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A Journey Into Darkness

by Robert Micklus

Oh Muse!¹ Please help my fabricated lute²
sing praises to a past, melodious youth.^{2a}
A journey I've to tell. Calliope,³ all
my powers await your beck'ning call.
The couplet is the obvious form I choose;⁴ 5
it merely lacks your flowing voice, sweet Muse.

You needn't call upon your Sylphs and such —
already they've been used a bit too much.⁵
Put Ariel to rest, and Umbriel⁶
alike, for surely man can serve as well.⁷ 10
With heroes I'll not oil my squeaking joints,⁸
though they may help to clarify some points.
Don't let my verse be overrun with puns
(They nauseate our senses when not shunned).⁹
And if the scheme¹ seems crude from time to time, 15
accommodate it with your glorious rhymes.
But Ariel — I feel his time's been spent;
escort him where the other spirits went.²
Were Byron here, he'd reel off priceless jokes;
you'd surely deem each one a wondrous stroke.³ 20
Now, jokes are fine — that's while the humor lasts,

1. Customary invocation of the Muse, found in such poems as "Rape of the Lock."

2. Merely trying to copy form, not the ideas of Pope, I've used the Romantic concept of the lute. The lute was the embodiment of the poet's imagination.—an instrument that could be played by the wind, and is found in such poems as Keat's "Ode to Psyche."

2a. Another Romantic idea—the Romantics continuously relied upon past experiences.

3. Greek Muse of verse.

4. Pope perfected the heroic couplet. It is composed of pentameter lines with a complete idea in nearly every two lines. The rhyming words are sometimes closely related in meaning, as you will see.

5. Pope, on the contrary, relied upon Sylphs and other characters of the traditional epic machinery.

6. Sylphs (spirits).

7. Pope wanted, more than anything, to understand man. One shouldn't concern oneself with questioning God (cf. "Essay on Man"), but look within, and learn to understand oneself.

8. I'm merely saying that I'll have nothing to do with much of the epic machinery, e.g. devices. In a strong poem there's no need for such support and filling in of space.

9. Pope detested puns.

1. rhyme scheme

2. A final word about epic devices. I'm basically saying that I'll have nothing to do with such padding. I want to talk about men, not Sylphs. I found this to be a contradiction in Pope's writing, in that he wanted to study man, yet constantly used fictitious padding.

3. Still talking to Calliope.

but once it wanders on . . . it's simply passed.⁴
So if you please, my Muse, a serious mood
(I don't like eating garbage with my food),⁵
for everything procures a time and place, 25
but joking simply takes up too much space
(and how I tire from having things erased).⁶

Please help me be precise with every word,⁷
and leave the wind to tell what hearsay's blurred.
And let my phrases bear reflection, 30
though I should prove to be vindictive.⁸
My only source shall be experience,⁹
for otherwise this verse will make no sense.
Let Nature guide my pen along the way¹
and scrawl the truths the universe displays. 35
Enough of this – my purpose is to tell
a story past (Do leave me, Umbriel)
in history's dusk, yet living evermore.
With every man this story's washed ashore.
Remember, tired, sacred Ariel, 40
to keep your friends amused (I hope you choose
to also keep away this musty Muse²),
for though my differences with Pope be fine,
I've got the edge – this story's purely mine.
Remarkable was Nathan Stone, a bright 45
young man of twenty. Gleamingly, his eyes
star-shined. Within those piercing gems
some felt they saw the devil's residence.
Yet others felt as equally assured

4. Though Pope didn't admonish joking, he felt it had no place whatsoever in a serious poem.

5. Pope would never have put a line like this in here. Byron would have been more wont to make one chuckle.

6. Though it occurred very seldomly, Pope used what one might call "the heroic triplet," where the idea required three lines for apt expression.

7. Pope hated wordiness. He choose each word like a man looking through a needle hole.

8. Constantly attacked for his writings as well as his poor physique, Pope was prone to

retaliate at times in such poems as "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot."

9. As Pope said: "What can we reason, but from what we know?" (cf. "Essay on Man") Pope relied heavily upon the tangible and the rational, moreso than the following poem.

1. Pope believed that if man would observe Nature he could find the solutions to his questions of the universe. Like Nature, the universe is ordered; so too is man.

2. Note the brief alliteration. Pope used such literary techniques as alliteration and assonance in many poems.

those eyes shined forth angelically and pure.³ 50
 Whichever was the case, they all agreed
 that he resembled Stone the First.⁴ This lead
 them to believe he'd likewise be a fine
 societal building block (in all due time).
 But Nathan's eyes were different eyes — they shined 55
 a different shine; his mind a different mind.
 He couldn't sit aside each spring and wait
 for riverbanks to rise. He'd not debate
 with when the sun would bleach the dewy skies —
 he'd rather take a pick and crack the ice.⁵ 60

And like that sun his feelings never set.
 He viewed the world with anguish and regret,
 and wondered why so very few had spread
 the harmony and peace which they espoused . . .
 how men could kill, yet foolishly stand proud. 65
 The more he listened to his neighbors talk,
 the more he knew . . . a living death they stalked.

“Uh . . . Dad?” he asked, “why have we war? and bombs?”
 “Man's creativity is seen, my son,
 of course, in these advancements he's produced.” 70
 (Now, Nathan felt his father was confused.)
 “But still, my father . . . sir . . . why have we warred?”
 “Just know that God could do no wrong. Our Lord,
 is perfect, you, my son, may rest assured.”
 “Oh . . . sure . . . but poverty — what are your thoughts on this?”⁶ 75
 “We're given that that we may know eternal bliss.”⁷

3. Notice the use, however inferior, of the heroid couplet in these six lines. Nathan's eyes were bright; the gems were a residence; others were assured they were pure. Note then, how the words interrelate. This happens often in my poem. From now on, at important points, I'll merely mark it with an asterisk.

4. Nathan's father.

5. The Eighteenth Century, in which Pope wrote, was a time of widening experience. Unlike many later Romantics, one would be more apt to discover the truths of the universe through participation, not through withdrawal and sheer observance of nature. This poem, in its ideas, is therefore greatly anti-Pope, for it

calls God's role into question and deals with irrational topics.

6. Notice the six beats in this and the following line, exemplary of the Alexandrine line, which was noted for its dull dragginess. I've used it to show that Nathan's father's words are dull, and even Nathan must speak to him on this dull level.

7. Throughout the poem, Nathan is dealing with the problem of theodicy—how a good God could possibly allow such evils. Pope, I feel, wouldn't have concerned himself (in his poetry, at least) with such senseless and unanswerable questions.

"Why speak of 'we'? Our family isn't poor."

"Well . . . those who are have not unlatched the door
that opens to the bounty of our Lord."⁸

His father's words made Nathan grow perturbed —
nonsensical⁹ they seemed, for he had heard
that all are equal in our Maker's eyes;
he thought his father'd accidentally lied.

80

His unknowing father sent him off to school,
that he might learn the wisdom of the fools.*¹

85

For the lessons Nathan sought could not be found
in school. His teachers just went round and round,
each never drawing near the lesson's end —
the truth — for which each footfall's tread is spent.

He sought solutions to his every "why?,"
not grunts and groans, all ending in a sigh.

