



Winter 1969

The Lantern Vol. 35, No. 1, Winter 1969

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LANTERN

WINTER-SPRING 1969

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Cover by: Linda Richtmyre

Statement of Editorial Policy

(in response to a need)

We, the editors of the Lantern, feel that a general statement concerning editorial policy is needed at this time. Perhaps, some have felt that the Lantern staff had no criterion for judgment except personal likes and dislikes or that pieces were judged on the basis of personalities. We feel that this is untrue, and that for sometime a general principle has been guiding the Lantern in the selection and publication of material. What we are concerned with is literature that is well written. A piece under consideration may not be in a contemporary idiom, but that piece can be published if it in itself is valid. That is, a poem or short story must stand or fall on its own merits. The manuscript will be considered on the grounds of what it is trying to do internally. The piece must conform to its own internal logic and goals; if the piece attains its own goals, then it is considered successful, and successful writing is good writing.

BARBARA BALD

GERALD MILLER

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Industrialization

Giant copulating pistons

producing joyless mechanical babies

which weep oil and cry

tariff! Dow Jones!

labor legislation!

painless stainless steel birth in

the hairy forearms of the

factory midwife

carbon carbon carbon copies

noiseless in cybernetic despair.

VICKI VAN HORN

Convention

panting politicians flirting with immortality

impassive flickering blind eye

capturing

prancing cymbals

tireless mechanical aids impeached by

real live walking talking crying people

doing funny real things (usually not their own)

all over the enchanted stage

words seducer of the truth

if such there is

among balloons

VICKI VAN HORN

86 Prof

the agony of mediocrity
bloated satisfaction
of the unchallengable
simpering dancing letters
mincing coyly behind a
nameless

VICKI VAN HORN

Even Your Roommate

Protestation

Of sophistication.

But in bed

She bled.

VICKI VAN HORN

Poem

Purring sensation
 stalking your ear
 along your cream chin
 lapping love
 from the dawn of your mouth

VICKI VAN HORN

Poem

Night is luminous with desire,
 the dawn frail with meaning

VICKI VAN HORN

Specificity

cubilinear equifactoral terribly exclusive
 country club for regular polygonal
 complex invertebrates
 dapper squares quaff inequality
 and seek to hide their square roots

VICKI VAN HORN

Bo Jangles and Snowstorms in America

'Twas a beautiful night in December, snowing as if all the heroes of America were parading down "Main Street U. S. A." right before your eyes. It was a confetti holocaust. The stars were jealous of the competition they were receiving from the snowflakes as they had their circuits plugged into the moon via light waves, sparkling on their way down. Howard Good caterpillared-Sherman-tanked his way through the snow. In the sky, the moon appeared as a coconut cup-cake. Along with Howard there were others, all slouching towards a concrete abortion left by some fly-by-night doctor from Mt. Olympus.

The lemmings swarmed through the falling snow into the concrete steel and plastic sea, building, Bethlehem, or what you will (Twelfth Night.) Meanwhile Pan continued to shake those huge pine trees up in heavens that are responsible for those landscapes on Christmas cards and Bing Crosby's immortal classic *I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas* (sold over three million copies.)

However despite or perhaps in spite of the beautiful glass paper-weight-with-the-little-house-in-it-shake-it-and-it-fizzes-with-white-stuff-scene, there was tension in the air. Yes, tension was hung in the air as tinsel on a Christmas tree. So as I Gary Coopered, High Nooned-swivel-hipped my way into the building, onward towards the large room with the others, I felt the tension as if I walked into a cobweb, subtle but there it is in your eyes and on your hair draping over your ears, unless you have long hair. Yes something extraordinary was going to happen. I took my place about one of the many tables as the other folks were doing. We all stood there in the warmth like Charms on a radiator, until a tintilating (there was no tabulation, I'm positive) metallic thud square-danced through the air to our ears. It was like a steel bug being gassed on Raid and then flopping into a shiny spittoon from a height of 100 feet. A Johnny Weismuller, ham actor expiring steel horse fly. At this sound everyone melted into the seats scattered at the periphery of the tables. As I glanced about at the faces, I saw Betty Wagon and I pondered how nice she looked, her face was like Plymouth-Rock, it exuded propriety like a fire hydrant in a ghetto on a hot summer day. She had a little "1620" carved on one side of her face that almost looked like a mole to the undiscerning eye. Yet something was different, it was like a popsicle without the sticks. It was then that I noticed Howard Good glancing at the others at our table with an air about him as if he just outfoxed the sheriff of Nottingham again. Howard was the universal rapsallion, he was the Scarlet Pimpernel. Howard was Douglas Fairbanks with his rapier as he arched one eyebrow and said in a marvelously fluid voice like holy concrete being poured into a church foundation, "Please pass the Broccoli."

