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Exile Vol. XIII No. 2

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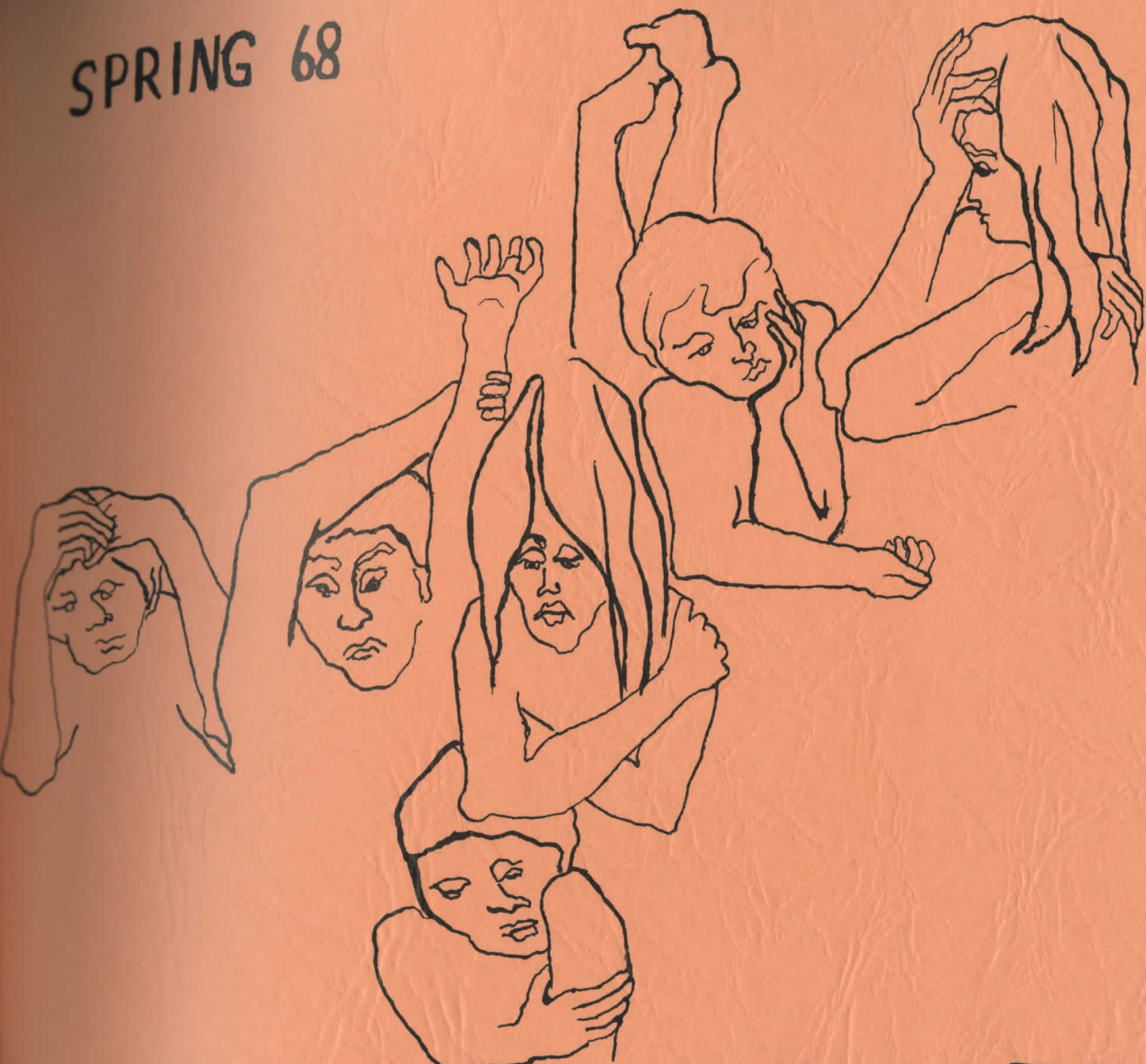
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Authors

Joyce Horvath, Harvey Spurlock, Cem Kozlu, Rick Brown, Jeffrey R. Smith, Bonnie Bishop, Mike Engle, Trudi Spaeth, Alan Pavlik, Nancy Scott, Karen Cozart, Lauren Shakely, Francie King, Suzanne Husting, and Rick Tucker

SPRING 68



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Kenderson, Clare Conrad

Cover design: Kee McFarland

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Contributors of art work: Nancy Eastlake, Bill
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WORLD II

Awake within the dark,
Flowing slowly through the middleglow,
Living in two worlds at once;
and now asleep,
Reborn.

Soft suddenly appears a dormitory lounge,
Green hazy forms set saying nothing;
Up above,
Paper dolls cover cubicle walls,
And wasted water drips from faucets.

Down a hall,
Amid the swirling yellow smoke,
A black plastic manufacturer and a marble nude
Are dueling.
Blasts are fired;
Plastic cracks and marble shatters;
A janitorial engineer sweeps up
And throws away the marble chunks,
While a sterile yesman patches up the plastic.
They disappear.

Leering people fill the hall;
They scowl;
Must run;
Running down the hall;
The hall never ends;
They scowl, curse;
Must keep running;
The hall never ends;
They spit;
Run on, run, run;
The hall never ends;
The hall never ends . . .

Flash quickly an open steppe,
Above the sun is shining,
The sky is dark, the stars are lit.
Instantly, fades out the sun, fades in the moon;
The sky is blue, white clouds drift on.
Below, the flowers open up.

Living corpses wander in;
They eat the sand and smile;
Then, choking, they die;
They turn to sand.
More corpses, warm and breathing, wander in;
They eat the sand and smile;
Then, choking, they die;
They turn to sand.
More corpses . . .

Beings with pleasant faces glide forward;
Faces known, faces of friends,
But faces without names and times and places;
All are projected into a sidewalk cafe,
There drinking warm yellow vinegar
And watching a man in ebon overalls
Rake and burn new fallen leaves.

Look up;
Instead of faces, dried up leaves;
They float down, land on grey concrete;
A clattering rake pulls them fireward;
Eye-burning smoke swirls up;
Weep.

A flowered tissue, held in a lean hand,
Dries the tears.
The hand becomes a tall slender girl
Wearing a man's white shirt;
She sits down across the table.

Her hair is mussed, wind-blown;
Her face, makeupless.
Below the table, she spreads her naked legs;
She speaks orange words:
"Help me!
Give me the glue.
I have to join water and sand."

Yesed together in a grass-covered lea,
Two grains of sandstone, two drops of water are fused.
From a stiff rubber tube,
The warm, white glue
Spurts into an inverted Florence flask.
Within, water and sand become one.

Flowing through the lea, is seen, heard
The quick life of a Spring river.
Alone, a budding tree reaches for the blue-pink clouds
That blow in from nowhere, pass on to nowhere.

Turn around;
See the red-purple smog
Churn up from the factory stacks.
It rolls across the meadow,
And Spring dies with the dandelions.

Summer;
The yellow heat consumes the flesh,
Sucks out the living juices.
No damp cave.
The river is dry.

Above the sun,
Below the sand,
Around the ever-pressing heat.
The solitary tree, leafy,
Is living from the light,
Dying from the heat.

Run, walk, crawl
Into the shade;
Cool below the multicolored leaves.
Autumn.

Brown leaves fall into a muddy stream
Or pile around their aging father.
These dry crackling corpses blow away,
Leaving the old man alone
In the wind.

Winter.
The wooden man stands still,
Feet covered by the black white.
He sleeps;
Around him,
Silence.

Flowing through the lea, is seen, heard,
The quick life of a Spring river.
Alone, a budding tree reaches for the blue-pink clouds
That blow in from nowhere, pass on to nowhere.

His head above these clouds,
A giant folds a paper boat for his son;
He drops it waterward.

Ride the boat
Along the river road to the sea.
On the shore, sand castles burst;
From the ruins,
Water flows back to the sea,
Finds its father,
Is lost.

The giant,
The son,
Chase the boat,
Race into the sea.
They drown,
They disappear.

Still afloat on the sea,
Thinking, "jump overboard,"
Holding, white-knuckled, to the seat.
"Jump, jump.
Hold, hold.
Jump!
Hold!"
Splash

One moment, a man,
The next, a drop of water,
Surrounded by brothers.
Flow together;
Mix.
All one again.
The whole sea.
The father

JEFFREY R. SMITH

THE GARDEN

Hidden by the maple tree I could see my father stroll nonchalantly through the garden. He inspected every petal to be reassured of its perfect shape, and if it did not meet his approval, he plucked it off the stem and buried it under the rose bush. After he turned the bend in the walk, strutting in his black suit between the goldenrod and the yew tree, I approached the spot where he had dismembered a rose and kicked dirt upon his immaculate walk. Then I plucked the entire rose from the bush and crushed it under my heel. Father's touch in the garden was death.

He seated himself on the wroughtiron bench and contaminated the air with his filthy pipe. More than once he rubbed his palm down the back of his head, wiped dirt from his shoe and straightened his coat. Then she drifted through the flowerbeds, unconscious of the dirt around her, and greeted father affectionately. I glared at their complacency, their smugness, as they walked through the garden.

