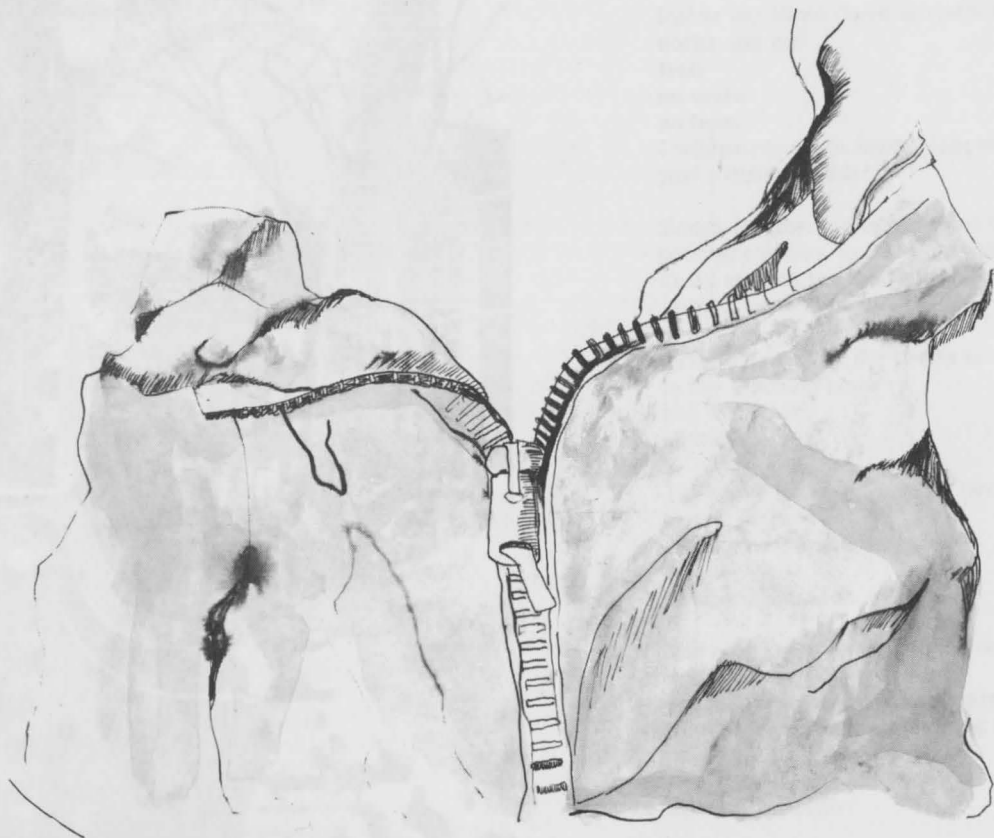
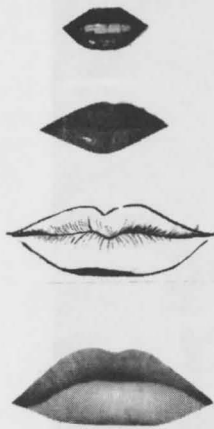
WHERE THE HELL IS REMBRANDT?

The oceans splash us apart now
Countries divide us
A lonely crowd stands between us
The ancient knowledge of the world is
so near to you, yet so far
Rembrandt, Michelangelo, De Vinci reach to touch
you in a way I cannot understand
I turn as you gently stroke my hair
I feel your heavy breathing as I
wake to the early morning light
blinding my sleep-ridden eyes
Matching you breath for breath
your heart beat by beat
I see day as you kiss my soul but
the sun deludes me and
My heart says roll over fool take her in
your arms and make love
the day is fading fast but
My mind knows the pain of love

And your hot breath reaches my sleepy ears
turn Turn TURN it pants
Love me Dammit love me
And I must awaiting your arms to
squeeze me into life as I know you will
To hold me tightly as I caress your breasts
To kiss me into the world

Still you dwell with the ancient gods
I roll back to sleep
And dream on

- John Loveland, '70





YEARS AGO

Was it a quiet time,
or did I shut myself away from the turmoil?

All the golden answers found
to all my deepest questions
slipped by me
years ago
while I was playing football in the back yard
and learning to divide fractions in my head.

I asked
and there were voices
many and frantic and strained.
They echoed off the walls of churches.
They came from classrooms
and the buildings of government
at all levels.
There were rumblings from the grave.

All of those countless human beings,
shouting and whispering,
engaged in the struggle for my soul
or whatever part of me amused them.
They cared.
They all cared about something.
Perhaps I should have been grateful.
But their urgency frightened me
and I turned away
to become,
otherwise involved.

- John Whitt, '70

I've finished growing now;
am I enough?

The energy that drove me
this far
is gone,
and is it far enough?

Inside my boots there is room for my
socks and my
feet;
no more
no less.
I will never again need a larger pair,
just a different pair.

Bones lengthen no farther and turn brittle,
pituitary pulses to a slower cadence,
Cells wrench the final cleavage,
stiffen, burst, and die.

Bristle creeps to the limits of my face
in the morning glass
and will grow
nowhere else.

The ivory thrust is gentler now;
I have learned to
give her what she wants
exactly
when she wants it.

And now my eyes are raised enough
that I can see the walls
guarding the border of the carpet;
Now I feel my bones straining at
the skin of my fingertips. . .
I've finished growing now.
And am I enough?

