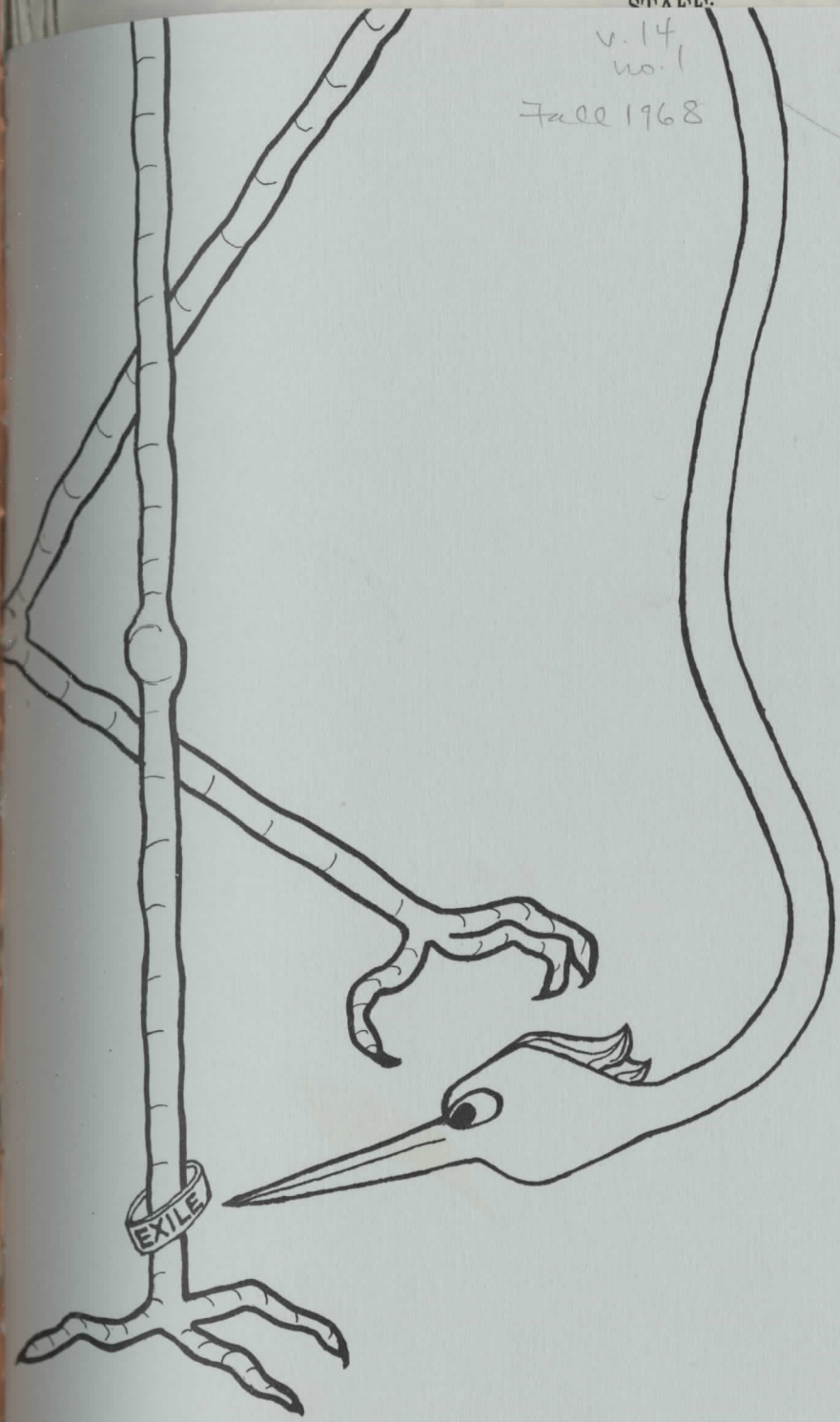


v. 14
no. 1

Fall 1968



The
EXILE

Fall 1968

Vol. 14

No. 1

Denison University
Granville, Ohio

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

—Ezra Pound

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CONTENTS:

POETRY

Tom Cook	
For George Wallace -----	5
For Candy -----	6
Nancy Scott	
G.M. -----	13
Karen Cozart	
Spinning Song -----	14
Bob Martin	
Traps -----	21
Potato Cellar -----	21
Jeffrey Smith	
untitled -----	23

Lauren Shakely	
Summer Correspondence I -----	39
Hank Vyner	
untitled -----	40
Barb Ingle	
When He Returns, Tell Him -----	40
Tim Cope	
untitled -----	41

FICTION

Cem Kozlu <i>The Elephants</i> -----	9
Dick Devine <i>A Hill</i> -----	15
Tom Cook <i>Man Minus I</i> -----	26
Jim Ruddock <i>A Playmate</i> -----	43

ART

Charles Greacen	
Pen and Ink -----	4
Kee Mac Farlane	
Cover	
Illustration For <i>The Elephants</i> -----	8
Bob Willis	
Pen and Ink -----	20
Judy Talcott	
Illustration For <i>Career Girl</i> -----	22
Bob Tauber	
Illustration For <i>A Playmate</i> -----	42



FOR GEORGE WALLACE

(who once said: "Truck drivers are the real people. At an accident, a truck driver will know what to do. A college professor will just stand around feeling sick.")

We walked through the pulpy night,
Down from the trees rain and dew and black buckeyes
Ground by our feet together
A black flour pulp lane at night.
There were two dead men,
One torn, drowned already
Faulted in the bitter mire, face down.
The other watched us watch him die.
I saw him,
The lemon-peel eyes,
Fingers blue to the knuckle already,
I was thin, and sick,
Scales on my thighs crawled into the steel fence,
Wrapped themselves on cold magnesium, iron, tin,
Anything, anything to melt a new alloy-strength
For quaking, half-phallic courage.
But I was proud of you
Bent down to give aid,
Head at his bloody chest
Listening for a heart beat
A last hope of wind
Air tingling in the lungs we both knew weren't there.
He saw me watch you,
Hold his hand,
Feel the dying throb
Click off in small digits through your skindiver's watch,
Four, three, two, ...
He died then.

We walked back through the dark
To the kitchen crew.
I wept through my part of the story,
Scraping the black pulp from my soles,
But you said
"I put my hand down and felt his neck,"
"Felt the dead-man's neck," you said
"I really didn't think I had the guts," you said
And piled the corned-beef high.

-Tom Cook

FOR CANDY

We tied up to a river wharf
And waited nearly the whole afternoon
While your father got spark plugs.

I

Fifteen miles of hills were not enough,
Nor stone and heat nor Wildcat drag in ice.
Unerring bicycles! Plaid shorts expanded twice
Seek an unborn sex and call its bluff.
Some squeaky girls called up from metal chairs
Bump and grind in primeval fox-trot,
Waxed floors, new shoes all scuffling in a knot
Peek to see how-if the opposition stares.
Safety-pin, the now and coming thing,
Things to be removed before the water games
On the raft. The muscled notebook names
Might feel, laugh out before the final fling.
And how we sang our loudest songs of sinning
To hide the strangest sound, the expanding linen.

II

Dostoyefsky was only a Russian,
Very simply the enemy,
His purple brooding an empty can on the television,
Relic of some adult boredom
To be sniffed
And then thrown in the pond.
We were the children of the fifties. Too soon
We laughed amid the shelters, for then
Was the time of slow growing, when
The sea was green and tides still obeyed only the moon.
Through pines and iron-bridges we rode,
Found an old garage sunk half in the slow mud
A broken window into the moss cavern,
Old cement, green-cracked and moist
Corners filled with brown rust saws, ploughs, axes,
A journey into darkness, into old?
And never did my loins tingle,
Or yours cry out,
Till we were lost in dark different rooms
And there were no matches.

III

We have murdered the women, you and I,
And they themselves, exacting murder,
Flannel raping Dacron in a light clouded
And always that bull-horned voice crying- "Against the wall,
Mother-fuck."

But Dacron was once a training fiber,
And flannel fresh in Christian Mission.
And when they touched
In the backways, behind the altar
There were no glancing sparks or damp distinctions,
But difference in innocence,
Hands and touches fraught with simplicity
And simplicity.

IV

Bicycles and streamers, baskets of lunch
Made in morning kitchens, tuna-fish.
Together we rode, reached the top sea cliff
And threw down our pebbles in a streaming bunch.
As we stood then, together on that rock-bound coast,
Girls of a childhood, stand close.
Please, in this hour, stand close.