You might be just sitting there
When you see someone
Who looks like forbidden fruit.
And you wait for the ripe time
To throw away your banana peels
And orange skins and grapefruit rinds.
But a big tiger gobbles up
What you almost tasted.
And you look in the garbage pail
For the stuff you had chucked
A minute before.

LINDA Di MAURO

Haiku

Four pink petaled paws
Crept along the garden walk
To find a robin.

LINDA Di MAURO

Election Night 1968

A polite sparkle of sound is heard from the television
as the maggots wiggle in interest about their
mechanical carrion, anxiously awaiting
their wrinkled airplane Pilate to take them
streaking into the land of success \$\$

A stillbirth is to take place soon, it will be
the most exciting thing to the maggots, the liveliest
thing in their shadow world to come along every
four years or so. (give or take)

An angry black stalks the streets fondling
his newly acquired .38 and is astonished as
his skin turns white. With dollar bills
stuffed in their ears and proudly carrying
their weapons of hate upon their backs all the
while proclaiming that they are indeed carrying
noble crosses, the spiritually blind cry for more
bread and circuses. Meanwhile a maniac reflects
alone in a dirty room that there will always be
niggers whether they be white with peace in their minds,
long hair on their heads, noses that are too large, yellow
skin and slanted eyes, or black.

Yes Virginia there will always be someone you can
laugh at, beat up, lynch, bomb, rape, and murder for fun,
profit, and the status quo of your blessed plastic, metallic,
paper ink and cloth "country."

T. W. RHODY

The Staff of Life

dull-witted loaves of dough-bread

dumb, plain, unimaginative.

all alike—except for glasses.

faces . . .

varying in shades

from bleached white

to the blackest pumpernickel.

sneezing, sputtering, sizzling,

wheezing, smoking, burning up.

lifting crusted hands

to sop up sweat.

riding together,

baking together

in the summer heat

of a subway car.

LINDA Di MAURO

Wind

October wind,

with the last remnants of Summer's youth,

played with the pink ribbons.

invisible fingers

buffeted the ribbons,

but a smooth,

perfumed hand

pressed gently,

seating the ribbons on a throne of bronze.

but,

the phantom lover

returned

to act in love's play.

she was pleased. the wind,

allowed

her

to touch her hair again.

HOWARD SOLOMON

Browns Mills Blues

daddy,

washed,

the tomato-red cadillac,

passionately,

spreading,

the thick,

soapy,

cleanser,

upon her metallic loins.

in back of the tobacco brown shack,

in another world,

less daddy,

and the cadillac,

the grey-black dirt,

softly beckoned

to chocolate-hewn nymphs,

with,

faded,

blue jeans.

HAIKU I

Life-giving rain falls
Drops which make flowers blossom
And umbrellas bloom

HAIKU II

Silent silver moon
A chalice of solitude
Pours out sympathy

HAIKU III

The whiteness of snow
Is never equaled, even
By cold pale moon-rays

HAIKU IV

Fan shaped leaf falls
Gink-o trees shower treasure
Golden autumn storm

LINDA RICHTMYRE

The Reunion

The moon was in her last quarter. The night welcomed the icy breath of a New England December in the same way that a mistress welcomes her master—responsively, yet silently. My car yearned to wander from the asphalt road which glistened from a blanket of ice. I fought the wheels into obedience. It obeyed me.

I don't know why I accepted the invitation. I had no real fondness for the sheep-like faces which bleated eternal love. Yet, I drove in the darkness without the cushion of a reason as to why. Would I strafe the eyes of faded memories?

I sensed why my long-lost, long-forgotten companions would attend. In my mind I could envision egos in conflict with other egos; various fingers pointed at the crucial question—who had fallen the hardest in the fight against time.

A senior-prom with wrinkled faces.