- Keith McWalter, '71

CHARISMA

"The earth is the Lord's
and the burden thereof."

I was impressed.

The unkempt and otherwise
evil genius of the east side
went on.

A marvelous cynic, feeding
on crowd reaction,
possessed
of a clear sense of his own banality,
calling us
to lesser and lesser achievements.
Fantastic.

He spat out
those uplifting vituperations
and waved his hairy arms in the air.
A conqueror.
We waved back.

No illusions,
no answers,
and no promises. Just
pointless rhetoric. But. . .

disturbing.
It was somehow oddly constructive.
We could ignore that, maybe.
The man could be believed.

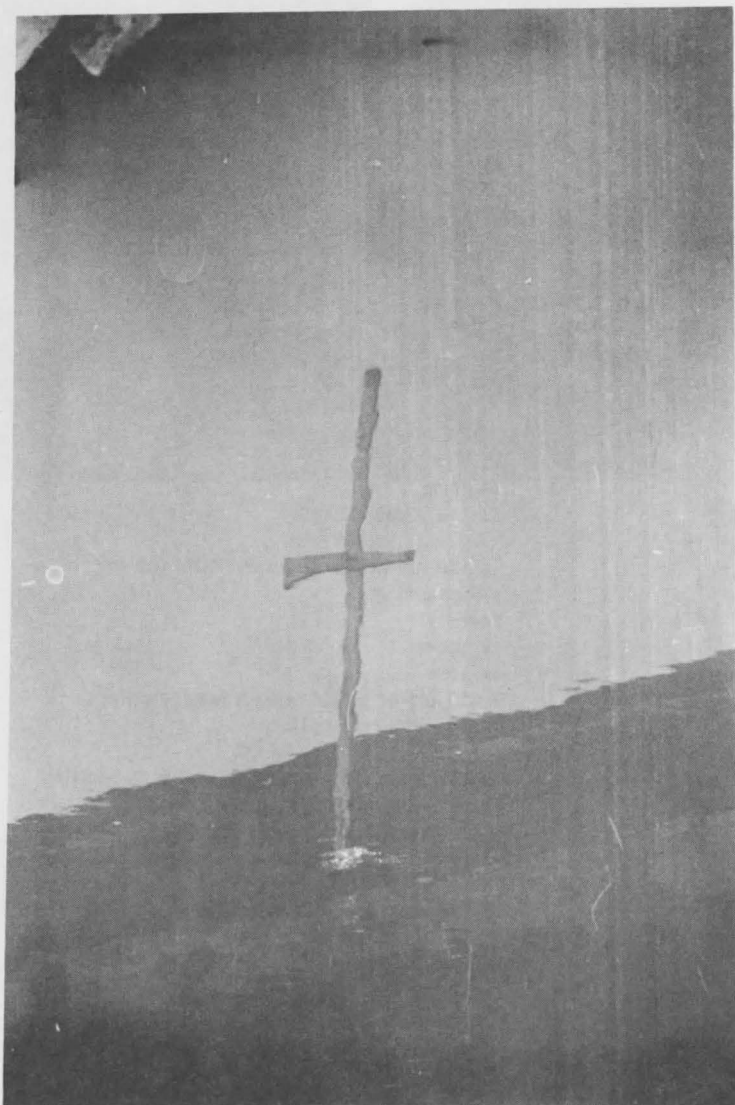
All the while he smoked
cancer sticks,
an endless chain.
And he told us he would die
as he had lived,
doggedly,
but with unutterable fear.

I was impressed.

He left us high and hanging,
with a vision of our narrow finitude,
with hands burning
from applause, drained.

Ortega would not have liked it.

- John Whitt, '70



MAKE ME EAT PEANUT BUTTER

I only want to grow up,
Pure and undefiled,
Unhindered within a fertile garden of natural grace
and harmony,
As my soul tells me.

Yet under a fiery sun my manhood is ripped from me;
My genitals bloody the floor
Daily, and like Prometheus I howl,
Imprisoned in the demeaning filth

Of the U.S.A.--
a country of contradiction
and coercion - fundamental
social sacrifice - man infesting
its pestilent destiny with
ignorant brutality and
technological horror.

And You, reader,
And resident,
Are doing this to me.
You have poured the brine into my womb,
You have pressed the bile into my eyes,
Even you who understand and sympathize,
Prisoner yourself, solled and beslimed,
You belong.

Come, duty,
Let's all dance in death circle
With its serpent smouldering deeply in the dark primordial
forest;
And burning blind with pagan rites,
Evoke those seething forces,
Scourge of our lives.
Come, whipping ourselves and breeding terror.
Dance.