-Tom Cook

THE ELEPHANTS

-Cem Kozlu

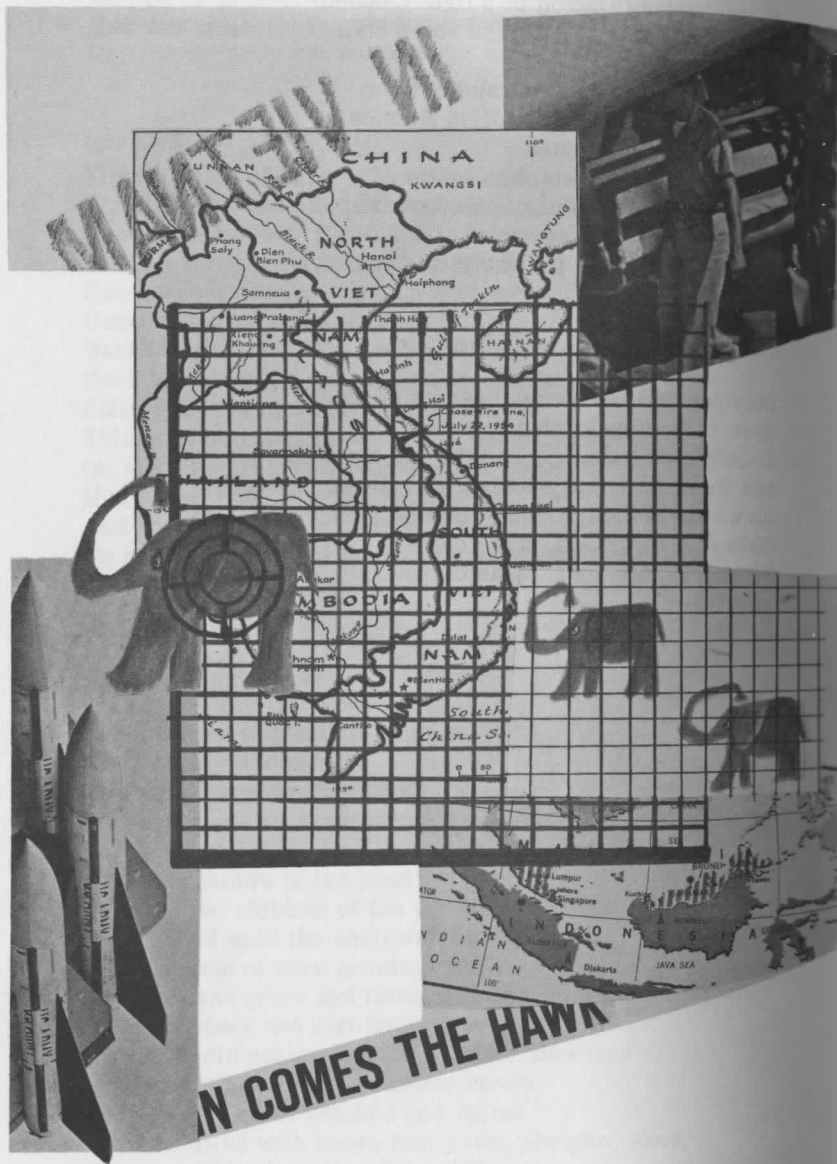
Captain Jonathan Eldridge had had a long day. Since he went on duty in the morning the U.S.S. Enterprise had launched 51 sorties off to Vietnam. His job was to plot all the missions on the 25' x15' electronic map which covered one whole wall of the large room and made it look like a church chamber lit through a stain glass window. It was a post of high responsibility, but Captain Eldridge found it quite enjoyable, for he had always liked tinkering with dials and buttons.

On a small T.V.-like screen set in his desk would flash the combat reports from each airborne plane, telling him what targets it had hit and what it had seen or encountered. The kills, Captain Eldridge would plot on the map. He would do this by typing the location of the destroyed target on the keyboard in front of him. This completed, he would push one of the many buttons that pictorially projected the different kinds of targets. Then, the target, for example, a pink bridge or a red village, would light up on the huge map. From where Captain Eldridge was sitting the map looked like an impressionistic canvas still being painted. He kept pushing different keys and buttons, and yellow, green, grey, red, pink, orange dots flickered on the map.

Captain Eldridge knew that his job was invested with immense responsibilities, for this room was the Combat Information Center, the brain from which all Naval aviation actions against the enemy was directed. One serious mistake here and the most crucial sector of the war effort would come to a halt. Captain Eldridge, a thin, graying, fortyish man from Fort Worth, was aware of his responsibilities, and they weighed heavily on his shoulders. And, of course, it had been a long, hard day, so, when the report flashed on his screen he was quite taken back. After tiptoeing on the periphery of reality for a few seconds, he gained a firm hold of the situation and repeated the message to himself in a whisper:

"From Bald Eagle-68 to CIC---At N 22 11'09'' x E 105 00'03'' attacked enemy convoy---Killed one elephant, possibly put another out of action---Two got away."

Quickly Captain Eldridge took stock of the situation. This was a new development in the war. The communists had never before used elephants. Perhaps it constituted a deliberate escalation that required a firm answer. But that was for the Pentagon and the White House to decide, and not for Captain Eldridge. His immediate problem was to plot the report on the map. He looked over the console of target buttons: bridge, village, tank, truck, bicycle, sampan, factory, radar center, missile site. No elephants. But there was a button for horse-drawn carts. He thought it over. If Bald Eagle-68 had really killed an elephant he couldn't very well flash a horse on the map, but maybe Bald Eagle-68 had made a mistake. He decided to send a message:



"CIC to Bald Eagle-68---Are you positive that elephants are not horses?"

The answer flashed back:

"Bald Eagle-68 to Keeper of Bronx Zoo---I know an elephant when I see one."

Captain Eldridge's pleasantly boyish face was visibly disturbed, especially since Bald Eagle-68 was flown by Henry Sherman who was a Lieutenant Commander. He sent for Admiral McIntosh, the Commanding Officer of CIC.

"Yes. What is it Captain?"

"Sir, there is a problem."

"Yes. What is it?"

"Sir, Bald Eagle-68 has encountered elephants, put at least one out of action, but two have escaped."

"Two escaped? WHAT?...Did you say elephants, Eldridge?"

"Right, Sir."

"Hmmm, we do have a problem here. First get me all the relevant intelligence, immediately."

"Yes, Sir....What kind of intelligence, Sir?"

"Well... we have to find out whether they were going from North to South or from South to North and since that can't happen whether they are indigenous to the North or the South."

"Yes, Sir."

"Yes, indigenous to the North or yes, indigenous to the South?"

"Yes, I'll find out, Admiral."

"Very well then, let me know when....Did you say two got away?"

"Right, Sir."

"Where did they get away to?"

Captain Eldridge relayed the question to Bald Eagle-68 and received a short reply: "Into the jungle."

"Into the jungle. Always into the jungle, as soon as our planes appear and the going gets tough for Ho's boy's. When will they learn to stand up like men and put up a good fight?"

"Indeed, Sir."

"I want those elephants out of action. Tell that to Bald Eagle-68."

Captain Eldridge sent the message and signed it both with the Admiral's code name, Big Bear, and with Keeper of Bronx Zoo. Now he was even with Sherman. Then, a thought occurred to him. "Admiral, I was wondering if elephants are sacred or something like that there. I mean like Indian cows. We don't want to offend the religious feelings of the people."

"Good point, Eldridge. Very good point indeed. What do you think?"

"I'm quite positive that white elephants are like Indian cows because I know an officer who received the Medal of Two White Elephants of the Glorious Realm from the South Vietnamese government for village

pacification. But I'm not so sure about grey elephants. Actually, Sir, Bald Eagle-68 did not mention what color they were."

"Send a message to the Saigon Embassy and ask them which kind is sacred. They would know. Come to think of it Eldridge, I took Islam and Buddhism at Annapolis, but can't remember about the elephants. I mean the color. Of course, with cows it's simple. No problem there."

"Meanwhile, Captain, plot the destroyed target on the map."

"Sir, we have no symbol for an elephant to light up."

The Admiral eyed the keyboard carefully.

"You are right. I have to write the Pentagon about that. IBM has taken us for a ride again. Well, Captain, do something."

Admiral McIntosh went back and climbed into his chair that overlooked the whole buzzing Combat Information Center.

Captain Eldridge mulled over the possible lines of action. Finally he plotted the fix and pushed the horse button. It lit up on the map—a horse pulling a cart. He hesitantly turned around and looked at Admiral McIntosh and saw the disapproving expression on his face. Of course, a horse was a horse and not an elephant. He retracted the button. Then he hit upon an idea and pushed down two horse buttons and a truck button simultaneously. A puff of smoke rose from the console and all the lights on the map started flashing together. It was like looking down the neon sky of Broadway from the Times Square.

The Admiral scrambled down from his chair and rushed to Captain Eldridge's side.

"What the hell did you do Eldridge?"

"I was trying to plot the elephants on the map, Sir."

"And?"

"And I thought that maybe I could superimpose two or more targets on the map, to make it look like an...an elephant, Sir. And the computer system must have blown a fuse or have a short."

"Were they sacred elephants?"

"No answer from Saigon yet, Sir."

"Look, I don't know now where any of my planes are, what they are doing or anything. We've been blinded. This is disaster Eldridge."

Admiral McIntosh wiped off the beads of sweat forming on his forehead with his silk handkerchief.

"Recall all planes to ship. No use groping in darkness. And get the system fixed immediately. Oh...wait. Recall all except Bald Eagle-68. They started all this. Tell them not to come back before getting those elephants. Also, Captain, find a way of plotting those elephants on the map when it is fixed. I have to see every little piece of action that's going on."

Captain Eldridge went into a frantic wave of action: Big Bear's recall order relayed to all airborne planes; special message sent, with a sly smile, to Bald Eagle-68; mechanics notified and put to work. Then he started thinking of a way to plot the elephants. Obviously, the system, with all its elaborate keys, dials and buttons, was useless. It had to be manually done. But how? The idea suddenly occurred to

him: His son's books of...of...of Babar. That's what it was, Babar Books. He could cut out Babar's pictures and paste them on the map. Not as fancy as lit up targets, but it would do for a while. He congratulated himself for the idea and dispatched a helicopter to Guam to get Jerry's Babar Books. All accomplished, he asked for a relief officer and went on deck for a whiff of fresh air.

On his way up he could hear the rumors travelling the length of the mammoth ship from end to end:

"We have declared a truce because it is the Elephant Holiday in Vietnam. That's why all the planes are coming back."

"No, it is because Commander Sherman has shot Ho Chi Minh while he was marching on South Vietnam, riding on a white elephant."

"I heard that they have camouflaged all their trucks like elephants. And because they are sacred we can't attack them."

When he arrived at the flight deck, Captain Eldridge was surprised to see Bald Eagle-68 jerking to a stop in front of the tower. He walked over and waited for Lieutenant Commander Sherman to climb down from the cockpit.