When I was younger my mother sat upon the garden bench and clicked her crocheting needle to the rhythm of her twitching eye. I sat before her, concealed by the chrysanthemum, and sought spiders and worms beneath the flowers. If I found an es-

pecially good one I would hold it up and whisper, "Here mommy dear, a present." But I wouldn't laugh. I'd feel myself defying her every action.

In the evening they would sit in the library discussing me. I stood out by the garden wall chipping bricks with a hammer that I found in the tool shed as their conversation filtered through the night. If their conversation reached the "you-know-we-should-send-her-away" pitch they started screaming. Then I would stop hammering and stare at the two of them leaning toward each other in anger.

The scene was a familiar one. Yet it was not for sheer curiosity that I sat on the garden wall at night. Once I caught a grasshopper and sat up quite late dismembering it. Mother and father were quiet a long time that night: so quiet that I feared they would hear the tearing and snapping of the grasshopper. But soon the argument grew to a pitch that I had never before heard. Father was leaning against the mantel fingering a marble bookend. Then I saw him lift it, cross the room, and split mother's head open with it. She slumped to the floor and through the window I could see blood ooze over her eye. I turned again to my grasshopper until I was disturbed by the window being thrown open and I was face to

face with father. His ugly sweaty brow glared at me through the night. He poised himself carefully on the sill for several minutes then slammed the window, but not before I heard, "Damn you!" under his breath.

The following weeks were full of neighbors' and friends' regrets over mother's accident. I watched his abominable pretentiousness, his ever-so-sincere humility, and his heart-rending grief. Father blessed himself but I knew he was glad to see the twitching eye join the worms under the rose bush.

It was not long after that I was sent away. For months I was not allowed outside but was kept indoors enjoying myself with the delights of the checkerboard. How obvious everyone was; but I played their little games. After one year, on a clinically sterilized release form, I was declared "cured" and sent home.

Even as the carriage drove before Hauffman House, I could feel the ugly facade of brown stone moving in until it engulfed me as I neared the front door. It opened to permit my father to exit. He did not smile warmly at me, nor did he tenderly kiss my cheek. He ushered me into the library and presented the new Mrs. Hauffman. I thought of the grasshopper on the garden wall as she extended her skinny fingers to clasp mine. I saw the bookend crashing on my

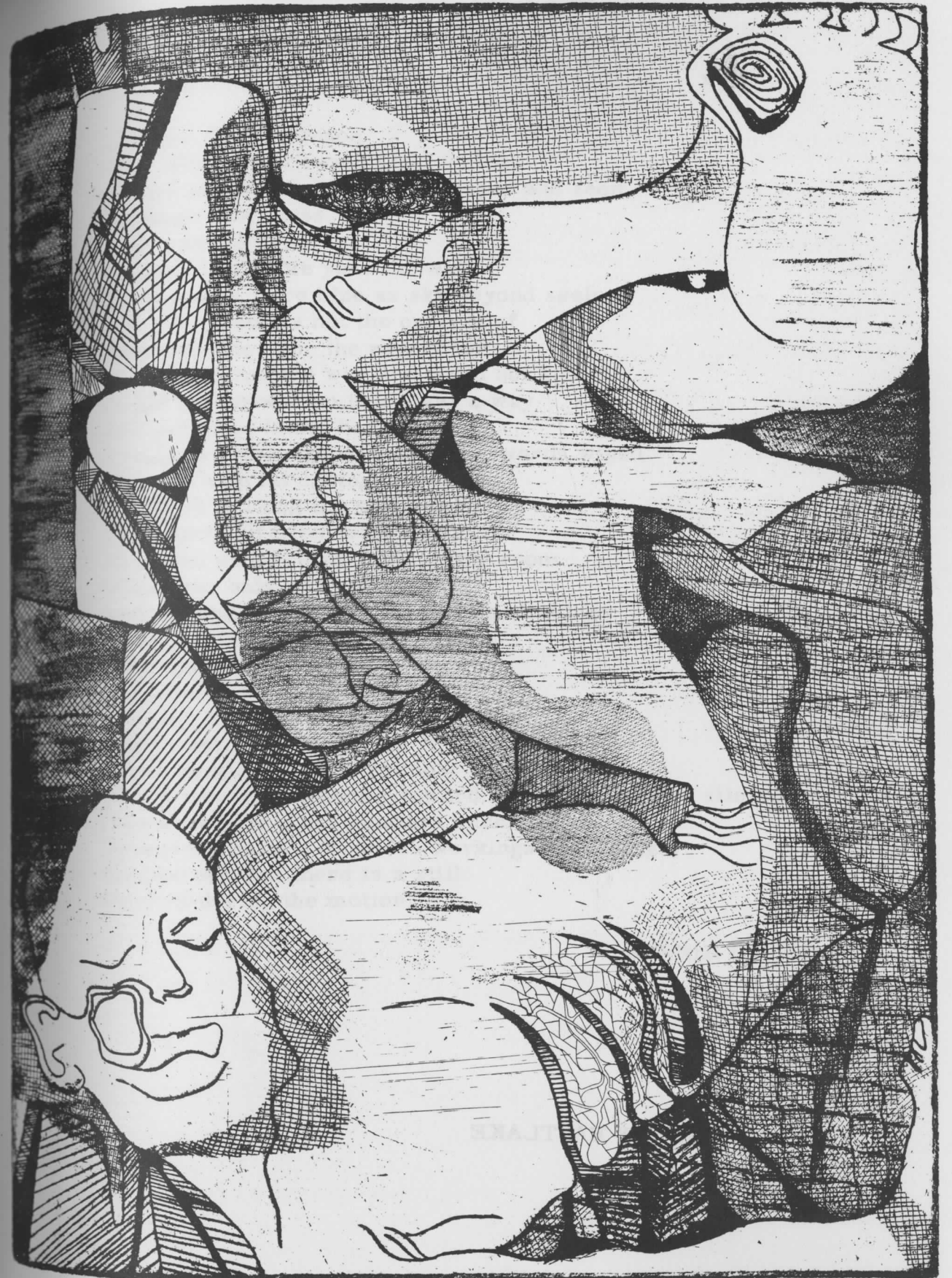
mother's head as the new Mrs. Hauffman crossed the room and stood before the fireplace.

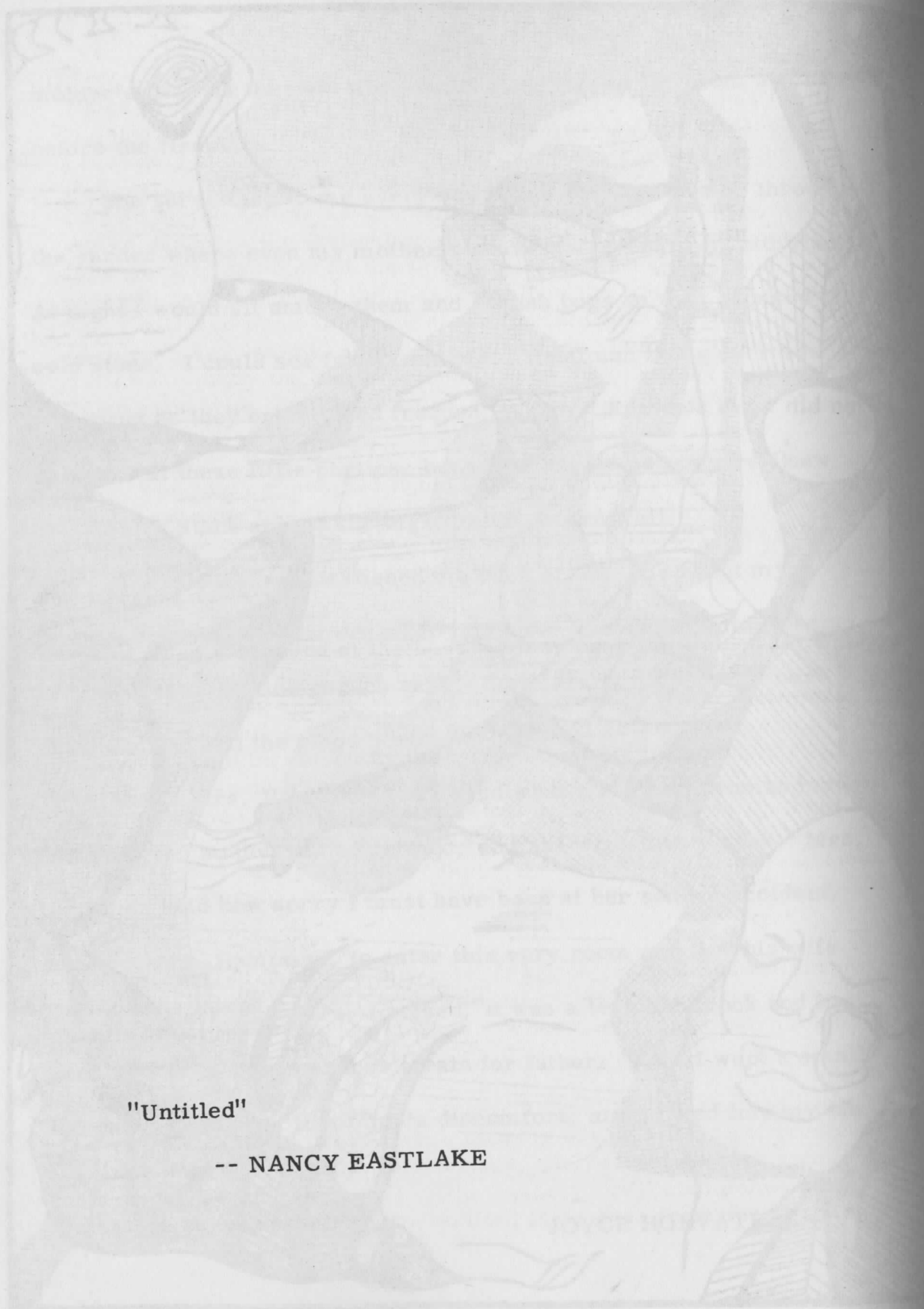
She served tea to me every day. We often took walks through the garden where even my mother's grave was overgrown with weeds. At night I would sit among them and squash bugs as they crossed the cold stone. I could see father and Mrs. Hauffman being ever so charming as they entertained frequent guests. Father's brow did not perspire at these little parties, but under all his composure I saw the hideous stare across the night to the garden wall.