Perhaps there was a reason to attend the reunion. I was curious to see the metamorphosis of Denise; I wondered if the butterfly had reverted into a caterpillar. Denise Myhres. The hostess of the reunion. A most attractive spinster, I thought. She planned the reunion. At one time, in a season of salt-scented mist and clamshells with designs as keen as scarabs, I knew her well. I wondered if her crown of petals exuded the fragrance of stale perfume. She giggled at me, as she brushed her brown hair from her eyes, because I asked her to walk with me along the bleached dunes.

"Third light down? Thank you very much . . . yes, it is kind of cold tonight. Left turn at the light? Thank you very much. No, I don't think she needs oil . . . Thank you very much."

The motor coughed like an old man, then spat out the phlegm and purred softly. A haze had begun to fall. A concrete street-sign with "Burns St." printed clearly. I parked the car next to a lamppost. A pumpkin, gutted and withered, lay quietly in the gutter as a remnant of Halloween.

"Why, Jason, you haven't changed but a little bit. Why, you're still as handsome as ever."

"Look, Candy, it's Jason."

"Hello, Jason, I haven't seen you in years. And still a bachelor."

"I'll bet you don't even remember me, Jason."

When I entered into the attic
A dozen witches kissed my feet,
And I said to them,

"Don't be erratic,
'Cause life is short and I'm so fleet."
So, how was your party, Sweet Denise.

I greeted the women who lay in wait at the door. I greeted them politely. As I shook their hands, I could feel a touch of hand lotion which had not dissolved. However, the most obvious feature was missing.

"Where is Denise," I asked.

"I think that she's in the other room, Jason. Wasn't this a great idea?"

"Oh . . . yes, just a great idea."

"You know, we really didn't expect to see you here. I mean, well, there was a rumor that you, I mean, that you weren't feeling up to snuff, you might say."

"I'm glad to see that I surprised you."

"Well, Jason, we're all glad to see that you could make it here tonight."

Leather couches. Extremely comfortable. However, my back aches instinctively when I see a leather couch. Through the door, a dimly lit room. The haze of cigarette smoke copies the icy veil of outdoors.

The entertainment room. Lost notes of a piano filter through the smoky haze. Instinct of past parties tells me to find the dishes of pretzels and potato chips.

"Jason, I just knew that you'd be here tonight. It sure has been a long time since we saw each other."

I managed to show a small smile as I said to him, "Yes, I know what you mean . . . it's almost like we never met."

"You really have a great sense of humor, Jason. A really great sense of humor."

We stood silently for what seemed to be about two or three minutes, reduced to spectators, uninvolved with the scenes and dialogue of the unfolding play. My friend fidgeted, perhaps being unaccustomed to the role of the viewer. He nervously lit a cigarette.

"A great party, huh Jase old boy?"

I left to serenade the pretzels. I wished to see the main attraction. The preliminaries were marred with a milky type of consistency; the dialogue, the dress, the social savoir-faire.

In the eboned room, I saw a lion,
Who thought that you were an elite,
He came to you and clawed on your piano,
And said to you,

"I think your life's complete."

So, how was your party, Sweet Denise?

"Denise?"

"Why Jason, how nice it is that you could make it to the reunion tonight. You know, everyone thought that you weren't going to make it tonight, but I knew that you'd come. I wouldn't have sent you the invitation otherwise."

"I must admit the cast is a formidable one."

"Oh, excuse me, Jason dear, but there's Jack. You remember him don't you?"

Within the room, I saw strange faces,
And I knew that they all glared at me,
Around their necks were namecards so familiar
That I thought my eyes just couldn't see.
So, how was your party, Sweet Denise?

The motor of my car cleared her voice, like a swan before she begins to sing.

Ballad of the Lost Widow

Travelling down a sandy pathway,
Like a lemur, towards the sea
Wooden carriage trimmed with velvet
Drawn by stallions, stopped by me.

From the carriage, stepped the widow, and
And I asked her if she'd lost her way
From her veil I heard her whisper,
"Speak to me of yesterday."

Icy winds snapped at grey tresses
Which she brushed with wrinkled hands,
Closely wrapped on bony fingers
Rusty, jagged iron bands.

And she spoke of reddish sunstreaks,
And the scent of salt, sea spray
And I heard her softly whisper,
"Pardon me, we cannot stay."