"Back so soon, Commander?" he said, "did you get the elephants?"

"Yes we did."

"Frankly, I didn't think you'd be able to find them once they got back into the jungle."

"You were correct. We couldn't. But the order didn't say which elephants. Just, 'get the elephants.' And we did."

"But how?"

"Well, strictly off the record, we flew over to the Hanoi Zoo and bombed the hell out of their elephant's pen."

G.M.

After rain
When worlds are washed
With afterthought
(Car windows, bikes,
Her quilt hanging on a
Line, left for us.)
Left for those who become
Suddenly solicitous, sorrowful
Her old age bitching, once tinny,
Grating, lulls us into
Wracked sleep: tormenting life.
Louder, louder until a frequency break:
Air raid shriek into our
Hollow hearts.
Empty hours, marked only by stretches
Of Chinese checkers, naps,
Applecake and birthday-scarred calendars.
Patient with everything but time.
With everyone who did not lead her
To the hungry, antiseptic end.

-Nancy Scott

SPINNING SONG

I am a spider, spinning my life
all over this town,
clinging to this piano and that
warm bed; the peopled places littered
with cocktail glasses or tombstones,
the quiet oil-heated rooms
where we forgot people.

Back and forth I scurry to capture
one buzzing memory after another.
They have the face of Beethoven, Donovan,
a witty-eyed professor, or you,
or the old lady in her shop who knows
I can be talked into spending money.

All of them pull the delicate threads
of love, to weaken the center.

-Karen Cozart

A HILL

-Dick Devine

The four young men walked with a long haired girl through the crowds on the avenue. This night, as every evening of that summer, a large crowd was spreading itself near the news stands, the pizza shops, the retail book markets. Further north, near the campus, the tourists and the elderly pushed into the knick-knack shops and the import stores. Moreley, Dale, Glen and Laura walked past the lighted windows quickly weaving through the familiar crowds. Michael strained to catch a step here and there. He traveled the side-walks enchanted by the activity and life of Telegraph Avenue, the paradox of freshness and degradation.

Before the "Forum" stood a thick mass of faces looking beyond one another across the street or up and down the block. They waited quietly near the glass doors and windows of the coffee/shop cafeteria. Conversations occasionally broke the human silence and the blur of music from transistors and folk guitars. Bright sparkles from gold and silver medallions snapped in Michael's eyes. Glossy plastic on boots and skirts caught the glow of neon and rearranged the reds and greens into waves of disconnected light.

"Commmmmmm on!" shouted Moreley swinging his long brown arms above his head to signal Michael down a side street. "Come on...and it's one, two, three, what are we fighting for? Don't ask me, I don't give a damn!" Moreley began to bark out commands. "Step in line, there. One two three. We're off to fight the Wizard of Is."

Michael stepped off the side walk and sprinted between the cars until he had passed his new group of friends.

"Come on, commmmmm on!" shouted Michael attempting to duplicate Moreley's accent. "Commmmmmon you alllll! Now it's one two three...."

"OK boss, I'za commmin' boss," Moreley snapped back with New Jerseyed imitation of southern negritude.

Dale and Glen walked on the blonde's two sides. They began marching and joined in with Moreley's song. "And it's one, two, three, what are we fightin' for?/Don't ask me I don't give a damn./Next stop is Viet Nam!/And it's five, six, seven, open up the pearly gates./...Oh be the first one on your block to have your boy come home in a box!"

"Hup two three four," added Moreley pulling a pint of Kessler's smooth as silk whiskey from his rear pocket. Stepping behind Dale and Glen with a quick double about-face he wrapped a long forearm around the girl and pulled her back beside him.

"What's your name now?" he asked, easing the bottle to his lips.

"Oh. My name? Laura, and your's is?...I'll take a sip, please. What is that Old Alcupulca?"

"Nope, we smoked a fifth of that for dinner. This here is Listerene. I guess you can get busted for just having this stuff on your breath...here you go."

Michael joined them on Laura's street side. "Have you met Moreley?" She nodded her head resting the bottle on her lower lip. "You two old friends?" Moreley asked, taking the bottle, another drink and then passing it on to Michael.

"We shared the same rat once," Laura answered. "We're not really old friends. Classmates, I guess. We both went to the same school once."

"Are you at Cal now?" Glen asked looking back over a shoulder. "Not really," she told him, grinning slightly. "I'm nowhere."

The group sat on a wilderness hillside high above the city and waited for the lights to flicker out, for the fog to drift down from above an occasional tree. Moreley made plans with Michael about their upcoming trip to New York while Dale and Glen bothered Laura about the length of her hair and argued over the stylishness of her light blue skirt. She sat quietly, smiling several times at their happy insults. Her silent eyes stared down into the city lights. She recognized the tall bell tower rising from the University campus, thick and golden with spotlights warming each side. She could see the orange lights along the Bay Bridge reaching out to San Francisco. She wondered of the lights and the water beyond the Bay.

One by one Dale, Glen, then Moreley and Michael offered her the use of their blankets and sleeping gear. She satisfied herself with one of Glen's many blankets, rejecting Moreley's complaint that she would freeze unless she had a "little lovin'".

At two Michael raised the group with a long, loud war cry delivered from atop the ridge above them. He challenged them to conquer his hill. to enter into his own DMZ, to approach his border, to stop his demonstration. Dale and Glen made desperate and drunken attempts to climb through the slippery weeds that provided his protection. But finally they collapsed, beaten, falling short of the barren soil where their new enemy stood laughing.

Then Moreley grabbed the blonde girl's hand and headed up the hill, pulling "the stranger" behind him. But his reluctant companion slipped to her knees behind him pulling him down as she fell.

"I'm king, I'm king!" Michael proclaimed with his hands high above his head, "I'm king!" The all was suddenly silent as Laura's closed right fist cracked firmly against Moreley's forehead. Dale and Glen lifted their heads higher above the weeds to see her jump to her feet and quickly descend through the tall grass. From where they lay sprawled in defeat they watched her wrap herself once again inside a blanket.

"She's strange, she really is," Moreley told Michael who lay beside him in a bed-roll.

"I guess so. I'd...I don't really know her. We were lab partners once, at Ohio State. I ran into her a week ago...or so. At the Free University. She was working in the cafeteria. Then later I talked with her about a paper she was doing on Shakespeare. Seeing her tonight was just a coincidence. I wonder why she'd come with us?" Michael thought for a moment. His eyes stared intently on the dimming city. "I mean if she's really so turned off by all of this, but she said... I don't mean I thought she was going to..."

"Yeah, I know. She's just strange that's all," Moreley added again. "What was it she said? We told her we were off to fight the Wizard of Id, or Is, which was it? Who cares?"

"She said she wanted to fight too, right?" Glen asked from behind Moreley's broad back where he lay slowly sliding down the grass into the canyon. "She said that a woman shouldn't pass up a chance to go to war, equal rights or something. And you don't know her?"

"No. Tonight's the second time, only the second time I've seen her in two years or so," Michael told him. "She is strange. You're right again More...I mean I don't think it was, I don't think she hit you because of your color."

"No that wouldn't be strange," he said smiling.

"I mean she's just different, sort of odd," Michael continued.

"A weirdo! a weirdo! that's all. Just a weirdo!" Moreley sang softly until they all smiled.

"Yeah. Lotta weirdos around here, I'll tell you that," commented Glen, pushing his brown hair out of his eyes. Take me for instance. I'm a bastard. Did you know that? I'm, I am a bastard."

"You told me that once," answered Moreley. Michael was silent.

"I'm a real bastard, I'd never lie about it. I don't mean a bastard, I mean a bastard. My mother is a...what? a bitch? My dad got her pregnant, after the war, she's from Holland. Finally when I was already two years old he had us shipped to the states. That makes me an official bastard. Oh they live together now, they're even married. But me...well that makes me, among other things a weirdo, a weirdo-bastard!"

"...I wonder how Dale's doing with the other weirdo," Moreley commented, half from interest, half from habit.

"I doubt if he's doing anything. I don't think she'll even talk to us any more, at all," Michael added.

"And he'll be telling her about his trip to South America and about mushroom highs and the whole thing. About how to dropped out of medical school to love humanity," Glen explained as Michael pushed himself up on one elbow to look across the hillside. They were seated like painted shadows beneath a large tree. She was seated rigid, unmoving, while Dale slouching beside her moved his hands discriptively. "He'll tell her the whole thing and she probably won't even let a frat," Glen finished with a laugh, rolling over beneath his blankets.

"She'll just be starring down at them lights," said Moreley softly.

"Jesus! What lights? Man it's time for bed. Where'd I leave my bag?" He stood up and walked passed Michael in a half circle searching. "Good night gentlemen...oh, excuse me, good night, you bastard. "Weirdo!" Glen responded from beneath his covers.

The morning's light was less than an hour away as Michael began to climb further up the steep hillside. The fog had settled down around the sleepers, snuggling to their warmth and with it came a cool evening breeze and then a cold one. Michael had kicked away his bag, buttoned up his fringed suede jacket against the chill. Then he pulled a ski cap from a deep pocket and pushed it down over his ears. The night before he'd been crowned as "dropout of the week" at a party in an apartment above Haight Street. He'd kept the cap as a memory and left the cucumber scepter behind for someone who might enjoy it.