Mrs. Hauffman questioned me once at tea time about my feelings toward my poor deceased mother. How vividly did I see her crocheting on the garden seat. How clearly did I recall her crushed head and the blood oozing. . . .

But to Mrs. Hauffman I declared what a beautiful woman my mother was, so poised, so refined, and ah! what lovely eyes. Mrs. Hauffman said how sorry I must have been at her sudden accident, and Poor Mr. Hauffman, to enter this very room and find his wife dead upon the floor. Yes, I sighed, it was a terrible shock and indeed, it's been a tremendous strain for father. Then I wept a small tear, gazed at Mrs. Hauffman's discomfort, and smiled into my tea cup.

-- JOYCE HORVATH





"Untitled"

-- NANCY EASTLAKE

It is not for no reason
That when I was seven I had a clock
Whose golden workings were heard and seen
Through blue glass
Thin like water,
And that the same year the walls
Of my room were blue as sky beyond seeing.
But the reason is not the current of
Remembrance nor the regret for
The year I had the way and could not know it;
Could not know even there was a way
And yet I had it and held it,
Tramped it through mud and afterwards wiped
My toes with fat spring leaves;
Tramped it along the shore until my feet
Split open and filled with sand;
Returned with it each night to the room
Where the only walls were sky
And the only sound was the golden workings
Through blue glass
Thin like moving water.
The reason then is this:
Because today I know there is a way
And do not, cannot, follow it,
These small recorded notions,
Coiled now but unwinding toward alarm and sudden silence
(For even blue glass shatters under the
Delicate pressure of golden workings unwinding.)
Remind me that there is a still
Moment during the motion.

-- BONNIE BISHOP

I have often wondered
As spring approached
Why the black apple boughs
Reached but did not touch
(Except on those infrequent rainy days
When stirred by the wind).
Why the roots entwined in the ground
Did not rise up through the broken loam
And fight as serpents to the death.

-- MIKE ENGLE

Without opera glasses or opium
I'm coming to your class
Because I've heard how you smoke
And how for you lighting a match
Is like rubbing two sticks together
For the first time.

-- TRUDI SPAETH

DIFFERENTIATIONS IN AUGUST

Steam and fog rising in the valley of the river
At dawn. The air of August mist, particled, fades
Into the wavering clear morning. The murk
Of growth and the small of green thickness
Through the afternoons;

Those days.
Awake, remembering the sunrise;
Driving to work again,
Thinking of tomorrow.
The sun warms the left side of my face;
This car carries its own still atmosphere,
Shadows beside me.

Near the bend in the river, a mile past the waterfall,
Where I went camping, alone,
Two years after the last war, on a Thursday
Afternoon, the first Thursday in August,
At 2:30, or about that time (I remember the trees,
The angle of the sun, the smell of air, the feel of my coat)
I caught six catfish from that rock, big as a house,
That is still there. And the first fish, silver grey,
Lay on its side, heaving but small, expecting liquid.
One drop of water, nearing the clouding eyes, quivered;
And the wind in the high trees; the pulse in my neck.
But there are billions of people in the world,
Countless insects and so many fish.
Each I have killed or spared for reasons as varied
As the random species dead or living
Or to be born.

A person can not imagine, should not imagine every
Instant, instants: Ages, shadows.
The new sweat that tickles down my own cheeks
This morning, remembering . . .

There is only this instant,
The feel of my hair, startled, on end.

-- ALAN PAVLIK

EARLY MORNING MAN

The ball was hugging the ground and coming fast. The runner on third was half way home. He went down, but the ball hopped over his glove into left field, as the crowd yelled wildly. Buzzzzzz-----.

"The alarm clock. Ollie, get the alarm clock!"

His hand darted out and hit the clock hard. He must have been too absorbed in the dream. Trying to shake it from his mind, he decided it was a result of the Detroit-Kansas City ballgame last night. The Tigers were winning 3-2 in the ninth inning when the rookie short-stop let a double play ball go through him, allowing the man on third to score the tying run. Through the extra innings, he remained seated near the radio fighting off sleep for half an hour past his 10:00 P.M. bedtime, only for that washed up, so-called bullpen ace to feed up a home run ball in the top of the 13th to blow the game. The losing streak was becoming a little frustrating. In the last two weeks they had faded from the hopeful position of one game out of first place into a dismal 4th place, 7 games back. The mid-season slump had come. They stayed close to the top for so long this year--longer than the sportswriters had anticipated. Next week he would miss the games with the Angels. The west coast games were too late to wait up for, then get up at 5:30 the

next morning for his nine holes of golf before work. He would have to catch the scores of those games on the car radio on the way to the golf course the following morning.

He leaned out of the sheet and tilted the alarm clock so it caught a ray of sunlight, seeping through the Venetian blind. Struggling without his glasses, he finally made out the time as a quarter to six--he had lain in bed too long. He rolled to a sitting position on the edge of the bed and rubbed his eyes, removing the crusted substance trying to paste his lids together. It was necessary to get a move on to make his 8:30 appointment at the office with Mrs. Bridges, and still not rush his golf game. Yesterday afternoon when he heard her crackling voice over the phone he should have told her he was booked up today. He was always getting caught flatfooted. Obviously she had detected another detail in her Last Will and Testament to be revised--this would make the fourth time.

In the dark he found his golfing clothes on the chair where he neatly placed them last night. The weather report predicted the temperature to descend into the 50's last night, so he decided to put on his green Doug Sander's style sweater. Though he didn't get cold easily, he knew the best performance comes when the muscles lose as little heat as possible between swings of the club. That's

why baseball pitchers wear warm-up jackets.

The noise of the dresser drawer caused Sandy to turn over and groan. It was hard to see how she could be disturbed so easily after not going to bed until the television signed off after Nite-Owl Theater. Of course, she couldn't see how he could go to bed so early, then get up at 5:30.

Ollie had never felt in better shape than during the last three summers, when he had followed this schedule. Last winter he gained ten pounds and so far this summer had lost five of them. He looked at his belt line. At 48 you couldn't expect to have the same trim waist-line of twenty years ago, but there was no reason to let it get out of hand. He now worked on some arched back sit-ups (having read of them in Health Today magazine) along with his usual leg-lifts.

In the bathroom, he washed his face, covered his receding hair line with his golf cap, then went into the kitchen. After finishing the light, but vitalizing, breakfast--a bowl of Grape-Nuts Flakes and a shot of orange juice--he headed his Buick for the golf course. He no longer had to wait in Tom Bradford's driveway for him to come out puffing on his pipe. Tom, another attorney, heard about Ollie's golfing and one day invited himself along, but in less than a

month, started staying in bed Tuesdays and Thursdays--the days when he golfed in his afternoon league. Not long afterward, work began forcing him to stay up too late and he stopped the morning golfing all together. Ollie didn't really listen to his long explanation. He now took on the course alone.

He for a time tried the league Tom was in, but the other players played too fast or talked and laughed when he was making a shot.

He pulled into the empty parking lot, then walked to the clubhouse door, and inserted his key into the lock. Sam, the clubhouse manager, gave him a key so he could get his clubs and golf shoes. After making sure the door was relocked, he walked to the first tee, pulling the hand cart holding his clubs behind him. On the tee, he did a couple knee bends, flexed his shoulders, touched his toes, then took several vigorous practice swings. As he addressed the ball and prepared to swing, he noticed that it was lined up with the outside of his left foot. Remembering yesterday's Sam Snead Golf Tip, he adjusted so it was in line with the heel. Perhaps this would help his "slice." He took a hard swing, remembering to keep his left arm straight, wrists loose and head down. When he connected it felt good. The ball didn't tail toward the woods on the right, but

sailed high and straight. As it hurtled into the early morning sky there was only the ball against the bluing background. Ollie watched it floating into the distance growing smaller and smaller, seemingly moving toward the end of the earth. The tops of the pine trees moved into his field of vision and the rest of the trees and the hill and the grass and the river. The ball came to a dead stop not more than five feet from the river. It was one of the best shots he ever had--almost too good. He hadn't thought of it reaching the river.

He started toward it. The course looked good. It had a worn trampled look in the afternoon, but came to life again during the night. He wished his sons, Jimmy and Jesse, would take an interest. Once in awhile they came out later in the day, but had never stuck to the game. Ollie was sure he could teach them, if he had the chance. Although he himself had never been outstanding, he had read books by men like Gary Player, Arnold Palmer and Ben Hogan; and, he felt he knew how to play the game as well as anyone. They were at an age--Jimmy 14 and Jesse 12--when they could practice and polish their game the way he didn't have time to. They would probably lie in bed most of the morning.