- Fred Walton, '71

I thought of cutting
my hair and
shaving and all I knew
interviewers like that
But I figured
the hell with 'em They
ought to know what
they're getting

My hair was long
And
combed back
and I wore a

stache
The Aetna knew
I couldn't understand
them if they
talked straight so
He tried to get to me to
Identify with me
you know
and talked hip so I
could "dig 'em" Like
man you couldn't sell my life
insurance
I wondered why Like
you're doin' your thing
man

and
that's great and all but
don't do it around
me we
can't use you freak
Go freak with all the other
freaks Like
you can't relate to normal people

Shove the whole thing up
your ass you
couldn't sell life insurance to
Biafrans

I wondered why

So I cut my hair
parted it
shaved my stache
and G.M. said in
its mark of excellence distinguity
of course

Sir
you have the finest attributes
your record speaks for itself
you've had very fine grades
this school has Class
Status Prestige
and he tried to get to me
That's what we want in a man
You sir
could sell Cadillacs to
the Lilliputians we
could use a man like
you on our staff

I wondered why

I'm growing my hair again
combing it back
wearing a stache
The hell with 'em

- John Loveland, '70



THE CAT

Hurry, Martha
pack, Martha, we must go

Pawn shops spread their lips
all that crap they belch
Why Martha? Hurry Martha

People are no longer welcome here
Men on lunch breaks smother me
Women shopping clog my nostrils
Winos wrenching their guts in the crapper of a bar
I gag and feel like joining them
I force the puke back down my throat
Swimmers are the garbage in the streams
Get the hell out of the tub, Martha
hurry Martha
enzymes don't dissolve

No Martha no car Martha No Car Dammit!
Shuttup we'll walk
just hurry Martha

Cars piled high on the roadside
a bag in the street you dare not kick for some fool kid may
have put a brick in it so's you'd break your damn foot
or some dog shit
bloated sheephead, eyes bulging
caught once but "Dammit, another little bastard."

At last
the bridge, Martha
Ah! breathe, b-r-e-a-t-h-e deep Martha
A blue-green world
Ah!

Aren't fairy rings in the city are there? Huh, Martha?
Huh?

Not that kind, you, you. . .hmmm. . .
You'll learn, Martha
Bet you never seen anythin' like this huh? huh?
This is life, Martha
L-I-F-E, Martha, Life
you'll learn

I love it, Henry

And the cat purrs ready to strike
Wake up Henry Henry?
Get dressed Henry
Our house!

A paw nails bared stretches
gathering dirt to fill the streams
Henry! Hurry Henry
Trees fall
Henry Henry hurry

Why Martha?
Where can we go?

- John Loveland, '70

UNDERCURRENT

I tried to drink deeply
of the air above the waves,
frothing, spraying in angry love
for me
so that my lungs might not forget;
tried to
fuse my feet into the sand
and downward
through plastic rock
and to the breathless fury
of the mother-core
that she might kiss
between my toes with sand
and teach my heels well
their hot screech as I ran.

Listen:

As I sat out on the burning cliffs today
the sun uncorked by pent-up pores,
and in my sweat escaped
the scent of salt-green seas;
I heard
the crystal blood of molluscs
running
in my veins.

- Keith McWalter, '71

ON THE RIM

We all stand on the rim, separately,
unable to fall
into the chasm of total awareness.

When Barry came to me
with the news of his grandmother's death,
I was drinking.
And I became philosophical.
I could reach out for his feelings,
but never grasp them,
and I collapsed into my own.

To proceed half-knowing
and half-known
seems often intolerable.

But it must be done.
So I am told
by people who cannot understand
because they have never listened
to their anguished selves,
straining against the narrowness of body
and semi-consciousness.

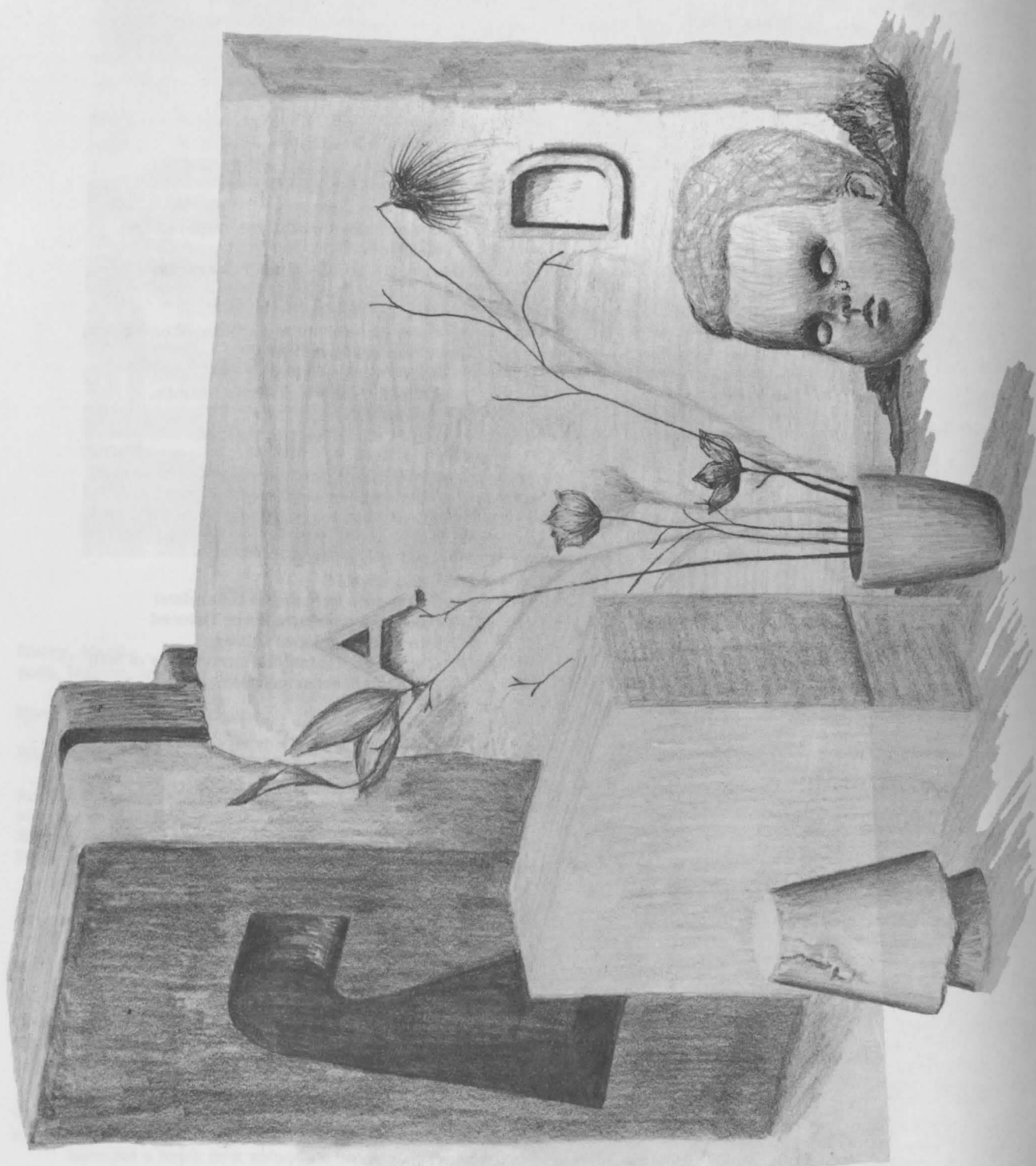
I cannot escape
the picture of my dying grandfather,
confined in bed by his own paralysis.
There must have been both feeling
and unfeeling there.

