



Chrysalis

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VOLUME 19



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PHEW!!!!!!!!!!!!

We hope that this year's edition of the Chrysalis is a representation of the Madison College Campus creative abilities in Literature and Art. We have all worked hard on this magazine and we are proud to present it to you.

The works by students from other campuses are prize winning selections from the Statewide Contest that the Criterion Club held.

Quality work for quality students . . . read and enjoy.

Thank you

The Editor

i remember those lazy
summer nights in that town in Arkansas—

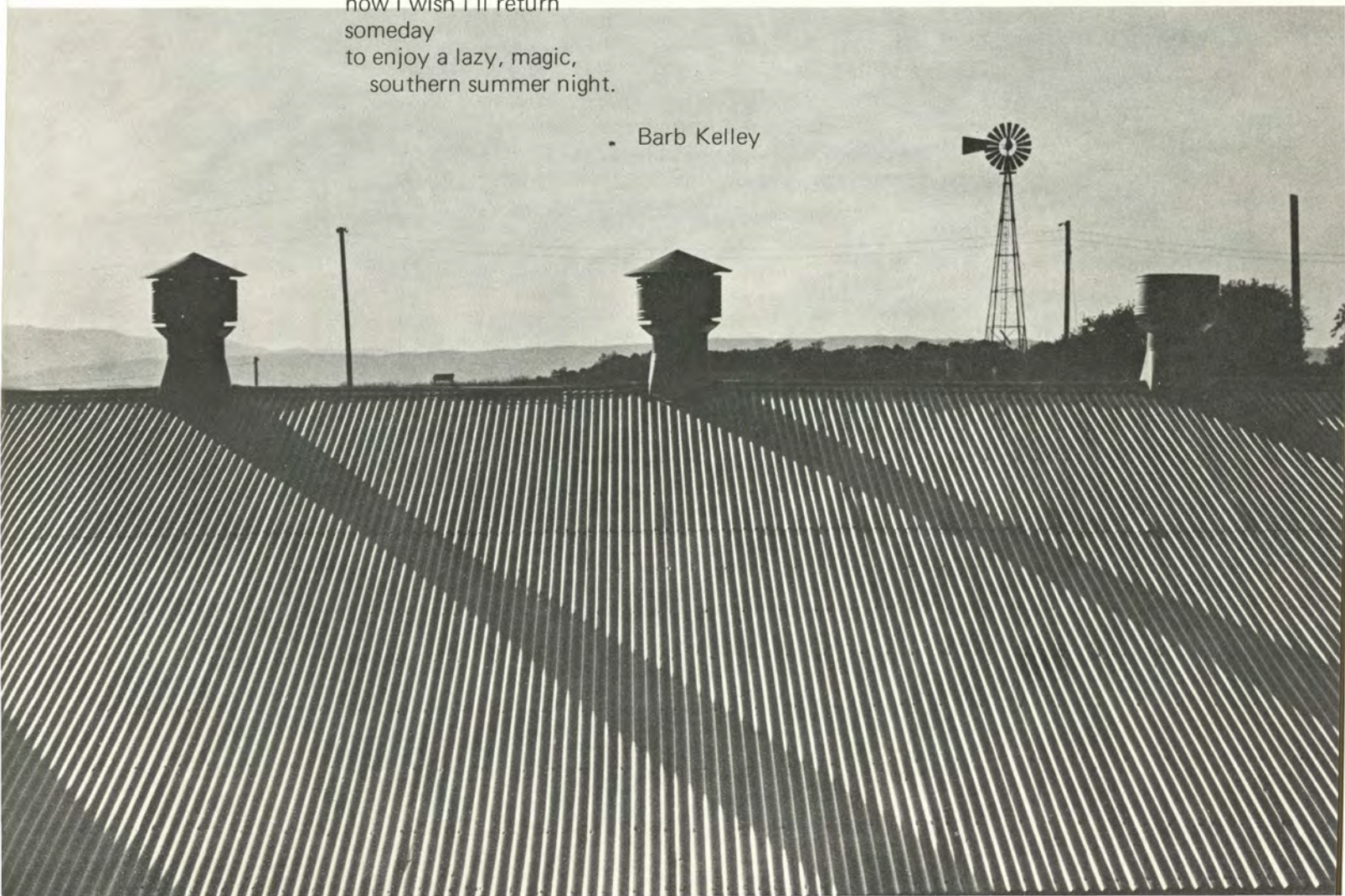
we'd sit and swing on our wooden swing
that was on our screened in front porch
and while inhaling magnolia blossom aromas,
we'd listen to crickets as they'd greet the darkness.

we'd swing back and forth as rhythmic as breathing
and we'd talk about news that didn't matter.
We'd sometimes hear a neighbor's radio
tuned into country masterpieces,

yet we were too young to enjoy the banjo and harmonica
and the melodies they resonated.

that music now brings back memories
of all those summer nights &
how i wish i'll return
someday
to enjoy a lazy, magic,
southern summer night.

• Barb Kelley



beach walk

birth of morning
reflects on glass ocean,
as soley, walking feet
impring "alive" into sand.

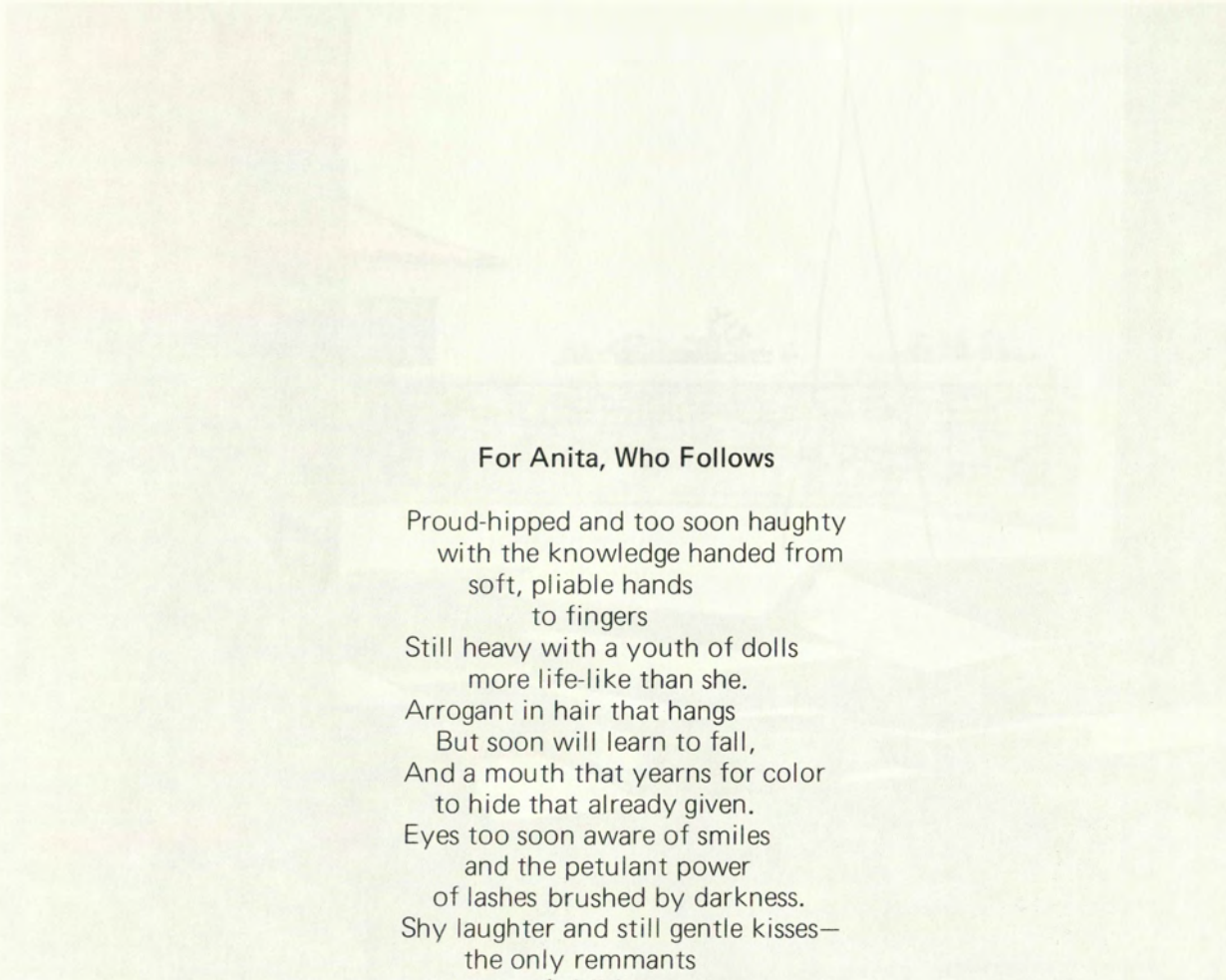
scooped impressions of creatured homes
appear after foam receding water
scims the wet beach grain.

castled remains of tedious childwork crumble defeated,
scattered by dark walks
and innocent impatience.

fish dead smells reek sharp through crisp air,
turned buckets of bone-picked remanents
entice swooping sea birds.

breakfast hunger turns
lingering walk,
into sand-scattering
homebound run.