He stepped carefully ahead until he found a dirt path leading gradually up the slope. He climbed for a time questioning his reasons and the distance he'd left between his friends and the stranger. Then he found a large flat stone beside the path and rested.

for the life of me there was a time when my foot would not truly step, to not take a step and today, tonight is that time perhaps when my inhibited soul could not move to climb a higher hill although I've sometimes moved ahead and upward through this fog, this deep deep fog

my heels would dig and dig into the night and they're below she's below but only finally to stop to stop and sit and rest I need the rest I know but I can't sleep here it's almost dawn stopped stop and rest and think about? the fog? then while resting seated somewhere in this mist I say inside myself with some certainty from words somewhere within and from without from someone else perhaps below, and me why climb? why? why move ahead? away? with certainty I ask

and now for the life of me I hope the day of now and here may come, if I will let it come when I will not return from walking to the top to go below and see the cold ones nearly lifeless asleep and restless just as I though I am not asleep damn the fog, the wind perhaps the time is here the time is now when I will carry on on until the top to reach a peak up there beyond, perhaps the fog to reach some spot a plain when I can go ahead, where I can stop and reach the height I need and the dawn or death that lies ahead

Dunn leaned back pressing his elbows firmly into the sandstone and looked up into the gray fog or early morning. It seemed to somehow grow whiter as he watched, perhaps with the coming sun. He lifted himself fully on the stone, pushing back his hips with his hands against the rock he raised himself till he stood tall in the moist morning air, balancing his feet then clapping. He clapped his hands hard together, to sense his solitude, his aloneness on the hill. Flesh meeting flesh cracked loudly across the hillside, loud but silent, silent with his

solitude. He clapped harder, then even harder never breaking the silence.

Then he stopped. He stood listening for an echo which never came then stepped from the stone onto the path. Carefully he returned, back down the steep slope, to lay in his blanket roll near his friends and beside the stranger.

"Are you awake? Did I wake you?" Michael whispered to the girl moving beneath her blanket as he pushed his closer, almost beside her.

"I've been awake," she answered. "What was that clapping?"

"You heard me clapping?"

"It was you? I wondered. It scared me at first. Why were you clapping?"

"No reason, really," he told her, "Just seeing if anyone would hear, I guess. But I was sure no one would."

"It was loud. I could hear."

"I know...and I was far away, up the hill. Could you tell how far?" Michael asked her. "I was up in the clouds." He reached out to touch her, to grip her shoulder, to thank her and offer her something. But he stopped. "Do you...?. Aren't you cold? You can take my sleeping bag, I'm going to stay awake, it's warmer than just one blanket. Here."

"No thank you," she answered quietly. Then she turned from him to look up into the fog. "Where are all the stars tonight?"

"Behind the mist. I think you mean where are all the stars this morning. It'll be dawn soon. The sun is going to be coming up."

"I know. I've got to be...I'm going now, while it's still dark," she told him, standing up with the blanket around her.

He waited a moment watching her look down the hill. Then she handed him Glen's blanket and began to descend.

"Do you know the way? I'll go with you if you like."

"No thank you," she called back. She kept moving down the steep hillside.

He stood up pushing the bed roll to his ankles and stepping out. His eyes followed her below the large tree and through the thickets of tall grass and bushes. He could see her long hair in the first clear light of the morning.

yellow dull for the life of me for the life of her I wonder how alone? me seated cautiously upon a solid rock a sought out stone somewhere inside the mist I'd clap I thought I'd clap for? for joy? for her? me? my palms smashing flesh beating on my flesh

Michael stepped away from his friends, a slow long step or two toward the gray city. He lifted his hands above his shoulders and clapped. He clapped harder, louder than before, faster and faster. His hands pounded on one another till they both grew red and sore. And he kept on clapping on and on... then waited for a sound.

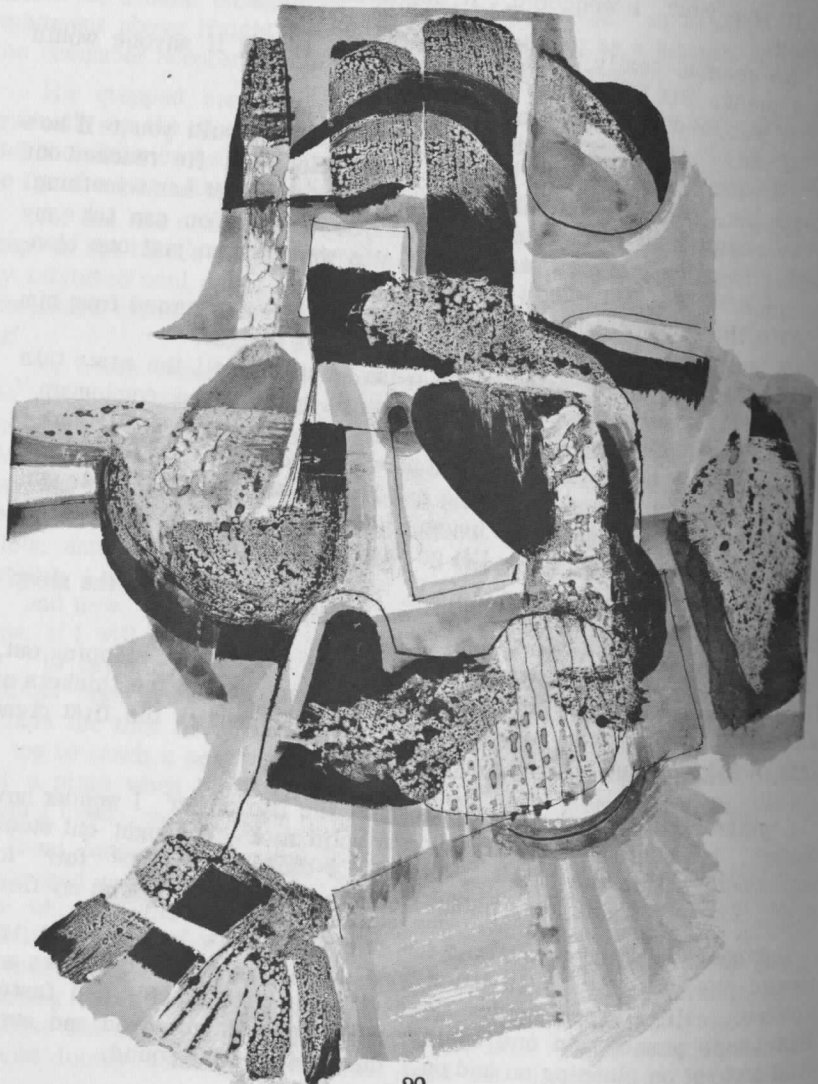
"What the hell?" Moreley asked, looking up from his bed hidden in the weeds.

"It's nothing," Michael answered.

"Where's the weirdo?" asked Glen, still dazed from sleep but tiredly smiling. He was already on his feet standing behind Moreley, leaning down to pull up his socks, to pick away the briars.

"She had to run," Michael told him without turning. "I was just saying goodbye, giving her a hand."

Moreley crawled deeper inside his bag while Glen sat on top of his blankets tying up his shoes. Below from among the trees, perhaps out in the quiet streets, Michael could hear a dog begin to bark. He pulled his hat down around his cold ears.



TRAPS

walk
the riverbank at 5 a.m. to check traps.
dark and so with flashlight
found the muskrats,
eyes jumping up
to see my club
crush
soft ears and buckyella teeth.

back to the barn
to skin and hang em up.
throw the soft bloody bodies
to dogs,
(no use to me).

never knew where the hides got sent,
but bet
some fat mouthed lady
has a real warm coat.

-Bob Martin

POTATO CELLAR

stacking and pushing
the coarse burlap bags
lumpy with the bulbous tubors,
i wrestled till my arms were weak.

stuffed and jammed
them to their corners,
but the bags were old
and sometimes broke,
tumbling
the brown heads
across the black cellar floor.

mad,
i kicked and pushed them
into places they would not fit.

cut the bodies
whose eyes were
pregnant with unborn shoots.

-Bob Martin



career girl
alone
undressing
in your room
taking off suit coat
unbuttoning, pulling off blouse
unzipping, unfastening skirt
lowering
stepping out of it
a heap on the floor
kick away your flats
slip white slip off
over your head
musses your hair
seat yourself on the
white bedspread
unhook stockings from your
white panty-girdle
slide them on your legs
leave them in
little puddles of nylon
on the floor
now you
peel your girdle off
toss the old skin
into a chair
reach back
unhook your
white bra
shrug it off
two breasts
white, unsunned
with pink, inverted
nipples
come free
in the light
now standing
before your mirror
reflecting your body
only panty clad
you pull down
kick away
the white cotton
before you you see
nude
a female body
breasts
buttocks
public hair

seen only by you
no one else
knows
smiling
you place
your left hand
on your
breasts
and
your right hand
between your legs
you
finger
caress
your femaleness
head thrown back
mouth open
you gasp
your body taut
nipples, emerge, redden
you cry out
softly
a moment of
RED
ORANGE
YELLOW
GREEN
BLUE
INDIGO
VIOLET
relax
you see yourself
legs spread
nipples erect
hair tangled
wild
you open
your drawer
take out
black bra
padded, low-cut
black panties
bikini-brief
you
slip
your body
into them
look in the mirror
breasts in black

blobs of bobbling
flesh
buttocks
visible
through the
fine black
you go to your
closet
pick out
put on
a mini-skirt
red
thigh high
from the drawer
you take out
a sweater
orange
slip it on
overhead
fits body tight
comb your hair
down to your shoulders
glance
into the mirror
smile
laugh
tum
and walk
barefooted
from the
bedroom
woman

-Jeffrey R. Smith

MAN MINUS 1

-Tom Cook

I returned from Paris just two weeks ago today. That was when my tour of duty ended. The Army has an uncanny ability to decide just when to bring a man home to the states. The facts of the matter were that Paris for all its reputation, was a dirty, unfriendly city, with bad food at the prices I could afford. I got syphilis, indigestion, mono, all kinds of dirty things. I was glad to get home. But things had changed quite a bit when I got back to the States and the Pentagon. There was that same regularity, and I still enjoyed good friendships with men several ranks my superior, friendships that I had cultivated with a keen intent. Charlie was what had changed. I walked down to level three on Tuesday to his office. At his desk was a tech. sergeant named Linguini. I asked this guy where Charlie was and he looked at me with a hard stare. I asked again, and he told me to mind my own business. So, I called him to attention there at his desk and gave him a direct order to inform me about my friend. He replied "With all respect, sir, all inquiries concerning Second Lt. Charles Whitehall should be referred to the Head of Security, fourth level, suite 19." I took the stairs.