My mother wanted me to speak to him,
but we couldn't even know
if he comprehended.
And I was silent
before his loss of energy.

All that is left us
is to proceed
along the rim.

- John Whitt, '70





PILGRIMAGE

Janus sat with his suitcase in the harsh little pool of light cast by the reading lamp and watched his tracked-in snow melt slowly into the rug, and let it sadden him. A steady ticking from the wall clock made almost palpable the silence of the old rooms, the cottony staleness of a month's locked-and-shuttered stagnancy. One month. The hard, knotted concept of that time's passing turned numb circles in his mind, and he was for some reason mildly disturbed to see the books and papers on his desk still lying exactly as he had left them. They should have moved in all that time, as he had. They should have moved after he had left by some vestigial ghost of his energy or some secret power of their own. The rooms themselves should have changed somehow, given that month to themselves, alone and empty, yet there they were, exactly as he had left them. Dust a little thicker, that was all. Very little to show for all that time. Suitcase, snow, stale air, stale body. Very little to show. Janus watched the last of the snow vanish into dark spots on the rug, and at the same time watched himself from some point near the middle of the room, an old, habitual, spasmodic reflex of his mind, soothing in its familiarity but nettling in its frequency. He chuckled dryly as he watched it happen, having long since given up wondering at it. For Janus knew himself quite well to be one of those compulsively imaginative persons who constructs tableaux about himself as he moves through life, dreaming himself the protagonist of an endless succession of scenarios, tiny dramas half-wrought by circumstances, half by fantasy. It was not conceit, he knew, but rather a premise by which his simplest action could be knighted with meaning; a comforting illusion, but illusion no less. He is cursed to know it. So it is, and well it should be granted, that Janus moves within and without this story, and apprehends its unfolding with as keen an eye as narrative may ever bring to bear. He knows its tragedy, elusive, frail. Indeed, he writes of it; it is the current play. . .

The inside of his head was a cinematographer's dream. Through the doubled plexiglass of the window he could barely see her standing at the boarding gate, still waving. The acute lens of his imagination caught her image through the rippling heat of the jet engine, and he moved closer, closer, in his private vision, till he could see her face clearly, dark hair and bright scarf whipping like tortured fire in the hot backwash, gloved hand frozen in the air, pointlessly now, as the shuddering wing swung around inexorably and cut her off from view. But still his spark of vision flashed across the gap, and he saw now through her eyes, the big jet turning and lumbering away with mechanical finality, wings afire in the late afternoon sun, moving with a ponderous grace that spoke of contained power, oblivious and precise, and inalterable purpose. Far across the stained concrete now, it turned again, hurtled headlong, and rose on shafts of blue fire, his mind-camera tracing the smooth buckling of the wheel assemblies, the upward tilt and roar, earth and concrete and waving girl spiraling down and back and away. . .

Janus snapped the suitcase open on his bed and began to unpack. His body still ached with cold and weariness. Coffee would help, and a shower. And Kurt would be arriving soon. He wandered into the kitchen and flipped on the light. The same, all the same; the little room huddled in stale coolness. He put a battered coffee pot on the stove and turned it on high, opened the oven door and gave its dial two full turns. He crossed his arms and massaged them for warmth. Somewhere in the bowels of the house the furnace kicked on and sent a warm shudder up through the thin walls. He walked back into the living room and dropped into the old

easy chair to wait.

"We'd better get started for the airport. You'll miss your plane," Gail said, standing up and stretching.

"Yeah, okay. Soon. One more cup of coffee?" asked Janus, holding out his cup.

"Sure. Are you positive I can't get you anything to eat?"