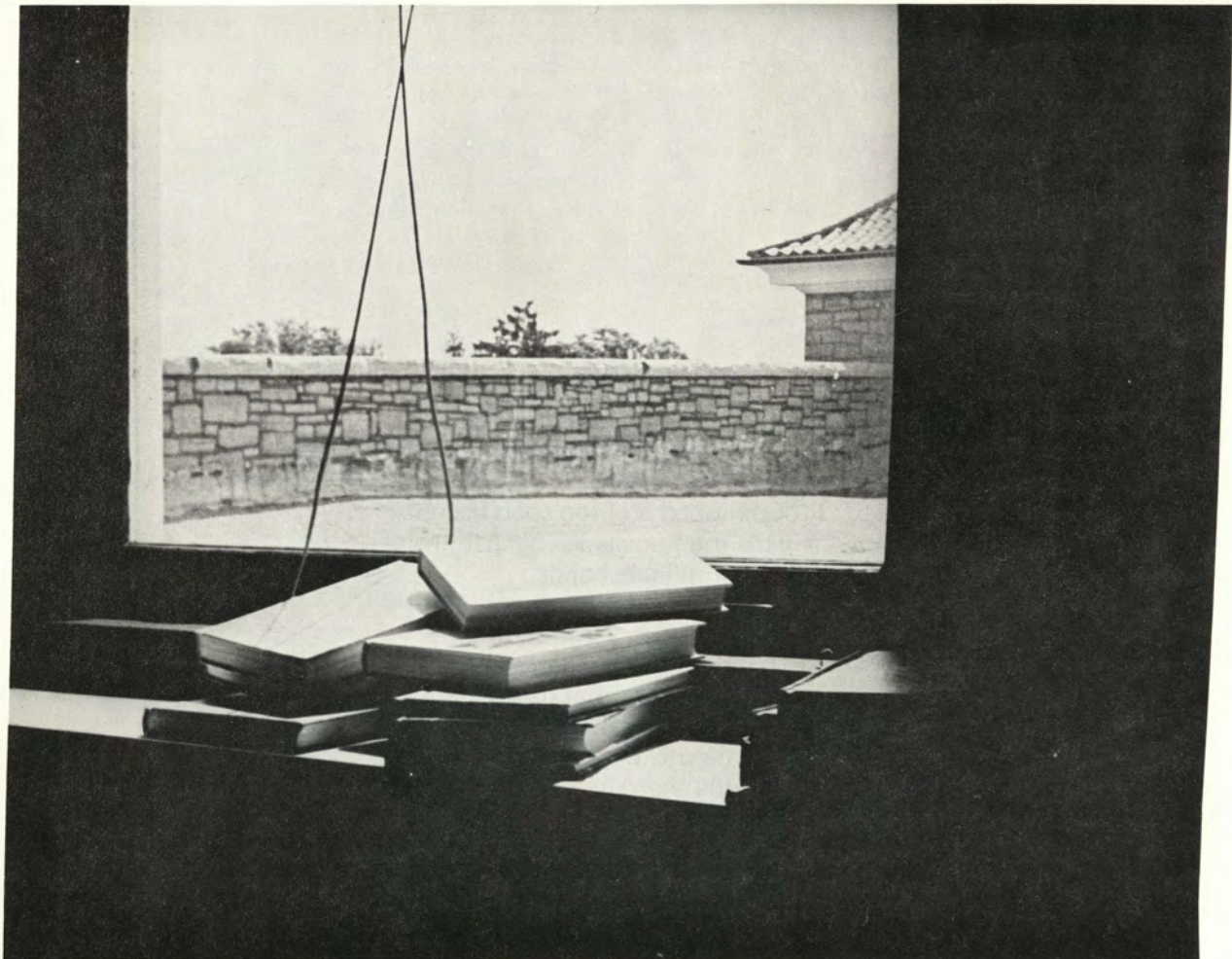
Karol Bowman



For Anita, Who Follows

Proud-hipped and too soon haughty
with the knowledge handed from
soft, pliable hands
to fingers
Still heavy with a youth of dolls
more life-like than she.
Arrogant in hair that hangs
But soon will learn to fall,
And a mouth that yearns for color
to hide that already given.
Eyes too soon aware of smiles
and the petulant power
of lashes brushed by darkness.
Shy laughter and still gentle kisses—
the only remnants
of child
in Anita, who follow, closely.

Linda Carter



Cat II

Raining.
And the sun has gone away.
The roof on the shed leaks.
The cat is going to have her kittens there.
Do you think she'll mind?

Jay R. Lowe



Hush

two marble statues seated
at the altar
her on his knees looking into
his cold hand
he contemplating her thoughts
wrapped in angel-hair gauze
they seek each other's minds—
seem to succeed
a majestic force descends
upon them and they
slowly begin to
dance.

Debbie Boyer

Midnight Madness

Death, you're like a lover to me,
enticing me from time to time
and, like a man too much in love,
you make that famous promise of forever.
Your eyes are black and offer rest
when the lights are far too bright.
Tonight you spread yourself above me,
begging me to yield. "Come hold me, Death!"
I cry in anger and depression,
yet you bring me nothing
but the things I find too sharp and sore.
And in that fatal moment
of my hopelessness and hope,
I push you back — no lover now
but like a cover smothering and tight.
Because, dear Death, your offered blade
is yet too sharp for me to hold
and I, too sacred to be pierced
by any part of you.

Anza Evans



A Book

by

Jay R. Lowe

A Book.
Pages flashing by.
The book closes;
Fades out end over end,
Into a red sea.
It turns to green.
Becomes a hill.
A young woman upon it.
She ages.
Dies.
Decays.
Her bones turn to flowers.
The flowers to raindrops.
The raindrops to fish.
The fish are in a bowl.
The bowl is in a window.
The house crumbles.
A tree springs forth from the rubble.
The leaves turn brown,
Fall to the ground,
Become squares,
The squares form a chess board.
The pawns revolt,
Kill the king.
His blood covers the pawns.
They turn to bricks.
The bricks become a fort.
The Indians attack.
Soldiers.
Fighting.
Struggling.
All dying.
The Indians become numbers.
The numbers make up a problem.
The professor solves it.
His glasses become breasts.
The breasts turn into rockets.
The rockets collide.
The explosion forms the sun.
The planets become basketballs.
They go through the basket.
The net traps the players.
They break free,
Become pencils,
Form a lattice,
Enclose a porch.

Ivy overgrows it.
The ivy turns to slime.
The slime to water.
Ships sail on the water.
The ships are eaten by a whale.
The whale grows legs,
Walks on the water,
Is frozen in an iceberg.
The iceberg becomes a mountain.
Goats are climbing it.
One falls,
Turns into a white bird.
Changes to yellow,
Perches on a clothesline.
The clothes dance together,
Form a circle,
It turns into a wheel.
The wheel is on a wagon.
The wagon contains cattle.
They all have smiles.
The smiles become suspension bridges.
Heavy traffic is going across.
The cars become ants.
The ants go to an anthill.
The anthill turns into a pile of ashes.
They blow away.
The dust settles on a mirror.
A man washes it.
He kicks over his bucket.
The water splashes out.
The water turns into coins.
The coins into barrels.
The barrels into baseballs.
They all fall into a hole.
The hole becomes an eye.
The eye turns blue.
The blue becomes the sky,
Clouds move in,
The clouds shrink into ducks.
The ducks drop eggs.
The eggs hatch spiders.
The spiders climb up a ladder.
The ladder folds in half,
Becomes the letter "A",
Runs and trips,
Breaks into pieces.
The pieces turn into stars.

A comet rushes by.
The comet turns into a head of hair.
The hair braids into a rope.
The rope becomes a pole.
The pole turns into a cigar.
The cigar burns down to the butt.
The butt becomes a fire hydrant.
A dog does his duty.
The puddle becomes a frisbee.
The frisbee turns into a plate.
The plate becomes a bowl.
The bowl contains peas.
The peas turn into bullets
The bullets to elephants.
The elephants trample a bicycle.
The broken spokes become daggers.
The daggers turn into crosses.
The crosses become the letter "T".
The "T" is on a STOP sign.
The sign spins around,
Becomes a top,
The top bumps over a fat man.
The fat man turns into a bowling ball.
The bowling ball knocks down the pins.
The pins become billard balls.
The billard balls go into the pockets.
The pockets become post holes.
The fence turns into a wall.
The wall is around a cemetery.
The tombstones become pages.
The pages make a book.



HOT DOGS
HAMBURGERS

DO NOTHING BUT LOOK

Butchers shop
a slaughter slice
engraved in blood
and siphoned in the
nail of the hand
ripened enriched
chunks of money
the dead mass
of muscle prices
going up I'll buy
will sell a life
hand it out
let the blood run
down the stream
too bad you only
interfere when
its your deformed
mutated skull

Carol Bissett

And Only Alice Knows/or Beyond The Looking Glass

I

Self is somewhere
far between the mystical mornings
and the rustic afternoons
holding the essence and the real.

II

Fantasy and belief are the fibers of the intrinsic
web of your consciousness
Words create the rhythm of life,
the touching and the taking.