Approaching his ball, he estimated the distance to the green to be a nice easy 5 iron shot. This was the place to be after a drive

--in position for a bogie with no trouble, and with the shot at a par if things broke right. He selected the club, addressed the ball, but looked too soon to where it was intended to go. The topped ball rolled directly into the creek. His body became rigid and he slowly overcame the impulse to fling the club into the creek after the ball. Arnold Palmer must feel the same way when he hits one into the woods in front of the T.V. cameras, but he restrains himself. Putting one foot on a rock in the middle of the creek, he unlodged his ball from the mud. His next shot pleased him much more as it carried the right hand sand trap and landed a few feet off the edge of the green. In order to play the next shot without fear of being showered with water, he had to shut off the three whirling sprinklers encircling the green. It would be much nicer not to contend with the irritating sprinklers every morning, but it was natural they would water the course when no one was playing. A chip shot and two putts got the ball into the cup. He decided to forget that shot into the creek, since it was only the first hole. A 5 was a better start toward a good round than a 7.

On the tee of the par three second hole, he felt loose and the flag to the front of the green made the hole seem unusually short. His swing cut slightly under the ball causing it to go high and land a

few yards short of the green, but the flying turf gave the shot a professional look. A chip and two putts gave him his 4.

It was one of those days when he was relaxed and his co-ordination seemed to be there--the ball was jumping off the clubhead. He refused to let a bad shot here and there upset him. Sensing a big round, he wanted to keep things going smooth. Probably the most unnerving event was on the fifth tee, when a boy riding the mowing machine was in his line of fire. The boy stopped the machine, motioning him to hit while he stared. But Ollie waved to keep the machine going. He paced around the tee swinging his driver back and forth as the machine crept away. The shot suffered, going only 150 yards and slicing into the right rough, but he recovered well and managed his bogie on the hole.

Going into the eighth hole, he was aware a bogie on the last two would break his low score of the year, which was 48. On eight he missed a par only when a 15 foot putt lipped the cup. On the ninth tee his muscles were tingling with strength. Taking an extra practice swing, he wound up and hit one which took off far, but to the right, ending up in the middle of the adjoining fairway. His next shot was still to the right and, reaching his ball, he saw himself faced with the problem of going over or through a large sycamore

tree in order to reach the green. There wasn't much hope, but he felt he might as well shoot the works. Taking out his wedge and placing the ball far forward to get the most possible height, he swung down hard. His club cut the dirt and the ball went up, up, up, and over by two feet the top of the tree. It came down, down, down, and dug into the center of the green. Arnold Palmer would have praised the shot. It was simply a matter of covering the 12 to 15 feet to the cup in two putts, to get his 47.

Of all his good shots today, this wedge was the most beautiful. The green was near the highway--perhaps a passing motorist had seen it. Ollie walked briskly toward the clubhouse. Though it was just 7:30, the parking lot was filling up now, since it was Ladies' Day, and all the ladies were arriving to play in their morning league. When he bought Sandy a set of clubs, she went as far as taking some lessons from the club pro, but gave up the game when she didn't do well right away.

He made it through the clubhouse door after nearly being steam rolled by Mrs. Grimes and Mrs. Michael, who were absorbed in a conversation. "Sam, give me a coke," he said to the man behind the counter. "I'm trying to stay off them to keep my weight down, but I figure I deserve one today."

"Ollie, you're the man I want to see. We got this new gadget in yesterday."

"The way my game is going, I don't want to take a chance with any new gadgets."

"I haven't even told you what it is," said Sam. "It probably isn't a good time to show you this if you had a hot day."

"Let me tell you about a shot I made on nine."

"Sam, I need some balls," came a voice from down the counter.

"Excuse me a minute, Ollie," said Sam.

After selling Mrs. Martin 4 Spalding balls, Sam returned with something in his hand. "Look at this, Ollie. It's a little gadget that you can tie onto your golf bag. It has a scraper and a brush, to clean off your clubhead after every shot. You know how sometimes a little dirt stuck on the club can throw a shot off just enough to catch a tree or something."

"I don't know, Sam. If you're hitting them good, a little dirt shouldn't throw you off that much."

"All the pros carry these things and we're selling them for only \$3.95."

"Let me see that thing, Sam." Ollie accepted the small

utensil and ran his fingers through the brush bristles. "I never realized the pros use anything like this."

"Well of course you can't see a thing like this on television, but if Gary Player's caddie would forget it you don't think he would be his caddie long, do you? Just picture Tommy Bolt, tied for the lead on the last hole of the P.G.A., walking up to make a crucial 9 iron shot to the green; then looking down to see his clubhead covered with dirt. He would wrap the club around the poor caddie's neck."

Ollie ran his thumb over the scraper. It was a nice shade of green and would look good hanging beside the towel he carried for wet days. "The occasion just might arise where you would knock a stroke or two off your score if you had one of these things. I might have even lowered my score a stroke today and that would have been something."

"You never know, but it's best to be on the safe side. I wanted to let you see one while they're still available. They've been going like hotcakes. I know you are a man who appreciates the fine points."

"Yes, I guess you better give me one of them."

"I'll have the boy put it on your bag, Ollie, and I'll just mark it up on the bill."

As Ollie started to speak, Sam moved down the counter toward two ladies who were eying some clubs on display. He could tell him of the shot tomorrow, when he wasn't so busy. It was 7:45, so he gulped down the last two swallows of his coke and left.

Instead of taking his usual route home he swung through the downtown area, but no one was on the streets yet. He came into the bedroom whistling "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" and flipped his cap onto the dresser.

"I'm trying to sleep," said Sandy from the bed. "What are you so happy about at this time of the morning? Did your Tigers just sew up the pennant or something?"

"It's a nice day. By the way, I was hitting them today."

"Good."

"47."

"47? Oh, you shot a 47. That's pretty good for you, isn't it?" She pulled the sheet over her head.

"Yes," he whispered, going into the closet to get his suit.

Jimmy appeared in the bathroom door, as he was straightening his tie before the mirror.

"Go right ahead. I was just finishing up."

"Okay," yawned Jimmy.

"What are you doing up so early? Going to play a little ball?"

"Jerry Hart and me are going fishing at Michael's lake."

"It's a good day for it. I'll fix your breakfast while you are washing up."

As he was pouring milk over a big bowl of Grape-Nuts Flakes, Sandy walked into the kitchen in her housecoat, scratching the top of her head. "Is that Jimmy I heard?"

"He's going to do a little fishing. Go on back to bed, honey. I'll get the boy's breakfast."

"He doesn't like those Grape-Nuts Flakes--you're the only one that eats them." She picked up the bowl.

"As long as they're already there-----"

"Okay--okay." She set the bowl back down and popped some raisin toast into the toaster.

When Jimmy came in, he pushed aside the Grape-Nuts Flakes and started on the raisin toast.

Ollie got into the car and thought about what faced him at the office. Mrs. Bridges, then Paul Hatfield wanted him to draw up a deed, then some guy, named Rivers, wanted to be put into bankruptcy--it would be another day full of paper work. Maybe he would take the afternoon off and watch some of Dr. Roland's case--Dr.


Roland was getting sued for malpractice. He and Doc had been good friends for many years and he did Doc's legal work, but of course Bob Freeman was handling this case. Bob was the best courtroom lawyer in town and wouldn't have any trouble getting Doc off the hook. Most lawyers, when they start law school, probably dream of spending their time arguing before juries, but unfortunately many end up behind a desk in a stuffy office all day.

Ollie disappointedly remembered he would have to stay in the office this afternoon, since Charlie Johnson, a farmer, was coming all the way from Chatfield to get his income tax report drawn up. Charlie could easily have it done in Chatfield, but for years it had been his custom to come to Ollie. He would, as always, be there for an afternoon's visit.

Well, there was the ballgame tonight to look forward to. Dennis McLain was going against Kansas City and he had pitched a shut-out his last game. Then, maybe tomorrow morning he would really be hitting them again, and he could go after that 47 mark.

-- HARVEY SPURLOCK





"The Diary of a Madman"

-- CLARE CONRAD

The Word diffused among the reeking, squalid cities
Of the East, bred in the filth of discontent
'Till none could escape the fever of its message.

The Word was carried like a seed upon the wind,
Springing up in the dank, dark blackness
Of a single windswept hut.

The Word ripped men from arms that bound them
To home, to family: to the peaceful, daily
Struggle that makes a man.

The Word left women man-less and afraid;
The wind carried longing and despair in the
Dolorous wail that sighed through parted shades.

The land lay maimed and ravished, her outraged
Tears spilling over the battered wooden splints
That no longer support her.

-- NANCY SCOTT

With images as uncomfortable
As rocks under a beach blanket,
Why continue?
Why pretend this marzipan mind
Can model a world,
Make a mosaic constellation
With the rocks.
Why not ask for special dispensation
And be done.