"Positive, thanks."

She smiled gently and walked through the glass doors to her kitchen where the pot on the stove and the remains of her breakfast scented the air heavily with morning.

Janus sat leafing through a copy of the HUDSON REVIEW that he had found on the coffee table, scanning pages absently, till his eyes caught on a well-thumbed sheet that was headed in small print: "Poems by Gail Murtaugh." He smiled in quiet recognition, only mildly surprised. He expected as much from Gail. He glanced down the page, remembering from old college magazines that terse, incisive style, her familiar themes and perceptions now magnified and sharpened by time and discipline. What he had known of her then had promised such things; the poetry, the very room in which he sat spoke of her: spacious, modern, with low-slung furniture and muraled walls, tabletops carefully cluttered with window jars and books and varnished leaves. Beads hung from doorways, dim lights and potted plants from the ceiling, all in colors bright and clashing, all cozily overfurnished. And with another kind of familiarity he watched himself from the far side of the room, waiting and watching Gail's long, thin figure as she returned with a steaming cup.

"Thanks. I just found this," he said, nodding at the magazine as she slipped down next to him on the sofa.

"Oh," she said. "That. You like?"

"Very much," he replied, although he had not read carefully. "But I must admit that I'm hopelessly prejudiced." She smiled. "It's a joke."

"What?"

"A joke. I used to take the stuff seriously back in school, but I really can't anymore. I just do it for fun, and the little extra money it brings in. It doesn't mean much, actually." She sighed through the last words, standing and drifting over to a window. Janus frowned down at the page, slightly puzzled. The lines tripped down the page in strong, sure meter, the words emotive and charged with careful meaning, with the sure scent of disciplined thought, controlled passion. It didn't look like a joke. Perhaps he had missed a word of deflating irony, a phrase of self-mockery that would let him laugh too. He could find none, and it disturbed him. Here was true feeling, but falsely framed. A pleasant hoax. It reminded him uncomfortably of the reason he had come.

He looked down into his cup and tingled at the cognition. It was half empty. Half empty. His imagination caught and stored the symbolism, and mocked it simultaneously. He raised the cup to his lips and drank the last, turning to face Gail.

"We should go now," he said, then paused through a deep breath. "Look, I'm sorry about all this. I probably shouldn't have bothered you in the first place."

"No bother," she said without conviction, but smiling. "It was just such a surprise to see you after so long. I'm sorry it wasn't under happier circumstances, that's all." She gave a thin, sympathetic smile and leaned against a bookcase, passing a hand through her dark hair. "Just one question, Jan," she said quietly, looking hard at him now. "Why me?"

He looked up questioningly. "I don't understand."

"Why did you come to me, instead of someone else?" she demanded softly. "You have other friends, closer friends, people you must see often. We haven't met since college. Why me?"

Janus shrugged slightly, turned the empty cup over in his hands. "I'm not sure, Gail. I had to see someone. And you were more than just a friend, really. . ." The words rang foolish in his ear and he felt himself blush deeply. "Well, we did know one another pretty well," he amended, pausing, girding, forcing upon himself recognition of what was becoming clear. He grew calm with awareness. "I hadn't really thought about it, actually, but I suppose I always felt that if it hadn't been Elizabeth, it would have been you," he said simply, sitting, staring blindly at the empty cup in his hands, knowing that by now she must think him a perfect fool, that what had started as a simple opiate for his confusion and loneliness had degenerated into this absurd, pointless confessional. She gave no sign, but from some point near where Gail stood his mind's eye looked on with mocking detachment.

"And are you reassured now?" she asked finally, her voice level, carefully neutral.

He managed to meet her eyes. "What do you mean?" he said, feeling stupid, like a child.

"Reassured that you're not emotionally emasculated, jaded, which is what I think you're afraid of. Can you still feel loneliness? Fear?" She hesitated for a moment. "Love?"

He could not answer.

"I don't mean to preach, Jan," she went on, "But I think you're wrong to grasp at straws so quickly. Don't fight it. Ride it out for awhile. Let it sit. Let it simmer. You're worried that you can't respond to me as you thought you would. That's natural. That's time, Jan. That's one of the things it does. You were with her for a long time. Let it be, Jan. It will pass. One way or the other, it will pass."

He rose suddenly, nervously, chafing at the words. "I'm not so sure of that," he said, placing the HUDSON REVIEW and his cup back on the coffee table with exaggerated care.

"How did you leave it with Elizabeth?" Gail asked, unrelenting.

He looked at her helplessly, as if he had just heard the name for the first time. He spoke, but his consciousness danced in spastic circles in some far corner of the room.

"We left it not in anger or even resentment, just tired. And numb. And suddenly there's nothing to test myself against, no criterion to judge what I do or say by. . ."

It was some fiendish play, and not a particularly well-written one at that.

"... It's remarkable how much you can grow to depend on someone," he said conversationally, almost cheerfully, "Not in a loving way, but in a sort of parasitic way. It's frightening to think how much of it might have been just habit, comfortable repetition. I try to think. I try to remember what it was that was motivating me all the time we were together, but nothing comes. . ."

He was flying now, more on the sound of his words than on their meaning, out of control, but he blundered on. Bad play! Bad show! his mind screamed catcalls from the other side of the room.