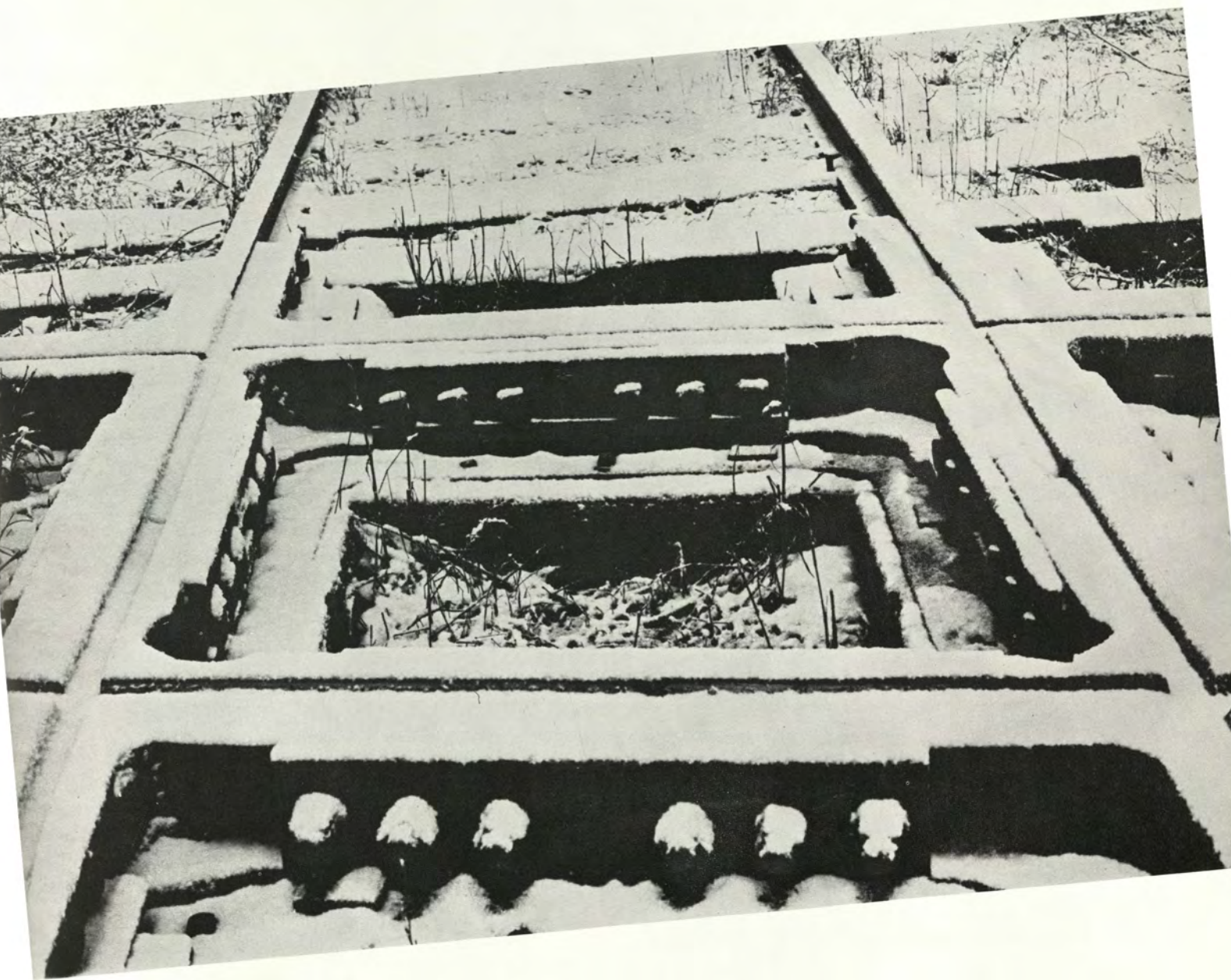
III

Sweet waters of time flowing
upon the golden banks of your mind,
Slowly sweeping away the sands to stores
of memory.

IV

Neurons calling upon knowledge
recreate an Ophelia in your temple.
Where did the old self go?
Only Alice knows.

Debra Danzeisen







“O, grapefruit, thou art sour!”

by

Janet Simon Moore

Colors and sensations flowed lazily through my mind, swirling together like bright acrylic paints—dazzling Florida sunlight streaming through bay windows warming my skin, firm yellow grapefruit on the crumpled white tablecloth under my elbow, Ellie’s straight golden hair—all blended with the past, with memories of the patient faces of my parents, the freckles, missing teeth and giggles of my younger brother and two sisters, the soft, creamy creases of my baby’s smiles.

Ellie felt it. I knew she felt it, and because I would be gone tomorrow, because it would make parting easier for both of us, we gave ourselves up to exaggerated frivolity.

“She’s pushing grapefruit again,” Ellie nodded toward the kitchen where Aunt May was busy making impressive noises with the pots and pans. Pushing back a strand of honey-colored hair, my eighteen-year-old cousin leaned forward and whispered loudly, “It’s magical.”

“It’s sour,” I retorted stubbornly, and seizing one of the fat yellow fruit in the bowl in front of me I held it up into the golden sun and cried with dramatic passion, “O, grapefruit, thou art sour!”

Ellie drew her head up arrogantly in mock imitation of her mother. “But, my dear, it is your duty as a member of this household to eat that grapefruit.”

Dropping the grapefruit abruptly, I leaned forward, opening my eyes in feigned surprise.

“Member? I? But, my dear, you must be mistaken. I’m the daughter of the maid, and black at that.”

“Tsk, tsk,” clucked Ellie, “that you are. It had slipped my mind.”

“Quite careless of you, dear. One oughtn’t forget one’s position ever, oughtn’t one?”

“Never,” replied Ellie, and we hid our smiles behind our white hands as Aunt May burst through the swinging door and with a great sigh flopped her tremendous bulk into the rocking chair near the table. Immediately she began fanning herself with a paper plate and rocking back and forth.

“Ellie, you still don’t look well. Do you feel all right, honey?”

We both had caught the tone in her voice, that dangerous rattle that meant the snake would strike at any second. Ellie threw me a weary glance and sighed.

“I’m fine, Mom. How many times do we have to go over this? I haven’t been getting enough sleep, that’s all.”

“Jen shouldn’t take so much of your time,” she said coolly, and without pausing to give us time to protest she continued, “I’ve made an appointment for you with Dr. Greene for 1:00 tomorrow.”

“What?” Ellie hit the table with her fist. “How could you without asking me? I don’t need a shrink, I just need some sleep!”

“But, darling, it’s for your own good. You seem so nervous lately. I know you’ll feel better after you talk to him.”

“No.” Ellie said it first under her breath, then more loudly and firmly, “No!”

“Now, now, don’t you upset yourself, sweetheart.” My aunt rocked calmly back and forth, smiling almost imperceptibly, like a cat playing with its prey. “I’ve also asked the Blaines if they’d mind taking you to school every day. Without Jen’s rent money, you know, we can’t afford to keep your car.”

My cousin turned white with rage. I felt guilt flush through me as I watched her dig her nails into her hand—guilt because my leaving would deprive her of the car she had dreamed of so long, guilt because my attempt to redirect my life had ended in another hopeless failure and once again I was returning to my parents, the bird unable to fly. I stared at Aunt May with a feeling close to hatred as she fanned herself indifferently back and forth.

“I’m getting old,” she moaned suddenly, her voice quivering with Parkinson’s. “I don’t know what’s to become of me.”

“You’ll probably die soon,” said Ellie, matter-of-factly, taking great pains to fold her paper napkin. She didn’t smile at all, but I noticed the slight lift in her eyebrow and the look of devilish fire that flashed across her brown eyes like silverfish flashing in the sunlight. I waited for Aunt May’s reaction, half holding my breath for fear that Ellie had triggered the fireworks that were occurring these days with more and more frequency. But Aunt May, fanning herself vigorously so that her stale grey hair flew out wildly from her massive white face, chose to ignore it. Instead, she turned in her chair abruptly and stared at me with her pale, drained eyes.

“I had a dream about you last night,” she began.

Again? I thought and squirmed in my seat, uncomfortable to be the victim of her attention.

“I dreamed you weren’t leaving us after all.”

Across the table from me, Ellie stiffened and turned her head to the window. The light, bantering mood between us evaporated as easily as a bubble in the sun. The bright colors swirling inside me faded and died. I pulled the curtain aside with trembling fingers and let the morning touch me.

No one said a word. Aunt May stared at me, as though trying to soak up my soul with those thirsty eyes.

“Dear,” she said, reaching out to me with her quivering hand. “If you’d only reconsider. I only ask respect, and that you fulfill your duty to love your poor, old — —”

“Drop it, Mom”. Ellie stood up suddenly and crossed the living room. Usually her stride was casual and light. Today, she walked with slow restrained dignity, hesitating only long enough to turn and rescue me.

“Jen has to go get her uniform on, and I have to get ready for school.”

The chair squeaked as I pushed myself from the table and followed Ellie. The silky Persian rug felt like cat’s fur beneath my bare feet. As I passed her chair, Aunt May, like an amoeba encircling its victim, reached out and grabbed my wrist. The disease that made her arm constantly quiver seemed for a moment to have entered my body.

“Dear,” she pleaded, looking into my eyes until I had to look away. “Dear, please, eat some grapefruit. We have so much that I’m worried it may rot.”

I tried gently to free my hand. “It’s my last day at the home. I don’t want to be late.”

She pulled me down to her in one jerk and crushed my face to her shoulder. “You’re so precious to me, dear. So precious. God is forgiving. Always remember that. God is forgiving.”

Embarrassed, I stood up, not knowing how to act or what to say. “I’ll eat some when I get home.”

She nodded her head dully, and I felt those empty eyes watching me piteously as I left the room.

“I hate her guts,” said Ellie, later that day, and flicked the ashes of her cigarette onto the linoleum floor of my room.

“There’s only one solution,” I said, grinning. “Skinny dipping on the beach. One last fling before I’m pent up on the Greyhound bus for God knows how long.”

“Skinny dipping and daiquiris,” Ellis amended, enthusiastically, squashing out her cigarette. Frowning, I pulled off my work shoes and chewed on my lower lip.

"Can I risk a hangover traveling?"

"Oh, Jen," Ellie pleaded, bouncing on the squeaky springs. "It's the finishing touch." The breeze rattled the venetian blinds approvingly.

"Okay, on one condition—no tears when we say good-bye."

"It's a deal," she said, and we smiled.

Hours later, leaving a soundly sleeping Aunt May, Ellie and I slipped out through the breezeway into the cool, dark shadows of the mimosa and palms. Running in our bare feet on the sharp night-cooled gravel, we were caught up in the fervor of dramatic adventure.