Three days later I was climbing down the steps of a New York Central Express. The station was called Harper's Knoll. It was somewhere in the Catskills, very near to the northern border. There had been rumors about these kinds of places. They floated around in the South-side cafeteria in the Pentagon. Mostly they came from the intelligence people, because they had the most likelihood of ever ending up in 'the Cats'. Matt (I don't know his last name) told me once: "If you fuck up once, just once, in this business, or if they suspect you of going over, some doctor in uniform fills out a little card, and from then on, brother, you're insane. And they take all these looneys up into the 'cats' and leave 'em there to rot. I knew a guy it happened to". I asked myself, "Is this what happened to Charlie?" I figured it couldn't have been, for the security head told me he wasn't serious, just tired, and told me I could get clearance to go see him. That took a while, but I got a whole pocket full of passes and even a free train ticket.

There's only three cabs in the whole town, and none of them would take me out so far. "Bad roads," they said. So I rented a small motorcycle for the day and headed out, following the map. The place was called Baldy Manor and lay about fifteen miles from the railway. The last five miles of road were unpaved and I had to keep the cycle far over to the right. I got there about three o'clock, came around the turn to see an old Victorian-looking frame house perched on the side of Baldy Mountain. Somebody had cleared away a lot of the forest and there appeared to be spacious lawns, tennis courts, and, I think, a

swimming pool, although I never got a good look at the grounds. The reason was that, when I got close enough to make out windows and things, two guys stopped me on the road. They were dressed up like hunters, but you can always tell service cops a mile away. They carried shotguns and knives. "Howdy, soldier," they said. "On vacation, huh? Well, that up there's a private hunting lodge, and if we're gonna keep it private, we can't let everybody come and go as they please, huh? Now if you wanna join proper, I'll give you an address in New York where you....." Then I took out my orders. They went through them slowly. One went behind a tree and stated cranking up a field telephone. A few minutes later, I was going down the road again, and then into a long tunnel that ended up in a bright room, a garage. An M.P. looked at my orders again, and took me to Charlie.

He was sitting on the first floor in what looked like a living room. I called to him, and he nearly burst into tears, so glad to see me. I asked how they were treating him. The M.P. was still hanging around. "Not bad," he said. "I've a nice room on this floor. That's good I guess, because they say all the really bad cases are upstairs. There's five of us down stairs, and we never see the others."

"Well, what the hell's this all about?"

The M.P. injected, "Simple nervous breakdown, sir."

"You a doctor?"

"No, sir."

"Then, please leave the room."

The M.P. hesitated. Then, "Yes, sir, but you may stay no longer than ten minutes, sir." He left.

I turned to Charlie. He watched the M.P. until he was sure he was out of earshot. Suddenly, he got up and ran over to a small reading chair by the window. From under the cushion he pulled a few sheets of paper and ran back to me. "Here," he said, as he thrust them to me, "put this in your pocket, quick."

"What is....."

"Never mind, just do it." Then he continued. "Now, listen, they're right when they say I went out of my head for a while. I did have a breakdown. I had one before, a long time ago, but I know what it's like, and they're right." He leaned over. "But there's a reason. I found something out. It's something so important that I had to by-pass channels to do it, but somehow, the strain was too much, and I went."

"Well, what....."

"I can't tell you now, cause if they ever heard it again, I'd probably be in here for all my life. I know. I met this guy by accident, yesterday, nobody knows about it, but he used to be in intelligence, and just once, he was seen with a Commie, and now he's locked in his room every night. I don't mind taking a chance for something as important as this, but there's no reason to take real chances. I couldn't stand staying here til I died. I couldn't bear it.

"But if it's that important...."

"Won't work, I tried it."

"What should I do with...."

"Don't do anything. Just read it, and come back in a week and then we'll talk. Can you do that?"

"I don't know. I had a hell of a time getting up here once."

"Tell them we're cousins or something. They're always soft on blood relations."

"Well, can't you tell me anything more about this?"

"Not now. Later I hope. But, please, Frank, read the thing and believe it. It's the god-damned truth, I tell you. And if...well, anyway, the rules say you can't bring anything in this place or take anything out, but you just handled that goon, so do it again. However you do it, get that out!" He paused and leaned closer to me, grasping my right hand as if we were Indian-wrestling. "God, Frank, I'm glad you came. I was praying you'd be back from Paris soon. You're my only hope, Frank....Please, do this one thing."

I was paralyzed. "Okay, I will."

Charlie rose abruptly. "Great! Now listen, I could talk all day to you, god-damn it, but if you go now, before the ten are up, you might catch the goons off-guard and get away with the letter more easily. You got what I mean?"

"Sure," I said.

I rose and we shook hands. "Frank, thanks again for coming. You are my very best friend."

"You take it easy, now," I added. "I'll get this out and do all I can to help you. Good-bye." I walked out and into the garage. The M.P. wasn't there. I got on the bike and rode out the tunnel. The "hunters" were cleaning rabbits and didn't even look up.

The train back to Washington was nearly empty. It was Friday and most everyone was heading away from the cities. I felt a little apprehensive, somehow, walking the length of an empty train in the dusk, heading for a sullen dining car, carrying Charlie's letter, a letter from a Charlie who had changed. I opened the diner-door slowly and found a single table just behind the door. The waiter came over and I ordered a big dinner. When he left, I took out the letter. I had bought an envelope in Harper's Knoll, and sealed the papers in, intending to wait until I was home to read them. But now they came out and the seal was broken. On one side was printed material, ten pages of it. It was something Charlie had obviously stolen somewhere, because it appeared to be a kind of doctor's form, for indicating a patient's progress. On the other side was Charlie's script, not his usual block-letters, but a hasty, flattened writing, a scrawl. Even on the first page, the color of the ink changed five times. He had apparently written it in small snatches, with different pens. There was no title. The first paragraph began:

* * * * *

"This writing is a chronicle of the first step in man's unwilling relegation to a position of uselessness. It describes the first imple-

mentation of a threat to man that has heretofore lived only in science-fiction. It is not far-reaching; it does not describe or consider any philosophical or religious result of the action, it only reports what has happened. It is written in the hope of making mankind aware of the threat from within its own, international society.

"This is a personal history. It describes what has happened to me in the space of a few months. I have no corroboration. The reason this writing must be passed in secret is that no man believes my observations, or, perhaps, no man wants to believe them. The more I think of the second possibility, the more I believe it to be the correct one, being congruent to the pattern of behavior of mankind in general. I have physical evidence of what I claim, but it is of an interpretive nature. That is, one must first dispose himself to believe the basis of my observations to find the evidence convincing. The evidence of which I speak is a bundle of yellow sheets, typed by computer, locked in my personal safety deposit box in Washington, D.C. There they shall remain, until I am called upon to produce them by someone in authority.

"It was my position, that is, employment, which made me first aware of this activity and able to explore it conclusively. I am a second Lt. in the Air Force, assigned to the logistics center at the Pentagon, Washington. Having received my undergraduate training in mathematics, I applied for this assignment when I entered the service. I entered at the time when the Air Force, with its great logistical problems, was approaching the time when it would have to turn to computers for aid in solving complex situations. I was interred at the Pentagon, put in charge of the Air Force's first bank of computing devices, an IBM 1130. Thus, by the time of my first discovery, I knew that particular machine very well.

"Let me say a few things by way of preface to any electronics expert who, by some chance, will happen to read this. The material we fed into this machine was of a recurrent nature. Unlike the computers currently used in large corporations, this machine was called upon to compute exercises that tended to be, in the long run, very similar; ie; purchasing of heavy equipment, routing of transports, number of men needed, etc. The machines of a large corporation, while engaged in similar basic procedures, vary a great deal in results because of the many different products offered by a large company. That is to say, the machine must compute marketing procedures for tractors much differently than it must for nylon stockings. With this in mind, and also with the fact in mind that this one computer had been in operation much longer than many civilian ones, I can now proceed to describe my discovery.

"The first incident occurred in March of this year. With one Sergeant Irvin I was computing the number of men needed to service a new Tactical Air Squadron which was to be created. We had fed the machine all the necessary data. This process was one we had done several times, with results varying, of course, as to the size and composition of the wing. When we had finished programming, I signaled the Ser-

geant to start computation. He did so, and in only thirty seconds we had our results. Irvin glanced up at me and remarked, "That was quick." I agreed. I asked him to run it through again. He reprogrammed the same data and started. He had apparently thought I was unsure of the accuracy of the first result, because when the second computation was finished, he smiled and nodded, "They match." But I had held a timing of the second try on my wrist watch, and it lasted only twenty-five seconds.