90

The wise suggested "Nathan, wait and soon
you'll see the great world travels to the tune
of our immortal Maker's harpsicord

(but how much wasted time could he afford?) —

95

each note alone's unfinished, foul, and crude;
but blended, wondrous. We, in short, conclude
that though you find discord within our world,
it is, in truth, sheer harmony unfurled.²

Experience's books shall teach these thoughts to you.

100

In time, our world you'll more intelligently view.³

From blindness you'll have found the perfect whole —
that without vice the light of good's unknown.*⁴

You see, young man, without the black how can
the white we know? We scholars take the stand

105

that evil's but a blessing in disguise,
for to the good it opens up our eyes."

Apparently, these scholars couldn't soothe him.

The more they spoke, the more their thoughts confused him.

8. His father hesitates before answering, showing that he really isn't certain.

9. Pope would agree that such thoughts must be nonsensical, for man has no business dealing with them in the first place.

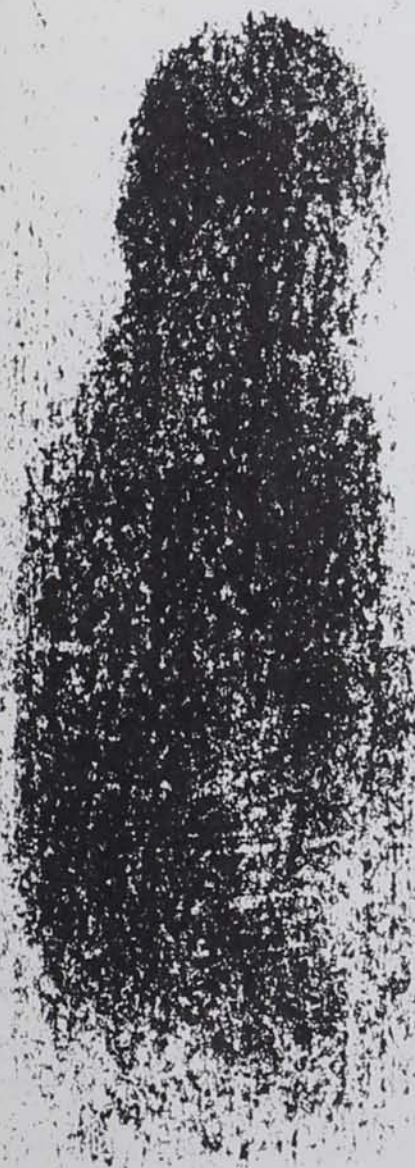
1. Pope would refute this, saying that scientific, objective knowledge is tremendously valuable.

2. This is about the extent of Pope's religious attitudes: he refuses to say much about God other than that he is the Orderer of the universe. Man is just a respective part of the

Eternal Order. Thus, he probably would have supported the very scholars I picture as fools: men who've learned much, yet are unwise.

3. Once again, I've used the Alexandrine line, through its dullness showing that these scholars are bores. It is not always used for this same purpose, however.

4. This couplet deserves explanation: the "whole" is actually unknown to these scholars. They merely babble the things they've reasoned out.



R. Sargent 69

Randy Sargent

So, this Rasselian⁵-born adventurer 110
 (when college texts had taken him no further)
 then journeyed home. Here's what he told his father:
 "Though truth's the sole enlightenment I've sought,
 I've come to think perhaps it can't be taught.
 I've asked the wise professors of the stars — 115
 they should've stuck to naming candy bars.
 I've asked the men who live by medicine,
 and found their hearts contain no blood within.
 Historians most surely know the facts;
 when learning truths, the facts I'd rather lack.* 120
 Professors of the languages can teach
 you many dialects; I'd rather reach
 man through the only universal tongue —
 not five, nor even two, but merely one.
 And architects build fascinating things: 125
 Lloyd Wright is truly most inspiring.
 But rather, I would have unique and gifted men
 leave mortar to the earth, and build their rooms within."⁶
 "Though you've clear-sightedly observed a lot
 of pointless wrongs, this bitterness cannot 130
 enshroud another day — I won't allow it —"
 "Why don't you, then, do something to uncloud it?"
 "Son, God is good — forget what's in your head
 and still your tongue — your thoughts I've come to dread.*
 The world's a balance of all things we can deduce: 135
 the perfect order of the universe — the truth."⁷
 "What truth is that? What do you mean? I can't —"
 "That with a single leg we couldn't stand.
 God gives us evil that we may —"
 "may fall. 140

If by the breeze of constant goodness touched
 (and it appears you surely say as much),
 why would we then, sir, be disturbed at all?⁸
 On that right leg I'd surely rather stand,

5. Refers to Rasselas, a character of Samuel Johnson, who left the happy, naive valley in search of worldly knowledge. Like Rasselas, he returns, still confused about life. The big difference between the two, however, is that Nathan knows he's confused.

6. This exemplifies the subjective approach of my entire poem. He wishes that men would leave mortar to the earth (science) and build their rooms within (subjective). Pope would

certainly have called me a foolish Romantic, even though the word was nonexistent during his time.

7. This is sheer Pope—the order of the universe. Pope, however, wouldn't concern himself as much with the question of God.

8. Notice how this rhyme doesn't follow the preceding line. Pope stuck more to the couplet.

than share the left where evil baits the man." 145

"My son, you mustn't question what you see;
 look at the whole — we live in harmony.⁹
 The all-surpassing good¹ — perfection at
 its best. Please Nathan, while you're young unlatch —"*

"Now father, what you've said has furnished you 150
 with unparalleled benevolence, it's true.
 But it'll never work for me. You see,
 perhaps I wish to delve more searchingly."*

Unswaggering, his father merely said
 "These are but growing pains within your head. 155
 Pursue more useful thoughts, that you may climb
 the ladder of the world — don't pawn your time.
 No time . . . you'll soon be old, yes, old like me . . .
 no time to dwell upon unpleasantries."
 But Nathan couldn't shut his speaking mind. 160
 He journeyed all throughout the world to find
 his still unanswered quest. Each day anew
 he thought "perhaps I've finally been to school."
 It matters not the places Nathan went.
 And why relate the wasted time he spent 165
 discovering not his destination's end?
 Why dignify the scholars Nathan sought?—
 long list of names, who only nothing taught.*
 He spoke to wisdom's prophets, schooled on poison.
 All uninformed, their criticisms annoyed him; 170
 they always (while the sun shined) drew their blinds
 (unborn's the form whose faults they couldn't find);
 destroyed the hardest rock that any god could mold
 (not e'en Prometheus had been so bold).
 They'd melt the smooth, untampered, polished gold 175
 with every all-discerning, burning stare,
 and from the black could spot the one grey hair.
 Their poison spread — his quenchless heart it soaked;
 soon disappointment drenched his every hope.*
 For everyday the questioned bothered him, 180
 and everyday professors counselled him,
 and everyday they didn't answer him.

But then he found the answer in himself,
 when once he summoned God, not them, the help.
 And in the canyons of his mind he saw 185

9. Pope again—the idea that everything has its designated place in the universe.

1. Pope wouldn't have been as concerned as

myself with the question of good and evil; he'd simply say that all things have their purpose in a highly structured universe.