Morning's mist lights on dead seaweed,
Mad-white waves choke on the sands, as
Golden crystals hide the secret,
Of the clasping of calloused hands.

ROBERT YANNONE

Sunset

Belligerently sets the orange orb
In the pink stripped sky of distraction.
Slowly the summer slithers through muddy days
and nights wet by more than tears of youth.

Friendships have grown.
Some to be as tenuous as puddle-butterflies
Some to renew daily with the sun.

Love lost in the halocaust lingered briefly
in the shelter of our lives, then departed.
Hope remained behind to comfort
a soul strained with decision
or to renew courage.

Some decisions are to be made, others need not be.
Both need the courage of hope.

Summer age comes quietly until you see someone
who isn't.
Youth rises like a sun, lingers briefly
at its zenith and sets slowly,
leaving behind lingering fingers of itself
obscured as it was
by the concealing clouds of time.

JUDY SCHNEIDER

You — Revealed

Some words of you are better left
unsaid.

We both understand that neither
of us do.

This is enough.

Both of us have more of each other
Now that something has gone away
Innocence is dead.

In togetherness we share sorryness.
You cup my chin in parting kiss,
and are gone.

JUDY SCHNEIDER

Boredom?

the plaything of old men
and little children.

the cudgel of professors
and politicians.

the tactic of authors.

the first-love of parents.

a soft creeping across my mind;
a slowly attacking phantom
laughing at my attempts to
thwart him.

MICHAEL STONER

Victim

i see you lying there,
 on your bed,
 back rising and falling
 as you sleep,
 your only blankets darkness,
 and the thick silence of the night.
 i have come as your enemy:
 i have come to kill you.

you look so helpless
 in your sleep:
 like a woman,
 or, worse,
 a child.
 as i steal across the floor
 of your bedroom,
 you turn,
 groaning a groan
 of desolation
 and loneliness.
 i, too, am
 lonely:
 i understand how you feel.
 tonight, i am lonely
 as i steal across the floor
 to kill you.

and, before the deed is done,
 i stand beside your bed,
 my knife poised
 for the kill.
 i do not want to kill you:
 i have but one reason.
 money.
 we are so much alike:
 both of us lonely
 and desolate men.
 you turn,
 exposing your face
 and your eyes,
 closed now in sleep.
 you are restless,
 as i am.
 and then you smile,
 and i smile too,
 glad that you will die smiling.

then, shrugging,
 i cut your throat.

I

I owned a tree once
I knew all the ways
to climb it.

And if you jump
You hurt your feet
but swinging down
is chicken

One day I stood
so still a bird
sat near my hand
and didn't see
the branch was me.

Trees are people
if you know how

CAROL MARTIN

II

Days bounce along like ping pong balls.
Round and white and empty.
All the roads I travel are barren,
Lightless sun and choking dust.
Pressurized, packaged images
We are, imagineless sand fleas.

But he's a
fluffy cloud,
a child,
a flower in
June sunshine.
I need him
to see
my own
being-less-ness.

CAROL MARTIN

Oblivion

Today is only Tomorrow's Yesterday:
Tomorrow, just a dream.
The seconds while you read here
Are gone beyond redeem.
And now a moment's ended;
An instant, born and killed.
Successive instants follow,
Time's generations filled.
Such rapid interactions
Cause future's mystery
To formulate without warning
And just as quickly flee.
Memories are the fossils
Of instants of the past.
Yesterday's gathered instants
In vague, smoke-shrouds are cast.
And thus it is with people;
Their lifetimes are so wee,
They're swallowed, just mere instants
In this vast ETERNITY.

MARIAH

Reality . . . the state of being real?

Webster

Reality . . . is easily camouflaged by a good imagination.

the tree of life stripped of all its foliage.

that nothing and nobody is perfect.

like the dust we sweep under the rug.

that every thing has to die sooner or later.

Reality . . . is that you can only put something off for so long.

a boogy man from whom many people try to hide.

that there is always someone somewhere better
than you are.

the fact that over half the inhabitants of the world
have never tasted a peanut butter and jelly
sandwich.

not affected by pain-killers or drugs.

Reality . . . is a finite commodity for which people find infinite
interpretations.

that folks don't think you are as great as you do.

easily hidden or distorted by facts and
figures, but nevertheless exists.

usually taken for granted or voluntarily ignored.

Reality . . . pulls no punches.

MARIAH

