

The Mockingbird

---

1989

# The Mockingbird

ETSU Department of Art

ETSU Department of English

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/mockingbird>



Part of the [Art and Design Commons](#), and the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

ETSU Department of Art and ETSU Department of English. 1989. The Mockingbird. Volume . Johnson City, TN: East Tennessee State University. <https://dc.etsu.edu/mockingbird/26>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Mockingbird by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact [digilib@etsu.edu](mailto:digilib@etsu.edu).



Rockingbird



1989

*The annual literary/ art publication of  
East Tennessee State University*

**Editor's Note:** This year's issue is dedicated to the layout zombies and half-tone phantoms who forfeited their bodies (and minds) to transform an illusion of galleys and artwork into a material celebration of process, energy, and rhythm. Special thanks to Ruth Tapp, Deanna Bryant, Caroline Jackson, Rose Christenson, Majid Ejlali, Susie McLeod, Fred Sauceman, Richard Blaustein and the ETSU Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, the ETSU English and Art Departments, the staff of the University Press, the generous support of ETSU Public Relations Department, and the combined literary and art staff of **Mockingbird '89**. Keep the vision alive.

**Marc A. Thompson**  
Editor

STAFF

**Editor**

Marc A. Thompson

**Assistant Editor**

Cathy Whaley

**Art Director**

Chris Ballard

**Assistant Art Directors**

David Rowe

Sammy Doyle

**Cover Photography**

Lanny Parmans

Wayne Dyer (Consultant)

**Entry Poster Design**

Chris Ballard

**Mockingbird Logo**

Chris Ballard

**ETSU Faculty Advisors**

Wayne Dyer, Art Department

John Morefield, English Department

**Literary Staff Members**

Cathy Whaley

Todd Norris

Pat Buck

Robert McDonald

Nell McGrady

Janet Robinson

Christine Lassiter

Randy Handel

Robert Alfonso

Kirsten H. Burkart

Mark F. Thompson

Ian Marshall

Susan Roper

**Judges**

**Bob Henry Baber** (Short Fiction) is a short fiction writer and poet who proudly wears "the blue jeans of the literary world." As a contributing poet and co-editor of the *Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel*, Baber has been widely published in the Appalachian region. He is also credited with developing the LOUKU form of Down Home haiku.

**Jo Carson** (Poetry) is a poet, playwright and performer whose works appear in *Appalachian Heritage Anthologies*, *American Voice*, *Southern Exposure*, *Appalachian Journal*, and others. She has been a frequent commentator on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." Her new book of poems, *Stories I Ain't Told Nobody Yet*, "a collection of people pieces," was recently published by Orchard Books.

**Sharon Campbell** (Photography, Graphic Design and Drawing/Printmaking) is the Head of Exhibitions and Museum School of Art at Greenville County Museum of Art, Greenville, South Carolina. In addition to teaching art for several years, since 1975, she has juried many exhibitions by southeastern organizations.

**Loyal Jones** (Non-Fiction) is the Director of Appalachian Studies at Berea College, Kentucky and is currently president of the Appalachian Studies Association. Jones is also co-editor of *Laughter in Appalachia*, an anthology of regional humor.

**Cover Painting**

Charles Lawson

"Saskatchewan"



### Poetry

Bibi Hall. <b>To Air is Human</b>	5
Susan Roper. <b>A Bible Salesman's Psalm</b>	6
Nell McGrady. <b>Blessed Erratum, First Place</b>	12
Nell McGrady. <b>Prelude: Daughter at Eleven, Second Place</b>	12
Robert L. McDonald. <b>Burn Therapy, Third Place</b>	18
Nell McGrady. <b>Resurrected Baptist</b>	19
Rebecca Alford. <b>Spell Dance</b>	25
Lon Tobin. <b>The Waters of the Toe River Below Lost River, N.C.</b>	31
Douglas Miller. <b>The Cellar, Honorable Mention</b>	43
Susan Roper. <b>Consummate Combustion</b>	48
Angel Y. Bryant. <b>Lie in Wait</b>	49
Dede Norungolo. <b>National Geographic: A Look at Ethiopia, Honorable Mention</b>	55
Todd Norris. <b>The Hills Whisper</b>	56
Janet Robinson. <b>Gravesite</b>	57

### Short Fiction

Rebecca Alford. <b>Motion, Second Place</b>	3
Susan Roper. <b>Solar Eclipse, First Place</b>	9
Tom K. McKnight. <b>Red-Headed Step Child,</b>	11
Lon Tobin. <b>Gnoskw and the Vaam Wizard of Hell, Third Place</b>	21
Richard Lilly. <b>Night Air, Second Place</b>	35
Mark F. Thompson. <b>Osborne, Honorable Mention</b>	40
Rebecca Alford. <b>Waves, First Place</b>	51

### Special Category: Drama

Christine Lassiter. <b>Thirty-Seven Days</b>	27
----------------------------------------------	----

### Non - Fiction

Angel Y. Bryant. <b>The Appalachian Paradox, Honorable Mention</b>	15
Mark F. Thompson. <b>Menken at the Globe</b>	17
Cathy Whaley. <b>A Spiritual Journey into the Self, Second Place</b>	33
Kathleen Cornett. <b>Motherhood by Degrees, Third Place</b>	39
Barbara Edens. <b>Of Demons Within, Honorable Mention</b>	42
Linda S. Hensley. <b>Where Freedom Does Not Ring, First Place</b>	45

### Graphic Design

Chris Ballard. <b>Birds of a Feather...., Honorable Mention</b>	10
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>Pac-Wiz Promotion Poster, Third Place</b>	24
Melanie Spangler. <b>Charlie Chaplin, Second Place</b>	29
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>Rolling Stones, First Place</b>	41
Chris Ballard. <b>Rage, Honorable Mention</b>	49
Theresa A. Bellamy. <b>Gradation</b>	52
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>U2, Honorable Mention</b>	54

### Drawing/Printmaking

Chris Ballard. <b>Victim of a Tough Society, Honorable Mention</b>	2
Mike Holsomback. <b>Before a Mirror, Honorable Mention</b>	8
David Rowe. <b>The Dream, Honorable Mention</b>	9
Sara Honeycutt. <b>Seated Woman, Honorable Mention</b>	15
Mike Holsomback. <b>Crucifixion Scene III, Second Place</b>	19
Theresa Bellamy. <b>Human Grid, Honorable Mention</b>	22
Charles Lawson. <b>Matthew's Boat, Third Place</b>	31
Carolyn Gilliam. <b>Underground</b>	34
Andrea Worley. <b>Composition #1188, First Place</b>	44

### Photography

Melissa Smith. <b>Awaiting News, Honorable Mention</b>	4
David Crigger. <b>Faith</b>	7
Katherine T. Houser. <b>Baker's Gypsy, Third Place</b>	13
Chris Ballard. <b>Ozymandias, Second Place</b>	14
Joseph A. Mortari. <b>Quilting, Exchange Place</b>	16
Donna Bowles. <b>Wood Nymph</b>	17
Joseph A. Mortari. <b>Bank Vault, Honorable Mention</b>	20
W. Eric Layne. <b>Home?</b>	23
David Rowe. <b>Untitled New York</b>	25
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>Farage, Honorable Mention</b>	26
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>Farage Fashion, Inc.</b>	27
Chris Ballard. <b>It's Just a Matter of Time</b>	28
Sandra Hunt. <b>Eyes of the World</b>	30
Katherine T. Houser. <b>Somnambulism</b>	32
Katherine T. Houser. <b>French Kisses</b>	33
Richard Righter. <b>Life, Honorable Mention</b>	36
Fathi Bakkoush. <b>Chiquitita, First Place</b>	38
Jenny Lokey. <b>Untitled</b>	39
W. Eric Layne. <b>Relief #1, Honorable Mention</b>	40
David Crigger. <b>Lost Childhood</b>	42
Richard Righter. <b>Time</b>	43
Jenny Lokey. <b>Flags</b>	45
Timothy Perry. <b>Twelve Midnight</b>	46
James J. Wilson. <b>Untitled, Honorable Mention</b>	50
James J. Wilson. <b>Untitled</b>	51
Chris Ballard. <b>Body Rhythms</b>	53
Richard Righter. <b>Feeding the Cows</b>	56
Jenny Lokey. <b>Pond Lily, Bays Mountain</b>	57
David Rowe. <b>Edit, Honorable Mention</b>	58





Chris Ballard, **Victim of a Tough Society**

# Motion

Rebecca Alford

Anna left him sitting in his Lazee Boy, peanut shells covering his tie-dyed shirt and green fatigues. She was sick of Camel filterless and vodka. Sick of sloppy Sick of excuses and beard growth. Sick of his breath. His thick tongue. The apologies.

She packed her suitcases. Harvey, the Saint Bernard, panted behind her, his toenails scratching the wooden floor. She rubbed him behind the ears as he slobbered. A tinge of guilt. She was sweating, shaking. And she left.

\*\*\*\*\*

She woke up to the smell of fresh coffee and bacon. The sheets were clean. The wallpaper was lavender with tiny flowers all over it. As a girl, she used to think she could smell the violets. She took a deep breath in and flared her nostrils, stretched and squealed quietly

She showered. Hot water and lots of force. Ivory She scrubbed and rinsed, scrubbed and rinsed. Shampoo and conditioner. She shaved her legs and underarms. Then she dried off with one clean white towel, and put her hair in another.

She lay hot and damp upon the cool sheets of her bed, and thought.

She dressed in blue jeans and her "I'm so happy I could shit" shirt. She pulled on her new spanking white tennis shoes, the kind with Velcro instead of shoestrings. She combed her hair. Brown. Plain. She decided on no makeup today Just fresh.