Christ's goodness mixed within the many flaws.
Three years had passed since Nathan'd ventured home;
he'd realized there was no need to roam —
there'd been no need to cross the oceans wide
had his own footsteps guided him inside 190
the mirror of his soul. Without a doubt,
he should've looked within, and not without.²

Now when his father saw him once again
he asked him if he'd found, for all his pains,
the sole solution to his many questions — 195
that all in all God's goodness is unquestioned.³

But with a glow of kindness on his face
(for God himself had touched him with His grace),
a seasoned man related what he'd learned:
"Now sir, unless you're blind, can't you discern
wherever goodness thrives, so evil lurks,
and surreptitiously awaits his turn? 200

We know somewhere, somehow, an evil thought
arose: I feel it grew from him without
(the one you say is good beyond a doubt).
If only good, he'd not perfection be —
he's good and bad, both simultaneously." 205

"Then why is He, my son, called God, not man;
this universe was surely, somehow planned."
"It seems to me you've certainly confused
creation and the living that ensues.

'Twi'x God and I there really is no difference.⁴ 210
But foolish others lack the confidence*
in being sons sons of God themselves, like Christ,

2. The preceding stanza is highly Romantic in its subjectivity and its individualistic approach to life.

3. This is Pope's basic approach—that man shouldn't concern himself with questioning God's will, for everything is part of the universal order. In the remainder of this poem Nathan attacks this approach.

4. Nathan admits, however, that God (good/evil) created the world. His idea that all things from a universal whole is similar to Pope's explanation of the existence of evil, but the reasons are different. He says that the whole, or

perfection wouldn't be complete if it was only good. It would be a mere dream world. We must, however, conquer evil (having first known it) like the exemplary Christ before we can reach the heavenly kingdom. Without evil to tempt us neither our knowledge of life nor our being would be complete, and without the idea of something to overcome in the present life, the idea of heavenly reward is ridiculous. God, knowing and being all (the perfect being) assesses us and the degree to which we've overcome evil.

should they deny the wrong and choose the right.
Yes, through the will he's given us we can
his image be. And father, only when 215
we choose the good through guideless intuition⁵
can we reach our destined fruition.*

Christ was the son of God – so we can be.
He practiced love, while all we do is preach –
until we've mastered love, we can't our masters be. 220
We profess love and peace, and profess and profess –
all that we show is but a willingness.*

But God has given us a world with love's
unconquered shores. Undaunted we must move –
fulfill our destiny – reach out and grasp 225
those yet elusive bounds. We needn't ask
without, but truly contemplate within
and realize that Christ-like, wondrous thing:
the beauty of it all – to be a human being.

Epilogue

The journey's through – for one man anyway. 230
There was no rush (yet, nor a sole delay).

But Oh! a note of thanks before I go
to Ariel, who didn't steal the show.
He and his friends could certainly have made
the journey quicker, but their presence I forbade 235
And though the time lapsed long in this event,⁶
our hero was aware of where he went.

Sweet contemplation showed him to himself
(and notice, Ariel, he didn't need your help).
And how I'm sorry Caryll, meddling Muse, 240
that your fine inspiration wasn't used,
but I just couldn't find the time or place
(Thank God – I don't like having to erase).⁷

5. Man must choose the good that's in him intuitively, so that he can conquer his equally evil nature.

6. This poem.

7. Just a final snide remark concerning the use of epic machinery that fascinated writers like

Pope and Dryden. Byron, of the Romantic period, also attacked this epic padding. In case you couldn't tell, though I admire Pope's style of writing, I'm not particularly fond of all his ideas.



John Roy

September 5, 1972

There is a sanguine flush in the peace torch tonight.
Souls once spirited run dry, seep shrill light.

And dreams are still-born in olympicity.

You came to rest, roadsided "The road all runners come"
never-never land.

Heart hardened race, records not drawn to sand.

And dreams are still-born in olympicity.

"Shoulder high they bring you home" to market to place.

Shrouded in pace, peace torch blown up in your face.

And dreams are still-born in olympicity.

Last lines come hard, withered memory cease to chime.

Carry-on runners, race remains, never dust off olympicity time.

And dreams are still-born.

James Popelka

Atlantic Taperecorder

Sometimes

I remember the days
we walked along the shore together
writing our names in the sand and whispering,
"I love you."

And how we would wait for the ocean
with a wave of its hand, to drag those whisperings into itself,
like a taperecorder
that stores the words spoken to it on indelible ink,
Forever.

Occasionally I return to the beaches
and sitting near the water, listen.
between the pounding of the waves
and the crying of the gulls
to the rumbling, strained replay of the Atlantic

I . . .

Love . . .

You.

Sully

I ask very little of you.
A smile in the night,
A little comfort from my fears.
The hardest part is a little time.

A little time to smile
to have fun
to talk
to cry.
Friendship is all I ask of you.
Nothing more.

K. Lee Turner

Golden blossoms fall to earth
Victims of an early frost.
Death's coming is evident
In the browning of the leaves.
And Summer's softness gives 'way
To cruel Winters' bitterness.
Glistening frost covers all,
Smothering the fields and lawns
In a sudden, silent swathe.
Vegetables in the garden
Lay wasted in frozen soil,
And flowers meant for lovers
Wither and fall to the ground.
Death draws near for the green world.

Richard E. Hankison

Aftermath

Sunset brought
a few more
broken pieces of life
lying on the
wastements of pain.
Like a broken glass
from a foggy window
my life will be
almost impossible
to put back
together again.

Nina Camiel



Lawrence Flournoy

LINDA

Subtle smile downed white amid mystic night.

Limbs long so supple to the senses so polite.

Isn't she pretty, but isn't she odd?

Everything she did, she did like honeybee transpiration.

With lust for life blossomed reckless excitation.

Isn't she pretty, but isn't she odd?

Life got thick love grew thin, sullen soul bleed.

Toured to taboo and took a trip, she had to get ahead.

Isn't she pretty, but isn't she odd?

Everything she did, she did with passions undenied.

And she did trip life, she really upped and died.

Wasn't she pretty, but isn't it odd?

James Popelka



Trudy Eberhardt

Sweet Baby Jane

by Randy Sargent

In the blackness sang a mellowed lull, weaving through the darkness on the loom of eternity. Peace (or was it a void?) seemed to congress on the flowing fibers of time. These fibers never merged, but played a dodging game, creating a blanketed atmosphere that had known other days, milleniums, before ——— where the lull of the universe had been racked and shredded with the anguished cry of death. Finally, there was peace, just as there had been land and sea, and night and day. And there was peace, and calm, and silence, and nothing the blackness had not been wakened since the final, shrieking wail had been swallowed by the lull.

VOICE.

Well, I just came by to tell you. I feel as though I need a change. No, I'm just tired of the same old day-after-day type life. Day-in, day-out, the same thing, and I'm sick of it. I need a change in atmosphere . . . (ringing: sphere sphere . . . sphere . . .) I feel as though I'm not really living, like I'm missing the greater part of me. Pardon? Yes, I think I can handle it. I'm inexperienced, but there's no greater teacher, so they said. (the lull becomes an increased humming) Where? I don't really know. I thought you could help me out there. This whole business was your idea and I can't stand the dull lull of it any more I want a chance I never had one, you know. It's not really your fault, you just sort of never meant to control things, and they didn't understand why you couldn't help out but please, give me the chance to live, and love, and experience (the hum becomes louder, as though a stitch in time would save the blind) let me see the world (silence . . . then a huge heave as though an old, worn loom was tired and became passive to demands. Tiredly and apprehensively came the reply)

"O.K."