-- TRUDI SPAETH

GRANDPA

Alone, fourteen,
you left dark forests of early homeland
atop hill shadowing
houses, yellow weathered strong,
places of birth and all beginnings,

you stared at a new world:
sweating black men bending under ship's toil,
ocean washing back, then forward,
gleaming new Statue,
buildings,

but beyond
to the land,
familiarity, family,
welcome, work,
Illinois, land of great working men,
some of the few minutes of boy's freedom
spent playing in a barn, left empty,
where the greatest of them had spoken.

Soon a man, home again,
to escort on return
giggling girls from the hill-bound village,
annoying,

but one later taken as wife
to Ohio -- flat clay land you admired,
weary of hills.

A home facing dawn across a gravel road;
children saw their mother's death,
"tante" becoming their second mother,
nine in all, knew you loving strict,
Pop -- small frame and black mustache --
corn-planting, hay-mowing,
cows giving cream, grapes giving wine,
muscle horses to horse-power tractor
you worked.

A summer fire,
the home facing the morning sun
replaced by one facing the evening,
cloud red over wheat,
filling the windows behind you now,
tires hum speeding the now-paved road.

Grandchildren:
straining to catch a story through thick accent;
nearby lofts recall laughter
searching for kittens,
now birds fill
hay-dusty emptiness.

Your heart with work years' strength
will not stop,
though nearly all else physical has failed
to wait out the dying century
around the coal stove.

Death has forgotten.

We look on,
helpless,
and think how it was unknown for you
to make an enemy.

Chaucer's plowman --

Again you await departure alone.

-- KAREN COZART

Meditation on a Line by Sylvia Plath

When echoes gallop home to me riderless,
I must doubt I sent a rider
Out to make the errand clear.
I would go myself once,
To be a rhythm on dirt paths
Glutted with fallen leaves,
And tented with branches
Intersecting, bowing to the pounding
Of the horse, of me.

Instead I cringe in a dark stall
And shudder, imagining embarrassment,
Because if I dared to go, I could never
Turn back to the center of dispatch
And when it seemed that the forest might collapse
Inward, splitting logs on the horse's back, then
I would leap from loyalty to the mission
And roll away into the curling fronds
To stay lost among the greenness,
The sigh of the ground,
And I would lie patient there until I was tucked under
By the first snow.

— LAUREN SHAKLEY

28 NISAN 1960

April 28 began as a warm and sunny day in Istanbul. To many people who had been cooped up in their houses the past week because of the rainy and gloomy weather it brought relief and a touch of the coming spring.

Early in the morning I picked up Birthe whom I had met in Denmark and who was now visiting me, and boarded the Bosphorus ferry at the Galata Bridge. The boat took us away from the rattle of the ancient streetcars, the sight of the ageless mosques, and the electric atmosphere of the city.

For days now Istanbul had been pregnant for trouble. Big trouble, it seemed. Fiery student meetings held secretly in darkened coffeehouses and ornamented with the youthful oratory of would-be Robespierres, gun-toting policemen at the street corners, and the endless number of rumours which criss-crossed the city in a matter of hours, recalled to my mind images from the ancient city of Constantinople. The Byzantine intrigues of Justinian's age, distilled through the Haren plots of the Ottomans, seemed to have reached our time.

The oppression of the government had become unbearable. All agreed that a revolution was necessary. Each had his own plot. Yet, every person or group was waiting for someone else to make the first move. Thus, an unnatural and spotty calm prevailed in the city, breeding ambitions and frustrations.

This beautiful Friday morning provided a long needed escape for me. On the boat, watching the foamy blue waves of the Bosphorus slide by, waving at the crews of the passing freighters, and talking with Birthe about everything but the Revolution, I felt free and happy. The people alongside the strait seemed completely detached from the city we had left behind, which was saturated with fear and frustration. Some hopefuls were fishing on the wooden piers where we docked often, and were not too happy when the violent wake of the boat scared their schools of fish away. We passed by Besiktas, the Five Stones, which Barbarossa had set up at the water's edge, and to which his victorious war-ships were once moored. We sailed by Therapia, the

Place of Drugs, where Medea, having safely arrived thus far in her flight with Jason from Colchis, had deemed her box of drugs no longer necessary and thrown it into the Bosphorus. Further up the strait groups of fishermen were repairing their colorful nets conveniently spread on the sidewalks that bordered the Bosphorus near the place where Jason, after that sublime voyage of the fourteenth century before Christ, had spread the Golden Fleece. Long and slim caiques that had never changed their shapes since the time of the Byzantines who first used them lined the shore in many places. Some of the people we saw waved, some just smiled, many only shot a glance. All seemed to enjoy the sun which embraced them and the water that provided them with livelihood while peacefully flowing between two continents.

The ferry which had taken us to an undisturbed past turned back where the blue waters of the Bosphorus end and the dark and unfriendly waves of the Black Sea begin. The fishing villages were left behind one by one and finally the oscillating skyline of the city emerged.

When we landed at the bustling pier near the Golden Horn early in the afternoon, the faces around us were dour and drawn. People were scrambling savagely to get on the crowded trams. Newspaper boys were shouting their lungs out trying to sell a paper which they claimed would be closed by the government the following day. A boy in his early teens ran out of nowhere and spat at the face of a patrolling policeman. Before he could turn back and run into a street alley, four policemen jumped on him like vultures. When they got up, a blood-soaked figure struggled to his feet and was promptly taken away in a jeep, leaving behind the echo of a last defiant cry, "Freedom or Death!"

I hurried Birthe to her hotel near the Beyazit Square around which the Istanbul University is located. At the hotel we talked for a while about the political situation. When I left, she said mockingly, "Good luck with your revolution."

The atmosphere on the streets around the square was very tense. Students in droves were walking towards Beyazit, pretending to hide under their coats folded flags, pictures of Ataturk, and placards. At the entrances to the square, grey-clad policemen, clustered around their jeeps, shifted their eyes from the swelling

crowd of students on the square to the clouds gathering above, as if hoping for a rain that would disperse the demonstrators.

I decided to stay around for a while to see what would happen. A little after five o'clock the several thousand students who by this time had filled the northern corner of the square suddenly unfolded their flags, pictures, and banners and started to sing the National Anthem at the top of their voices. By the time they were finished, the few remaining vehicles had hurriedly left the square, the pedestrians had placed themselves conveniently along the sidewalks, and the police had regrouped on the opposite side of the square. For a few minutes a ghastly silence reigned between the grey asphalt and the grey sky. The two antagonists looked like a pair of Roman gladiators eyeing each other's strength before the mortal grapple.

The students were the first to act. They started to march and sing the song of the War of Independence, a song of misty hilltops and trees and birds and silver flowing rivers:

Let us march, friends!
Let our voice be heard by the earth, by the sky,
by the water,
Let the hard ground moan from the harsh tramp
of our feet.

The faces of the marchers now looked relaxed, almost happy. Leaders emerged from their ranks, singing, shouting orders, cursing, urging on the stragglers, and giving the amoebic mass a shape of its own. When it reached the big circular flower bed in the middle of the square, the crowd divided to two around it and acquired a crescent shape.

The grey group contracted around its several vehicles. A tall figure climbed on the hood of a jeep and with a megaphone shouted as soon as the song was over:

We order you to stop where you are and to disperse.
Go to your homes.
Or we shall have to use arms to disperse this unlawful demonstration.

I found myself praying that the students would not stop. I

wished that my brain could somehow exert a hold on everyone and direct the mass to the end of the square, swarming over the green jeeps and the grey uniforms into the streets of Istanbul like blood rushing through my veins.

The colorful mass stopped for a second. Then it continued on its way, pushed by the newcomers pouring in from the streets behind and pulled by its leaders. Now the students were silent and slow. Their steps were as carefully placed as those of a revengeful tiger before the deadly jump.

The faceless figure on top of the jeep raised the megaphone to his mouth, then lowered it without using it and jumped to the ground. The grey cluster opened around him like a fan. In their hands were guns. Women pulled their children closer. Many looked for a tree or a light-post to put between the approaching clash and themselves.

Together, the policemen raised their arms toward the grey clouds and split the sky with a harmonious crack. The mass did not flinch. When I heard the second round of shots, I looked in vain for the raised grey line of arms. Instead, I saw a tall student on the side of the crowd near me fall back into the arms of two of his comrades, his face covered with blood.

Things then happened all at once. The front ranks of the demonstrators dispersed towards the flanks. Yet, the streets kept feeding the mass. Students ran hither and thither looking for a bit of earth to throw at the castle of grey. A girl nearby carefully laid her books on the sidewalk and started pulling out one of the iron spikes lining the flower beds along the sidewalk. Bare fingers grappled with earth and asphalt trying to tear away something that could be thrown. Among the crowd, bottles, rocks, pieces of glass appeared out of nowhere. Figures ran toward the police, threw an object wrapped in hatred with a Herculean posture and ran back, crouched under the flying bullets.

Spectators ran into the shops and doorways lining the square. I gazed at the holocaust unable to order my legs away from it. A middle-aged man running away stopped next to me and shouted, while still heavily breathing, "Go away! Run! Quick!" I gazed at him. With a cutting yelp he suddenly slumped down, wounded in the leg, saying, "Oh . . . Oh . . . God! . . . Help me!" with an unbelieving

look in his eyes. Two young men stopped, kneeled, put his arms on their shoulders, held him at the waist and legs between themselves, and carted him off to safety. I turned around and ran into one of the side streets.