Her mother waited for her upstairs. Croissants, bacon, scrambled eggs, hominy grits, fresh squeezed orange juice, coffee. Light conversation. Anna felt comfort in her mother's big brown eyes. She drank her coffee. A little trickled down the corner of her mouth and she stuck her tongue out to catch it. No lipstick. Her lips were chapped. She would have to walk to Boyd's Drug and get some Blistex.

\*\*\*\*\*

Anna walked by herself. Small town. She hummed one of her favorite songs since she couldn't remember the words. Cat Stevens' "Father and Son." In high school, she knew all the words. Now she hummed.

She stood in line tossing her tube of Blistex from hand to hand. The man behind her spoke. It startled her.

"New in town?"

Anna turned around, "Yes...well, sort of. I grew up here."

"Oh, back for a visit then?"

"Yes. My Mom lives here."

"Great town...how long you planning on staying?"

"Oh, I don't know. Least a couple weeks I guess."

The man nodded, grinning. "I'm Howard."

"I'm Anna. Anna Dorsey" She shook his hand. There was a slight pause.

"Beautiful day, huh?"

"Yes, it is," said Anna.

"I feel like a walk...Would you like to join me?"

"Oh, I don't know, I..."

"It's okay if you need to get back to your mother's. Just thought I'd ask."

"Well," Anna hesitated, "actually, sure, I'd like to walk."

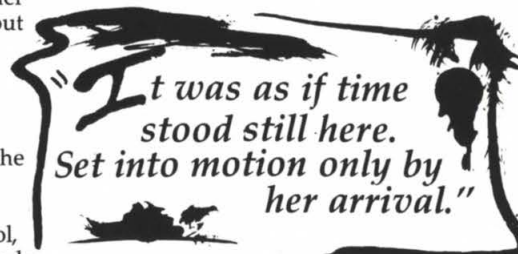
The man wasn't attractive. His eyes stood too far apart. But he had pleasant, plump lips. And when he smiled, dimples. Happy dimples like a baby

They walked. They stopped at Swirls for ice cream. There was something about him. She couldn't put her finger on it. But she told him the whole story The marriage. The business. The baby boy All American family White picket fence. Two car garage. Alcohol.

He listened through two double nut fudges and about a pot of coffee. It was 3:30. He walked her back to the white house on the corner of Isaac Street. He rubbed her cheek with the back of his hand. "Tomorrow again?" he asked.

Anna smiled. "Tomorrow again," she said and turned to walk the rest of the way home, alone.

Her mother sat reading *Better Homes and Gardens* in the living room. She looked up over her spectacles. "You okay?" Anna nodded and sat down on the sofa to join her. The March evening was chilly She tucked her toes under the afghan and picked up the newspaper. The two sat quietly until dinner.



But Anna couldn't keep her mind on what she was reading. The living room had not changed since the last time she was home, or the time before that. It hadn't changed since high school. Even the pictures sat in the same place. Only, everything was a little duller. Lifeless. It was as if time stood still here. Set into motion only by her arrival. Her presence. Nothing ever happened here. And the only things happening now were the things she touched.

She went to bed early, around 10:30. She lay under the quilts and thought about when her bed used to have a canopy The white ruffles hung above her head like ladies' petticoats. She sat up and looked out the window As a girl, she prayed looking out of it. She didn't like to close her eyes because she felt happier looking at the trees and stars. She pressed her nose to the glass and thought the coolness felt good. She lay down and slept.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sunshine woke her early She showered and dressed. Stood staring at her figure in the mirror. Long arms. Her shirt sleeves were always too short. She looked at herself straight on, then sideways, then straight on again. She pulled her hair tightly off her face and fastened it in a ponytail high on the back of her head. A little mascara and blush, nothing heavy. And a dab of Shalimar on the wrists. She grabbed her pink sweater and went outside, careful not to let the door slam behind her. The crocuses were already blooming.

Green grass peeped its shiny blades up between the beige spots. The sun cast shadows of long tree limbs. Simon, the old black cat, was lying in a patch of sunlight on the sidewalk. His hair was shiny in the moist places, recently caressed by his bathing tongue. Anna made her way down Mosby Street, and turned on to Isaac. The birds were twittering tunes. High pitched and happy There was a healthy breeze in the air. She tossed her ponytail back and forth so that she could feel its silkiness against her neck.

He met her in front of the Drug Store. He stood with his hands in the pockets of his jeans, kicking his Hushpuppies around in the dirt. She smiled, a small smile with no teeth, and he joined her. She thought to apologize about yesterday, the way she dumped her life's saga into his lap. But she didn't. They walked without looking at each other.

"Today, I take you to my favorite spot," he said as he rubbed his hands together like a squirrel handling a nut.

"And where might that be?" She glanced up at him.

"To my car, my lady To my car. It's just two blocks away from here. I'm going to take you to an enchanted forest."

Anna giggled. "Oh yeah?"

"Oh yeah." He opened his mouth and eyes widely

\*\*\*\*\*

They sat on a yellow blanket in a clearing surrounded by trees. He brought a picnic. Fried chicken from the Colonel. Coleslaw. French fries. A bottle of Blue Nun and real wine glasses.



Anna couldn't remember the last time she went on a picnic. Now she sat with this "almost stranger" comparing shoe sizes and tracing the history of scars. The wine felt warm going down and made her mouth salivate. She rolled over on her stomach.

"So tell me about you now," she said. "What's your life like?"

"Not really much to tell," he answered. "I'm a high school science teacher. Sponsor the sophomore class. Love kids." He paused. "I guess I'm basically an earthy kind of guy." He leaned back on his elbows and tossed his head back so that the sun melted onto his face.

Anna felt her heartbeat pick up. A tingling started in her stomach and rushed up her backbone. They were face to face. Close. She could feel his warm breath. He moved towards her. Slowly He put his hand around her ponytail and played with it, tossing it back and forth against her neck. He chuckled slightly Then quiet, serious, he pressed his plump lips against hers. His mouth tasted sweet. Her heart raced. And she closed her eyes.

\*\*\*\*\*

Her mother played with her wedding band, drawing it up to the tip of her finger, then pushing it back in place. The lines on her face were deeper today, her eyes glassy Her nose were baggy around the ankles.

Anna put her hand on her mother's shoulder and rubbed back and forth as she spoke. "Is there anything I can do? Maybe I should make my banana bread. Marcie could freeze it. There will probably be tons of food."

"Yes," her mother said. "You know, it's just so strange. God, it was just two years ago I lost Henry Now Brent. I don't know They were so close, Anna. And so young. Took pity on an old woman."

"Oh Momma, from everything you've told me about Marcie, I hardly think she took pity on you. She's found a dear friend in you. I'm sure Brent felt the same way."

"We just never know. Do we? Never know when it's gonna be our time. Never know...today, alive, healthy Tomorrow dead. Those tiny foreign cars. Aren't safe. They aren't. Ought to be outlawed."

"I know Momma. I know Let's have some hot tea and cheese crackers out on the porch. The fresh air will make you feel better."

They sat and sipped the hot tea. Anna rocked back and forth in the love seat swing. The chains squeaked, moaned, as she thought. Marcie was like a daughter to her mother. Perhaps more a daughter than herself. Her mother lived alone in the blue-grey house. Marcie had spent more time here lately than Anna, for sure. But she had grown up here. Still, Marcie might be her mother's best friend now. And Anna had only met her once. Didn't even really meet her. Just waved to her from a distance. "That's my friend Marcie," her mother had said. "Wave dear, that's Marcie." Anna had waved.

Now Marcie's husband had passed away And Anna's mother was sad. Anna's husband wasn't dead. But she had spent three days with her mother now, and his name had not even been mentioned. He was forgotten.

"More tea Momma?"

"Yes, thank you Anna." Her mother handed her the teacup, and Anna walked inside to the kitchen.

\*\*\*\*\*

She bought that old dress years ago. She didn't particularly like it now, but then she hadn't really liked it when she first got it. She'd worn it to please her mother. She slipped the silky burgundy over her head and straightened the skirt. Static cling made the material stick to her bony legs. Light pink nylons. She parted her thick brown hair on the side and pinned back a mass of it in a gold barrette shaped like a leaf. She smiled at herself in the mirror. It didn't smile back.

\*\*\*\*\*

The cab driver took his cigarette out from between his wrinkled lips. "Where to?"

"133 Papermill Lane, the funeral home," Anna said.

She paid the man and climbed the stairs. Her tiny ankles shook in the high heels. Marcie greeted her at the door. "Anna dear, it was so thoughtful of you to come. Your mother's here. So are Ricky and Betsy You know Betsy Your mother's been such a help to me. Anna, you have no idea."

"I'm so sorry Marcie. Please, if there's anything I can do, let me know. I want to help. You've been so good to Momma. You and Brent." They embraced slightly and walked into the viewing room.