In another place and time an old hound dog licked an aging wound.

THOUGHT.

The day has been stormed with clouds of doubt and fear and the rain is blowing in. Freedom, so close, so very near, to reach out, to touch it. Come closer to me — reach so that vulnerability and doubt are not so caging. Burn! Burn these bars! Let this bird fly with unpinioned wings, unhampered, smooth through the air. Let the phoenix be protected by the eternal calm that reaches out to guide the yearning wings.

An excitement is riding on these blowing winds, a finity is galloping onward, defining the infinity of this endless ride. The songbird rises fervently to be caught up and driven on! On! through the emptiness! And the blood is boiling with fear and doubt. Let not the feathers be dampened by this rain — through the open window

The shrieking whine ached through the rocks on the plain. The sun had long since burned from them their vitality. Now the rocks just lay there . . . mostly dead. And the sudden piercing shrill shook them in their open tomb. The boulders seemed to roll and moan and evade the “intruder” . . . to cry silently for the maintenance of unmarred tranquility. The whine grew and came nearer until the bowels of the plain were racked with cramping agony, yearning to spew up part of the hell embraced. The tempo of the land heaved with the shrill pitch, boulders seemed to split, the one blade of grass fell limp with the effort . . . the voice appeared . . . and . . . all was still.

A small wind had picked up from the west and blew gently across his face. The soil beneath his feet was baked and played tamely between the searching toes, and the sun’s radiance glistened on him. The eyes were what was strange. They knew no interpretations, but seemed to inhale the surroundings. The eyes were black . . . a void which had nothing to mirror and all to receive, ebony infinities. Beautifully the eyes played upon and across the jagged plain, exploring, awed, and overcome. Such as a child who is enchanted by a wondrous magician.

Slowly, as though to feel for the first time, he bent down to the earth. He sifted the dirt through sensitive fingers again and again, and felt the grains on his face. So warm, so comforting, so much pleasure from this simple earth! The heat of the day and the brightness enveloped him, and he played and rolled, jumped and danced in the sun. The rocks were another curiosity for him. They held the heat, and coolness of the

shade. And their rough nature held a fancy for him. For hours he would run his hands and feet across the textured surfaces. And sat behind them to feel the chill and relief from nature's oven. He had lain his manly frame down in the shadow of a rock, and had fallen asleep. When he awoke, he held a baby doll warmly in his arms.

"What th' devil! Hm . . . I wonder what Adam would've done. Well baby Jane, you must have some purpose, so I guess I'll keep you around. The Old Man generally knows what he's doing. You certainly aren't the Eve I pictured . . ."

And he got up with baby under arm and began his trek across the plain. Not too much was left. The vegetation had dwindled down mostly to bushes, clusters of saplings, and stretching pines smattered here and there. The breeze liked to weave itself around the black pine boughs and whine its melancholy tune to the baby saplings. The wind would often mother the saplings in her arms, and sooth them into velvet tranquility. But other times she would storm and taunt and whip the young trees into tantrums, and they would flail their arms and become crazed into raving aberrations, swimming and twisted in the wild squall. And when they were tired, exhausted to incoherence, she would stop, the sly, old shrew, and gently, ever so gently, begin to rock them in her arms. The saplings would settle, and sigh, and cuddle in their witch's wings, solaced and sleeping.

The sun was going down. The pines pierced the reddened ball and stood black, silhouetted against the glowing orb. The sky was red hot from north to south on the west edge of the plain. The clouds had drifted home, leaving a pure, lucid open sky which melted into the western flame.

In the growing darkness, he was tired and did not trust his footing. He settled for this first evening in a covert of boulders in the midst of pines. He found shelter from the black void in the forms which surrounded him. He sat beneath the black, spidery pines secure in his stone shelter. Baby Jane was propped near him, and he was propped beneath those huge singing pines, swaying hypnotically above. The air was still warm and floated beneath the trees. The stars came out as the twilight faded into night. He watched them and they seemed to speak to him. As they multiplied, the earth lost its heat to the black, sucking void. A chill shivered through his tired body, and he curled up nearer the rocks. In the very stillness of the night, a different chill ran through him. He shivered with the chill of loneliness, and reached for Baby Jane. During this first night, he cuddled the doll, and, whispering, carried to her heart, the fears on his lips and the tightness growing in his heart, and finally melted into slumber.

He sat up suddenly. He and Baby Jane were perched on the edge of the blackness which surrounded him. The dark void had become an abyss of all dimension. The hollows and the pines were echoing the mouth of time, a screaming silence within the barriers of the plain.

From the edge of the plain plodded a faint light. Its bearer had no face, but a lantern which revealed the clinging, journeyed dust on the ancient cloak, and carried the light through the night. The faces of empires smiled and cried, and stared dead from the hems. Children, old men blinked horrified eyes between the threads of the cloth. Their silence screamed to wait, just a bit longer, to hold the lantern near enough to scorch memory from their minds. But they remained caught in the cloak, and memory caught within their minds.

Multitudes of faces appeared stretched across the horizon. The past paraded across the sky as the portraits floated by. He sat very still, and found himself clutching Baby Jane as he witnessed the history of the millenium of man. As the faces began to dwindle near the end, he viewed the twisted agony of the eyes that could no longer see, and the mouths that no longer had anything more to say. It had all been said, and all been done done yes, it certainly had been done.

After the faces had ended, he sat and trembled. He felt the impulse to get up and run, run from those faces imprinted on his mind, and run from their suffering. He grabbed Baby Jane and began. He sprinted across the sand of the plain until the sun had poked over the eastern edge. He kneeled on the warming earth, and smoothed the acrylic hair of his doll with a rather gentle touch, and rested. When he was ready he began again, and kept Baby Jane tightly with him.

The terrain began to change, becoming more contoured with peaks and valleys. When the black void threatened him again, as the sun met the west, he clambered up one such peak, and ventured to find his security in the cave-riddled mountainside.

The winds rather whistled through this hillside, with its many openings and channels. As the night dropped around him, he slid back within the opening of one of these caves. Blackness overtook the sky, but this evening there were no stars talking in the heavens. This seemed strange to him, and somewhat frightening. They had been his reassurance from the void.

He heard behind him a low sonorous sound, and it became clear and louder until he distinctly recognized a tired voice:

“These winds, they blow the dusted leaves away,
but in my mind remain the pages
of the days before
Blow hard, blow swift, and carry away
the trembling, ancient pyres
yesterdays have built, and —
Mention to me God,
if just a gentle whisper;
console my raging mind.

These winds, they fan the beaded brow,
and catch the gilded drops
on webs of memory
Run hard, run swift, of flames of hell,
eat away and leave your blackened sore to heal
within the trembling frame of rotting temples —
Oh God, mention to me,
if just a gentle whisper;
console the raging of my mind.

These winds, they carry with them
the stench of aging flesh,
and cradle in their arms
the screams of wooden tombs —
these wooden floors burn in my flight
the soles of lagging feet
hallways stretch before the fired body
coaxing flames to caress
the phoenix in the human pyre,
smoke is wafted to my mind,
torture seeps beneath the boards
to char my blackening footsteps
Oh, for a gentle whisper!!