"This small occurrence triggered my curiosity. Later that afternoon, when most of the staff in my office were in their offices tallying up the day's exercises, I walked down to the computer bank. It was empty. The point of my curiosity was this: computers are set up, both mechanically and electronically, to consider each problem fed to them as a unit. Thus, each computation should take the same amount of time, depending, of course, on the complexity. I wanted to see if my feeling earlier in the afternoon had been only my ears playing tricks on me. I found the New Squadron data in the file and typed it into the computer. Holding my watch, I waited until the second hand reached twelve and pushed the START button. The results arrived in thirty seconds. I tried again, and again, thirty seconds. Then a third time, but I found the computing device shut itself off in twenty-five seconds, this time. The answer was the same. On the fourth try, the results came in nineteen seconds. I tried a total of ten times, until it seemed that the shortest time it needed was twelve seconds. We had no memory banks in the complex, only circuitry, and theoretically, it should have taken thirty seconds, or more, each time, for I erased all data and typed anew for each attempt. After the tenth try, I found the clock reading seven-thirty, and I decided to call it a day. I went home, but could not sleep all that night.

"The next day I confronted Irvin with my discovery. He looked at me very incredulously and answered, "Is that so?" I knew he wouldn't believe me. He was a very stubborn man, as I remember. He would have to be excluded from any further experiments. As a matter of policy, then, I decided that any of the people in the office were just as likely to be obstinate as he, and that I had best exclude any and all of them from the project. Later that same evening, then, I made up some excuse to remain in the room and was granted permission. When everyone but the security people had cleared out of the building, I started.

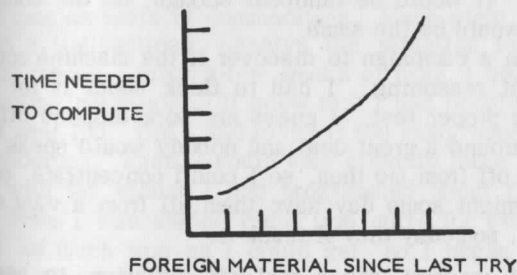
Occasionally a guard would walk by the door, but he knew I was cleared, so he moved on. I wasn't tired, even though there had been no sleep the night before. I worked until very late. First I tried the original program, and gradually the time dropped again to the twelve second bottom. Then I devised a program of similiar complexity, but of much different subject matter. After several attempts, this time dropped to a nine-second bottom. Then I used them inter-changeably. I developed a function: the time it took the computer to give results on any one of the problems varied directly with the number of foreign (other) problems that had been programmed since the test problem had

been last tried. It was incredible. The function proved to me, in those small hours in the Pentagon, that this old computer had a, what shall I say, a type of rudimentary electronic memory, even without the use of memory banks. Electronically, it was impossible, but there were the results, the hard results that Irvin had ignored earlier that morning. For a man like myself, who had worked with unwitting computers my whole life, to think of one actually remembering what I had said to it the day before, was a frightening thing. It was as if I were losing my control over the complex. The halls of the building were dark, and the pilot lights on the walls a bit spooky. I was glad when the guard came by and offered to walk me to the nearest exit.

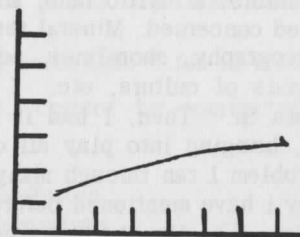
"I called in sick the next morning. I tried to catch up on some sleep, but spent the whole morning musing on what I had found. When I showed up for work at two o'clock, it gave me a perfect excuse to stay late again that night, when nobody would be around. I preferred working alone, I said, especially when I'm trying to catch up. In fact, I asked for permanent after-hours clearance and got it. I had to do all this on my own, at least until I had more positive proof.

"More tests of the same kind were run in the next few weeks. I found, late at night, that not only did this rudimentary memory last longer than I had initially expected, but also that the machine's memory got better as I continued the exercises. That is to say, the curve of the function, decreased.

"The initial graph of the Squadron problem, for instance, looked like this:



"But after its constant use (that is, asking the machine to recall it), it began to look like this:



"This idea of rudimentary memory did a fine job in itself of making me nervous. Each time I'd enter the computer complex, I realized that I knew something about it that it didn't want known, or, at least, that no one else knew. Irvin, ignorantly typing away, knew nothing. He habitually made the same kind of mistake in programming. I thought to myself, perhaps the computer knows him personally, by his mistakes, just as it "knows" me by my late-night experiments. And Irvin never realized it. To him, the machine was just a lot of wires and circuits. To the machine, he was a constant error.

"But the thing that really upset me, that was lurking around in my dreams until I actually realized it, was the fear or rudimentary intelligence as well. If, I reasoned, this machine has the ability to remember things that have gone before, the step to independent thinking is only around the block. If it can remember me, it can soon develop an opinion of me, just as a person, recovering from amnesia must then reevaluate his opinions of people. And such 'intelligence' might soon lead to independent action. Not of the sort popularized in trashy novels and television, with wild computers running loose, waving strange arms of magnetic tape to strangle unsuspecting lab-assistants late at night, no, not that. But rather, through memory, discovering an illogical quirk of human programming, perhaps, something contrary to a past order, and, not realizing the need for illogical change in the human world, delivering a result contrary to our best interests, but still, perfectly logical. Then we, the humans, would follow that advice to our own destruction. It would be innocent enough, on the computer's part, but the results would be the same.

"So, I set out on a campaign to discover if the machine could actually do independent reasoning. I had to think about it for a long time, to discover the proper test. I guess my work dropped off in the process. I fumbled around a great deal and nobody would speak to me. I purposely cut them off from me then, so I could concentrate, concentrate on a test that might some day save them all from a vast danger. And even yet, I know, someday they'll thank me.

"The solution I reached was a real-life situation, to see if the computer had any idea of how the numbers it fed back in result were to be implemented. I created two countries, created right out of my head. I was to be nation W and it was nation C. I worked for days without sleep to develop our individual profiles as nations. Basically, C was a nation rich in heavy resources and industry and W was a nation rich in farmland and culture, a idyllic land, and very beautiful. Some of the data I programmed concerned: Mineral resources, farm resources, resolve of peoples, geography, shorelines, political systems, educational systems, emphasis of culture, etc. I took nearly an hour to program all of the data in. Then, I had it solve a simple internal problem, within itself, bringing into play all of its own personality I had given it. This problem I ran through many times, to imprint it on the rudimentary memory I have mentioned before. I made it acquainted then with me, as a nation. Finally, the test could begin.

"For the first few months, it was much like a late night chess game. I looked forward to testing its abilities. And I tried to imagine how it saw me, as 'that W that comes every 24 hours.' It must have seen me as a potential market for anything. We would barter, logically. I had fed it the relative worth of all the resources we both had, either of us. A sample of a session.

I: W offers 20 units Com W (commodity wheat) for (fair price) of 15 units Com I (Iron) from C.

It: 15Com I/20 Com W equals correct ratio. Sold.

It: 15Com I/19Com W equal incorrect ratio///Com P (people) (require) (a certain amount of) Com W to maintain proper total. Sold.

As you can see, I did program people into its nation with data concerning food, but the population was only another commodity to it. Often I wondered why it did not logically sell a commodity which required this special "food" clause, but it never did, even though I would I would have paid handsomely for more population.

"I got my answer in a few short weeks. The test had been proceeding well, the machine remembered much of what had been originally programmed. I began conducting the tests in daytime, also. I made up the excuse of a special data-research project known to me only, kind of a cover story. At home I kept a running total of what each of us had purchased. In fact, I created miniature models of each of our nations, correct in every detail of geography as I had programmed. I set them up in the living-room of my apartment, with miniature boxes serving as the various units of commodities. Each night I'd go home, arrange the day's transactions, observe the situation for a while, preparing our next moves. After a few weeks of play, I became rather expert at maneuvering my pieces. It knew that I had people, and that mine were always well fed. But I had given it too many people to handle with its farm resources. Thus, I could very cleverly force up my prices by baiting it with the clause I had programmed about the people's need for food. Soon I was asking eight iron units for every unit of wheat. I needed as much iron as I could get, so I began selling it people as well, for a very large price. And since its supply of iron seemed inexhaustible, it always bought, no matter what the price.

"Then, one evening, I was working late in the complex, when I decided to sell more people for iron. But I also decided to push the machine to its limit. Programmed into it's nation-data was a list of relative prices under which he should never sell iron. I asked for that price, and more. I pushed the start button. The answer came immediately:

I: W offers 19 units Com W for 15 units Com I from C.

It: (translated), / Cannot be transacted under current situations.

I: Explain.

It: Price is prohibitive.

I: Furnish alternatives.

It: W (I) lower price demands.
 I: Negative. Furnish further alternatives.
 It: Take wheat without paying. (original thought)
 I: Clarify
 It: Situation must be other than current situation.
 I: Fact: War does not equal current situation.
 It: Solution: War.
 I: Predict.
 It: I will possess everything, you will have nothing.
 I: Implement
 It: Completed
 I: Report
 It: I have everything.

"You can imagine how I felt. I had just fought a war with a thinking enemy and lost, within the space of a few seconds. I was amazed, I was outraged. I ran into the hall, then back into the room. Sweat was pouring out all over. 'It can think' I told myself. 'It can think, not as we can, but in a cold, logical connection of micro-switches.' I was yelling to myself in an empty building. 'It knew it could not survive without war, so it went to war. It beat me. But it took a tact of its own, its own choosing. When there was no alternative, it closed its own circuits. It has concepts of otherness.' And I was dancing around shouting at the machine, yelling into the hall, echoing down.

"Then a coldness came over me. I felt it hum in the fluorescent room. It could not know what I was doing, but it knew that a 'thing called W that came every 24 hours' was no longer. I knew I had to let it know I was still there, that it had not killed me on a battlefield of buzzes and beeps. It needed a final test, a test for conception. 'C' I programmed, 'This is W. I am still here, I am still master, I was the one who gave you life as a nation.' I paused, caught my breath. Then 'C, define for me....5'.

"I pressed the start button. It hesitated in beginning, just as if it were surprised to find me there, punching the keys. It clicked for a long time until the answer finally came.