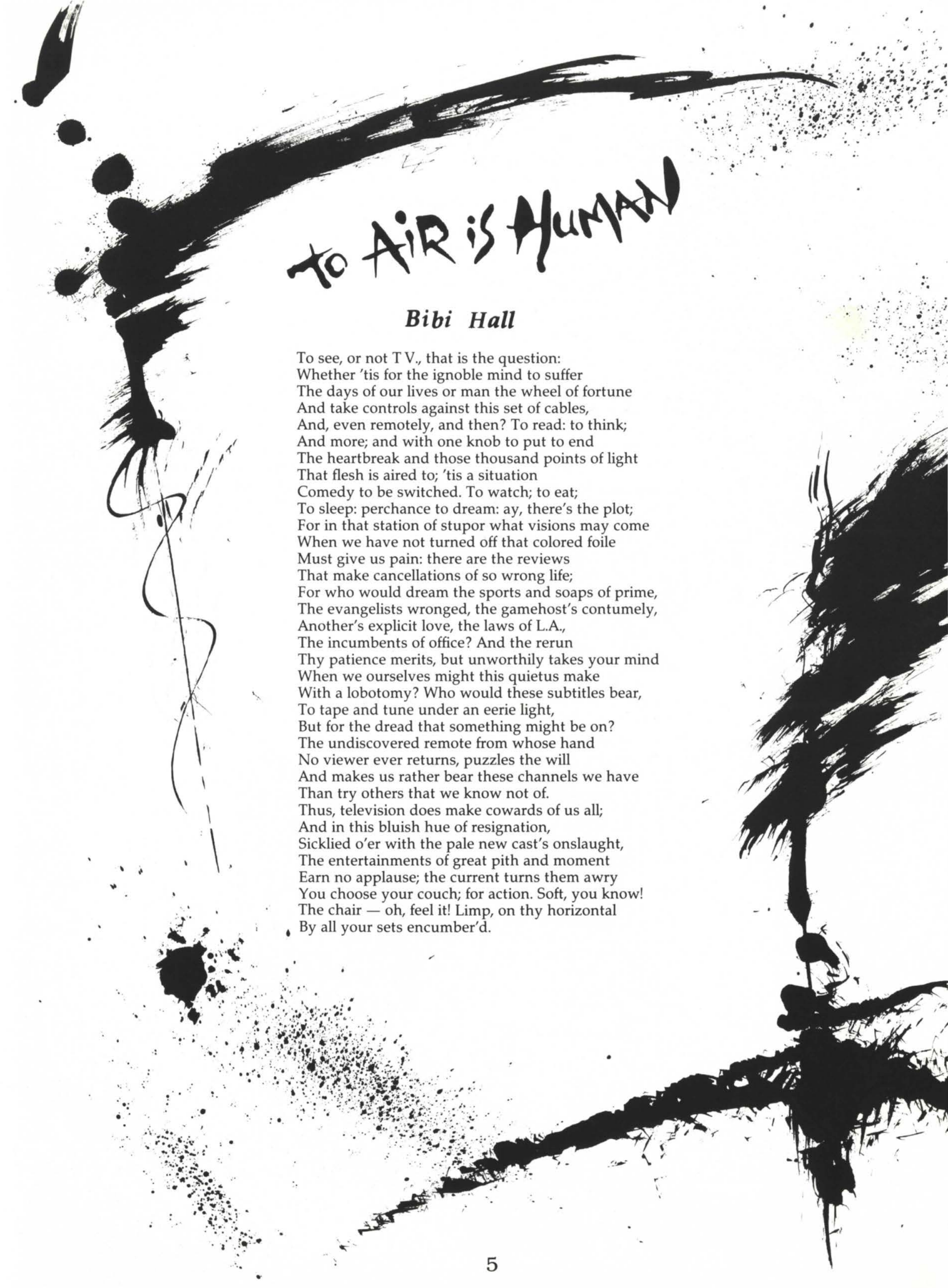
Anna looked at the body A cold sweat started at her knees and oozed into her head. He was barely smiling. But she could see the etchings of dimples. Baby dimples.

The town was in motion after all.

#### Honorable Mention, Photography



Melissa Smith, *Awaiting News*



# TO AIR IS HUMAN

*Bibi Hall*

To see, or not T V., that is the question:  
Whether 'tis for the ignoble mind to suffer  
The days of our lives or man the wheel of fortune  
And take controls against this set of cables,  
And, even remotely, and then? To read: to think;  
And more; and with one knob to put to end  
The heartbreak and those thousand points of light  
That flesh is aired to; 'tis a situation  
Comedy to be switched. To watch; to eat;  
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the plot;  
For in that station of stupor what visions may come  
When we have not turned off that colored foile  
Must give us pain: there are the reviews  
That make cancellations of so wrong life;  
For who would dream the sports and soaps of prime,  
The evangelists wronged, the gamehost's contumely,  
Another's explicit love, the laws of L.A.,  
The incumbents of office? And the rerun  
Thy patience merits, but unworthily takes your mind  
When we ourselves might this quietus make  
With a lobotomy? Who would these subtitles bear,  
To tape and tune under an eerie light,  
But for the dread that something might be on?  
The undiscovered remote from whose hand  
No viewer ever returns, puzzles the will  
And makes us rather bear these channels we have  
Than try others that we know not of.  
Thus, television does make cowards of us all;  
And in this bluish hue of resignation,  
Sicklied o'er with the pale new cast's onslaught,  
The entertainments of great pith and moment  
Earn no applause; the current turns them awry  
You choose your couch; for action. Soft, you know!  
The chair — oh, feel it! Limp, on thy horizontal  
By all your sets encumber'd.

# A BIBLE SALESMAN'S Psalm

Susan Roper

## I

Using God for his calling card, he followed the Bible Belt like a crafty old serpent, cutting a path down through Virginia valleys, across Tennessee mountains, sliding over the Carolina hills and eating Georgia dust before finding solace in the scorching Florida sun.

Each state he hit, he changed his accent like a chameleon suddenly struck with the gift of gab. He prided himself on selling to the hillbillies—ten dollars down, ten a month for the finest, prettiest, biggest family Bible to come off the presses in thirty years. So he said.

Ladies were impressed, swinging open their doors to get a better look at this handsome man come peddling the Word of God. Striking when the sun was high and the menfolks off to work, he drank coffee with the woman of the house, smelled her flowers, praised her cleanliness as a sure sign of Godliness and never believed she had grandchildren.

Like a male Delilah, he cut purse strings, taking the last ten dollars saved for a rainy day, leaving a promise, a piece of pink paper and a scent of Old Spice. When a dear Saint's pride wouldn't let her buy a Bible on credit, he produced a scriptural reference to St. Paul's charge account, saying, "Why, Lady, the Lord wants you to have this holy heirloom."

## II

Picking the Protestant patches was his specialty, but when instinct failed, he dug out a Catholic edition and recited the rosary. On a real rough day, he'd ring the bell of a Jewish house, then smile and say, "Sorry to have bothered you, Ma'm," Hearing the door close, he'd curse and mutter something about Hitler.

Once, his curse reached the ears of a Jewish mother's son, a big, burly fighter of a man. He demanded an apology, so the salesman broke the front porch rocker over the Jew's head, only stunning him, as if he had hit a stubborn wasp with a flimsy plastic fly swatter. When the police came, the salesman was unconscious, blood spilling down his shirt, lying in dirt, ferns and broken flower pots scattered over the porch.

That curse cost him \$100 and a night in jail. Swearing a promise never to come near that land again, he stopped at the first air-conditioned bar outside the city limits.

### III

After a good day, he rented a room at a local hotel,  
spending the evening in the cocktail lounge,  
if it wasn't a dry county At the end of a slow day,  
he'd hole up in a fleabag motel on the outskirts of town  
and go to bed with a pint of Four Roses whiskey  
Never buying more than a pint at a time, he'd wait  
until the end of the line, pulling a good one—a week,  
a month, or more — till his money ran out or he was carted off  
to the hospital in diabetic shock or coma. They'd call his kids,  
if they could get one of the three, say he was dying,  
but nobody came. The kids had heard it all before.

One Christmas Eve, they said he wouldn't live through the night.  
Even if he did, he was paralyzed and would never walk again.  
Two weeks later he called his youngest daughter to tell her  
that he was in Florida staying with a spunky Yankee widow  
he'd met at the local square dance the past Saturday night.  
She owned a motel so he married her, his third wife, fourth  
marriage, and retired from the Bible business.

The salesman left a trail of cheap maple coffee tables groaning  
under the weight of his wares, smiling Jesus pictures  
(bonuses for payment in full), and motel rooms littered  
with empty whiskey bottles.

He was a good man though. He spread the Word.  
And one night, not long before he died,  
he listened, and heard.



David Crigger, **Faith**



Mike Holsomback, **Before a Mirror**

SOLAR ECLIPSE  
Susan Roper

The damp Floridian wind gusted that November day, but Robyn didn't notice the chill. She was numb. She wanted to scream and tear the fresh flowers to pieces and claw the hard ground with her hands, but she only sat there.

The preacher from a neighbor's church read the Twenty-Third Psalm. His voice droned monotonously as the familiar words ran together, sounding like a television set after the station has gone off the air. Robyn viewed the tiny gravesite. Ray's parents were there. Two of her neighbors had come, and the owner of Ray's favorite bar and his wife stood behind the preacher. Martha was somewhere behind Robyn, and Elizabeth sat on the opposite side of Ray.

Robyn watched her mother's fingers methodically creasing the freshly starched handkerchief in her lap. Elizabeth hadn't wanted to come. When Robyn called her to tell her about the baby, she asked, "Do I really need to be there? It's such a long trip. You should never have moved to Florida."

Crying, Robyn told her mother that she needed her. She hadn't cried since and wished now that her mother had stayed home.

Before time to close the casket, Robyn bent to kiss her son goodbye. Elizabeth grabbed her shoulders and pulled her away, telling her, "Robyn, don't kiss him on the mouth. The embalming fluid is poisonous."

She looked into her mother's composed face. Her eyes were dry and her thin lips were pressed closely together. Robyn knew that she should feel something, but it was buried too deeply.

Robyn had placed Raymond's favorite rattle, a blue plastic hammer, in his tiny clenched fist. She thought that he might be able to use it somehow.

Squeezing her own wrinkled handkerchief, Robyn counted the days since Raymond had died. One, two, three days. Sometimes it seemed like it had been three hundred years, other times, three seconds. It had been on Saturday.

She put him down for his nap after lunch. He was cutting his first tooth and, like all teething babies, had been overly fussy. She had taken him for his six-month checkup just the past week, and the doctor said that he was a normal, growing boy. She was cleaning house that afternoon when Ray came home about four o'clock. He had been at the bar and it was unusual that he hadn't stayed until closing time.