The crack of guns, shrill cries for help, and hateful shouts followed me until I dashed into a small book store where a merry bell above the door announced my arrival to the old owner of the shop. He came toward me, held me on the shoulders and shook me around.

"Are you all right, son?"

I could not answer him.

He directed me to the only chair which was placed between the counter and the shop window and pushed me on it. He then disappeared behind the counter. I wanted to ask him not to leave me alone. I could not utter a word. He reappeared with a glass of water in his hands.

"Here, son. Drink this, and you'll be all right."

Then he went to the window and pressed his nose on it, trying to get a glimpse of the square.

Minutes later, I saw a girl and a man in his early twenties hurriedly turn the corner. They stopped in front of the bookstore. Waving his arms and hands violently, the man harangued the girl. Then he lurched towards the square, to be stopped suddenly by the girl who firmly stood in his way. His arms fell to his sides, his shoulders stooped. With ease she pushed the defeated figure into the store, accompanied by the same merry jingle that had welcomed me. The old man gently guided the shivering newcomer to the only chair, which I had just slid out of. The young man slumped on it. His face was grotesquely tense. All the flesh on it was drawn between his cheekbones and tormented eyes. His gaze which passed through us was fixed on a distant point in the square.

The girl slipped behind him and rested her hands on his shoulders, bracing him back as if to make him strong again. His hands on which I now noticed spots of dried blood frantically pulled down on the cuffs of his coat. He wanted to hide his hands. Perhaps

he wished to disappear altogether.

Suddenly he straightened back and softly whispered, "Murderers . . . Beasts . . . Murderers! They killed him." His left arm stretched out to hold a figure that was not there. Disappointed, his open hand closed like a revengeful paw. He put the clenched fist carefully in his pocket as if all the objects of his wrath were now prisoned there. His right hand gently felt the bloodied lapel of his coat.

Trying to solve the mystery of what had happened, he softly recounted to himself:

"We were marching together . . . with Mehmet . . . when we heard the first volley. From our place in the front I could see that no one was hurt. I didn't know what to do. Then he said, 'This is the moment of truth for us. If we turn our tails everything will be over.' So, we took a few steps and before I knew what had happened, his head lashed back and he fell into my and Bilge's arms."

He stopped, lost in his thoughts. Then he continued:

"We carried him to the side. He hoarsely whispered, 'My books . . . in the library. . . .' Then he was silent and motionless."

He did not seem to believe what he was telling himself. His gaze shot past the old man and me and the wall that stood between him and the square where he was searching for a clue to everything.

His hand resting on his left lapel moved slightly up and touched the girl's bony, pale fingers. For the first time aware of the world around him, he jumped up, facing the girl.

"I've known you since . . . when . . . October. He was my friend for twelve years. And there was nothing I could do. I was totally helpless. Helpless! Totally helpless! Can't you see? We were right. Divinely right. But the son of a bitches, wretches killed him. . . . God damn the revolution, the flag, Marx, police, the thousands pushing behind us. And be damned himself! . . . We were thousands, swarming all over the place . . . helpless thousands . . . helpless . . . helpless!"

His fists smashed with all the power of his being on the counter beside him. Exhausted, formless, baffled, his body fell to the chair and his head rested on his clenched fists. For a long time he remained there, taking deep breaths that rocked his head between his fists.

Silence and darkness reigned outside on the glass and rock-covered streets and penetrated the store. I knew that I could not see the eyes of the girl and the old man if I looked at them. I was glad. I thought that the day must be quite old by now. Two drops of rain hit the window. I carefully followed them racing towards the earth.

The man cleared his throat, interrupting our silent world. He got up. He put his hands in his pockets and said to the girl, "Mehmet's books are in the library. We have to go and get them before it closes."

With a tingle of the bell they stepped into the rain.

-- CEM KOZLU

BANTLING

Such strange paths
you've wended through my heart.
Your being dissembles the
elements which do make me strong
and the ache and question
of my mind elates and shames me.

Yet with your finger
you trace out indiscriminate intentions
on my back under my shirt.
There is, hiding, something
that stretches and yawns
in the depth of me, as if waking
after a very long sleep.

Your eyes follow the
curve of my ear.
Dissembling unconsciously, you wend,
and my ear detects the
warmth of pleasure. And I cannot
help but make your joy my own,
for you personify the consummation
that honest desire imports.

-- FRANCIE KING

Hear in the hearth-fire
burning our last-winter logs
call of the phoenix

-- SUZANNE HUSTING

I saw you yesterday,
For a moment held and glimpsed,
Wedged between two thoughts, and gone again.
When I knew you, four years ago,
It was summer and New Hampshire,
Long walks, and hot pine woods,
And swimming in the quarry.

Years ago granite was quarried here, but rain long since
Has filled the gap with eighty feet of water, the drops
That touched the bottom untouched, unwarmed since first they fell.
Behind us the gouged rock rises eighty feet,
Holding back a looming hill.

Sun warms only surface water, and as we dive our skin draws tight
To hold our heat against the cold beneath.
One evening after swimming we sat, abandoned blocks of quarried
granite
Stacked, unused, our seat, and watched the sun set behind New
Hampshire trees.

All that is past, and now I live in Boston,
My life ground thin by business,
Shadows distinct, unshaded, distance understood.
Now walking is a chore, and now I daily drive to work
Along the "Freedom Trail."

At home in Boston, and Sunday morning on the Fenway.
Morning sun through morning's window, moving over coffee and the
Sunday Times.

Later perhaps a walk on Boston Common or the Public Gardens,
Or an afternoon of solemn, sturdy Boston brick on Beacon Hill.

But you appeared this Sunday morning
Between the Sunday walkers on the Fenway
And the looming shadow of the Prudential Tower.

Leaving Boston, sun overhead,
Heading west on asphalt, past Cambridge and Watertown,
Through Fitchburg towards New Hampshire.

I walk again around our quarry,
Still deep, still cold on Sunday afternoon,
The hidden water still unmoved.
I toss a rock. How far does it fall
Before it strikes a sunken ledge?

Return to Boston. At home again in Boston.
The renaissance of night could never hide your face,
But Monday's fingers only grasp at granite.

-- RICK TUCKER

My Eyes Would Escape

My eyes would escape the page below,
The black and white print of death sowing death,
In a book of one who makes a point
Of showing the vanity of our plea:

Dona nobis pacem

And I remember a summer evening
We played and sang with one heart
In a language which we had to assume
He would still understand:

Dona nobis pacem

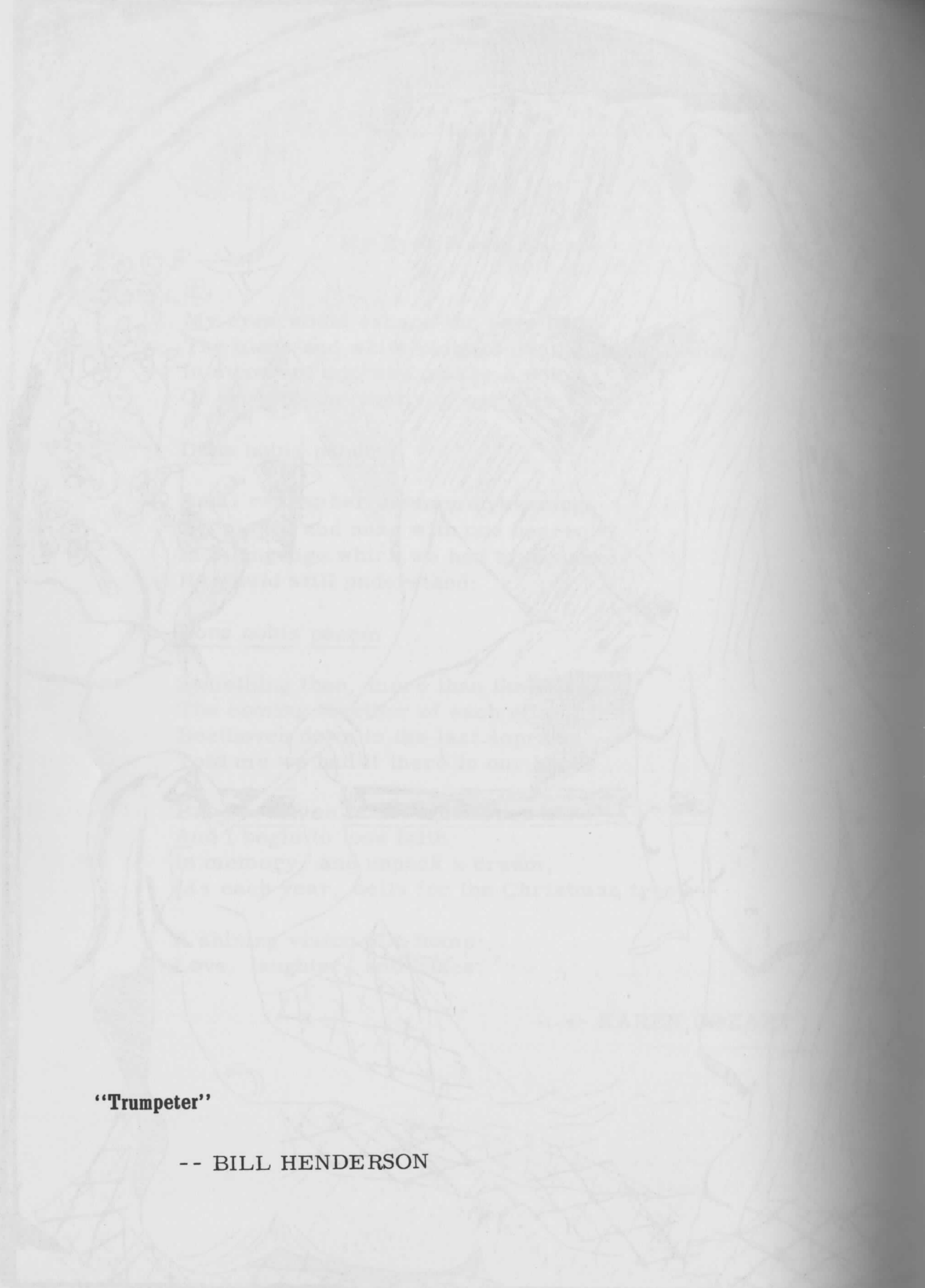
Something then, more than the words,
The coming together of each effort,
Beethoven down to the last soprano,
Told me we had it there in our hands . . .