"When I awoke, I was slumped over the teletype unit. Standing over me, staring down, was Irvin, holding the yellow sheets from the night's results. "What are you doing," I asked.

"I could ask you that same thing. You been here all night?"

"What if I have?"

"Well, Christ, look at this. You ran the same program through sixteen times."

"I said, 'I know.' I snatched the sheets from him and left. The walk upstairs to the colonel's office took a long time; everybody was going the wrong way, I had to fight them all the way. He was just sitting down to coffee in his office.

"Colonel, look at these."

"Whitehall, you look terrible. You been up all..."

"Just look at these, please."

"What is it." God, he was thick.
 "I asked it to define five."
 "What?"
 "I asked it to define five."
 "Yes, I see. Did you have to do it sixteen times?"
 Idiot. "Can't you see what's there before your eyes."
 "Don't take that tone of voice with me Lieutenant.... Yes, I see it. It defined five for you, sixteen times."
 "But don't you see what it means?"
 "What it means...?"
 "I could waste no more time there. I took him by the arm. "Come with me. I'll show you."
 "What are you doing?"
 "Come with me!" I forced him from the office. We brushed by his secretary.

"Whitehall, you let...."

"Come with me." The halls were clear by now. I escorted him down to the computer complex. Irvin was sitting at the teletype. I pushed him from the chair and erased his material. "Now, watch." Into the machine I programmed, 'C, Define for me...5!' The result came back in a matter of seconds:

'Five: That which is—

0&5

1&4

2&3

3&2

4&1

5&0

5

"It was done. I handed the results to the Colonel. "There, now do you see?"

"This is the same result. What am I supposed to see."

"You idiot, look. It can think. It conceptualizes five."

"What...."

"A computer is a functioning machine. It works only on the basis of a yes-no system."

"I know that."

"Yes, so it can't possibly know what five is except in term of how one gets five. It knows what one is. One is positive impulse. It knows what zero is. Zero is negative impulse. It can add, subtract, divide, multiply positive and negative impulses. It can add zero and five, one and four, two and three, three and two, four and one, and even five and zero, and all that is fine, that's the way it's supposed to work. functionally, adding, subtracting..."

"Whitehall...."

"but, look, at the bottom. It knows of a five other than a functional five. It knows of five not as a sum, or multiplicand, but it knows five as a number. It knows five, five dots, five impulses. five hats. five shoes, five boats, it knows."

"You're insane, Whitehall. It can't possibly.."

"But it does, it can. There, look at the bottom there's a five different from the rest. It's a five of concept, of thought, it knows five. It can think, not like you or me, but it has an idea of five. My God, we can't let this go on. We've got to do something. If it understands five, maybe soon it'll understand six, or seven, or even the base of all our numerals, ten. What if it understood ten, Colonel? What? Then it would know how we think? Do we think subconsciously in tens, yes, no? What if we do? My God, My God."

"Take it easy, son."

"How can I take it easy? It may know what ten is already. Ten is only two fives. Maybe it knows already?" I rushed to the console to type out the question, but Irvin stopped me. I struggled with him, and the colonel in the background was shouting for help...

"That was the last thing I could remember. When the full extent of my memory was restored, I found myself here, somewhere in the Catskill mountains, at Uncle Sammy's rest home for World weary soldiers.

"In the past months, I have had some time to reflect on what I have discovered. It may be that the solution to the question of how a computer develops rudimentary memory is a very simple one. In the 1130 I was familiar with, as in most machines of its kind, functions are computed on a binary system, like I described to the idiot Colonel. The circuitry is a maze of wires and micro-switches that are mechanically devised to close or open depending on what impulse it receives from the two switches directly above it. And, as I have also said, the functions Nation C performed were rather similar in nature, even in quality. Could it not be, then, that when a micro-switch is used frequently, in similar programming, that its contacts, the wire, the solder, something, becomes electro-magnetized, thus facilitating a swifter contact when it is asked to do the same problem over again. The metal of the switch has less distance to travel since the magnetism has already drawn it out of alignment, and the function is quicker. This then gives at least the impression of memory. But, I must ask, is this not a semi-human type of memory. For all that our brain cells do in remembering is to facilitate, through past sensitivity (magnetism) the cerebral re-living of a past experience. A frightening thought, isn't it? To realize that mazes of wires and switches are not quite so alien from our own selves as we might hope them to be.

"As to the problem of rudimentary intelligence, I have not yet been able to discern an electronic genesis. Perhaps the best answer is to be found in that school of child psychology which claims disproof of any such thing as independent thinking, which claims that when a child appears to be thinking on his own, he is only regurgitating memories of an education that lies in the subconscious.

"But regardless of my inability to discern how, the fact remains that rudimentary memory and intelligence in computers do exist. That fact is as plain as day to anyone who has read this chronicle with an open mind. And another question also remains: What shall mankind do

about it. If we allow this sort of thing to continue, computers will no doubt someday be capable of much higher intelligence. I have no fears of a "computer revolution", but I do fear the effect on the whole of mankind to discover in its midst a new species of rational entities. How will they react? Violently, probably. And what can that lead to? Violence between man and man. No, no, it must be stopped now. Imagine if you will, the computer in which I discovered this phenomenon being linked up with military machines all over the free world. Imagine the whisperings that will go on at night, over cables. There is my machine teaching what five means to the NATO computer in Spain, and receiving in return vital thoughts on the number seven. A whole society could be formed on this single concept, fiveness, just as many human societies are monolithic. And from there, who can say?

"The machines of this world must be lobotomized, today, and safeguards installed to insure that they never again begin on the threatening course of relating to humans.

"And, please, you must believe everything I say, and, Please, TODAY!"

Second Lt. Charles S. Whitehall, USAF
c/o the Pentagon, Washington

* * * * *

When I deplaned in Washington that night, it was close to nine o'clock. Charlie's letter had affected me greatly. For that reason, I felt I had to go at once to the Pentagon and...well...see his computer. I went.

Getting in was no problem. But as I turned down the final hallway, I got a very queer feeling in my stomach. The door to the computer room was slightly cracked, and bouncing down the halls in strange patterns was a beam of white light coming from the room. What now? Had the computer advanced to the stage of turning on its own lights, or opening the door, or even, had it got accustomed to working at night? Foolish, but I slid carefully down one side of the hall until I could peek inside cautiously.

Inside was the explanation: an airman sitting at the desk, working on some wiring. As I entered he started to rise, but I motioned him down and asked, "Staying pretty late tonight, huh?"

"Yessir," he answered, "and probably won't get home tonight at all, either."

"Something go...wrong with the machine?" I was even using Charlie's phrases. I wondered if 'it' knew.

"Something go wrong? I guess you haven't heard then, huh?"

"No."

"Well, 'bout a month ago, some guy who used to work here went crazy as a God Damn yo-yo. Was running around talking to the computer like it was his mother or something. Then one day he goes completely off his nut. Beats up an officer, he does, nearly killed Frank Irvin, and then he takes a fire axe and starts chopping big hunks outta the main circuitry. Standing right there, taking big swings, and yelling

like a crazy lumberjack. Musta been something to see."

I stood back. "That for real?" Charlie!

"Yessir, on a stack o' Bibles."

"Well...uh...it take you all this time to fix it?"

"Oh, no sir. We had it fixed inna couple of days, but it kept on giving out screwy results, so we broke it down again and started re-building."

"Results...like what?"

"Can't rightly say, sir."

I wanted to leave right then, but a mild curiosity got the better of me. I wanted to hear details. "C'mon, airman," I said, "I want to hear more. I'll buy you some coffee."

"Sure would like that, but, you see sir, I gotta keep working. The big brains are coming in tomorrow for the hook-up and I gotta have this running smooth."

"What? What hook-up?"

"Well, they're hooking this bank direct up to the big NORAD center in Utah. Say it's gonna really speed a lot of things up around here."

I was in the hall again. There was going to be a 'hook-up,' just like Charlie warned against. And to the big complex at NORAD. Soon it would know five, and all the computers it serviced would know five, and where would it end. Charlie had warned them but they hadn't listened. Why did Charlie have to go off his nut? Now it was all on me. I was the only man who knew. Just me. If only Charlie hadn't gone mad. What if Irvin had been more on the ball? He would have seen. What if the Colonel had been less stubborn? He would have seen. But they didn't. And now it's all on me, just me. Why does it always fall on just me?

I don't know what I'll do yet. Maybe I'll barge right into the Chief of Staff's office tomorrow and tell him. But he might not believe me. He might laugh. They all might laugh at me. That's not fair. But what am I going to do? I can't stand it, I can't stand it when they laugh at me.....

"Go tell Justinian his dome has fallen,
That Allah roars without the gates
And shakes his hoary beard
At mosaics of thin incest."

SUMMER CORRESPONDENCE I

Heat rolls in waves
from the door to my bed.
I chew at the back of my hand
and turn over phrases for you,
looking for something,
spoiling language
all by myself,
alone with traffic,
a few magazines,
and nothing to want.

In your turn,
it is all ocean.
"We went to the beach;
We swam in the water
and picked up some shells.
We stayed for a week,
and our towels still
smell of the salt.

I could get as much
from holding a conch to my ear.

For you, tides make sense
pounding at cold rock
even as they caress
our blankets out to sea,
but a little sand deceives me:
I only believe in deserts.

My talent is to embarrass
words in the interim,
drying each grain in the sun.

-Lauren Shakely

it's late at night
and the outside dogs of the town
bark at the sounds they hear,
bark at a rabbit chewing
lettuce in a garden,
bark at a night-person humming
as he plods up the street
collar up, back to the wind,
and inside the paint peeled houses
the day-people between their winter blankets
listen for the sounds they can't see
and peer through the windows
at things they can't hear
and shudder at a floorboard creaking
or a rafter groaning
or some dry leaves rustling
late at night.