"Is the baby asleep?" Ray asked.

"Yeah, he's slept all afternoon. He's such a good baby." Robyn smiled.

"Well, you'd better wake him up or he won't sleep tonight." Ray went into the

kitchen and got a beer from the refrigerator. "The guys are coming over to play cards. Do you think you can fix us something to eat?" he asked.

"Sure," she answered, as she pushed the vacuum cleaner to the corner of the room, silently taking stock of the groceries. She had to feed Raymond his supper first.

Walking down the hall, she stopped outside the baby's room. It was so quiet. Too quiet. She stood perfectly still, holding her breath and listening. She heard nothing. A wave of fear overtook her and she tried to move but her feet were nailed to the floor and her body was paralyzed. Ray's voice jolted her into motion. "Robynanne, hurry up. The guys will be here any minute."

She walked into the room and stood beside the baby bed, looking down at her son. He had scooted on his tummy over to the side. One arm hung down through the rails, curled around the edge of the mattress. His fuzzy blonde hair sprang like weeds from his tiny round head, and the faded blue blanket lay across his back. His back was so flat, almost sunken in the middle. She watched for the rise of the blanket, but there was no movement. None. She knew that he was dead.

She tried to move, to pick him up, but she couldn't.

She screamed.

The next few hours were a blur. Ray came running into the room, pushed Robyn away, and grabbed the baby. She remembered that Raymond's right arm stayed curled, as if clutching a Teddy Bear or a breast. Ray laid his son on the floor and tried to revive him. Robyn wanted to change his diaper. He was wet. Somebody called the Life Saving Crew. The Fire Department came, too. Ray's friends were there, and the neighbors lined the yard like spectators at a football game. Robyn followed the stretcher to the ambulance. It was twenty-two miles to the hospital, but she didn't remember anything about the trip except the siren and the sound of the resuscitator, failing to work. Why didn't they just leave him alone? He was already dead. They were hurting his mouth. The airway was blocked. No air would go in, or come out, ever again.

The words, "blocked airway," stuck in Robyn's mind. Like a drowning swimmer, she grabbed onto them. She must have left a rattle or some other toy in the bed and Raymond had put it into his mouth and choked to death. It was her fault. She had someone to blame.

At the hospital, Ray and Robyn had to stop at the desk in the emergency room to fill out papers. There was only one chair beside the desk, so Robyn had to sit on Ray's lap. She couldn't stand up. Finally,

Honorable Mention. Drawing/Printmaking



David Rowe. **The Dream**

someone called for them and led them to a small, windowless room. A nurse came, telling them that the doctor would be right in. She held a hypodermic and told Robyn to roll up her sleeve. Robyn obeyed.

The door opened and a doctor walked in. He avoided Robyn's eyes and spoke to Ray, shaking his head, "I'm sorry."

"What killed him, doctor?" Ray asked.

"I really don't know at this point."

"There was something in his throat, wasn't there," Robyn said flatly.

"No, no foreign object in the esophagus. But the lungs had collapsed." He fiddled with the stethoscope hanging around his neck, then said, "We'd like to perform an autopsy To confirm the cause of death."

"Yes, of course," Ray said, without looking at his wife.

Robyn shook her head from side to side.

"No, oh, no. Please, no." She pulled at Ray's shirt and pleaded with her eyes.

"We have to know, Robynanne. We have to know what killed him."

"I...I don't want my baby cut up. Oh, please, no."

The doctor cleared his throat. "We really need to know in case your son died from an infectious disease. If it is something contagious, then all those who have been in contact with him must be treated."

"All right," she said, nodding weakly.

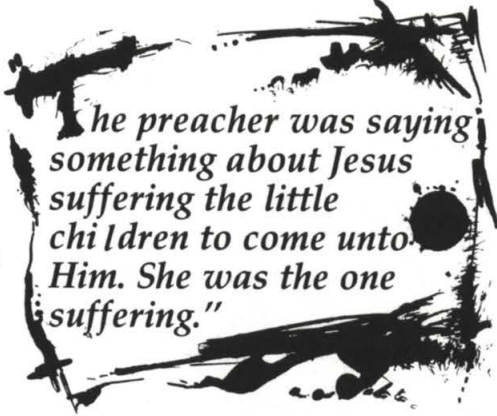
They signed the papers giving permission to perform the autopsy and left the room. A sheriff's deputy was waiting to take them home.

In bed that night, Robyn lay still and cold, like a sheathed knife. Ray pressed himself against her thigh and the swollen hardness of his need revolted her, as if it were a malignant tumor. He didn't wait for a reaction but climbed, clumsy and heavy, onto her naked body.

"No, Ray, not tonight, for God's sake."

"But baby, I gotta have you. I gotta." His voice was muffled and speaking to itself.

Robyn closed her eyes and the bed began to spin as if she were drunk. She opened her eyes and strands of Ray's black hair fanned across her vision like bars of a jail cell, so she squeezed them shut again. The bulk of her husband ground her deep into the mattress and she felt as if she were being buried in the vault with her baby. Her legs spread and she gritted her teeth.



*The preacher was saying something about Jesus suffering the little children to come unto Him. She was the one suffering."*

When Ray entered her, she escaped, the familiar rhythm propelling her farther and farther into the distance like gusts of cold November wind. She became a kite, soaring away from Ray, the corpse of her son, her mother — her own frigid body. She was blown into the snow-filled glass ball that sat on her mother's mantel every Christmas, encasing a small girl and her dog in eternity. Robyn used to sneak into the living room and climb up on the cane-bottomed chair and lift the infant globe from its wooden cradle and shake it, staring at the white flakes swirling in all

directions. She pretended to be the figure inside the thick, heavy crystal, secure and safe forever. Only now she was part of everything locked in that concave universe — the tiniest snowflake and the syrupy liquid it floated in, the little girl and the dog — but the hand that held and shook her world was not her own...and the wind blew harder and the thick gelid rain spiraled upward, catching her in an icy tornado that ejected her from this mock microcosm.

She spread her arms straight out from her sides, squeezing her legs together, her body rigid — a perfect frame for the kite. Holding her breath for the final torrent which would drive her to freedom, she was jerked violently back — by the kite string clamped between her teeth.

All motion stopped. She lay suspended on her imaginary kite frame like the condemned on a cross. Ray rolled off her, pulling the rumpled sheet across her sticky body. It wound around her like the tangled tail of her broken kite, smothering her in a sweaty shroud. Within minutes, Ray was snoring.

Robyn felt like she hadn't slept since that night. She gazed again at the circle of people under the mortuary tent...familiar, but strangers now, the distance thickened by the perfume of funeral flowers and recently bathed bodies. The preacher was saying something about Jesus suffering the little children to come unto Him. She was the one suffering.

And she continued to suffer until the pain grew so strong it stripped her of emotion. She saw her life as nothing but a faint sketch drawn in faded, broken lines on a world drained of color, as if it were a torn page from a child's coloring book, discarded in the rain.

Honorable Mentton, Graphic Design



Chris Ballard, *Birds of a Feather...*

# RED-HEADED STEPCHILD

Short Fiction

Tom K. McKnight

It was five miles from Dan's house to the nearest doctor. Besides, Doc Cornett had done all he could do for Reva. None of the medicine Doc had was strong enough to kill this summer fever. Three people within hollering distance of Dan's and Reva's house had died already. Doc Cornett told Dan, "If the fever doesn't break within a week, plan on building a coffin."

half dead with the fever for all she knows. I am the one who's been around her, taking care of every little need, carrying cool water to kill that fever. Why doesn't she ask how I am?" Dan growled to himself.

In the silence of early dawn, Dan sat thinking of his five boys. "Sam, Buel, Roy, Clay strong, healthy boys," he thought, "and Timmy, the only red-headed Ison in the bunch. For that matter, Timmy was the only Ison who had blue eyes."

Timmy was born right smack-dab in the middle of all the other boys. None of Timmy's brothers got along with him. They just tolerated him. He couldn't pull his share of work in the fields or in the barn. He couldn't work a team of horses to plow a straight row in a field, and he absolutely refused to help butcher hogs. "The boy's not lazy," Dan thought. "He's just different."

Timmy spent all of his spare time reading. He kept himself away from his brothers and away from Dan as much as possible. He found it easier to stay out of everybody's way.

Timmy was the only one of Dan's boys who preferred staying home with his mother to playing in the creek or going on a fox chase. Reva spent more time with Timmy than she did her other boys. They were all born within five years of each other, one each year the first five years of Dan and Reva's marriage. But Timmy was Reva's pick.

The other boys loved their mother, but not the same way. Timmy loved her. The boy and his mother were special to each other, and the whole family knew it.

Sam and Buel never complained, but Roy and Clay, the two youngest brothers, teased Timmy and made rhymes about his hair. The two oldest and the two youngest boys had coal-black hair and dark brown eyes. Anybody who saw them could tell they were brothers.

People who didn't know Dan's boys often asked if he had two sets of twins because they looked so much alike. Sam and Buel were almost the same height, even though Sam was a year older than Buel. Roy and Clay even had a cow lick in the same place on the crowns of their heads.

Clay's favorite rhyme was, "I'd rather be dead than red on the head." Timmy tolerated their fun-making because Reva always did something special to make up for the cruelty of her other sons. Ages seventeen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen, and thirteen, they were just like stairsteps. Sam was the strongest, but Roy was the smartest.

Dan was called out of thought when Reva began to lift her hands like she was reaching for something. "Timmy," she called. Her voice was hoarse from not drinking enough water over the last week.

"Timmy Where is Timmy?" she asked. "Watch after him, Dan."

"I'll watch after Timmy," Dan said aloud. "But who's going to watch after me and help me raise these five boys?" he thought. He bent closer to Reva.