Soon we were at the beach, running in the semi-darkness of night, street lights, and stars. Amid a rush of giggles, squeals, and hesitations, we discarded our clothes and dashed across the sand, our nudity flashing white and silver in the star-sprinkled night. Rushing waves, icy and forceful, bowled us over and dragged us under, soaking our hair and we emerged choking, gagging, breathless, laughing. Ellie darted from the water onto the beach where she dropped to the sticking sand and rolled and kicked and shrieked with delight. I crouched low in the water, feeling the loose sand pulling over my bare toes and the swooshing, smacking of the wake on my bare back. I crouched, conscious of the salt water swelling and falling around my naked breasts, feeling deliciously daring.

"Ellie, do you see these waves—they're free! Independent!" I yelled in rapturous pleasure, throwing the water up with my arms, reaching in one motion for the stars. Above me, around me, the stars in a great glittering mass shimmered like rain on black asphalt streets. Impulsively, I broke away from the ocean's salty embrace and ran like a wild uninhibited savage, splashed with moonlight. "Unattached! Unchained!" I yelled and heard my voice trail behind me in the wind.

"You're crazy, Jen." Ellie shouted from her bed in the sand. But I heard her laugh. "You're a hopeless romantic." The breeze whistled across my cheeks and ears. I spun around and suddenly Ellie was at my elbow running, too, laughing, laughing, and breathless.

"You're crazy, Jen," she yelled again and in unison we flopped on the sand to catch our breaths and our minds. "Those waves are just as trapped as anyone else," she said as the water swirled, white and bubbly, around our toes. "Can't you see them reaching out, trying to grab hold of something? Reaching, reaching and always being pulled way."

Our gaiety slipped away into the cool, dark shadows of melancholy.

"Thou art sour," I said, watching the indifferent foam rise and fall.

"But virginal."

We laughed, and before silence could settle too deeply between us, I drew in a short breath and asked lightly, "Is it bad, Ellie?"

"It's bad, Jen."

"There's only one solution—we have to escape."

"From what? I feel like we're fighting a horrible, abstract monster. I can't see it or touch it, but when Mom's around, hanging over us, I know it's there. How do I escape from that? You can. But what about me?"

I turned to her impulsively. "Come with me tomorrow, Ellie. Sneak a bag into the car and jump on the bus at the last minute. You can finish high school up north and live with Mom and Dad and all of us."

Ellie said nothing, but looked away. The night was filled with the sound of the lamenting waves dragging their souls from the shore. Then Ellie said quietly, so that I barely heard the wryness of her tone, "I couldn't possibly miss the appointment with Dr. Greene."

The stars winked sadly over us, mixing with the moon, night, and sea into a blur of wind and salty spray. The stench of seaweed and rotting fish burned my nostrils.

"Ei?"

"Hm?"

"What do you think about dying?"

"Not much." Ellie giggled, and the gloominess hanging over us slipped back into the sea.

"I'm serious. Everything around me is dying. Does that mean something? Am I some evil force that radiates death, like King Midas, only everything I touch dies?"

"I'm alive, aren't I? . . . And your baby is alive."

"Mrs. Sellman, at the home, died today. She died in front of me."

"Have you thought about your baby, Jen? Day after tomorrow you'll see him again."

"I was bringing her a glass of water when she fainted—or at least I thought she had fainted. But she had died."

"Jen, Jen. Think of life, not death. Think about your child and your future."

"I don't want to think about them. If I touch them they'll die too."

I jumped up, ending the conversation abruptly.

"I'm cold. Let's go home." I started to run.

"You're chicken, Jen!" Ellie yelled after me, but there was no laughter in her voice. "It's really, really sour!"

"There's only one solution," I yelled back. "Where do we pick up the rum?"

Hours later she knelt, stark naked, over the porcelain bowl, her head resting limply, pathetically over her shivering arms. As I stroked her damp forehead, the stringy wet strands of hair tangling themselves in my fingers, Ellie's body, drunk and tortured, twisted convulsively and she vomited into the toilet. She raised her head, her eyes half closed, her jaw slack like a fish left to lie helplessly in the sun. Her guts complained again, throwing up gastric acids and liquor. She pitched forward, her skull thudding against the cold white porcelain. When the convulsions subsided, she slumped to the floor.

"Jen, don't leave," Ellie moaned feverishly. "She doesn't love me."

I wet a towel at the sink and kneeling beside her thrashing body, pressed her burning forehead, wiping her face clean, moistening her drying lips.

"Your mother does love you, I'm sure."

"She doesn't love me," Ellie repeated stubbornly, letting her head roll loosely from side to side.

"She loves you very much, El."

"No, Jen, she doesn't understand."

"People can love even when they can't understand," I said. The bright lights were giving me a headache. My mind was dull with liquor. From the corner of my eye I saw Aunt May hovering ominously in the doorway.

"You!" Aunt May hissed at me, coming across the room to glare at me in the bright light. "You're responsible for this."

I ignored her.

"Jen." Ellie tugged at my arm. "Jen, I drank the rest of it. When you went outside. I didn't save any for you."

"It's OK, Ellie, don't worry. You're all right."

"Did you hear me?" Aunt May's quivering claws tightened around my wrist, forcing me to acknowledge her. I looked scornfully into her massive, cruel face and tiny, dried-up eyes. The pleasant memories of the beach and freedom drained from my mind. "You did this to her. What have you to say for yourself?"

"Don't touch me," I said slowly, hatred squeezing out the words. I stood up and twisted my wrist from her hand. "If anyone is responsible for this, it's you."

"Me? Me?" Her voice rose to a screech as shrill as a cat crying in the cold.

"Yes! Yes! You." My tongue suddenly felt released, as if all these many months a depressor had held it still. The liquor flowed through my mind, opening channels that sober reasoning normally would have closed. "Your daughter thinks you don't love her, that you don't care what happens to her. What else can she think? You nag her, whine at her—and what about the time you hit her with the frying pan? You're always taking from her, and what do you give her? Trust? Privacy? Ha!" The laugh forced itself from my throat, guttural and scornful. My mouth seemed to run independent of my brain. I felt as if I were watching and listening, but not participating as all the thought and resentment I had been storing up flooded out into the harsh glare of the bathroom light.

"You're a mean, petty, jealous woman."

"I treated you like my own child." Her voice was high and quivered with anger.

"If this is how you treat your children, then I'm glad I'm not one of them."

We faced each other defiantly.

"I wanted to get drunk, Jen," Ellie murmured from the floor. "I wanted to get drunk because she doesn't love me, because she's making you go."

"You are not welcome in my house," Aunt May hissed, drawing her heavy body up straight and challenging me with her gaze.

I ignored her again and knelt down by Ellie. "Can you get up?" I put my arm around her shoulders and lifted her.

"You can call the people down the street and see if you can spend the night with them."

I drew Ellie's arm around my neck and pulled her limp body across the room. Aunt May stood in front of us, her huge bulging bulk blocking the door. I closed my eyes as the lightness in my head became as heavy as Ellie's weight on my shoulder. "Will you please move so I can put your daughter to bed?"

She stood there a moment longer, glowering at me, then jerked herself away.

"I drank the rest of it, Jen," Ellie mumbled as I flopped her onto the wrinkled sheets. Her eyes were closing, her voice barely audible. I sat on the side of the bed, stroking her neck and jaw. "It's all right. Go to sleep. You'll feel better in the morning."

We sat in silence for a few minutes. I could hear Aunt May breathing hard in anger behind me. I rose to leave.

"Jen?"

"Yeah?"

"I'm still a virgin."

I thought about my baby and laughed. "Is it bad, Ellie?"

She made a feeble attempt to smile. "Sour, Jen."

Aunt May followed me into the hall. "We were talking about my daughters," she growled at me, grabbing my arm firmly as I tried to move away from her. "My daughters, who are decent human beings."

"Decent and neurotic," I spat at her, jerking my arm away, "and I'm glad I'm not one of them."

But she wasn't finished. Like a black, oppressive force, she drew herself up as if to strike me.

"Well, dear," she said, her voice ringing triumphantly in the hall. "At least none of my daughters had to get married!"

I sighed. "It can't be changed now, Aunt May. Forget it."

"Forget it! Forget it! How can I forget the disgrace you caused me!"

"God is forgiving," I said, and crossed the living room.

I went out into the night, dark, empty, and lifeless—as dark and as empty as my uterus and as devoid of life and movement as Mrs. Sellman's shrivelled body. I saw clearly the powder-white, powder-dry skin pulled tightly across prominent cheekbones, and the veiny eyelids above the glassy fish-like eyes, slightly bulging from dark sockets. As the breeze brushed my cheeks, I heard again those dried lips, cracked like parched earth, asking me for water, for life. And suddenly it seemed to me that Mrs. Sellman was there grasping my wrist with her bony, fleshless fingers. I moved deliberately across the lawn, stepped on the lowest branch of the grapefruit tree, and reached for the firm round fruit. Somewhere there had to be a sweet one, somewhere. The juice ran out of the sides of my mouth, stinging and burning as I bit through skin and pulp. Mrs. Sellman with the scream frozen into her face as if she were falling through eternal emptiness—in that moment that I had watched her, the glass of water sweating in my hand, every suffocating second of my marriage, mercifully short as it was, had crowded around me, trying to drown me or push me toward some open precipice until I, too, gasping and gagging, had felt the scream frozen in my face as I fell.

A light flicked on in the kitchen. Her sagging form filled the breezeway door. "Sweetheart, are you all right?" Her tone was one of humble repentance.

In the dark the grapefruit fell slowly and, wiping my mouth with the back of my hand, I nodded.

"Come on in, honey, you're tired."

Numbly I obeyed. The kitchen light sent a sharp pain to my eyes. I squinted and moved in the direction of my room.

Suddenly, pathetically, Aunt May dropped onto her knees in the middle of the room and grabbed my hand. "Sweetheart, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Can't we try again? We can both start over. Please. Please, give me another chance."

For the briefest second I hesitated, for a fraction of time I wondered if possibly we could try again, but she didn't notice and continued, "Consider your responsibility to your aunt. Consider your duty . . ."