He slowly turned and saw himself chained to the wall of the cave, murmuring this prayer. He began to cry, and Baby Jane just smiled.



The Jester

Trudy Eberhardt

THE COURT OF THE EBONY CLOWN

Queens and kings and peasants
all gather round the throne,
in the center stands the joker, dejected and alone.
The black jester sheds sad, bitter tears,
but they laugh at his ironic fears
and take it as a subtle joke,
in the court of the ebony clown.

He pleads for starving children,
he pleads for wars to end,
he asks for love and sympathy
but the crowd just laughs at what he's said;
then someone realizes he's not joking
and shouts 'The Clown is Dead!'

There is silence, then a giggle,
as the King calls for the axe,
the jester is beheaded,
Red on a suit of black.

A new jester enters quickly and promptly takes the floor,
he keeps the crowd amused, amidst the blood and gore,
The corpse is then removed, without a grimace or a frown,
While the queens and kings and peasants laugh,
in the court of the ebony clown.

Edmond Knowles

The Cosmic Band

Songs of joy,
songs of life
Rythm in my brain and everybody knows
it's the new Cosmic Band and Light Show.

I have a song and I sing it
And maybe we sing together
or out of harmony but everyone
sings their own song.

Today my tune is one of gladness
Before it was sung in darkness
But now there are new melodies
as yet unknown
But all part of the Cosmic Band and Light Show.

Dreams of darkness let me sleep
I have wearied of the watch you keep,
so let my feeling run free
Times of joy never despair.

With a song in my heart I know I can beat
The darkness of the past and live for today.
It won't be easy but I must go
And start my own Cosmic Band and Light Show.

The oldies from yesterday
mingle with my songs for today
and lead to new songs for tomorrow
all in the Cosmic Band and Light Show.

K. Lee Turner

Poem To The Dreamer

Sand-ocean paintings
of the world are nice –
but soon, too soon
spread out salt
into a shiny surface;
reflection of the self,
being
a shock to
the weak-willed personage
who can only curse
the ocean with a pebble . . .

Nina Camiel

Dawn

Icy blue patches of winter's sky
Shatter my warm slumber

Golden Peace
Flows slowly over the horizon

Morning
Is the birth of joy.

Cheryl Hildebeitel

TOO BAD LIFE ISN'T

like a hundred yard dash,
a sprint through spring
between two clean white lines,
all the way high and mighty
driving knees, flashing teeth,
barely breathing, lunging finish,
all bunched together at the tape,
laying in sweat suits in the sun,
no one really tired when it's done.
Too bad it's more like a mile
in Madison Square Garden, everyone's
elbow in your face the whole race,
so many laps you're passed by some
people twice, turns so steeply banked
you fall off if you don't keep flying,
legs who grew up on grass beside streams
straining over the hard boards, dying
fibers screaming for air while your
lungs panic and stoke stale cigar smoke.
Too bad it has to be this way,
or we might be able to get together
in a lot more relays.

Vincent Phillips

Incident at Tiffany's

by Scott Wagner

Rubbing his hands together to keep warm, he gazed up at the large, garishly-lit sign — TIFFANY'S. Smiling, he remembered how inaccessible everything had seemed when he was younger. As far back as he could recall, he had always wanted some of "Tiffany's finest." And now, that wish would be fulfilled. He gazed into the store window and shivered. There were enough people inside to keep the clerks busy while he would be doing his "shopping."

A spasm of cold shot through his body. Yes, he would do it now. At least it would be warmer inside. If he could get away with this

X X X

. . . "Johnny, how could you ever have done such a thing? We've always tried to give you everything you've wanted, and now you go and do something like this."

He saw the hurt look on his mother's face. "Mom, listen, I just

"And what about your father? He was always so proud of you, and now you do this to him. Do you know what he'll do when he . . .?"

He could see his father—a big man with a quick temper, though rarely used. "Mom, I'm not a little boy any more."

"Johnny, if you would only tell me why. You were always such a good boy. I just don't know . . ." Her voice trailed off and she shook her head slowly.

"What? He did what? That—when I get my hands on him, I'll, I'll . . ." Too angry to continue, Johnny's father began storming around the house. Then:

"John! John! Young man, I want to see you right now!"

But it was too late. Johnny was already gone.

The old shack, unoccupied for many years, now had a new occupant. Pulling back the tattered drapes, Johnny peered cautiously out of the window. No one was in sight. He was still safe with his loot! What a heist he had pulled! He drew back the tissue wrapping and smiled. To think that he had actually done it, by himself, and had gotten away!

Or had he? Suddenly, he was aware of a noise—the sound of hoofbeats. He wrapped his prize carefully and ran to the window. Six marshals, with rifles, were riding towards the shack. Without delay, Johnny grabbed his package and started for the back door. His horse was just outside.

“Roberts! Johnny Roberts! You’re surrounded! Come out with your hands up!” The marshals began fanning out.

Quickly and quietly he untied his horse. “Easy, boy, easy.”

The voice hailed him again. “Roberts! It’s no good! Come out now! We’ll give you one minute, and then we’re opening fire!”

As he mounted the animal, Johnny shoved his package inside his shirt. “Easy, boy. Not yet, not yet.”

“Roberts! You have ten seconds! You’d better give up now!” There was a brief pause, and Johnny tensed. “All right, men,” the voice continued. “On my signal, open fire. Ready . . . NOW!”

“GO BOY!” Johnny gouged his heels into the horse’s ribs, and they bolted from the underbrush. The marshals, intent on firing at the shack, were taken completely by surprise. Johnny gained a large lead, but it was short-lived. The marshals quickly mounted their horses and took up the chase.

“Go, boy, go!” Johnny’s horse galloped hard and fast, the ground thundering beneath its hooves. But his lead was growing less—the marshals were nearly within firing range. Johnny saw the ravine ahead. If he could hold his lead and clear that ravine . . .

The marshals began to open fire. “C’mon, boy, we’re almost there!” The horse was about to leap when a bullet whizzed past Johnny’s side. The horse threw its head back; its front legs buckled and collapsed, and Johnny was thrown forward, over the ravine. The river, many feet below, looked cold . . .

Slowly opening his eyes, Johnny looked around the room. His head throbbed, and everything appeared blurred. Seeing a white coated form, he tried to speak, but his mouth could not form the words.

“Take it easy—don’t try to talk,” said the form. “I think you’re going to be all right.”

Johnny tried to sit up, but the doctor gently held him down. “You’ll have to stay here a few days. Anyway, someone fished you out of the river yesterday and brought you in.”

Johnny shook his head, trying to clear his vision. Where was his package? Then he saw, on a table, his clothes, his wallet—and his package, still wrapped in the tissue. He breathed a sigh of relief.

"We're going to have to put you to sleep again," said the doctor. Johnny did not feel like arguing.

He was awakened by the sound of excited voices outside his door. Sitting up in the bed, he listened.

"Yes, officer, I'm sure! It's Johnny Roberts! He even has the package with him!"

Stealthily, Johnny crept over to the table and gathered his belongings. He dressed quickly, keeping an ear on the conversation outside.