"I've got to ask her," Dan thought. "If she dies without telling me, I'll never know."

Dan put his hand on Reva's arm. She was burning up, hot to the touch. "Reva," Dan said. "Can you hear me? This is Dan."

"Timmy Timmy," she moaned.

"That's right, Reva. Tell me about Timmy. Please talk to me. I won't hold anything against you. I promise."

"Take care of Timmy," Reva repeated. "Take care of him for me."

"Tell me about Timmy," Dan begged. "Please, Reva, who is Timmy's ? I can't ask her."

"Dan," Reva said.

"She's coming out of it," Dan thought. "And she will kill me if she remembers this."

"Dan," she asked, "How long have I been sick?"

"Six days," he answered, "It'll be seven days at daybreak. Reva, you've got to get better."

"Dan," Reva said, and she put her hand to her sore throat, trying to soothe the pain. "Take care of the boys, especially Timmy."

"I will, Reva, but you're getting better. You're awake."

Reva closed her eyes and coughed, almost choking. The rattles in her chest were worse, and Dan knew in his heart that she was dying. "Unghhh Unghhh," she breathed, in low, strained sounds. And then Reva stopped all movement as she had earlier in the night.

"Reva!" Dan called. "Don't leave me."

"Unghhh Unghhh," she breathed, slower and slower.

"Reva please can you hear me?" Dan begged. Reva moved her eyelids slightly and gave a little squeeze on Dan's hand.

"Reva, I hate to ask you at a time like this but is Timmy my son?" There. It was a mean thing to do, but he had said it. She was dying, and he had to know.

With her last strength, Reva pulled her hand out of Dan's hand and motioned for him to move closer to her. She looked at Dan through red, puffy eyes as he leaned near her.

Slowly, in a hoarse, scratchy voice, Reva forced each word as she said, "Yes, Timmy's yours but the other four aren't."

And Reva breathed no more.

*He knew it was mean, but one way or the other, he had to know. Maybe tonight she would talk about Timmy."*

About one o'clock, Reva stirred during her sleep and began talking out of her head. For three nights Dan had listened to every word Reva said when her fever was the highest. He knew it was mean, but one way or the other, he had to know. Maybe tonight she would talk about Timmy.

As the night dragged on, Reva became more restless, moving and mumbling something about her boys every few minutes. Dan stayed bent over, close to Reva, for a long time after he put each fresh, cold cloth on her forehead. At four o'clock, Dan suddenly realized that Reva wasn't breathing.

"Reva!" Dan called out, as he grabbed her shoulders and shook her.

She took a deep breath and started a slow, shallow kind of breathing, the way people breathe just before dying. Dan had heard the death rattles before, when his father died of pneumonia. He knew the sound. Reva's breathing became slower, and she lay silent. Morning seemed a hundred hours away.

Sometime after the fire died down in the fireplace, Dan awoke to Reva's voice calling his name. "Dan. Dan. Where are the boys?"

"They were in here a few hours ago, but I sent them to bed so they could go back to school in the morning."

"Are they all right?" Reva asked. "Do any of them have signs of the fever?"

"No. They're all healthy," Dan comforted. "They're just asleep."

"Dan, take care of the boys. They all love you so much." Reva closed her eyes and returned to the half-asleep, half-conscious state that she had been in most of the night.

"The boys. The boys," Dan thought.

"Always concerned about the boys. Why doesn't she ever ask how I am? I could be



1ST PLACE  
Poetry

## BLESSED ERRATUM

Nell McGrady

an answer for those scientists  
in Florida who consider aging  
an "aberration of civilization."

Not so.

I've history to validate  
the shadows on my face,

geography that maps  
this failing calibration  
of blood and bone.

These eccentricities  
accrued to me;  
by squatters' rights, I own  
this sweet distorted mind.

I outstripped the passion  
that turned my body elastic,  
that branded my stomach  
with silver etchings;

in hot leaded-labor I poured  
out my subscription to forever.

So I'm entitled  
to this melioration  
of midday, colors softened  
toward disintegration,  
music faded to a hymn.

I've earned this vagrant path,  
this scent of mushrooms,  
these slow-sliced days of anodyne.

I smoke the calumet of evening  
and praise my tangled skein of DNA.

2ND PLACE  
Poetry

## PRELUDE: DAUGHTER AT ELEVEN

Nell McGrady

Fused to this minute  
by the lightning shock  
of something she has seen  
or heard  
and suddenly understands,

she becomes marble, intractable  
and pristine as a Greek nymph  
on our suburban lawn.

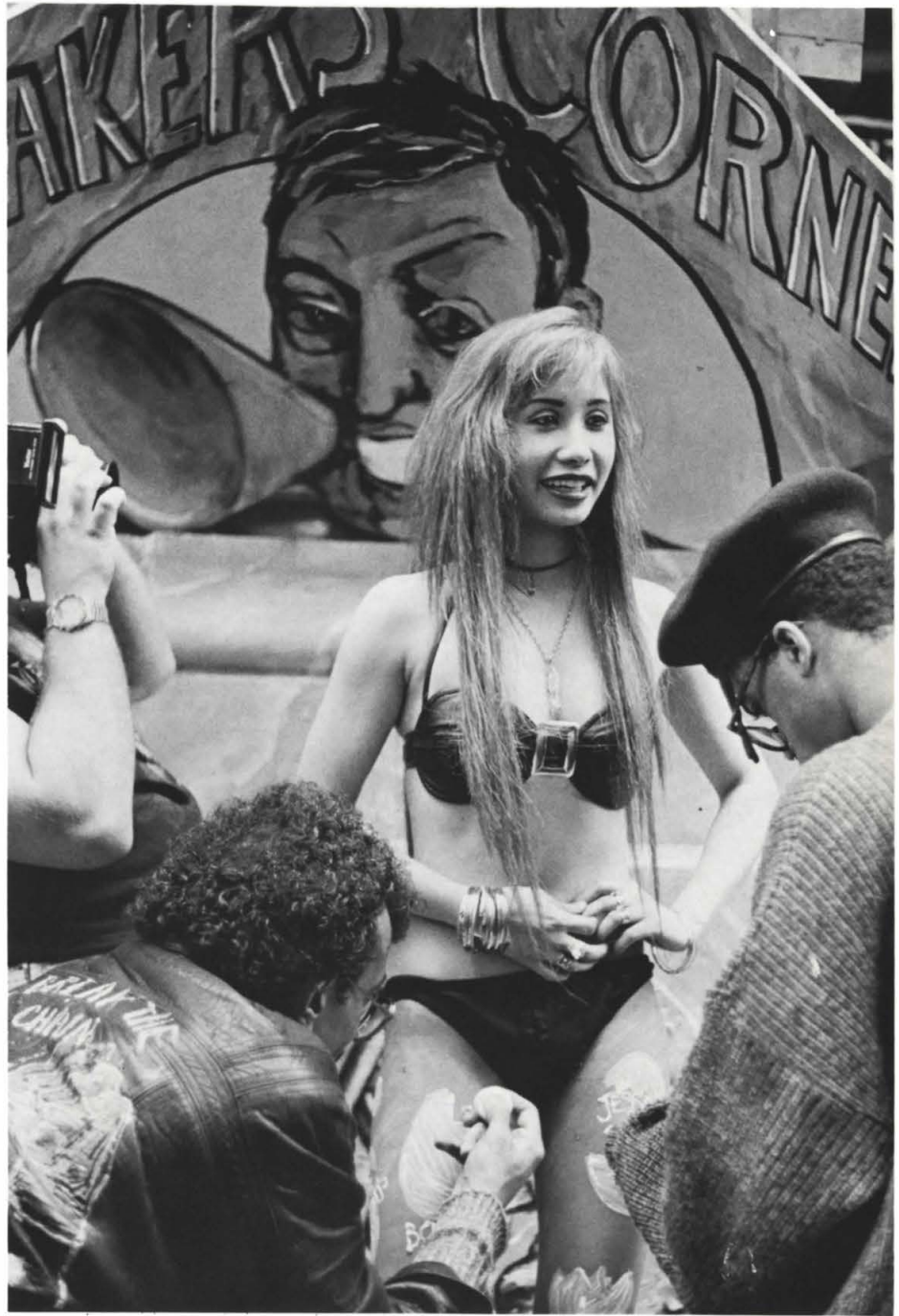
The swirl of her white dress catches  
and holds in the perfect balance  
of this brief respite.

Her stare  
fixes the impatiens to eternal greenness,

and in this holy moment I understand  
sacrifice. I'll gladly relinquish  
that bed of impatiens, suspend  
forever their wild abandon to sun  
for such pure grace. But now

she unfolds, a ghostly and seamless piece  
of linen, ruffling the air she displaces

in a fledgling dance  
of ever-growing circles  
that propel her  
always closer to me  
and always farther away



Katherine T Houser, **Baker's Gypsy**



Chris Ballard, **Ozymandias**

# THE APPALACHIAN PARADOX

Honorable Mention Non-Fiction

Angel Y. Bryant

We are raised in a paradox here in these hills. We are taught to have pride in our accomplishments, the fruits of our labor, to use our God-given talents to their fullest capacity, encouraged to aspire to the fulfillment of our dreams. Yet we also learn that we operate under limitations inherent in our own culture, are at the mercy of our own virtues.

*We are raised in a paradox here in these hills...; Yet we also learn that we operate under limitations inherent in our own culture."*

According to Loyal Jones, our forbears "chose freedom and solitude and mainly rejected the accoutrements of civilization. Perhaps the choice was both their strength and their undoing." We are a product of the fears and beliefs of our culture, one that feared outside knowledge. Jack Weller explains this belief in his essay, "Education:"

Since the forms of education were imposed from the outside and did not grow up as an expression of the culture, teaching what the mountaineer wanted his children to learn, there has traditionally been a resistance to "book learning." A person was thought well enough educated if he could read and write and count, and "too much" schooling was thought to be unnecessary, even dangerous — and so was unwanted.