"... It seems there was nothing but trivia on my mind, and we just went through these little mechanical scenes of happiness or misery, over and over, in circles, and all the while I was inwardly quite passive. Not acting, REacting. Do you understand?" The rush ended, the curtain fell slowly. The audience mind again melded into the player.

Gail was nodding. "I have been a stranger to my soul

in all my pilgrimage," she murmured softly.

"I beg your pardon?" he said, even though he had heard.

"A quote. Bryon, I think," she said, running a slender finger across the spines of the books on the shelf behind her.

"Good old Byron. That's very pithy. Very expressive," he said casually, his face never beginning to reflect the subliminal depths to which the idea was searing him in that moment. Thoughts careened breathlessly through his head. That was it. That was it exactly. The very crux of his most maddening anxieties, framed so neatly, so casually, in words. She was suddenly unsmiling, as if she knew, and went quickly to the closet for their coats.

"We really should get you to the airport," she prodded, then stopped and fixed him firmly with her eyes. "You know where I am, Janus," she said. "I'll always be here."

The air grew thick and warm in the old house, and Janus sank deeper in the easy chair and almost dozed. From outside came the sound of a car pulling up, and the curtained window flashed white in a momentary headlight beam. He rose and went quickly to the window, parting the blinds to look down. It was a taxi idling in front of the house across the street, waiting. He breathed relief and went back to the chair. Kurt mustn't arrive yet. He needed more time, much more, for what he wanted to do. It had only just begun, really. He had planned their respective vacation schedules not to correspond too closely; with luck Kurt wouldn't return until tomorrow.

Janus relaxed again and sat back, opening and closing his fist to feel beads of sweat prickling at his palm.

"Watch, damn you."

The sky hung stark grey outside Elizabeth's window, and Janus kept his vision focused hard upon it, scanning the distance helplessly sandwiched between dark sky and white earth, while his thought alternately fired and froze in impotent convolution.

"I don't want to," he snapped. "I don't see any reason why I should."

Elizabeth sat in her slip on the edge of her bed, lips set tight, dark hair framing eyes intense and rueful.

"This is what it will be like to live with a diabetic, Jan. I'm sick of your leaving the room every time I go through this routine. Now sit down and take it. Don't take your eyes off the needle, damn it. It's the only way. . ."

Janus shivered and gripped the sill and watched. The pungent jolt of alcohol finally reached his nostrils and raised the hair on his neck. Elizabeth pinched up a fold of skin from her leg and pushed the needle in quickly, then pulled it back as casually as if it were a pencil having finished its sentence.

"There," she said, swabbing the spot with alcohol again. "I'm sorry I spoke so bitchily, but it really is the only way sometimes. You've just got to learn. . ."

"Yeah, okay. I understand," he said flatly.

She rose and stood next to him.

"I'm sorry if I. . ."

"Just shut up, please." The words came harsh before he could frame them, from some unguarded recess of emotion. He forced out an awkward balm, before the words could stale upon his tongue.

"I love you. . ."

Elizabeth blanched and slapped him squarely across the face. His own hand shot out by reflex but froze in mid-air, infinitely suspended on the hairline between love and utter hatred. His face burned with more than the sting of her blow. She never moved.

"Jan, I'm sorry," she said, her voice trembling with some dark amalgam of passions, her shoulders sagging with



a weakness that was more than physical. "But I need much more than your pride and your damned ego in times like this. I'm not as proud, and I'm not as strong, and I'm weary and sick of trying to make up for that difference..."

Sobs threatened to choke off the words, but she fought them back.

"But I do try, Jan. I do. We seem to fail so often now, though. And I'm not even sure what it is I want any longer. But I can't do it all. I need you, Jan. And maybe I need more than you can give now, more than your pride will allow..."

He stared at her as if at a stranger. He started to speak instinctively, but she raised her hands and backed away.

"It's no good. I'm no good now, Jan. I don't know where your mind is when you stare out that window, or even when you look around this room. Can you tell me where? Can you tell me how much you can help me now, Jan? I need more, much more. Can you give it? Can you?"

The tortured catechism peaked in one convulsive, wracking sob and disintegrated into a choking silence that he could not fill. He simply looked at her, his mind cringing into numbness, even emotion ebbing now. Long minutes passed, measured by the spasmodic rise and fall of Elizabeth's bowed shoulders the pounding of his own blood at his temples. She raised her face to him finally, wet and streaked with ruined makeup.

"Go now, Janus," she said. "Just leave, please."

It had happened before. She had said it all before. The whole torturous scene seemed familiar as he watched it unfold into freakish tableau, and the sensation grew again upon him that he was observing it all from some point outside his own body, with a vision withdrawn and aloof, dead cold with passionless indifference. And always before he had stayed, he had pleaded, he had fought his way back to loving her, to that keen pitch of exaggerated concern, but this time, somehow, that tenuous spark died into an animal sleep, and he turned and slammed the door behind him and walked to the car and drove away...

...and slammed the door and walked to the car and drove away and walked to the car and drove away and thought of Gail where did she live? and turned and slammed the door...

Fear was beginning to creep over him now. He was losing his resolution; he had expected second-thoughts. He needed something to make it easier. He rose from the easy chair and checked the stove again. The hash. Where did Kurt keep the hash? One of his friend's childish, regrettable habits of weakness, Janus had always thought, but damn his caution, damn his cleverness in hiding it. He checked all the cupboards in the kitchen and then ransacked Kurt's bureau. Nowhere.