"Well, Doc, I hope you're right. We've been looking all over for this guy."

Johnny moved to the window and slid it open. Just then, the door opened. "Roberts!"

Clutching his package, Johnny jumped and ran . . .

"Roberts! Police! Hold it!" The men ran to the window and fired into the darkness. . . . and ran and ran . . .

Wearily, he trudged along the dark street. It was late, and he was getting cold. Large, fluffy white flakes of snow began falling. Thrusting his hands deep into his pockets, Johnny walked, deep in thought. He was alone in a strange city. He was the object of a large manhunt. He was . . .

The humming and flickering of a neon sign distracted him. He looked up. "Joe's Diner—I might as well get something to eat." Pushing the door open, he entered. It was a small, dimly lit, yet not uncheerful place. He selected a corner booth and sat down heavily.

A few minutes passed, and Johnny became uneasy. Finally, a stout, heavily made-up waitress appeared. The reek of perfume almost made Johnny lose his appetite. Quickly he gave her his order, and she disappeared. He felt somewhat relieved.

As he sat, waiting, he looked out the window into the dark night. It was snowing a little more heavily, and the wind was picking up. As he stared out onto the street, Johnny caught sight of a tall, heavy man in a dark overcoat. The man paused at the corner, looked around, and then hurried toward the diner.

The door opened. The man entered, followed by swirls of snow. He stamped his feet; then, he looked carefully about the room. Finally, he walked over to Johnny's table.

"Is this seat taken?"

"No, no." Johnny turned his attention back outside.

The man sat down. "Cold night."

"Yeah."

"Lousy weather."

Johnny ignored the man's last remark. He continued looking out the window. The other man sat, hands folded. He studied Johnny carefully, as if he were looking for something. After some time, he spoke.

"Is your name Roberts?"

Under the circumstances, Johnny was not sure if he should answer the man's question. He sat, warily regarding his companion. Finally, the man's patience grew thin, and he asked Johnny again.

"Well, is it, or isn't it?"

"Is it or isn't it what?" Johnny wondered how persistent the man was.

"Is your name Roberts?" the man asked again.

"Yeah. Why?"

The other man extended his right hand across the table and shook Johnny's hand vigorously. "Am I glad I found you! We've been looking all over the city for you! And now, here you are!"

Johnny studied the man. Something was wrong here, and he didn't like it.

"Listen, Roberts," the man continued, "you're a hunted man. We can help you."

"Who is 'we'?"

"Never mind that. But we can get you out of here—even the country, if you want—and we can do it safely."

"What's the deal?" Johnny tensed his muscles.

"Oh, not much. Your, er . . . possession, for your safety."

What was this? Some deal, Johnny thought. He clenched the table legs tightly.

"Of course," the man went on, "if you don't want to do it that way, we can always . . ." He began reaching inside his coat.

Whatever he was doing, he never finished. Johnny leaped up, flipping the table upward and smashing it into the man's face. As the man slumped to the floor, Johnny bolted to the door, almost running into the waitress as she came in with his order.

"Hey! Your sandwich!"

Johnny plunged outside, to be swallowed in the night.

He awakened slowly, stiffly. Johnny decided that an underpass was no place to sleep on a cold, snowy night. Looking around, he saw, to his great satisfaction, that he was very much alone. The snow of the night before had abated, and it was a clear, crisp morning. He decided to visit the docks and to try to get passage out of the city.

The dock was very quiet for . . . what day was this? He could not remember. It did not matter now. With a little luck, he would soon be on his way out . . . somewhere. He began thinking of all the places he would like to visit.

As he walked along, his mind wandering, he looked at all the big freighters. Obviously, his trip would not be a comfortable or easy one, but it would be better than remaining in the city. He might even have to work on board to earn his keep. He looked at each ship as he passed, and pondered over which one might take him to freedom. One was as good as another, he decided. He continued walking.

Johnny finally walked into the "office"—shack would have been more suited to the place, he thought—of a small steamship line. An elderly gentleman was seated among disarrayed piles of papers and books. He did not look up when Johnny entered, but continued his work.

After some time, he looked up at Johnny through battered glasses. "What do you want?" he snapped.

"Uh, I'd like passage . . . out."

The old man made a face. "Do you got a passport?" he asked.

"No, not exactly." Johnny began to feel as if he had made a mistake in trying to leave the country, but the man nodded in understanding.

"Ah, *that* kind of passage! You got much money?"

"Well, not much now. But I will—when I sell my . . ." Johnny's voice broke off.

The man studied Johnny for a moment. Then he spoke. "Well, I'll see what I can do. I seen a lot of guys like yerself—in a hurry to leave for some reason. Let me make a few phone calls. Sit down and make yourself comfortable."

"Comfortable" was an old wooden bench by the window. Johnny sat down and looked around the room. Dust and cobwebs were everywhere. Not a very secure place, he thought to himself. After some time, the old man returned. He sat down and rubbed his hands together briskly.

"Everything's going to work out fine, young feller. You'll be on your way soon, I think." He smiled warmly at Johnny.

Something about the old man disturbed Johnny. He couldn't quite put his finger on it, but it was the same feeling he had had about the fellow in the diner. Something was wrong again.

Then he heard it. Sirens! He had been betrayed once more. Johnny sprang from the bench and confronted his would-be captor. "You . . ."

The sirens were much closer now. He ran outside and listened. Figuring that the police would be coming from both sides to surround him, Johnny sprinted to the edge of the dock and halted. Crouching behind some crates, he watched the old man running toward the police. Now was his chance to get away, unseen. He made his way over to a freighter, grabbed the dock lines, and began to climb. Just as he vaulted over the railing and onto the deck, he saw the police cars turning the corner.

He had watched, unseen. The dock had been thoroughly searched and they had not found him. Johnny smiled as he watched the old man point in another direction and shrug his shoulders. They would not find him now. He went below deck and slept.

He was awakened by a sudden lurch and vibration. "What now?" he thought, as he sat and listened. He could hear voices—they weren't English! The ship's crew had returned, and Johnny realized that the freighter was under way. But where? He got up and moved to the hatch. The corridor was empty. As he started to step through, he thought he heard something. "Having a nice trip?" someone asked.

Johnny spun around. A man—an Oriental—was holding a gun on him. "Let me put your mind at rest. Do not think that we are going to let you go." He smiled at Johnny, and then continued. "We are not nationalists—your allies. We *pass* for them, in our little black market affair. But that is of no concern to you now. I'm afraid that once we are out to sea we will have to get rid of you." Once again, he smiled; then, he motioned with the gun. "Now move!"

As he stepped through the hatch, Johnny grabbed the heavy door, and with all his strength started to swing it closed. His captor bounded forward, but not quickly enough to stop it. The weighty door closed on his arm and crushed it.

Johnny dashed up the steps. The man's screams were alerting the entire crew. Shouts were heard everywhere as he headed for the side. He climbed the rail, stood for a moment on the ship's edge, and plunged into the icy water.

He sat on the gravel at the water's edge, holding his leg. He had been lucky. If the ship had been much further out into the bay, he never would have made it. Shivering, he felt his pocket. His loot was still secure. Then he turned his attention to his injured leg. "I must have hit it on the ship's side when I jumped," Johnny thought. He stood up, and limped toward the road to hitch a ride. As he climbed the slope by the road, he decided that he must visit a drugstore and get something for his leg. Then he would find a small hotel . . .