In some ways knowledge is dangerous to the mountaineer. Once the mind is open to other cultures, other doctrines, other value systems, a child must compare these to the lifestyle his family represents. Often this knowledge causes the youth to be restless, dissatisfied with the ignorance and societal restraints his isolated culture has foisted on him.

Religion has to some extent perpetuated this problem. While visiting this area to report on the Scopes trial, H.L. Mencken overheard an upland worshipper denounce booklearning. In his paraphrase Mencken says, "Why indeed read a book? If what was in it was true, then everything in it was already in the Bible. If it was false, then reading it would imperil the soul." The fact that the mountaineer is family-centered makes the implications of religion even harder to overcome if its doctrines are shared and upheld by the family unit. In *Appalachian Values* Jones says,

...culture and religion are always intertwined. Life on the frontier did not allow for an optimistic social gospel. Hard work did not always bring a sure reward, and one was lucky if he endured. Therefore, the religion became fatalistic and stressed reward in another life.

The economic status of the mountain family has been one of self-reliance with much emphasis on livestock and farming to supplement other incomes. It is not unusual for a family to be very dependent on income from tobacco allotments for cash inflow, while gardening supplied their pantries. In this farming culture Weller points out that school "was always secondary to something else." Children were depended on to help with the farm chores or to babysit younger siblings in

order for their parents to work, to some extent exhibiting adult capabilities and shouldering their share of responsibilities in order to keep a roof over their heads and food on their tables. They were hard-pressed to find adequate time either to attend school or to study at home. Weller maintains that as a product of this active lifestyle it is no wonder that children of this area have been "far more interested in the hoopla of school sports than in the riddles of grammar and mathematics." And many of these children may show interest that is negated when they return home to illiterate parents who fill them with equal portions of farm chores and a religion that supports mere endurance of a hard life in exchange for rewards after death. Clearly it would be confusing to be an idealist in a society that places physical labor and its immediate visible results higher on its list

Honorable Menton, Drawing/Printmaking



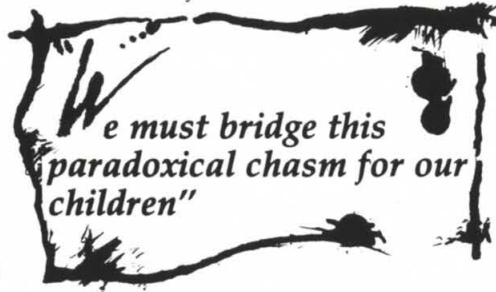
Sara Honeycutt, *Seated Woman*

of priorities than education. As Weller states, "the mountaineer is simply not interested in abstract ideas, or in intellectual fine points, or in learning for the sake of learning." In many cases only if education is immediately applicable to the daily life of the mountaineer does it gain any respect or importance in his life. In this culture a child is torn between a strong sense of familial obligation and loyalty and an urge to reach out to improve his own lot in life. As a result of this inner turmoil many may begin to resent education, for ignorance is bliss when one realizes it may have been better not to have a dream than to have it stripped from him later by socio-economic factors over which he has no control.

In describing the character of the mountaineer Harry M. Caudill suggests that "within his fold of the mountains and surrounded by foes real or imagined, the mountaineer was crankily individualistic. He tenaciously defended the ideas and freedoms that made his bizarre individualism possible. He became a loner." It is this individualism that isolates us from the rest of the world. This problem is intensified by the fact that education tends to isolate us from our own. According to Jones it destroys "the common level of the reference group." For some it is preferable to maintain a commonality with his peers than to have too much book-learning and ostracize himself from those who will think him a snob because of their own ignorance in

any subject matter that does not directly relate to their limited lifestyles.

The mountaineer's independence, strong sense of pride in accomplishment, and individualism cause a great inner turmoil for those who by social or economic instability are forced to become dependent on government assistance to survive here. Caudill suggests that "contemporary Appalachia has viable symbols; they are the public assistance check, the food stamp." It is necessary to give a people who have been called masters of simile back their symbols, to give them the option of once again becoming an active responsible component of a working, open-minded society



Weller emphasizes our love of place here in these hills:

We are oriented around places, and we go back as often as possible. And it is a great problem to those who urge mountaineers to find their destiny outside the mountain.

And this is where the mountaineer feels the paradox the most. We may learn, but we are not able to apply our knowledge, use our concepts and ideas here. We may go elsewhere to make our fortunes and return later to our native homes to enjoy the fruits of that labor. In order to maintain a decent lifestyle and still remain in these hills that are our home we must emphasize public relations in our chambers of commerce, enlisting more manpower to encourage businesses and industries to bring life blood to this area. We must provide jobs not only for the practical farmer or experienced factory worker, but for the idealist, the artist, those concerned with concepts and ideas that do not have immediate practical application, but preserve the beauty and truth of our age and our culture, and not merely the fruits of our technology, for future generations. We must bridge this paradoxical chasm for our children, teach them to temper our cultural beliefs, social hierarchy, and religious background with the knowledge necessary to live productively in a modern age. We must apply those doctrines on which we were raised, for Proverbs 1:7 states that "fools despise wisdom and instruction." We must dispel the myths with the light of knowledge, and as with all change, this begins with a true desire in the heart of an individual who is ready to face the fears of his past with the light of his dreams for the future.



Joseph A. Moriarity, **Quilting, Exchange Place**

# MENCKEN AT THE GLOBE

Non-Fiction

Mark F. Thompson

H.L. Mencken, twentieth-century American writer, was best known as a journalist and a critic; he was *not* a noteworthy poet. Had he tampered with the classics, the results might have been similar to what follows.

Juliet is the sun. The moon on the other hand is a sour and pugnacious old charlatan. Her envy is that of a shrivelled and withering Baptist bridge player or a sagging dame of the DAR. All would be best served if the sun killed the moon. In a battle of beauty, charm, and wit the sun would easily prevail. This is widely accepted as sound prognostication. Ask any common fellow and even his simple analysis will bear me out.

Of course it is unlikely that Juliet would tangle with the malicious moon. Having been thoroughly timidified by the influence of the Mt. Sinai Capulets, she is a perfectly peaceful creature. Still, continued contact with the moon would be naive and dangerous. That lunar Lesbos will doubtless cause her green sickness. We have seen many cases of it at the Johns Hopkins and the only remedies of any effect are two tablespoons of ipecac hourly, a good daily sloshing, and alacritous marriage.

*"Her envy is that of a shrivelled and withering Baptist bridge player or a sagging dame of the DAR."*

At present my Juliet is consumed with the awesome beauty of the night sky. She discourses in thought with the stars. The only star visible at this hour is Venus, so she mistakenly contemplates a planet. I must readily forgive such errata. Astronomy is no longer accepted educational dogma. It is the practical basis for all human sense of time and motion, so naturally it is not taught. No doubt the child's head is full of imaginary nonnumbers, existential unrealities, and women writers.

But whatever sadly erroneous thoughts lie within, they are beautifully housed. There are indeed stars out tonight. They are Juliet's eyes. Their dark sadness twinkles like two supernovae exploding in that shapely skull. If those sparkling ocular orbs were plucked metaphysically from their sockets and flung into heaven, night would be instantaneously transformed into day and the Crossbeaked Sapsucker would be duped into song. He is a sagacious avian not easily fooled.

\*\*\*\*\*

But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.  
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief  
That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she.

*"No doubt the child's head is full of imaginary nonnumbers, existential unrealities, and women writers."*

Be not her maid, since she is envious;  
Her vestal livery is but sick and green  
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.  
It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O that she knew she were!  
She speaks, yet she says nothing; what of that?  
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.  
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks.  
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?  
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,  
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven  
Would through the airy region stream so bright  
That birds would sing and think it were not night.



Donna Bowles, **Wood Nymph**



NO PLACE  
Poetry

# BURN THERAPY

*Robert L. McDonald*

*Authorities found Bates's cremated remains at Walter Wesley Ellebracht's remote ranch 60 miles from San Antonio, where they believe the Ellebracht family enslaved as many as 75 drifters between 1981 and 1984.*

—NEWSWEEK

*It was fear that first made gods in the world.*

—Statius

Welcome to your nightmare,  
they said.  
And he believed them,  
remembered the countless times  
his good mother had reminded  
him to say his bedtime prayers,  
wished he had done it  
so he would know what was called for now,  
here in the noon-day desert sun  
where his gut had begun to boil.  
If she were here, she would pat  
his hand and reassure him  
in a voice like the one  
she had forced the day he told her  
he was leaving,  
telling him  
that everything would be all right,  
that good would prevail.  
He almost loved them  
for a moment  
for making him  
think of her again.

Then he cried,

just before the fluid of redemption  
flowed from a rusty can  
to fuel the transformation  
and the match was struck.