But I could only smile a dry, mirthless smile and say goodnight.

From the window of the bus I looked down at Aunt May, squinting up at me, while Ellie waited in the car. We had already said good-bye. Beside me on the worn plastic seat lay the heavy, lifeless laundry bag full of grapefruit that Aunt May had insisted at the last moment I carry up North to my parents. She blew me a kiss, then her face crumpled and she began to sob, the roar of the engine drowning the sound she was making. I could only see the up and down movements of her shoulders and the distortion of her face.

The gears ground into place and, slowly the bus began to move. Turning away from Aunt May to look at the road ahead, I wondered if she was crying for me or for the grapefruit.

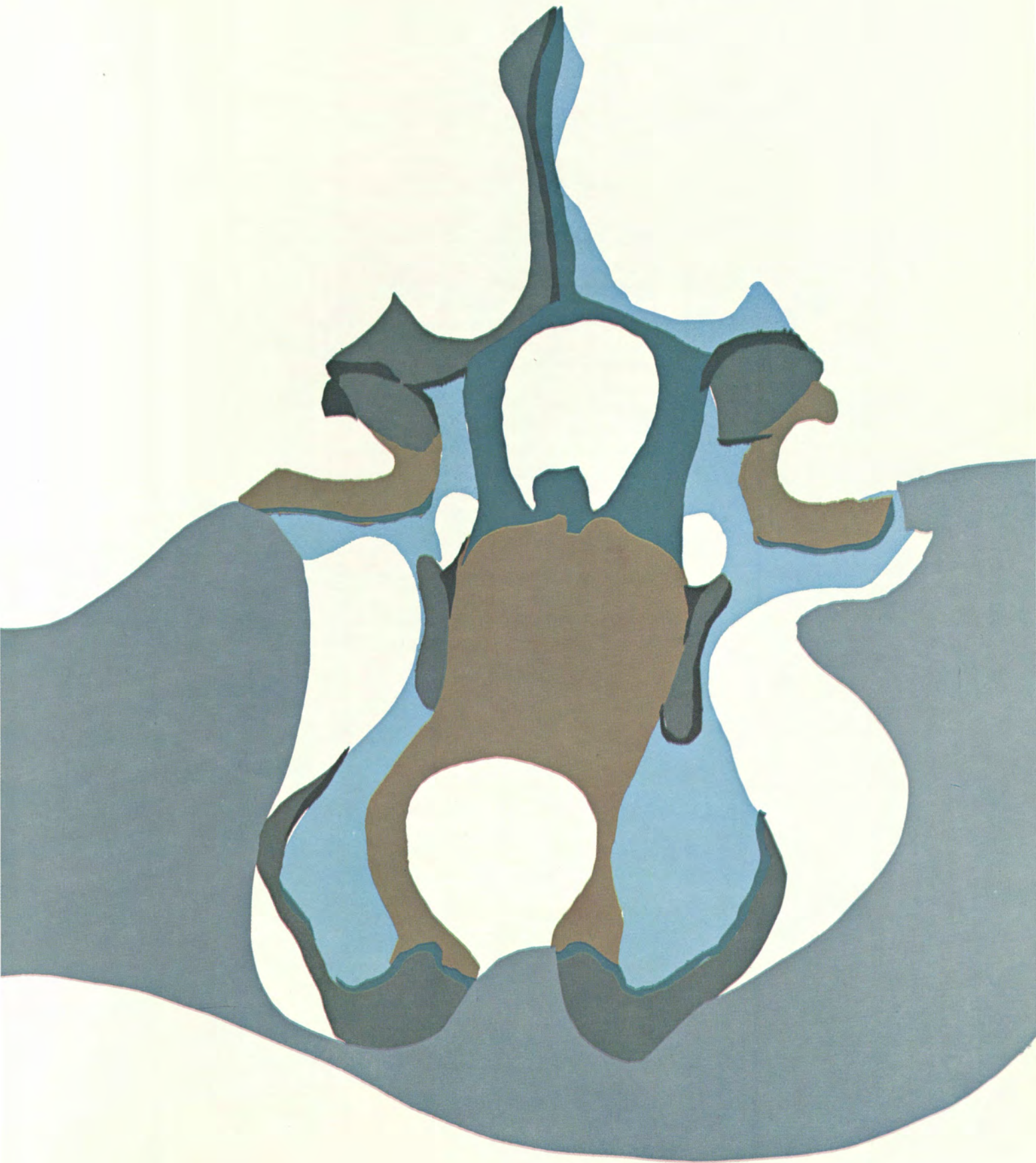
Lost

I am removed.
No longer can I touch the sensitivity in
friendship we once shared.

Our minds reach the same destinies, but
never meet.
Knowledge has become our prison, restricting
us within ourselves.

We,
two people grasping blindly for an exit in
a dark room,
leave by different doors.

Rosalin Jack



monday, march 5th

that day patty read you the list (she was always fond of lists)
you were in the john (probably pulling up your pants) and we both
knew he was coming home (it had been a long time)
i wanted to say i'm glad
i wanted to say i believed in the war
i wanted to say a whole bunch of things
but i didn't (you never noticed the difference anyway);

that day we had the same monday rain
and some kid stole the tests
we went back to our rooms complaining;

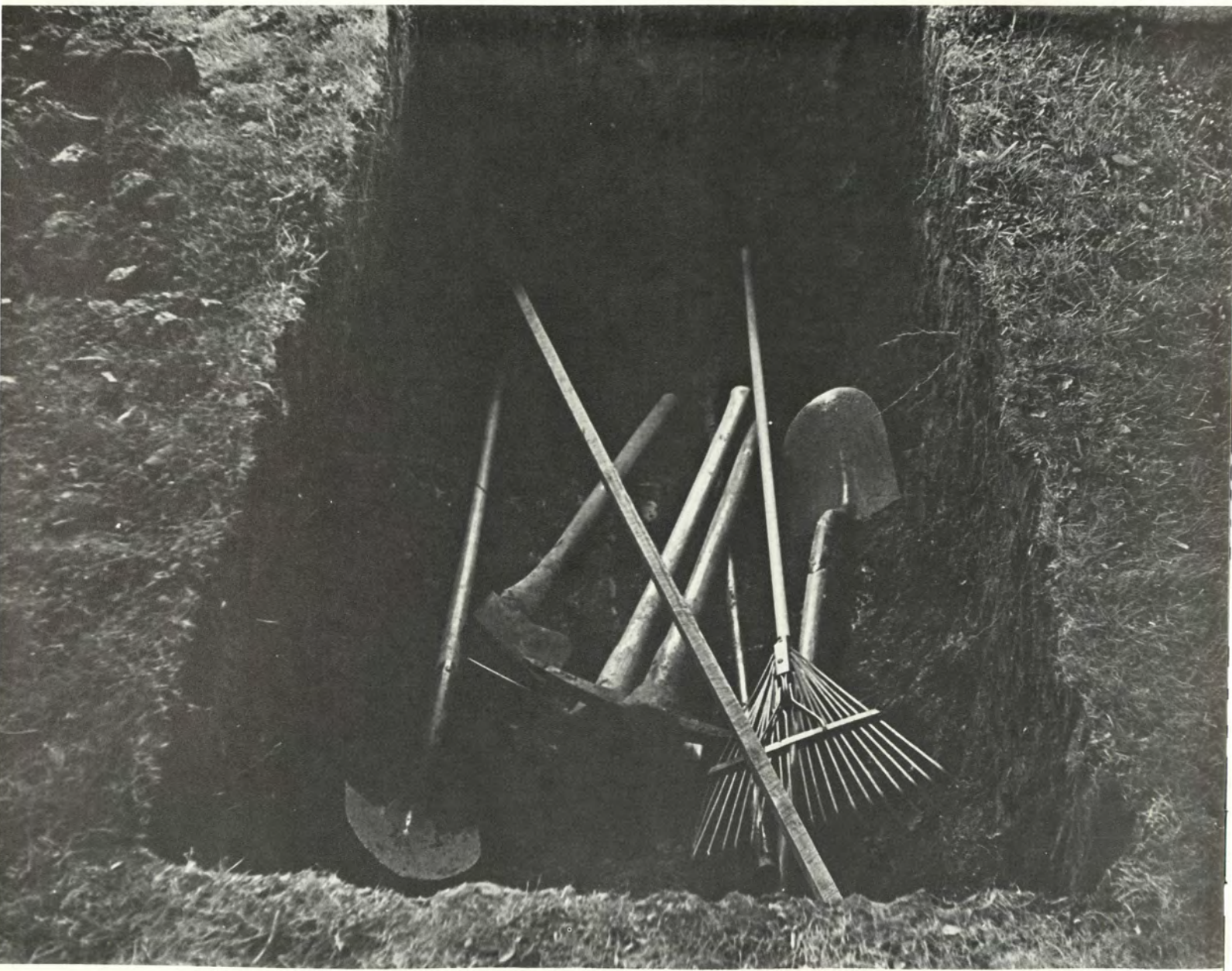
that day my roommate took off her nickel bracelet
(we looked at the size of her small wrist)
and saving it for grandchildren she frowned when i said
one day you'll find it all rusted in the bottom of a sandbox;

that day i picked my first forsythia in bloom.

Judy Bentley

"Beer."
"Draft or can?"
"What cha got on tap?"
"Bud and Schlitz."
"What cha got in cans?"
"Bud and Schlitz."
"Gimme a Bud."
"Draft or can?"

Dede McLane



THE DEATH OF CHAUCER

Chaucer could have had me (bowing) under his thumb,
My attention, too—his verse a crackling campfire
On the cooler side of a lonely night in the dark woods;
Glowing with thought like the intense heat of coals.