But Beethoven is not mentioned here
And I begin to lose faith
In memory, and unpack a dream,
(As each year, bells for the Christmas tree) --

A shining vision of a home:
Love, laughter, and lilacs.

-- KAREN COZART





"Trumpeter"

-- BILL HENDERSON

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GIRAFFE

Dear Editors:

As I gazed upon your picture of a giraffe ["Picture of a Giraffe," March 28] I was reminded of my own pet giraffe I had in 1943. Thank you for telling an unbelieving and skeptical public the truth about the animal kingdom that so few of us knew as far back as the first tragic days of the second world war.

Mrs. Edna Ross
Crescent City, Calif.

COWARDS

Dear Editors:

I never thought I would see the day when a magazine with your reputation for objectivity and honesty would stoop to giving publicity to the youthful minority of cowards that are doing so much to aid the enemies of America today ["Youth and Dissent: Where Will It All End?," April 14].

Why is it, I ask you, that we give all the headlines to the bearded children who think they have a right to heckle and badger the American people--a right, I might add, that my grandfather fought to defend in Cuba sixty years ago, and that my brother is defending in

Vietnam at this moment? If it were not for our boys fighting in Vietnam today, the peaceniks would probably not be able to exercise this so-called "dissent."

Mrs. Irene Fox
Erie, Pa.

Dear Editors:

Hurrah! I say its about time someone told the true story about the youngsters who think they know so much about how to fight America's wars. I often wonder if those same protestors would be so anxious to defend our nation's enemies if they were all put on the front lines, only to find these "simple peasants" are shooting at them with real bullets. I assure you, the protests would stop.

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Frank McGee
Dayton, Ohio

Dear Editors:

In response to your article on "Youth and Dissent" I can only relate a story that I overheard in a restaurant last month, told by a soldier fresh from combat. You might suspect that I have exercised quite a bit of literary license here. You are entirely correct, but I will make every effort toward an accurate reproduction of what took place.

The soldier was little more than nineteen or twenty years of age. It never ceases to amaze me that our country chooses its youths

to fight its wars. But this burden, I am afraid, has always--and will always--be placed on the shoulders of the inheritors of the long sought for "world without wars." When will we learn to live in peace, as brothers unto one another? Not in our lifetime, nor our childrens. We might as well resign ourselves to the fact that there will always be wars.

A dear friend and his lovely wife joined me for lunch and we were not in the booth more than fifteen minutes before we heard the soldier talking to his friend at the counter. He was in the midst of describing the horrors he had seen in his fight against tyranny in the far away jungles.

"Old charlie was holding us down from this tree," he was saying. "Our C.O. told us before we got in there that the area was pretty clean of V.C., you know, but we got in there and 'pow,' we all fell back to the side. There was two of them in these trees and this lieutenant started up screaming something like I thought he was hit. But he was really just screaming about me and this other guy to get in there and knock them out.

"I was really scared, but I knew I was supposed to do this. So I crept in with this other guy to the edge of the wooded area. All the time, these guys were shooting at us, so we kept pretty low and when we got in close, I saw this one guy way up in this tree waving to some

other guy that we were down there. I had this great chance to nail him, you know, but I really felt funny about it for a minute. I mean, he's just doing his job, right? He lives here, you know? It's his place, and this strange army from somewhere else comes in and starts shooting up the place. I don't know that I wouldn't be mad, too, if someone did this to my hometown."

Two or three customers had, by this time, gathered at other seats around the soldier, listening and nodding, understanding the tragedy of war.

"So? What'd you do?," his friend asked.

"Well, I didn't know WHAT to do. Here I was in the middle of nowhere, with this gun in my hand, and there HE was up in a tree with a gun, and I was ordered by some guy I hardly knew to bring him down, but I couldn't, you know? I just couldn't.

"But then he spots me. And then I knew feeling sorry for him was no good because it was too late. Due to something outside the choosing of both of us, he was my enemy."

I missed part of the story as I went to pay the bill. When I returned, my two friends were standing by the soldier and his friend.

". . . shooting at you, and its kill or be killed, there's no two ways about it. You never thought you could bring yourself to snuffing out the life of another human being, but when you get right in there

where they're shooting at you and your friends, that all changes.

"So the other guy just disappeared when we brought this guy out of the tree. We ran in there and found the enemy sprawled at the base of the trunk, and he was pretty messed up but he was still alive. So we hauled him out onto a stretcher so we could interrogate him. I knew what was going to happen to him afterward, but that was one of those things you got to do when you're in a war, because in a fast moving unit, you just can't haul prisoners with you when you go to meet the enemy. And you have NO way to get them back to base camp when you're in the field, and even if you could turn him over to the government, you just DON'T, because lord knows what they'd do to him.

"So we got him out in the open and a medic worked on him a while before we talked to him. And I'M telling YOU. . . ."

"The soldier sipped his coffee dry. Someone took his cup and generously had it refilled.

"I'm telling you, I'll never forget the things this guy said. It was right about when we got him in the open when I got this funny feeling about this guy that didn't seem to fit. Because I looked all around where he landed and I couldn't find a gun. I looked up in the tree, thinking he had lost his gun in the branches, but there was nothing there. So I checked him over because I thought he maybe had a

pistol on him, but he didn't.

"We started in to questioning him and the lieutenant asked him what outfit he was from and the guy wasn't answering so the medic brought him around again and the lieutenant asked him again and he said he wasn't from any outfit. So the lieutenant bashed him with this gun-butt and asked him again and the guy said he wasn't from any outfit, he was a newsman and that he wished the lieutenant would stop bashing him with that gun, so the lieutenant bashed him again.

"But by and by, between bashes, he got the better part of his story out. He said he was a newsman who had heard about this operation and couldn't believe this was actually happening on American soil, so he came out to see for himself. . . ."

I hadn't been paying particular attention up to this point, but these last words sent chills down my neck. I looked around to see the same puzzlement on the faces of the other listeners. Only the soldier's friend maintained calm.

"We weren't really surprized at this line because we had heard it all before, but had been warned from our superiors about the enemy and his devious tricks. In an operation a day or two before, we picked up a peasant trying to sneak in and blow up our munitions and we questioned him and he told us in broken English that we wouldn't be able to get away with this in America. At first we didn't

know what he meant by this, but when we found out he was trying to tell us that we were in America, we laughed like crazy men. But it was great to see this group of guys sitting around laughing their heads off, you know. We rarely get the opportunity to laugh anymore, but then we pulled out his eyelashes one by one, and killed him.

"But to get back to this other guy. He started this fantastic story about being on vacation in Puerto Rico and he ran into this Navy guy out at Luquillo and started into talking with him. So this guy told him about this Special Forces training camp in the hills where they simulated jungle conditions in Vietnam, built little villages and stuff, and had these guys out there fighting each other, but with blanks in their guns so they wouldn't hurt each other.

"We didn't believe this bit, of course, but we let him go on about how this guy said these soldiers were put under drugs, and told that they WERE in Vietnam and they actually WERE fighting the Cong, all so they would actually get the feeling of combat and how a soldier feels in jungle warfare.

"The sailor told him this was supposed to be an experiment so the guys would get to Asia already having a feeling for combat. But the thing went haywire because these guys got out of control and went around clearing the area of Puerto Ricans and taking villages here and

there. It was then that all the guys in the unit started in to laughing, and it was then I noticed something that I had overlooked up to that point."

The soldier stopped to have another sip of coffee. As he placed his cup down, the waitress, who had been standing by, engrossed in the story, reached under the counter for the coffee pot and refilled his full cup. The soldier stared at her in disbelief when my friend asked him what he had noticed.

"Pardon?"

"What was it you noticed?"

"Oh. I just noticed she refilled my coffee but it was already full."

There was a short pause as we looked at him.

"No, no. The newsman," a man said as he pulled a chair up to the group. "What did you notice about the newsman?"

"Oh. I was looking at him and noticed something so strange and obvious that I don't know how I had missed it before. He seemed to change right before my eyes. It was eerie as Hell."

"Changed?"

"Yeah. I started noticing he all of a sudden didn't look oriental at all. I mean, he looked as normal as you or I. It was eerie as Hell. And then, he's sitting here talking and I noticed that he was

speaking English without a bit of foreign accent at all."