# RESURRECTED BAPTIST

Nell McGrady

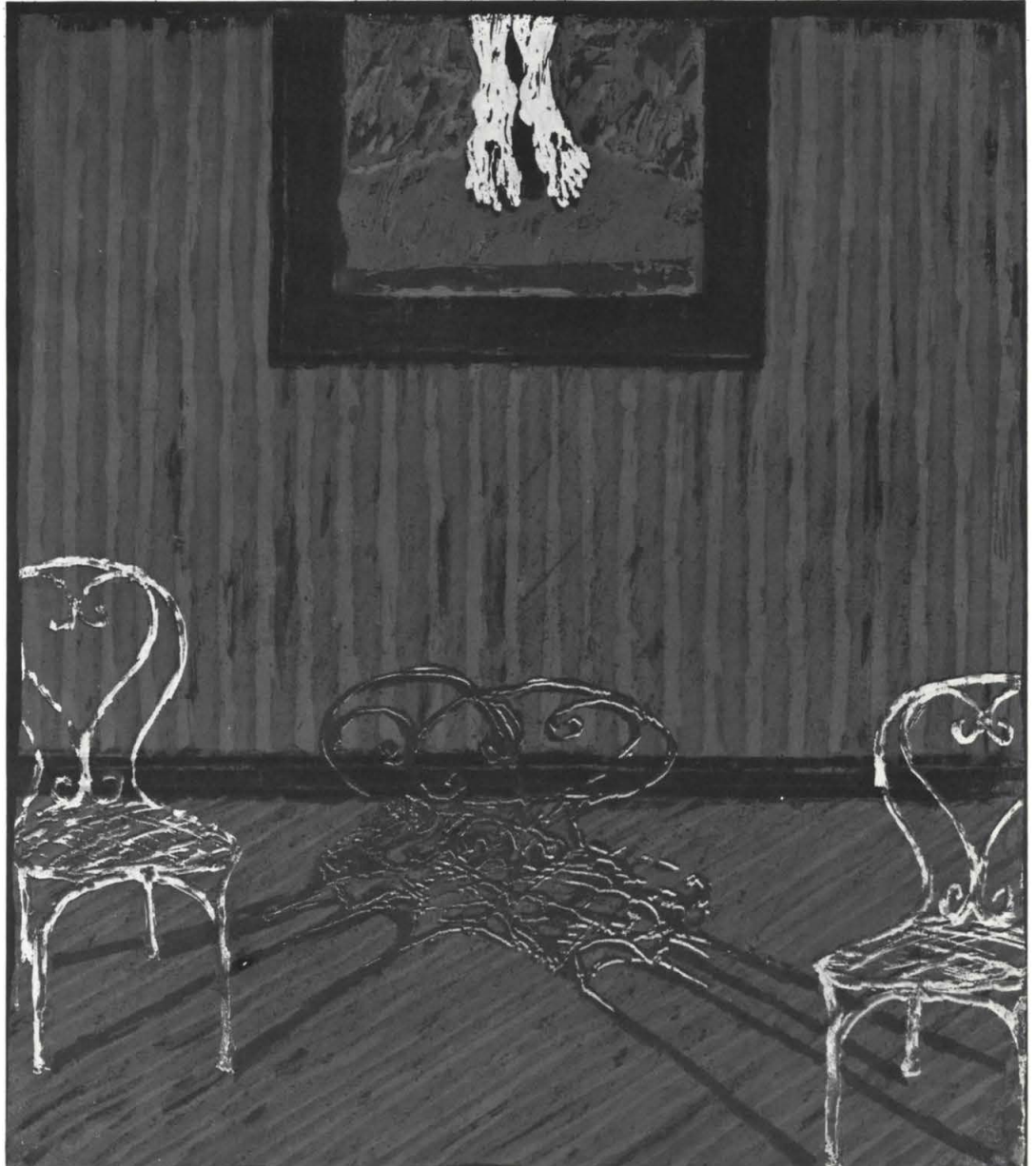
Not love,  
but rage will hurl  
me back,

back through the cry  
of my dying and I'll implode  
into an April shower  
with thunder, exploding  
like windows bursting  
from a burning house.

"A lie!" I'll shout,  
and "Damn  
those Sunday  
morning promises!"

Pale skinwalker,  
I'll not be purged  
by prayers,  
or syrup of ipecac  
but will stalk forever,  
unforgiving,  
and flinging sermons  
through the wind.

Second Place, Drawing/Printmaking



Mike Holsomback, *Crucifixion Scene III*





Joseph A. Moriarity, **Bank Vault**



# GNOSKW AND THE VSAM WIZARD OF HELL

Lon Tobin

## CHAPTER I

### Destined for Greatness

Come to may aid, oh blithe spirits of the artful muses, as I tell the story of how a college girl met face to face with a computer age wizard and with the help of a benevolent ruler conquered the forces of evil, rescued its captives, and made the world safe for computer operators everywhere and forever more. My story starts one dark winter's day in the make-believe kingdom of Etsu where a young girl by the name of Gnoskw was summoned to the royal chambers of Queen Nnub.

As Gnoskw climbed the stairs she wondered why the Queen of all computers in the province of Gilbreath would possibly want to speak to her. But ever since she had taken her computer concepts course, she had heard of the fame of the great Nnub and she longed to know if the tales of the Queen's magical powers were real or just a myth. So, with some apprehension, she stood in the outer chambers waiting to be summoned.

Finally, she was called and she crept into the Queen's room. Piles of paper walled the office like redwoods in a forest, and from behind a desk, as if from a dark cave, came a jovial greeting one could hardly help but be drawn to.

"Come in, my dear. I have an assignment for you." She was unsettled not so much that Queen Nnub had an assignment for her (Nnub always had an assignment for someone) but because Gnoskw couldn't figure out why the Queen would pick her there must have been a thousand students with more experience than she. Surely Nnub could have made a better sel

"What are you doing, girl? This is not time for you to be daydreaming! There is a terrible monster named VSAM who has taken over the basement dungeon of this castle and many of my most talented and skilled students are down there. They must be freed and I want you to do it."

"But why me?" protested Gnoskw. "Surely if the most well-trained of your subjects have been captured by VSAM, I'll be no match for his powers!"

"Don't be afraid, child, you're obviously very smart," the Queen assured her. "Your name means 'I know,' and besides, when this whole mess started I consulted the oracle at Dosssett and it told me you were the one for the job."

"I don't care what the oracle said," shrieked Gnoskw, her voice trembling with each word, "there must be some mistake. I can't go into the dungeon of Gilbreath against the wizard VSAM. I've only had basic computer courses, and he has all the powers of Hell itself at his fingertips."

The queen thought for a minute and

answered, "Gnoskw, you have your mind and you stand for what is right. I've been instructed to give you two magical powers and a piece of advice." The Queen handed the girl a vial of dust and said, "This vial contains a magical dust that will enable you to make anything you throw it on go around in circles."

"Big deal," complained Gnoskw "You're sending me after a wizard and you're giving me a tube of talcum!!"

"Look," said the Queen, "it wasn't my idea; the oracle said that you'd need it. Besides, there's more. Up until now no one has ever been able to read an Assembler dump." As she spoke she reached out and touched the girl's eyes. "Now you can. It will help you follow the wizard because he can't be seen."

"Wait a darned minute! Now you're telling me I can't even see this thing and you want me to go get rid of it. Why it's like trying to find a needle in a haystack when the needle is made of thin air and is liable to bite my head off!" Gnoskw rose and started to leave, but a patient touch of the Queen's hand on her forearm reminded the girl of whose presence she was in.

*"There is a terrible monster named VSAM who has taken over the basement dungeon, and many of my most talented and skilled students are down there."*

"Besides dear, you may not be able to see VSAM but I have one ally left in the lab, a terminal that somehow has been able to resist VSAM's tyranny. It will be your eyes." The Queen looked patiently into Gnoskw's eyes. "Listen to him, child. You may have secret powers but few problems are ever solved by gimmicks. If you are to beat the wizard, it will be at great price to both of you. You and the terminal must work together."

Then, as if to offer a sacrifice to the gods, Queen Nnub turned and lifted from a casket a piece of paper. Folding it, she handed it to Gnoskw. "On this paper is written the most powerful command ever keyed into a computer. Use it wisely; you will know when. No one can read it, but I know you will use it well."

In a state of shock and anger, Gnoskw looked at the pathetic arsenal of weapons would use to battle VSAM: a bottle of dust, a language no one else could read, and a piece of paper with a bunch of gibberish written on it. With tears in her eyes, she

started to object again, but the Queen had disappeared behind one of the paper redwoods. So, Gnoskw turned to go.

Suddenly, she remembered the piece of advice that she had been promised but decided against asking for. Then as she reached for the door knob, the Queen's voice bellowed, "It's on the door." Gnoskw smiled as she looked at the words "YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER." Puzzled, she closed the door behind her and walked towards the elevator.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Journey to the Dungeon

As the elevator sank into the bowels of Gilbreath Castle, so did Gnoskw's heart. All the talk of magical powers, truth, and intelligence had nearly convinced her she could pull it off, but now, as the meeting with VSAM drew nearer, Gnoskw shrank back into her shell of inadequacy. Her descent had started out on the third floor and she hardly realized anything was happening when the lift abruptly came to rest. Her heart jumped as she prepared for who knows what, but as she raised her eyes to whisper a prayer, she caught sight of the indicator and realized she had stopped on the second floor.

The door slid open and in stepped a tall, good-looking guy with grey eyes that could stare right through you. His wavy hair was impeccably groomed and its black color contrasted beautifully with the white suit and patent leather shoes. The whole outfit was seasoned by a red carnation and on his lapel was a gold cross inscribed with the words "love, peace, and conformity"

"Good morning, sister!" the man said as if announcing it to an audience. "What brings you out on a lovely day like today?"

Gnoskw thought about the miserable weather outside but decided to be polite.

"I'm on a mission for Queen Nnub," she started to explain when her new acquaintance broke in.

"Oh yes, that VSAM affair terrible lot that! You say the Queen has sent you to confront the monster?"

"No, I didn't say anything of the sort. How did you know about the wizard anyway?"

"Well, my dear, I know everything," he retorted smugly "I know who you are, what you're doing, everything to know about everything. In fact, if you'll listen to me, you'll never have to think on your own again. Why I can give you just the commands you need to capture VSAM and you won't have to give it a second thought."

"Who are you anyway?" Gnoskw queried.

"I'm the preacher from the JCL church Here," he said as he handed her a form letter. "This will get you on line and enable



Theresa Bellamy, **Human Grid**

you to corner VSAM. Now don't bother to thank me. It's really nothing at all — good day to you, sister! Praise the Printer."