But my teacher, no more than the unnerving bother of a
mid-back mosquito,
Probing for the prick,
Biting with his needle tooth,
Making me itch with discomfort as my dreams were sup-
planted by class,
Droned again and again at my ears,
Until I tried to swat him from my thoughts, and missed.

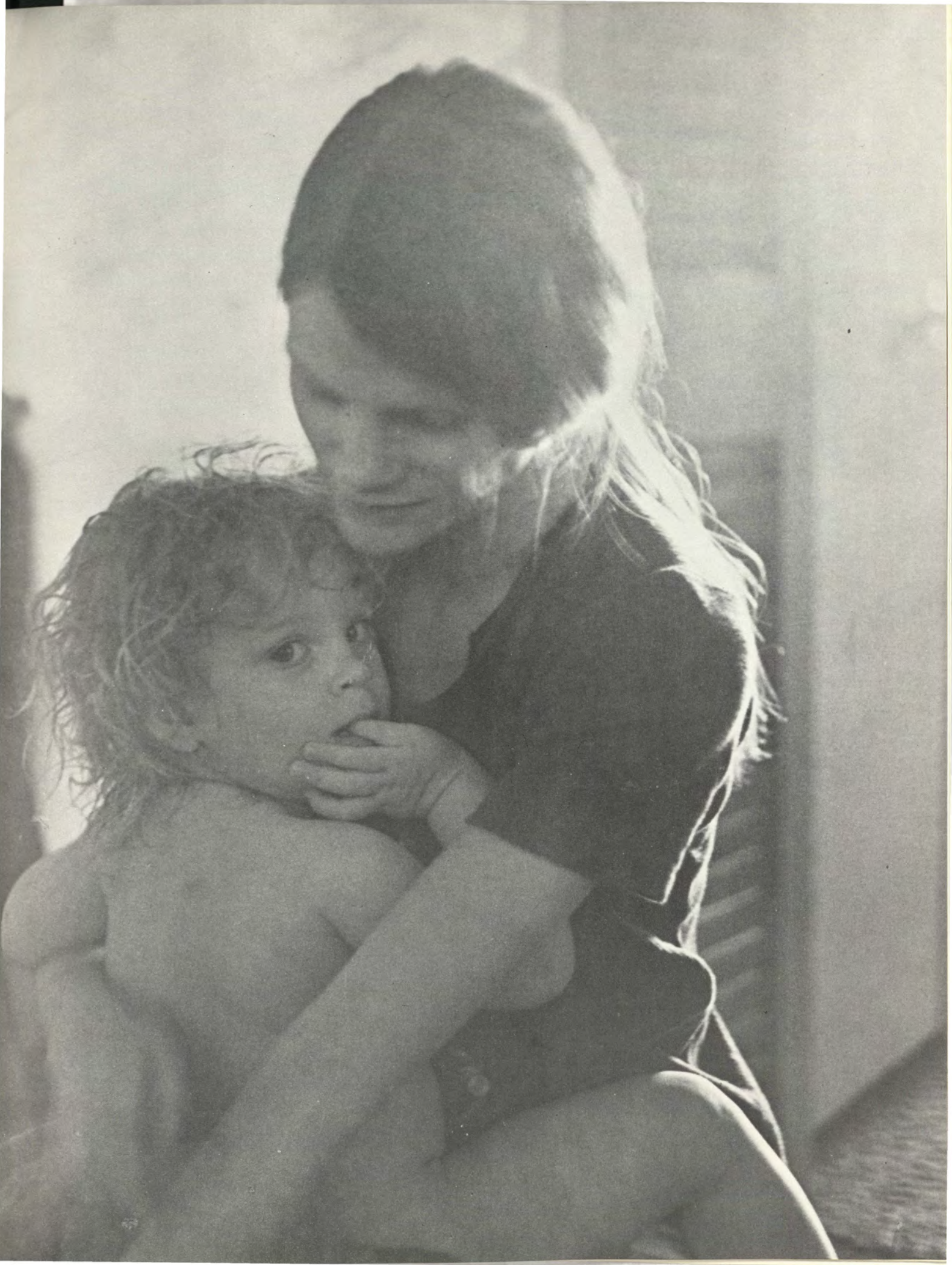
Forever and ever, it seemed, he hungrily hunted for the
appropriate vein,
Hoping to find satisfaction in the thought that he had
given me knowledge;
He gave me nothing but an itch,
Which time might scratch into a scar.

Kevin Coyle

mary worth's poem

pigtailed wonder of womanhood,
ageless child of games,
dreamer of landscapes.
she'll stand freckled before us,
an oreo creme filled grin,
and shoestrings untied.

Judy Bentley



BABY NEEDS A BOTTLE
MA'M
TELL HER THAT ITS
COLD AND HUNGRY
SHOW HER THAT ITS
ALL HUMAN

BABY NEEDS A BOTTLE
SIR
TELL HIM THAT ITS
BONES ARE SHOWING
SHOW HIM THAT IT TOO
HAS FEELINGS

BABY NEEDS A CHANCE
CHILDREN
HEAR THE CRY
THE DRIED OUT BLOOD
WHERE THE HEART BEAT SOUNDS

TOO LATE
SIR, MA'M, CHILDREN
BABY NEEDS A COFFIN
CAN YOU SEE THE COLD
DARK GROUND
WILL YOU SEE THAT ITS NOT HUMAN
anymore

CAROL BISSET

SIGNED D. H.

By

Richard Bausch

She had been watching him from the window of the living room every morning when he loaded the racks of bread onto his truck, and every afternoon when he returned to the bakery for another load. She knew he sang to himself because his lips were always moving and sometimes when he wasn't carrying the bread he would snap his fingers as if he was listening to something.

"What're you humming about?" her mother asked.

And her brother Virgil said, "She's gonna stand at that window all day, ain't you, Daphne?"

"Daphne Hunter?" her mother said.

"Yes Ma'am." She didn't take her eyes from the scene outside the window.

"You hear me talking to you?" her mother said.

"Yes."

Virgil came up behind her and put his head down over her shoulder, looking down the front of her blouse. He was always doing things like that to her and his eyes were big and round behind the glasses he wore. "Kleenex," he whispered and moved out of her way before she could get turned good to hit him.

"Missed me," he said.

And her mother said, "Cut the roughhouse."

And Virgil said, "Yeah, Daphne," looking at her because she had tried to knock his glasses off which were so thick and made his eyes look like cartoons of eyes, big in each circle of lens, like they would burst out at you all of a sudden.

"Supposed to rain today," he said, like he was talking to himself. She was looking out the window again but she could hear him fumbling around in the closet by the front door.

"Where's the umbrella at," he said.

And her mother said, "Get your hair combed; it's getting late."

And he said, "Okay—I got you the umbrella. Some thanks."

And her mother said, "Go on in there and get busy. You too, Daphne—come away from that damn window. You, Daphne."

"Yes, Ma'am."

"You heard me, come on away from that window."

She turned to the room again, folding her arms across her chest like she was going to hug herself. Her mother was standing by the front door with her purse dangling from the crook of her elbow.

She said, "Come on, Virgil, it's eight-thirty!"

And Virgil said, "All right."

And her mother said, "The same thing every morning."

Virgil came out of the bathroom then and he was trying to get his comb into the tight low pocket of his jeans. His hair was smoothed down and darker because of the water he used; there were tiny beads of moisture standing out on the skin just below where his hair stopped. He picked up the umbrella from the chair by the door and then looked at her like he

"Come on, come on," her mother said.

And Virgil said, "Listen to her."

And her mother said, "Listen to who?"

And Virgil said, "Nothing—you. 'Come on, come on.' "

And her mother said, "For God's sake." Then she said "Daphne you get busy on the place."

And then they were gone.

She went to the window and watched them go down the sidewalk out of sight and then she turned her attention to the bakery right across the street where the truck was still parked back-in and where he still worked bringing rack after rack of bread out of the tall brick building. She could hear the noise the racks made as he set each of them in place on the truck and then she could hear the music like it was already there or like she already knew it and how strange it was and beautiful. She did not want it to be a secret anymore because it wasn't really a secret the way secrets are and because it was not just music and not just hearing sounds or the humming; it was something else, something which made her different from everybody else and it was like wanting when it happened, not wanting to fly or sing or love or even be loved but just wanting all by itself in a nice way even if it was a thing she couldn't tell anybody she knew in words before laughing started.

But she could tell him. She could make herself look all developed with the Kleenex and she could make him see her beautiful and strange and then she could tell him because his lips moved all the time and he sang.

She stood watching him now, feeling the music soft inside. The sun was very shiny in his loose blonde hair and his T shirt was all dark and wet under the arms. She liked to think about his hair and about his hands and about the hotness of his body in the summer sun and she could see water moving on the sides of his face under his sideburns and she could see it shining on his round smooth arms. He was closing the panel doors of the truck now and she knew that he was through. He came around the truck and got in on the passenger side which faced her. The veins of his neck stood out as he climbed in and she backed away from the window a little trying to keep just back

of the curtain because she didn't want him to see her yet. The engine came on and when she edged up closer again she could see him sitting behind the wheel writing something in a little pad which hung from the rear-view mirror. With slow jerky movements the truck came sliding out of its place. He was through writing now and was looking into the side-view mirror at himself. He put one hand up and ran it through his hair and then let the truck coast out into the street and shifted it into gear and drove away. She watched it until it was out of sight, leaning against the screen, seeing it get smaller and smaller down the long street. There was a school building across the street further down, an old Catholic school. Its windows glared in the sun and made it hard for her to see. The old building was one of the tallest ones on that side, taller even than the bakery. She had wanted to see the city from that roof before the woman stuff began. She had wanted to climb up there and lay down all open in the heat with cool air blowing on her from time to time looking at the sky. She was hearing the music strong now and she thought of Virgil with his big glasses looking at her there and his knowing looking at her all the time with that look like maybe he's thinking of it she would never tell him about the music ever because he knew looking at her knowing and he would only laugh even if she told him how it made her lose track of things coming so strong the way it did because he was always looking at her like he even if she didn't let him any more looking at her all the time like he

She closed her eyes, trying to get the music back. She didn't want it to go away yet but there was a lot of work to do too. She would have to hurry if she was going to get everything done so she came away from the window and the music was all gone.