"No kidding." The man pulled his chair closer. "No kidding."

"Sir, I wouldn't kid you, believe me," the soldier said, bringing his fist down on the counter. "I've been through hell out there. I've seen things that would make your hair stand on end. I've done things that would turn the stomach of most men, so when I tell you something for a fact, you better know I'm not kidding."

My friend's wife spoke up. "It must be just awful."

"Believe me, ma'am, 'awful' isn't the word for it. But after seeing so much, you kind of have to get used to it."

"You mean he looked as much American as you or I?"

"At LEAST as much," the soldier replied. "More, even."

"Incredible!" someone said. "Was he a communist spy?"

"Well, I couldn't say for sure, because as soon as I noticed this, he changed back."

The crowd had grown to ten or twelve people. Someone in back asked if the Viet Cong really do this sort of thing.

"I mean, would they. . . . could they impersonate an American and tell you some story about, you know, you not being in Asia at all but in Puerto Rica? I mean, can they get away with it?"

The soldier stirred his coffee slowly.

"I'm not sure. I just don't know about that. But I can tell you this. None of us were fooled for a minute because we had it told to us over and over again that this was the kind of war that was unlike any war fought since the beginning of mankind. They made sure we knew that we were dealing with an enemy that would stoop to any length to make sure that the country would be united under a communist dictatorship."

"Good for you?" the waitress said. Everyone was beaming with pride. The soldier blushed.

"Then what happened?"

"Well, we couldn't take him with us, so we took him in the bushes and shot him."

There was a brief interruption as the soldier lit a cigarette. He shook out the match and placed it in his friend's upper left-hand shirt pocket, then continued.

"Well, later that afternoon we entered a sector believed to be the location of a V.C. base camp. But we found nothing so just before nightfall, our outfit was airlifted back to the base. When we got there we found it under enemy fire so we strafed the surrounding jungle and scared them away. But for how long, we couldn't be sure, so the next morning a few Huey's went on patrol and we spotted a Cong village from the air. We dipped down and shot the living day-

lights out of the place. But apparently it was deserted because when we put down nearby and advanced into the village, we found nobody there. Somebody put a match to the place so it could never again be used by the Cong.

"On the way out, we picked up one V.C. kid--he couldn't have been more than eleven or twelve. He was sitting in a ditch, playing like he was scared, the little devil. He was just sitting there, playing scared, with this little transistor radio to his ear, the little devil."

The soldier inhaled deeply on his cigarette. I saw one man's face turn pale as he asked the soldier what they finally did with the child. The soldier blew out the smoke and turned to face the man.

"What COULD we do? His mother dead, his family and friends nowhere to be found? We did the ONLY kind thing. Besides, we couldn't take. . . ."

"I know," the man said, standing up quickly. "You couldn't take him with you." The man whispered something to the waitress, who then pointed toward the back. The man quickly disappeared in that direction. The soldier went on.

"Well, we took the transistor with us back to camp. That night it was pouring outside, and somebody tuned in an English-language station on the radio. We all sat around listening to the

first American music we'd heard in months. It was really something. It wasn't like home exactly but there was just something about hearing something American, you know? I mean, it had been so long, and I saw this one sargent, a big burly guy with tatoos on his arms, he had tears just streaming down his face like rain.

"But the whole feeling was ruined when this voice came on with the news and after a minute or so, he was talking about all these things that went on in San Juan that day, and we all got a little uneasy, you know? I mean it was spooky. Here we were in Vietnam, a platoon of the 'nited States armed service fighting in Vietnam, and we hear this guy talking about the tenth annual Pan-American Games, and he says like, 'being held HERE in Puerto Rico.' And it was Puerto Rico THIS, and Puerto Rico THAT."

A few people sitting in chairs around the crowd shifted uneasily. The soldier searched for reactions among the blank faces. One man cleared his throat and the soldier looked at him accusingly.

"Well, we KNEW it was the Cong. But you know how that can spook a guy. I mean, one guy was saying how it was hard to believe the enemy would go so far as to fake a radio broadcast, and then said wouldn't it be something if these Viets were right about us actually being in Puerto Rico without us realizing it. But this warrant officer said it MUST be the enemy, because he knew radios and he knew for



a fact no transistor radio that size could pick up Puerto Rico, which at that very moment was halfway round the world.

"And this other guy who had been sitting by patiently finally spoke up and said something that settled our minds for us. He said suppose it were Puerto Rico. Okay. How come the V.C.'s keep shooting at us every time we go out on a "Search and Destroy" mission? And then someone else cut in and said the whole discussion was stupid and said it was useless talking about it because arguing never solved anything.

"But we did keep talking about it for a while, about how the commies were really going out their way to make us think we were in Puerto Rico. Then this corporal said he thought he was in Puerto Rico right before being shipped overseas, but he didn't remember much about it except it was a nice place to visit but he wouldn't want to go there, and then we all turned in for the night.

"But later that night, the enemy lobbed a few Molotov cocktails into the camp and we went out to scare them away, and I picked up a sniper's bullet in the foot. I was the first injury in our outfit and the staff decided to ship me out to a Naval Hospital first thing in the morning.

"So in the morning, I bid a kind of soldier's farewell to my buddies, never knowing when I'd see them again, and I hopped a heli-

"Untitled"

-- NANCY EASTLAKE

copter and we winged over the hills toward the Big City.

"It was great to see civilization after so long. We reached Saigon in no time at all. It was a quick landing after sweeping over the harbor, and I climbed off under my own power. These field attendants came running up and asked the pilot what happened and he said I had been shot in the foot by the V.C. These two guys laughed and said 'Okay,' they'd get me to the infirmary and one of them gave the signal for lift-off and the chopper zipped away back to the interior.

"One of the guys took me in a jeep to the base infirmary and on the way, asked what happened. I told him I was shot in the foot by the Cong and he looked at me wierd. When we got there, the intern asked me what happened and I told him the gooks got me in the foot and I saw him write "gook infection:foot-L/114" on my medical record. I didn't argue with him because he did it with such authority.

"By bits and pieces, I found out the truth. I resisted it for a long time. I was not in Saigon, I was in San Juan, Puerto Rico. I was in the hospital there when some brass visited me from Washington. I learned about 'Operation Pomegranate,' a top secret training experiment in which officer candidates were drugged and placed under hypnotic suggestion and made to believe that they were in Vietnam.

"I went along with them from the start but I did this because I

didn't want them to torture me. I had heard of what the communists do to captured Americans, and frankly, I wanted no part of it. After all, what good would I be to my country dead? In my mind, I kept fighting to save my sanity by counting the alphabet backwards. No matter how often I did it, it still came out twenty-six, which, as you know, is the number of letters when you count forward. I could never quite figure this out, but I gave up after a while because instead of preserving my mind, this little game was making me lose it.

"But in the end, I knew it was futile to resist their brainwashing. I couldn't go on forever believing that Puerto Rico was being invaded by North Vietnam, and after a brief transition period of frothing at the mouth, I was released from the hospital and given a month's leave. I flew over here for a short vacation before making it back to my family in Milwaukee for the holidays."

For a long moment, not a soul made a sound or movement, save to clear a throat or mop a brow. I could contain myself no longer.

"But what finally happened?" I asked frantically.

The soldier had been sitting head in hands, now raising his eyes to look at me.

"Nothing. Here I am." That was all he said.

"But what about 'Operation Whatchamacallit?'" Somebody

asked. "You mean to say the United States Army is going to just sit back while innocent people are being murdered on American soil?"

The soldier shifted on his stool and glanced around nervously.

"Well," he started, "you can't really call it 'murder.'" He thought for a moment, then began again. "No one said this thing was going to be a kindergarten affair. Sure its a dirty war, but wars will ALWAYS be. . . ."

He stopped again to think. One by one, the people were pushing chairs back under tables, leaving money on the counters, and hurrying out the door.

"Actually, more people are killed on American highways in one year. . . ."

He stopped again, somewhat confused. My friends and I gathered our things and followed the others to the door. When we reached it, I looked back to see the young man's friend still listening intently. The soldier was pleading for understanding.

"Okay, so maybe we made a mistake by going in there in the first place. But that's no reason why we shouldn't see this thing through and try to get it over with. I mean, is it really that bad to try to bring peace to this. . . ."

Once outside, I felt the outrage overcome me that I had stored

up inside. I was in the midst of a high pitched scream of exasperation when I noticed my young friend pointing toward the large window in front of the restaurant. My eyes followed his gesture.

The soldier and his friend were bent over, slapping their knees violently. They were laughing, as the saying goes, "fit to be tied."

I am not sure what moral might be drawn from this incident. I presume it to demonstrate that, for some reason, we have failed to pass on to the younger generation the gravity of the mission our country has been assigned in the world. I only hope that all is not lost, in our battle for the minds of American youth.

Gregory Scott
Miami Beach, Fla.

AZZALEAS

Dear Editors:

Many of us who have come to appreciate the beauty and splendor that the azzalea has brought to our homes were dismayed that your magazine would insult the little fellow by misspelling his name [¹"Azzalea Revival: the flower that is sweeping America," March 28].

Azzalea, for your information, is spelled with one "Z", not two.

Mrs. William C. Palmer
West Virginia Rhododendrum Soc.
Cucumber, W. Va.

-- RICK BROWN