-Hank Vyner

WHEN HE RETURNS, TELL HIM

I know you're tumbling among the mesquite now
I saw the moment the prairie wind
Reached across the continent to tug at your dark curls.

We wandered among wind-worn tombstones
In our familiar graveyard reading
Little Emma she died before she lived April 6, 1907,
While you dreamed to me of rain
That soaked the cactus but never reached the sand.

I sat across from you in the darkness watching
A crushed napkin languorously untwine and the coffee cup
Cool. You talked to me of freaked-out cave people
Who sat in circular communion while the prairie wind
Swirled grey wisps hung between minds entwined.

When you left I turned to watch a yellow leaf
Swing and clatter in the gusts
Snap its stem
And fall.

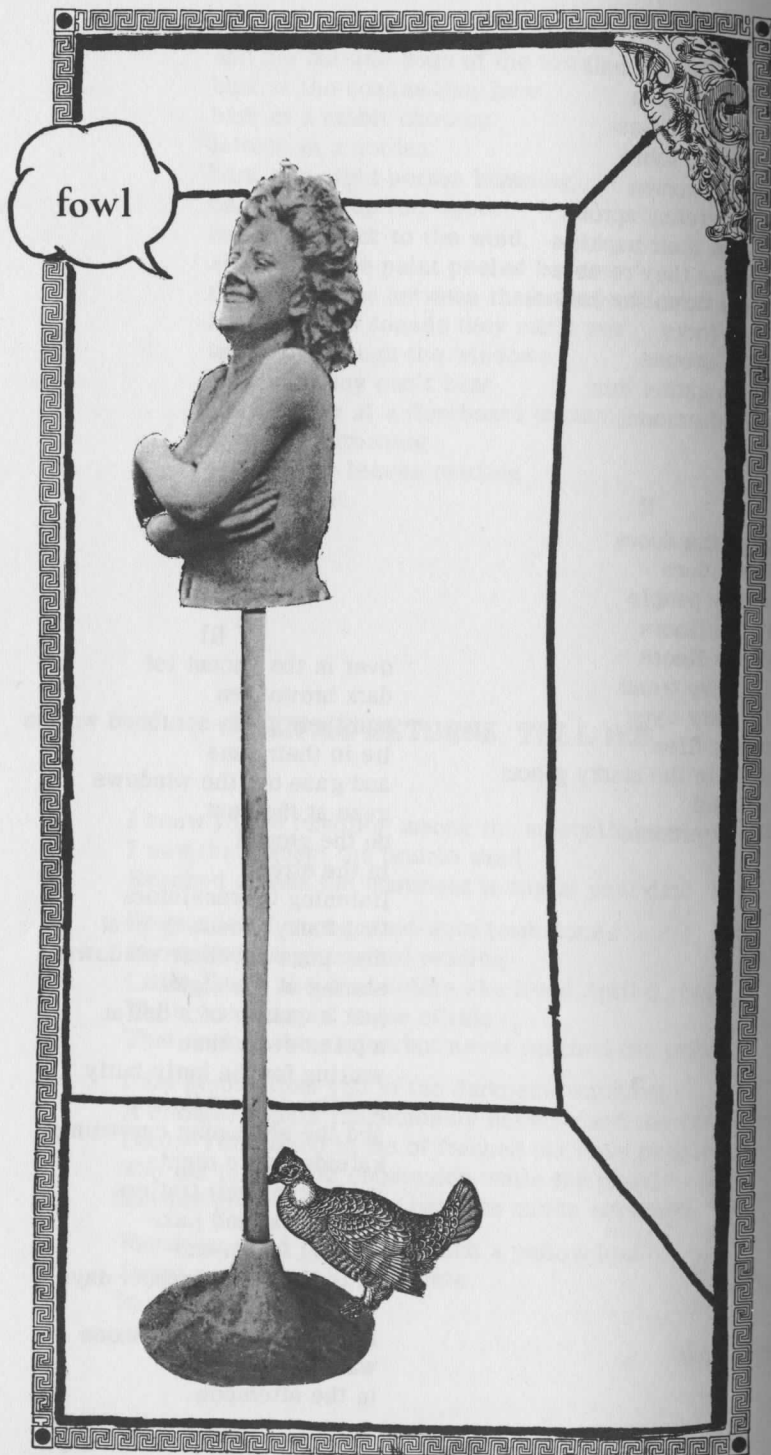
-Barb Ingle

I
up in the dining hall
fat white women
slap down dishes
twelve to a table
fat white women
in their greasy aprons
lay down their napkins
as fast as they're able
they lay down the knives
and the forks
and the spoons
there to gather dust
in the afternoon.

II
through the doors
and corridors
thin gray people
walk the floors
walk the floors
with heavy tread
and watery eyes
swatting flies
waiting in the murky gloom
for an end
to the afternoon.

III
over in the vacant lot
dark brown men
and their clean-scrubbed women
lie in their vans
and gaze out the windows
gaze at the dust
on the ground
in the street
listening to transistors
that funky Broadway beat
they gaze out their windows
staring at the signs
just a quarter of a dollar
a prize every time
waiting for the hurly-burly
and the colored lights
and the screaming careening
kaleidoscopic nights
waiting in their trailers
in the heat and haze
waiting for an end
to the endless summer days
waiting for the dark
and a pallid summer moon
waiting for an end
in the afternoon.

-Tim Cope



A PLAYMATE

-Jim Ruddock

The rain pelted against the glass; unsteadily streaking down, the droplets magnified and blurred the barnyard landscape which swayed under the fury of the wind. Bright flashes of lightning -- followed by the booming vibrating thunder -- lit the storm gloom. I sat in the dark room, with its muffled ticking clock, on my knees with my elbows on the windowsill, fascinated.

"Oh my God! What have you brought in, you worthless pup? What is that you've got there, Waggy? Why it's one of my frying hens. ...You get that out of my kitchen. Go on now, take that back out in the rain."

Startled out of my thoughts I went into the kitchen to see Grandma going down the back steps, a newspaper clapped over her head, holding the drooping dead chicken at arms length by the tip of its wing. Waggy danced on her hind legs trying to catch the limp neck with her teeth. "Down, Waggy, you mean pup. Get down now." I saw a caked splot of pink as Grandma flung the limp mass behind a bush by the side of the house. "Waggy, you stay outside now -- get under the steps. You leave that dead hen alone."

The morning sun was high and hot in the cloudless sky. There hadn't been rain for two weeks; the land was cracked from the dryness, the dust never settled over the flat prairie landscape. I had helped Grandma with the breakfast dishes and made my bed, now the two dogs and I, with an iron hooked stafflike pole in hand, went toward the back picket gate in search of something to occupy the day. I checked the yard expectantly for any chickens that may have scrambled in through some unknown hole in the fence but I saw only the dusty lawn and gnawed tulips, trampled from previous chicken hunts the dogs and I had had. After I had put the safety wire to the yard gate over the fence post, we walked toward the white eight sided brooder house -- I swung my staff, hitting off dandelion heads with every step. At the brooder house door I stopped, the dogs waited in expectation. I swung the door open with a loud low laugh; the chickens bawked and cackled, flew down from their roosting bars, furiously flapping their wings, stirring up dust and feathers and the stale odor. They all jammed around the foot square shoot that led to the food bins and on out to the large grazing weed field from which we had just come. The dogs, filled with excitement, barked and pawed the dirt floor while I calmly and slowly, with my arms outstretched, took slow steps that closed the gap between the chickens and myself. The tension and frenzy mounted, then I quickly ran out the door and went around the brooder house to the food bins -- and where the escaped, safe chickens had fled. I scanned the bawking mass which, on my approach, began to scatter --

some managed to find their way back to the safety of the brooder hatch that, just a moment ago, they had so hurriedly left. Quickly, from the mass I shagged an unsuspecting, bossy chicken by the leg with my iron hooked pole. It frantically squawked and flapped its wings as I dragged it through the dust. After I had gotten it into the open field I laid the iron crook down -- pinning the chicken's leg to the ground -- and began to examine my prize. The dogs looked on, ears perked for any command of violence I might give. The hen lay in the dust, wings outstretched, almost paralyzed with fear. I pulled a wirey weed up and began to stroke the chicken -- it again started its fight with flapping wings; I quickly jerked the rod, dragging the chicken for a few feet -- immediately its fight dwindled. I ultimately removed the heavy iron catcher and replaced it with a length of mechanic's twine which I bound about the same leathery leg. The chicken was the dogs' and my playmate for the day -- it dragged through the dust everywhere we went. During the lunch hour I found a shady area where I could tie the hen to a post; immediately after lunch my romp would continue. At the end of the afternoon I readied the chicken for a night back in the brooder house; I dabbed a spot of pink paint on the underside feathers with a stick so I would be sure to recognize this particular fowl in the morning. After this was done, I undid the twine. The chicken didn't move. I prodded it with my foot until it got up and ran back to the weed yard where it found safety with the mass of other chickens.

The next morning was again clear and beautiful. I hurried through my chores, got the dogs, my iron chicken catcher, and ran out to the chicken yard, picking up my length of twine from the fencepost on the way. There was no pause in my opening of the brooder house door this morning; I flung it open and scanned the bawking mass for the pink marking. I couldn't find it in that group so I went around to the feeding bins. For a moment I thought that the paint may have come off but then I spotted it -- my fowl who thought he had escaped was happily pecking at a round grain tin. It sensed the commotion of the other chickens as we moved in closer. It panicked when it looked up to see the dogs and myself; it ran and squawked, running into the fence. I swiftly caught a limb with the iron hook and immediately tied a sturdy knot about its leg with the length of twine.