It was all gone a lot when she was busy and sometimes it wouldn't come back for the rest of the day but not often. She had a certain way of doing everything there was to be done in the apartment and she almost never allowed herself any variations. She was efficient, but slow, so she had to go steadily till she was through. At one he would be back and by then she would have the apartment clean and lunch done with. She set to work, washing her hands first, then the breakfast dishes. After that she went into the bedrooms and made the beds, leaving Virgil's until last because there was always that smell in Virgil's room and she didn't like having to clean in there. His dirty clothes were always strung out all over the floor and sometimes he left wet towels there from the bathroom. She hated having to pick up the cold wet towels. With her mother's room she had a different feeling because it had only been last winter that she had started that woman stuff every month and her mother had told her only the things about it which she needed to know to keep from being scared out of her wits the first time, also to keep from messing herself. She had felt funny when her mother told her because her mother said don't tell Virgil about it because girls mature faster and Virgil already knew what she looked like there with his with his

So when she cleaned her mother's room she always had a feeling of secrets even though there wasn't any more because what her mother told her was really the last of it.

Cleaning her own room was as mechanical as washing dishes. She didn't like or dislike anything about it.

Today she worked a little faster than normal and was finished at noon. She did this on purpose, not stopping until she was finished with everything she had to do in the apartment. (There were a few jobs which she had always saved for the afternoon—like dusting or running the sweeper—but she went at these jobs too and finished everything at noon.) Then she fixed herself a bowl of cornflakes with no sugar and two pieces of buttered toast and when she was through eating she washed the bowl and the spoon and wiped the crumbs of toast off the table with a dish cloth.

Then she was through.

She stood in the kitchen for awhile going over each job in her mind to be sure she hadn't forgotten anything because she didn't want to leave anything undone in case she was late getting back if the driver of the truck asked her to go for a ride with him and she went and was late. Then she went into her room to change her clothes. He would be there at one. She had to hurry.

She took the white blouse off and stood in front of her mirror looking at the empty bra her mother had gotten her. Virgil was always torturing her about Kleenex because he knew how she

had used it more than once to fill up the bra. The first time she had actually gone outside and sat down on the front steps thrusting her chest out to accentuate the bumps and Virgil had stood behind her talking about Spring coming and how cold it still was and had seen the Kleenex

How come you got Kleenex in your bra

Kleenex

Yeah Kleenex you got Kleenex in your bra is that why you're sitting here with your back all bent outa shape and no coat on sticking your chest out like that whyn't you grow some real ones

and her mother had told her about that woman stuff that ministrations saying don't tell Virgil because girls mature faster because he's not ready yet lord if your father were only living I don't know how I'll ever get around to it with that boy I don't want him to learn from the wrong party and Daphne thinking no he's not ready not ready no he's not ready not ready feeling older no matter what he knew and thinking she would tell him too so he would know from her and he would feel what she felt so she decided to tell him whether or not he was ready for it because of what he already knew looking at her all the time like she was still letting him like he was thinking of it like he

so she went out to meet him going down the street toward the school seeing him come from far off carrying a basketball the sun hot and low in the sky and air stirring cool and humid on her skin the windows of the apartments along the street perfect with gold and a shaft of light soft across the cluttered grassless yards he rolling the basketball at her down the sidewalk and she scooping it up in her arms and bouncing it hard back at him his hair all awry and flying across his face as he gathered the ball into himself having to jump to one side to do it she standing waiting for him looking at the bigness of his eyes behind the glasses

What's up

I wanna talk to you

facing each other on the sidewalk the air still now and he taking a small faded blue cap out of the pocket of his jeans and putting it on

Guess this'll be safe now

I wanna tell you something listen

So whud you wanna tell me is it about

Something Mama told me never to tell you

Oh yeah really

Something you're not old enough to know yet

Oh yeah who's the oldest here anyway

It hasn't got anything to do with how old you are

We know that don't we

It's a matter of mature

Mature

Yeah girls mature faster

Listen to her

the wind picking up now and a sudden gust of it hitting them and passing taking his cap in surging upward motions away

Jesus

running after him Daphne feeling a hard cold drop of rain splash against her cheek

It's gonna rain come on it's raining

My hat

Forget your hat

Together running back toward the apartment Daphne feeling a new surge of anticipation because he will know from her once and because he actually listened to her about the hat but reaching the sidewalk in front of the apartment Virgil looking at her knowing saying

I know what you were gonna tell me I've known it all along

What what

The rain coming faster

You heard me I've known it all along after all we

What do you know what

How you bleed there see I told you you should know better

Holding tight to herself screaming You don't know You don't know You don't know Virgil laughing at her with his big round eyes she wanting to dig them wring the bigness out of them because she had nothing then just nothing hating Virgil for his eyes feeling the small cold rain on her skin and the hard nothing cold and small inside her and empty

Not speaking to anyone not crying anymore alone in her room staring wide eyed at nothing complaining of headaches dreaming of having something to keep from them all forever this time until looking out the window one morning in summer and seeing him hard at work singing and carrying the racks of bread singing to himself just his lips moving and watching him watching for him until she had the precise times of his comings and goings arranging all her housework around that on summer days so she could watch him strong and supple and wet and singing all the time to himself until she could hear the music and it wasn't long before she knew it was not his but her own coming from somewhere and so she had that she at least had that to keep holy and secret like the other except soon she began to see that it was not secret because no one wanted it from her and it was no good unless someone wanted it and so she had decided about him she had made up her mind and today she would make him see her strange and beautiful and full of music and then it would be something again and then it would be all right and she could have it

Now, in front of the mirror, she took the bra off and looked at herself, pushing at the flesh with the palms of her hands from the side, trying to see what she would look like when they finally came, when they were fully developed. The nipples had swollen a good deal but that only made her look funny. A hair had come out on one of them recently, a long black one and she had pulled it out crying a little because that wasn't a place where girls were supposed to have hair. Now she looked at them, turning a little from side to side, experimenting with different poses. But it was getting late now and she had to get ready so she sprinkled talc on her shoulders and sprayed her wrists with cologne and then put her bra back on and stuffed it with Kleenex so it would look like they were developed. Then opening her bureau drawer she brought out the top she would wear—a flimsy red halter—and a pair of tight white shorts because if nothing else was fully developed her hips and legs were. She dressed deliberately and carefully, checking every detail in the mirror, and then she brushed her short brown hair so it would look windblown and carefree like the pictures she'd seen in the magazines. When she was finished with her hair she went into the bathroom to clean her teeth and she was very careful about it, brushing hard until her gums hurt. She also gargled with mouthwash three times, baring her teeth in the mirror and examining every angle of her mouth. Her teeth were straight enough but they were yellow and no matter how hard she brushed them they never got white the way she had seen some people's that looked almost like milk when they smiled. She grimaced at herself, baring her teeth. The make-up was next. She went into her mother's room and got her make-up even though she had some of her own because hers was that Miss Teen stuff and she wanted to use a woman's make-up. She worked quickly, sitting in front of her mother's mirror with the make-up strung out on the dresser in front of her. She felt like a movie star. She leaned up close to the mirror and flashed her eyelashes trying to blush. She opened her lips the way the models did and let her tongue lie out a little so that it was just barely visible. Yes,

she was beautiful. She put the make-up away and wiped the table off and stood up slowly as if he were standing there behind her waiting for her. It was five minutes to one. She would wait until he actually pulled up because she didn't want him to think she had arranged any of it.

She went to the window and looked out. The sidewalk was empty across the street but she could see in the windows of the bakery where men in white coveralls with short sleeves rolled up were putting loaves of bread onto the racks to be loaded. She watched them work for awhile and then began to watch for the truck, even leaning against the screen a couple of times to see if it was coming or not. Far down she could see an old slow walking woman with a dog on a leash and behind her two priests strolling along in the other direction. The sun was very bright on the street but the sky was grey over the bakery with long dark clouds looking almost like smoke moving horizontally along the roof edges so that it looked like the building might be falling. There was no wind. The trees up the other way toward the park stood motionless in what looked like a single escaping ray of sun on that side. Then shadow moved on them and they were yellow-green and nice. The music began to start in her as she thought of the driver of the truck with his lips moving singing to himself and with his long blonde hair shining like it did; and it seemed that all at once the sun opened itself wide and the street came brighter in color and began to waver and the sky went all white and perfect, even the moving clouds, white in a glare of heat and color, until she felt herself beginning to lose the weight of her body, beginning to wave with the heat full of water like it was; and the music was strong in her, stronger than it had ever been before all insistent and ringing in her and then she stopped. A cloud passed over the sun and a cool air began to stir and she was watching the truck. The truck had come. The window and the street outside had gone yellow and hot under the falling apart sun until she had felt herself rising away from herself, had felt all loose and air-like, floating away on heat and music and then the truck was there and he was getting out. He was getting out of the truck and going up onto the sidewalk like he always did. She unclenched her fists and saw nail marks deep in her palms. Her hands hurt a little.