Something to drink, perhaps. That was it, a drink. He went back to the kitchen, pulled Kurt's bottle of whiskey from the shelf and poured a shot. He had swallowed twice when he realized that alcohol acted initially as a stimulant; not what he wanted. He slammed the shot glass down into fragments in the basin and walked back into the living room with deliberate calm. He sat in the easy chair and very carefully wiped the whiskey and tiny shards of glass from his hands. He closed his eyes and breathed regularly and deeply, drawing the warmth of the half-lit room about him like a dark blanket.

The sun shot through the motel room window a limpid yellow, prised through airy curtains and a weightless sea of dust motes. Janus stirred in his half-sleep and drew Elizabeth closer to him, warm and dreaming, her hair scattered like dark fire across the pillow. It was sometime

long ago, before they had graduated, and sleep melded gently into wakefulness, slow and liquid as the pulse of unmolested consciousness, the borders of dreams infringing playfully upon reality itself. Janus woke to that sweet limbo and listened long to Elizabeth's murmured breathing next to him, watched the sun cut a slow, golden swath across the blanket. His mind-camera wheeled reflexively about the room, finding last night's coke still sitting on the nightstand next to his head, a lazy column of bubbles marching steadily across the underside of a waning ice cube and on up the side of the glass. He scanned the blank eye of the TV set and his own tousled head looking back at him from the mirror on the far wall.

Elizabeth moaned and swung a sleepy arm across his bare stomach. And in a sudden, wrenching mental spasm, completely without warning, he imagined writing a story about himself in this setting, in which he would imagine... writing a story about himself in this setting, in which he would imagine... The mirror grinned its broad, silvery, slippery grin back at him from across the room. He waited for the convoluted epiphany to subside, then leaned over and kissed her gradually awake.

The mirror grinned its broad, silvery, slippery grin back at him from across the room. He waited for the convoluted epiphany to subside, then leaned over and kissed her gradually awake.

Later they went swimming in the motel pool, icy and invigorating. Elizabeth sat on the side, watching an airplane trundle its way across the electric blue of the sky, and Janus, springing from the diving board in momentary weightlessness, cast his private vision in that instant into the cabin of the plane, peering out through the thick windows, across the riveted skin of the wing, through the shimmering props and down on a motled plain of clouds. The wind rushed past his arms, he felt his body's sudden tilt and fall, and it was all there, all there in that single bolt of sensation: the stale smell of repressurized air, the roaring vibration of the props, the gut-felt dip and roll of flight, the belt across his hips, the flashings of light from a thousand tiny peopled windows far below. His consciousness flashed through the hull, along metal sinews, through the marrow of the wings. He felt deep into the engines, into the dark, hot hammerings of piston and prop, of fire against metal and metal against air, fire and metal and air aloft and alone in the icy, devastating wind that tore by so very near. The sun hit the propeller blades and turned the fan to gold...

And ten thousand feet below and three yards deep in the motel pool, Janus listened to the pulse and sway of blood and velvet water in his ears and watched the bubbles cascade upwards to the silver underbelly of the surface...

It was beginning now. His vision blurred and doubled and refocused. The easy chair seemed to tilt and sink slightly into the floor. And he could see the very atoms, atoms of the rug, the wall, substance shifting, form remaining, particles of matter parting, yawning black... And he was unafraid, unafraid until he began to sense the other presence, the alien presence, so pervasive yet so total in its apartness, feeding on his breath, pounding, pulsing with his blood, in the very room, there with him, till at last he felt more than saw it, hovering just beyond his field of vision, watching, watching, the nexus of all horror, he locked helpless in its cold sight, a giant, disembodied eye, naked, staring, possessed of all knowledge, without love or menace, apart, passionless, the audience mind, the stranger soul, witness now to the final, ultimate scenario. He writhed in unnamed terror under its unblinking gaze, the fierceness, the unholy, mocking detachment

of its vision forcing itself inward now upon his own brain. And in pitiable fear he saw himself, shriveled in the chair, his pulse roaring now in his ears, each stroke rocking him, heartbeat hammering fierce cadence, each blow jamming up against his mind's eye a frozen frame of vision, watching, watching himself twist and turn with suffocating fear in gruesome slow-motion, the hammering frame-switches accelerating now with explosions of blood through his brain, faster, faster, faster, and the eye, the eye, growing now, rushing toward him, till the horrible pupil gaped infinite darkness, surrounding him, and through the breach poured images and shapes, dreams within dreams, remembrance and illusion intermingled in diminishing succession, back and back. . .

He dreamed of those earlier grey moments, riding back to her house on cold, starchy Sunday afternoons, or she leaning heavily on his shoulder, slumber-drunk, in the lonely asphalt black of her driveway, in the chilled moments before they went inside to coffee and tired love and a paranoiac later-than-we-ought goodnight. . .

And he had a dream of himself as a little Jewish boy, soft and clumsy, and he would take his mezuzah, a tiny, sealed, silver capsule that hung around his neck on a silver chain, to school with him every day. And of course the other boys saw the mezuzah in gym class, dangling from his neck even in the shower, and asked him what it was, and he explained that it was a symbol, a token, that it contained a tiny parchment with the Commandments written on it, and that only Jews could wear it. And all the boys laughed and said that they bet there wasn't any little scroll inside at all, since there wasn't any way to tell without opening it up, and that he was stupid for believing that there was and being fooled so easily. And Janus didn't answer, but later decided that even though he believed that there was a scroll inside, he would find out for sure, just to prove it to himself.