"This isn't a bad place," Johnny thought, as he sat down in his room. After a brief rest, he got up, rinsed out his clothes, took a hot shower, and bandaged his leg. Then, for the first time in days, he slept in a bed.

He awakened early in the afternoon. As he slowly dressed, Johnny thought over the events of the past few days. It was necessary that he leave the city—it would be best if he just left the country. Then he could stop running. Knowing this, he gathered his few belongings and walked out of the hotel. On the street, he hailed a taxi. "Take me to the airport."

Johnny stood near the terminal entrance. For a few minutes he watched the large crowds bustling about; he was uncertain of his next move. Not wanting to be too conspicuous, he began to mingle with the crowds. Finally, he made up his mind. He walked to the ticket window.

"Yes, sir, may I help you?"

"Yes. I'd like a ticket to . . ."

"All right, Roberts, hold it! FBI!" Johnny turned and saw four men running toward him, guns drawn. Pushing his way through the gathering crowd, Johnny headed for the runways, with the agents close behind. As soon as he jumped the gate, he knew that he was in trouble.

Johnny stopped dead in his tracks. Several police cars were parked on the runway, blocking his escape. A helicopter hovered overhead in case he could get away—which was highly unlikely. He turned, saw the four men blocking his retreat, and . . .

He did not know what to do. He thought of all he had gone through to keep his prize. NO—he would not give up now. He had been through too much. He saw the cement wall by the parking lot. If he could reach that, he might still have a chance.

Raising his hands in surrender, Johnny began walking toward the car nearest the wall. The men began lowering their weapons. Suddenly, Johnny turned and sprinted toward the wall. "Roberts! Hold it!"

He almost made it. He was at the base of the wall when the gunfire ripped through him. He fell, and red filtered over his eyes . . .

X X X

Rubbing his eyes, Johnny shook his head hard. The woman in the bright red coat looked out the store window at him. Surprised, he turned to the street, shaking his head slowly. It was too cold to wait any longer. He would do it now, before anything else happened.

He pushed open the big glass door and walked inside. "I must be very careful," he thought. A customer dropped the handbag that she had been looking at, and Johnny started. She seemed to be staring right at him. "Why is she looking at me that way?" he wondered. He continued on.

He slowed his gait as he approached the office. "I hope the manager doesn't come around," he said to himself. He glanced around. A uniformed man was standing by the wall looking at Johnny. Was he smiling? Or did he know that Johnny was in the store for an unusual reason? Johnny hurried away.

A salesgirl at the make-up counter looked down at him as he walked by. Something vaguely familiar about her disturbed Johnny. He knew that he had seen her heavily made-up face somewhere before, but where. She was staring at him, too. He walked a little faster, thinking to himself. "Take it easy, boy, we're almost there. Don't foul it up now."

He walked into a tall, heavy man, and almost fell. "'Scuse me." As he got away, Johnny turned and looked back. The man was standing in the middle of the aisle, watching. Johnny almost lost his nerve.

Finally, he saw it—"his" counter. Now where was that salesperson? Good—busy with a customer. Walking slowly around the counter, Johnny examined everything carefully. He knew exactly what he was looking for. Then he saw it. Reaching up, he clutched . . .

Walking triumphantly through the store, Johnny held his prize. At last—a whole handful of Tiffany's finest chocolates. No one had seen him, and he was making good his escape—until he came to the cosmetics counter.

The tall, heavy fellow was there with the heavily made-up saleslady. Now Johnny remembered—they were the ones in the diner with him. Both were looking at him, and the man started to reach inside his coat. Panic-stricken, Johnny dropped his candies and ran.

Blindly he rushed to the doors and pushed his way outside. He leaned heavily against the wall, facing the street. Despite the cold, he was perspiring heavily. What had happened to him? It was all going to be so easy—and now he had lost everything. His breathing was just getting back to normal when he heard a voice.

"Hey! Johnny Roberts!" Turning, Johnny saw a man running toward him, waving his arm. Who was it? Had someone called the police? Had he been seen?

Johnny darted quickly into the parking lot, skillfully twisting in and out among the parked cars. Turning, he saw his pursuer far behind, but still giving chase. Johnny ran into the street.

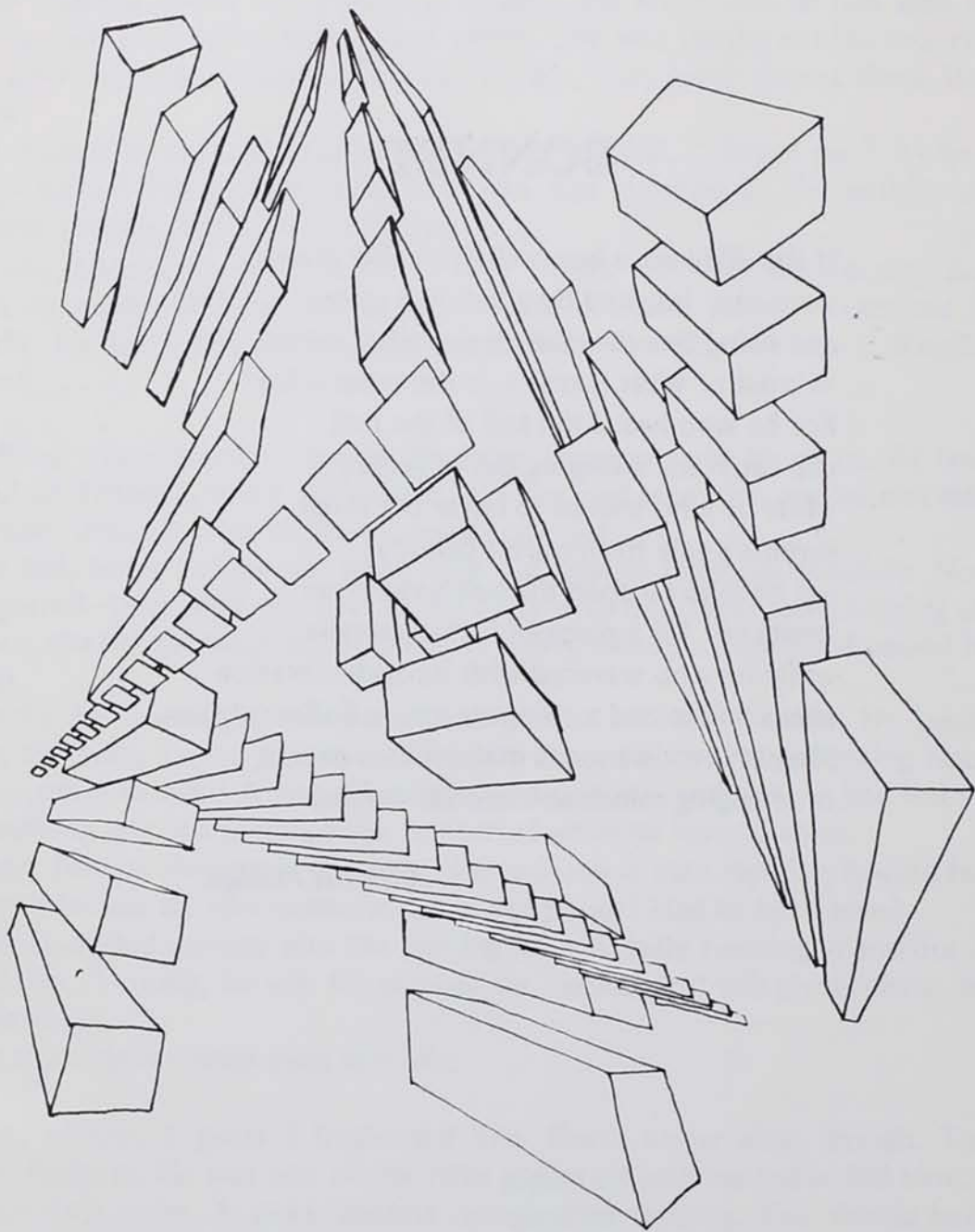
The truck driver never even saw him.