She ran her tongue lightly over her lips to wet them, glanced at herself one more time in the mirror, then opened the door to the apartment and stepped out into the hall. She stood there for awhile, fighting a gaseous feeling in the pit of her stomach, like she would have to go have the runs. She stood still for a long time, eyes shut, concentrating, breathing very deeply because when she spoke to him she had to be very calm and cool and clear in her mind about every little detail so that she wouldn't say anything wrong and ruin it. She began to edge carefully toward the door which opened out onto the outer stairs and the street. She felt like he was watching the door waiting for her to open it so she would pretend at first to be busy with something or thinking of something like maybe just going out for a walk on a warm summer's day. She opened the door as casually as possible and stepped out. Without looking toward the sidewalk across the street she went down the stairs and walked up the sidewalk toward the park. When she had gone far enough up the block she crossed the street, still not letting herself look at the place where he worked. She could hear the racks rattling as he loaded them onto the truck and she felt sure that he was watching her every chance he got. Now she was nearing the bakery and still she kept her eyes on the sidewalk. The sun was hot on her shoulders and the air was utterly still again. She could hear each sound he made as he loaded the racks of bread. Something moved in her stomach but she breathed deeply and that made it go away. She was almost there and she could see him coming out and going in so she stopped pretending not to see and followed him with her eyes, walking slowly toward him and pausing from time to time pretending an interest in the sky. Large clouds were moving and again the sun was gone. A breeze was stirring leaves somewhere making a whispery sleepy sound like night time when it was dark and all she could hear were the trees and it was like being out in the country. Finally she could stall no longer and with quick nervous paces walked right at him.

Without looking at her, he walked back into the building.

She paused, only for a second, then walked past the truck and on down the street. She heard him come back out of the building and heard the rack as he fixed it in its place on the truck. She turned around and slowly began to walk back, watching him now, trying to time her approach. Maybe something was wrong with the way she had approached him or maybe he was shy because she was sure that he had been watching her all along. She began to walk a little faster, seeing him

close the door at the back of the truck. She walked right at him, but again he went back into the building, only this time he stepped around her to do it.

She didn't walk on now. She stood quite still in the middle of the sidewalk and tried to think because it looked like he might not have really seen her after all because it was so hot out a lot of people got real dull in the heat and you couldn't do anything to make them wake up and it was really very hot out. She was so sure that he had been watching her and that he would speak to her and she hadn't thought about what she'd do if he didn't. She stood looking at the truck—the thing she had watched on so many days it seemed, and had thrilled at the sight of all summer. It was filthy dirty and someone had written WASH ME in the dust across the side panel just below the word BAKERY. She had to do something quick—she wanted very much to reach out and touch the truck but her mind was racing. Maybe she should walk on down the street again but if she did that she might miss him a third time because he would be coming out any minute. She stepped over to the back of the truck pretending to be curious about what was inside.

Suddenly without thinking of anything and without knowing why she wanted to do it she began to write with her finger in the thick grime on the back panel. As she wrote the music started up and she stood back and let it rise over her wild and strange. Then she finished quickly what she had started, wiping the grimy finger on the back side of her white shorts without thinking. The music was coming strong now and she moved her lips with it, hoping he could see her and know she was singing like he did all the time. Her mind began to dance away from itself, floating, everything beginning to waver around her like it had up in the apartment looking out the window only now it was even more than it had been, all wavering and rising like the heat vapor from the sun except the sun was not out and it was grey and getting dark with clouds and her eyes were filling up with water, water running down her cheeks onto her chin and down, water running down her neck to her shoulders, all water and rain.

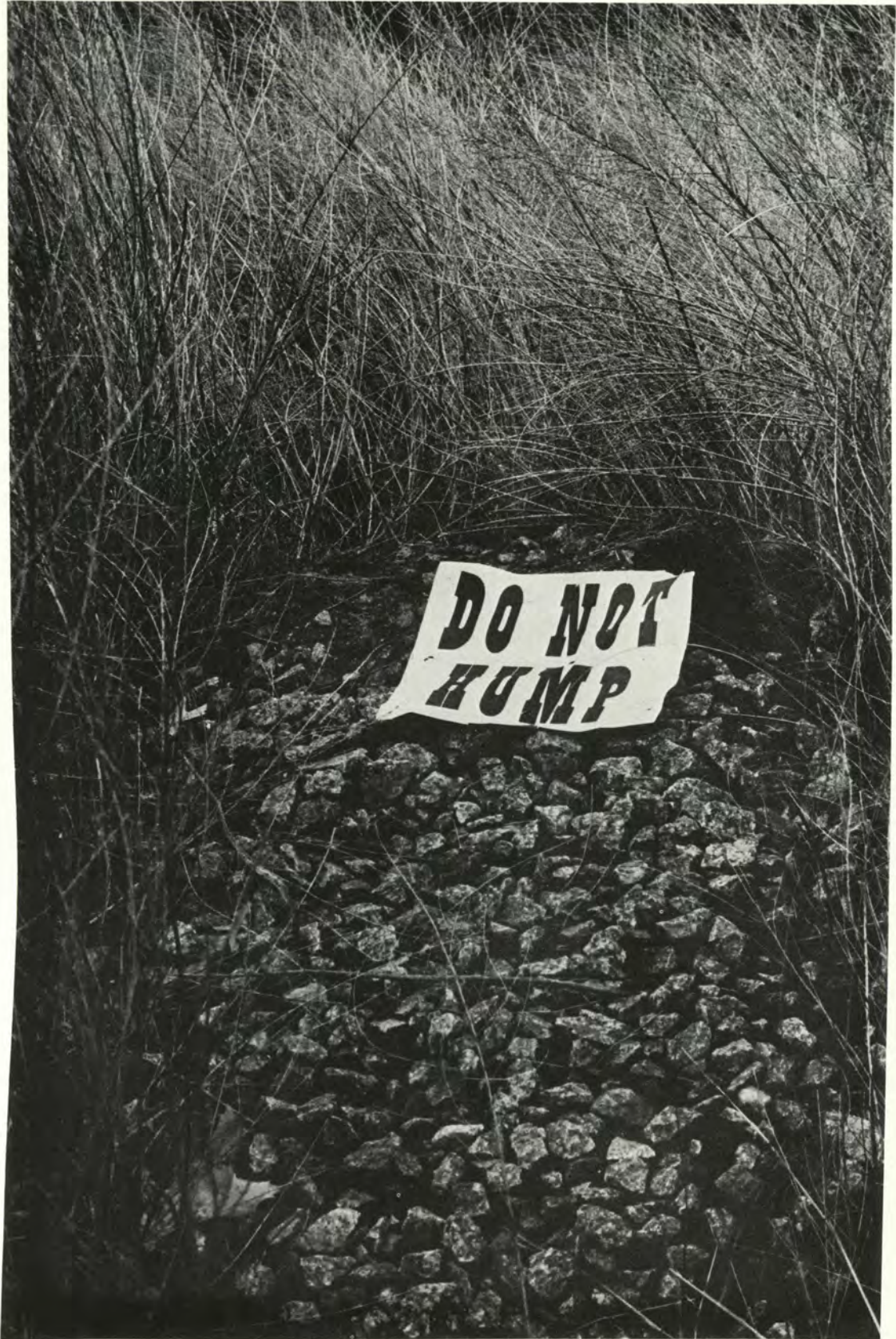
Rain. The music went away then forever and she knew it all the way to her soul standing soaking wet in the downpour with her fingernails all dug into her palms. She looked at what she had written in the grime on the panel door of the truck and it seemed that the water was smearing it all away into nothing. The water hit and hit and hit her. It beaded up on her face and in her hair and on her hands and arms. She looked up at the windows of the bakery and at the line of apartments across the street.

Faces.

It seemed that faces stood in all the windows, watching her. Faces with large circular thick glasses over big round eyes watching her and laughing. Her clothes were clinging to her body and the Kleenex in her bra was beginning to sag—all soggy and wet and dissolving. Oh it was so far to walk and it wasn't fair it just wasn't fair. All the way across the street and up the steps. It was so far. But she was beginning to get cold now, and she had to do something. She crossed her hands over her chest, feeling the eyes on her, and began the walk across the street. The water was making circles and circles at her feet and it was coming even harder than before, hitting her. She looked once toward the old school, seeing the low, raining clouds close above it—she might've gone up there one time but now it was raining and it was too far. She went closely up the stairs and into the apartment, taking the halter and the bra off as she crossed the clean living room. The water ran down from her hair and she could hear it hitting the floor. The apartment was dark because of the rain-storm and the window was a grey eye at her side. Lightning went away with thunder and came back with thunder. She went into her bedroom and crawled into bed, pulling the covers up high. She could see the bra and the halter lying in a pool of water on the floor where she had dropped them and the Kleenex was still sticking to the wet clothes. Some of it was still sticking to her chest too but she didn't care if it was. Her hair was wet on the pillow and on her face but she didn't care, she didn't care anymore at all. Virgil would see her from the door when he came in and her mother would too but it just didn't matter now.

She turned in the bed, so that her back was to the door and, closing her eyes, began to cry some. In her mind she could see everything happening all over again and it came too fast to the rain—she's just stepped out of the apartment and in a split second she was in the rain and it always went that fast and no matter how hard she tried she couldn't get it to slow down or be different. She was getting all wet again, caught in it again and her Kleenex was dissolving; it was melting away.

1972



THAT DAMN PORSCHE ALL DAY

That damn Porsche all day,
 gunning down the road
With no room to move into,
No extra air to call my own,
No escape from all your silent questions;
 just sticky leather
And feeling dully apart.

I threw away all your frowns
 three miles back,
After passing a wrinkling lady,
Doing the same thing she's done for years,
Waving from the door with her apron strings;
 so at the next nice town
I've decided to leave.

Jane Perry McCutchen
Sweet Briar College





LIST OF CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

Cover	Christina Beck
1	Carol Heatwole (2nd place award)
3	Barbara Belote
6	Ron Young
9	Susan Stillman (3rd place award)
12	Judy Kalbfleisch
15	Amy Bennett
16	Georgeanne DeCroce (1st place award)
25	Carol Heatwole
28	Thom Snyder
31	David Elder
41	Barbara Belote
43	Thom Snyder
44	Carolyn Turner