And late one night, alone, he set to work, laboriously filing off one end of the silver capsule, and it finally broke away and inside was. . . nothing, emptiness, hollowness, passionless uncertainty and the mocking laughter of a thousand hidden devils; just a long, distended, shining smile of metal. He cried long and bitterly, and next day destroyed the talisman as best he could, melting it down to a charred lump of metal and burying it in the back yard, and he could believe no longer. . .

There were dark shapes moving, coiling in the night, moving with him, moving him, behind the rain-beaded window, following in black pursuit, like the moon, pacing him, dashing with him, through the ragged distance. . .

It was through the last of the dreams that reality recurred to him briefly, his arms like lead at his sides in the gloom, his eyes drooping even as they caught the quick flash of a headlight beam through the curtains, as his consciousness listed and in the final moments still heard a steady hissing and heard or dreamed the fall of slow footsteps on the stairs, even as immense darkness swept up and washed him down into the common sleep, the animal sleep, to which all men unconsciously aspire.

He was slammed backwards into darkness, and that soft night twisted open in a huge incandescent eyes that glared down, unblinking, and wept liquid fire like hot butter across his back and arms and then closed and left him curled in the darkness, whimpering and horribly burned.

Nightmares later, motions and sounds invaded the night, and his consciousness ventured out to the gates of his eyes, lids heavy and reluctant, but it only listened on their dark

insides, curiously, then scurried back around and behind the vitreous humor, back along the optic nerve, and burrowed to sleep again in the soft convolutions of the brain.

Light. Breathing something cool and thin. Lighter. Sharp smell of alcohol somewhere. White room. Focus. Kurt standing near, leaning down from far above, smiling tight-lipped.

"Hey, man. How do you feel?"

"No needle, no needle. Do you have to do that now?" I don't have to watch it. I don't. . ."

"Hey, easy. You're alright, man. No needle, see?"

Kurt's hands, open. Ten fingers. Onetwothreefourfivesixseveneightnineten. Five times five is twenty-five. Three times ten is thirty. Thirty days hath Spetember, April, June. . .

"Come on, now, Jan. Wake up."

Janus? Are you up yet? Hurry, you'll be late. Janus?

"I'm coming. I'm coming. I'll be late. I'm going to miss my plane. . ."

"Easy, you're okay. You're where you belong. Wake up now. Come on."

. . . in all my pilgrimage. Focus. Focus.

Oxygen. Bed. Hospital room. Kurt.

"That's better. How are you feeling?"

Janus slowly looked about the room, finally met Kurt's eyes.

"Thirsty. Water. . .?"

Kurt shook his head. "Not yet. You wouldn't be able to keep it down. God, you gave me a scare. Came very close to killing yourself, you know. I TOLD you I was going to shut down the pilot light before I left, didn't I? I could smell the gas even outside the apartment door, my God. Had to break my way in, and first thing I see is you knocked out in the chair. I thought you were gone, man. Stove not even lit, pumping out gas. . . coffee pot didn't even have water in it. And the oven. . . If I hadn't decided to come home a day early, Jan. . ."

Janus nodded and looked away.

"Thanks, Kurt. I'm sorry. . ."

Kurt shuffled uneasily, leaned his stocky frame over the bed and adjusted the pillow under Janus' head with warm, clumsy hands.

"Well, it's alright now, I guess," he said. "Listen, you rest now. Doctor says you'll be laid up for a couple of days, so make the most of it, okay?" He forced a weak smile. "I'll probably see you again tomorrow."

"Yeah. Look, I'm sorry, Kurt. I can't think too clearly right now. . ."

"It's alright, man." He stood very still, looking hard and Janus through the white silence, hands clenching and relaxing at slow intervals.

"Well. . ." he murmured finally, stepping backwards towards the door. "Take it easy, now." He turned and closed the door softly behind him then reappeared a moment later.

"Oh listen, I forgot. Would you like me to call Elizabeth for you? She might want to be here. . ."

"No, that's alright," Janus said without looking up. "No sense in that, really."

"Okay. Goodnight."

The door closed again.

Janus sat for long moments, cold and quiet. Then in his mind's eye he followed Kurt down the long sterile corridors of the hospital, down to the street in the garish florescent light of the elevator, along rain-slick sidewalks to his waiting car, and into the circling night. Then, and only then, he was alone with the room. His vision scanned and probed, across

the two white mountains that his feet made at the end of the bed, along the hairline crack in the far wall that ran up past a white metal utility tray, icily clean, past a light switch, a slightly skewed still-life print, framed and alone in sterile exile, and on up to the ceiling. . .

And there, at the upper periphery of his vision, he caught a dark frantic movement, and he craned and focused till he saw clearly the tiny moth flying in tight, reckless circles about the bright dome of the overhead light, crashing over and over again into the hard surface, trying blindly to reach the killing heat inside, and dying by slow degrees even in its failure. Janus watched closely for a long time, and listened to the tiny cracks of impact as it flew desperately against the bright, unyielding glass again and again and again. . .

- Keith McWalter, '71