"Yes, officer, I guess I frightened him. Don't know why, though. That's right, Johnny Roberts. He was one of my fifth graders. I just wanted to tell him . . . that he had won first prize. A story contest—imaginative writing. You should have seen his story, officer. Fantastic. He had such an imagination . . ."

SONNET

If the difference between dissimilar dreams
were only inspired by a bell in a spire,
and rising one dreamer denies what seems,
in trust of what is real — is the other a liar?
For he who heard the toll of the bell
did catch the swinging tail of reality,
while he who snored to cover the knell
invents a tale from purest privacy;
yet he who escaped the bell's violation
wants not for a piece of its hollowness,
while he who wavered with its each vibration
needs a map and a compass just to follow a guess.
Should certain moods make minds decide,
or changing minds soft moods deride?

Vincent Phillips



Richard W. Clark

Precession 4

Infinitas

Stellae oculi milia sunt
Et infans securus suspicit
Stellae in caelo incendunt
Laetitiam in spectaculo sentit
Stellae lucernae tacita sunt
Et miles fessus suspicit
Pacem in silentio mavult
Viri profani suspicent
Stellas solas videant
Anus solitaria suspicit
Consolationem recipit
Olim Mater et Infans suspiciebant
Videbat stellas suas
Et stellae in caelo adhuc incendunt
Quotiens suspicitis, mei amici?

Raymond Fleck

Podiatry

iambic tet. has caught me up.
My thoughts in four-foot lengths are born.
So I must try to shake its hold
(because I fear the critics scorn)
and for myself new meters choose . . .
To fit my feet with different shoes.
Then, in trochaic quints relate
ideas on poverty and hate.
And when I change from hawk to dove,
in anapests I'll speak of love.
Dactylic lines I'll set aside
for tales of spring and suicide.

But — stubborn iamb's strong at will.
Dida dida pervades me still.
I cannot rest until I see
iambic tet.'s no longer me.

Kate Swanson

2 and 4a

what i thought was (a, b and d
but not c)
is 6/f only
dk dk dk don't know? Take your time, they say
and . . . 12 . . . work as quickly as you can
circle the wron ganswer BUT
(p) do not guess
the saturday mornings of x
aminations (will go, went, have gone)
choose one _____
and we, as like,
misplaced modifiers at the battle of bull
are doomed
d o o m e d to
fill blackingly bubbles of (c) and 4 and
often h . . .
our ignorance multiplied by our always knowing
(e) none of the above

Kate Swanson

"I have a rendezvous with death."
Oh, that's been used before.
But somehow I feel that
To the author it matters not.
"I have a rendezvous with death."
I laughed when I first read it.

Henry R. Ellsworth Jr.

AUTISTIC AUTUMN

April is cruel flaunts dry tuber.
Automatic Autumn chill, haunt ripe humor.
Air blows cold, downs snow on thicket row.
Corn chops inverted, black birds below.
Chop, chop, carrots to encumber the ground round.
Bop, bop, truncated turnips, cucumber sound.
Sun-beam grows weak, do si do falls backs.
Sway within thick air, never to relax.
To relax.
Roll it one-more-time, you got me rock'in . . .
Sway I to thick air, never to relax.
To relax.
F sharp wasn't it.
"Not bad"

Brian

Once I was a child
Silent, introspective
Child-like innocent
Tiny, faery seeing
Child of the earth and destined
Here to die—
A time passed
And I passed also.
The years that I outgrew
Are vague gray shapes
In the mind
I live now
Still earth bound spirit
Desiring freedom
And I run
From times before my time
Two lives I'll live
Before I die
And still the question
Why?

Mary Spink



John Roy

Old man
with a bottle of Ripple all your own,
all you own,
where has the wind in your sails blown?
You tell stories from your stoop
of days when you could give
and days you could take,
of flying across varnish
at the head of a fast break,
but where has the bounce in your step gone?
Is it drowned in wine or out on pawn?
Is it hung in a locker room waiting to dry,
or just stuck in your mind, waiting to die?

Vincent Phillips

I WALK ALONE

I walk alone;
through the clustered cities of the world,
the man-made jungles of turmoil;
Silent, yes, but with open mind,
to see what treasures I can find.

I walk alone;
through the awful ghetto, the solemn slums,
indulging in converse with the bums.
But I continue on, alone but free,
to see whatever I can see.

I walk alone;
Down majestic avenues, filled with new, rich merchandise,
past the rushing crowds, no smiles within their eyes.
There seems to be no emotion or levity,
only unconcern and apathy.

I walk alone;
a solitary man,
In search of truth and justice, somewhere in this land
But there seems to be no interests
in morality, or righteous quests.

I walk alone;
finding nothing here of virtue,
discovering many things askew,
I travel on in search of more fruitful fields,
And I — I still walk, alone.

Edmond Knowles

Eyes ——— and they were empty

Your eyes were empty, but not void

I can remember the words You spoke,
still I wish their sounds would be
forgotten for they, too,
were empty, but not void

No shine of pleasure dared to escape from your
eyes, for none was there to
dare. No friendly, foolish laughter
struggled to be heard ——— not because
all ears were dull, but simply:
laughter was hard to find.

Two hands, a pair of empty hands, moved
to speak, but spoke no move: no
move of love nor tingle of happiness.
Your empty heart was pounding,
pounding till its walls would fall;
and then, your heart, your
empty heart, broke

And a frightened sigh came gushing forth, rushing
to meet a world turned inside-out
with opposites: filled not with
contentment, but pain; not
with happiness, but sorrow;
not with hope, but despair

My mind is full of dreams. There live your broken
heart, your pair of empty hands
and your silent sounds,
but not your eyes ———

——— for I can still remember
Your eyes were empty, but not void

and I'm sorry.

Kelly Stewart



R. Sargent '10
Randy Sargent

Candle light is quiet
Silence forms a night
And stars make noise,
But slight.
Trees and wind join hands
In quiet fulfillment
As flowers withdraw to their rooms
Nightly silence pulls them
Away from daily sores.
Animals, mostly sleeping
As the moon continues flight
Owls keep watch.
Guide Diana in her mission.
Fields bathed in white moon-light
Crickets beat the tune
As moon-goddess guards
Her creatures.
And candles in the night
Light us as we lay
Like wind and trees entwined
Listen to night's silence
And await the call of day.

Mark Spink