Gnoskw started to ask a question but he had disappeared and left her with only the form letter in her hand.

The elevator suddenly stopped and shook her back to her senses.

A chilling draft slithered under the door, and the sounds of people screaming and cursing about dumps and return time filtered to her ears. The incessant hum of printers whined as if forever computing the square root of two and the smell of paper cut into her nostrils. She swallowed hard and breathed deeply. In a matter of seconds the door would open and she would enter the domain of the VSAM wizard of Hell.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Friend in Need

As the door slid open, scenes met Gnoskw's eyes that all the powers Queen Nnub ever possessed could not have prepared her for. People, endless masses wandering aimlessly, crowded the hall. No light showed through the windows as a pall fell over the entire scene, and only an eerie red glow illuminated the reams of printouts the people carried in their hands.

Gnoskw noticed that each one carried yards of paper. In fact, they carried so much that one end of the printout formed a noose around their necks and then reams followed them dragging on the floor like a ball and chain. The sounds of wailing were deafening and the air was so stale that she gagged as she made her way through the masses.

"Excuse me. Excuse me, please!" She gasped as she stumbled over people. "Could you tell me where to find the Telex lab?"

"Look at this mess," someone said showing a wrinkled printout into her face. "This thing is so screwed up it will take a miracle to straighten out. This assignment is due on Thursday, the printer is fouled up, and something is screwing with the programs we submit! How do they expect us to get our work done when the computer is eating our programs?"

She started to answer but he'd never have believed her anyway. The crowd shoved her along as if she were in an undertow so the answer never materialized. At last she made it to the main lab, and although the scene outside the elevator was bad, what confronted her now was even worse. Bodies were strewn all over the floor wrapped in shrouds of computer paper. The lab, unlike the hall, was filled with air so hot that it felt like a dragon's breath, and it reeked with the smell of human sweat and printer paper. Everything was in darkness. All the terminals were jammed with a kaleidoscope of lights rolling on the screens and on them all danced demons screaming in unison, "V-SAM, V-SAM, V-SAM." Every terminal but one.

Over in the corner sat one terminal still in the light and on line, perking along as if nothing were wrong. Gnoskw knew this was her partner.

She climbed over the piles of humanity and hard copy until she got to the keyboard and logged on. The prompt came back: "HELLO, GNOSKW, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE!"

"Boy, you're sure in a good mood to be in the middle of this mess," she typed. The message returned: "QUEEN NNUB USED HER MODEM TO LET ME KNOW YOU WERE COMING."

"Yeah, she sent me down here to get rid of VSAM but I never realized you'd be quite as optimistic as this."

The terminal flashed its reply: "LOOK, GOOD LOOKIN', NO REASON TO BE SCARED. THE QUEEN CONSULTED THE ORACLE AT DOSSETT AND WAS TOLD YOU WERE THE ONE FOR THE JOB. SHE'S GIVEN YOU SPECIAL POWERS, I UNDERSTAND, AND YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS, SO LET'S USE IT AND GET TO WORK!"

Gnoskw sat stunned as she looked around and suddenly realized something very odd. Her fingers danced across the keys. "How come you've been able to resist VSAM when all the rest of these terminals bit the dust?"

"CAUSE I THINK FOR MYSELF," the screen lit up: "THE REST OF THESE GUYS LET THE WIZARD MESS WITH THEIR MINDS BUT I'M A LONER. THAT'S THE WAY YOU GET SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD — YOU THINK FOR YOURSELF UNDERSTAND?"

Gnoskw read the message and smiled. She was starting to feel very close to this box of lights and wires. "We've got to come up with a name for you," she entered. "One thing is for sure, you're pretty cute!"

"MESSAGE UNDERSTOOD. MY NAME

IS 'PRETTY CUTE,'" the monitor blinked.

"Well, that's not exactly what I had in mind," chuckled the girl, "but I guess it will do."

The terminal didn't understand but figured this was one of the characteristic complications of working with a human. "LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. WE'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO!"

"Maybe not," answered Gnoskw. "In addition to what the queen gave me, I've done a little work on my own on the way down here." She lied, but who would know? She'd save both of them a lot of work. Wouldn't the Queen be proud of her "resourcefulness"? No one would know the difference and all would be safe once again in the land of Etsu.

Meanwhile, the reams of paper piled higher and higher; the deafening noise shook the windows; the demons continued their chant, "V-SAM, V-SAM," and the wizard chuckled as he contemplated his ultimate victory

### CHAPTER 4

#### The High Cost of Education

Pretty Cute was amazed at the girl's resolve, and as Gnoskw dug in her book bag for the form letter from the JCL preacher, he readied himself to go one-on-one with the VSAM wizard of Hell. Gnoskw had a lot of trouble getting to the letter, and she'd glance at every piece of paper, look at it long enough to realize it wasn't what she was looking for, then crumble it up and throw it on the floor with the tons of paper already there.

Finally, she got it and she smiled sarcastically as she keyed in the commands. How proud everyone would be of her when it became known that single-handedly she had brought the VSAM wizard to his knees. They'd probably name a lab after her or at least a street or something, she mused. "But there's no time to worry about that now"

After one last check for accuracy she submitted the program. Everything suddenly fell quiet. Then, without warning, a flash of light burst across the screen. The demons on all the terminals joined hands and flew merrily around the room while huge letters burst before her eyes on Pretty Cute's screen "V-SAM, V-SAM, V-SAM."

Smoke curled slowly out from behind Pretty Cute's monitor, and as tears rolled down her face, she knew she'd lost her only hope of success. Her printout came back, and all seemed lost as it wrapped its way from the printer, across her lap, and up around her neck. She looked down and saw an endless flow of hard copy and with it she saw her mission piled on the floor.

Suddenly, a small cursor appeared on Pretty Cute's screen and a faint message scrolled up: "WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU PUT IN THAT PROGRAM?" She cried both because she was glad he was still with her and because she knew she'd have to admit what she'd done.

"Pretty Cute, I've done a terrible thing. The JCL preacher gave me those instructions and I thought we could save some time and aggravation by just taking his word for it and typing them in. I'm sorry Really, I'm very sorry"

"YOU OUGHT TO BE," the terminal weakly responded. "I NEARLY ENDED UP IN A MICROWAVE PARTS FACTORY FORTUNATELY, YOU'RE A LOUSY TYPIST AND YOU FORGOT A PERIOD. OTHERWISE, I'D BE HISTORY! AS IT IS, I'M ONLY RUNNING AT ABOUT 20% BUT I'VE GOT ENOUGH BUZZ LEFT FOR ONE MORE SUBMIT — THE RIGHT ONE — GOT IT?"

She started crying even harder now. "WHAT'S WRONG NOW," he said not very sympathetically

"I don't know what I'm doing and we'll never get out of here!"

"LOOK CUTIE, DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT ADVICE THE QUEEN GAVE YOU?"

She remembered the sign on the back of Queen Nnub's door and immediately the slick dressed preacher came to mind.

"THAT PREACHER HAS FOULED UP MORE LIVES THAN I CARE TO TABULATE. HOW DO YOU THINK THE REST OF THESE JOKERS GOT DOWN HERE? YOUR NAME MEANS 'I KNOW' BUT IN ORDER TO KNOW YOU MUST FIRST THINK. NOW THINK!"

She cried even more.

"ARE YOU GOING TO LET THINGS RUN YOUR LIFE FOREVER OR ARE YOU GONNA TAKE CONTROL FOR A CHANGE?"

Gnoskw thought for a moment and made her decision. "No more easy road for me," she typed. "I'll be the master, Pretty Cute." Then, as she cleared her eyes, she looked down where her tears had fallen and smeared the letters on the dump.

"The printout — that's it — the print-out!" she shouted as she remembered her newly acquired language.

"WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT GIRL," Pretty Cute sputtered.

"Nnub gave me the ability to read an Assembler dump. If we can tell where the wizard's been, maybe we can figure out where he's going! What do you say, partner?"

"GIVE IT A GO GIRL! GIVE IT A GO!"

## CHAPTER 5

### Now That's Using Your Head

Gnoskw's eyes flew across the pages as her mind interpreted the data which lay before her. It was odd not to recognize the mass of symbols, but instantly pictures became visible in her mind. With Pretty Cute's help Gnoskw was able to locate the wizard in the far end of a memory bank. Using her ability to read Assembler, she typed the commands to seal him off. As she was working, however, all of the demons started circling her head and she noticed that their chant had changed. She listened above the background noise "We are V-SAM. We are V-SAM. We are V-Sam."

Suddenly she realized what had happened. Thrusting her hand inside her bag, she grabbed the vial of magic powder

and threw it in the demons' faces. She'd been right — VSAM was actually a combination of all the demons, and as they screamed and grabbed for their throats, they dove for the nearest terminal for refuge Pretty Cute.

His monitor blinked, "QUICK, GNOSKW, I'VE GOT THEM ALL! THE COMMAND — THE ONE QUEEN NNUB GAVE YOU! ENTER IT — NOW!"

Her heart nearly stopped. In her haste to find the JCL preacher's worthless promise of an easy solution, she realized she had thrown away the only command that could save them!

"NOW, GIRL! NOW! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?" Pretty Cute's screen crackled.

She swallowed hard as she prepared to tell him that because of her stupidity all was lost. How could she admit that she'd lost her partner and failed on her mission because she'd accepted and not questioned? "Pretty Cute, I "

Without a warning, like the cavalry to the rescue, the display flashed as a modem patched in from upstairs and a strange series of digits and letters moved across the screen. Queen Nnub had saved a backup.

Gnoskw screamed for joy as she submitted the command. For what seemed like hours, all was quiet. Then suddenly, all the lights in the lab came on and the windows flew open as fresh air filled the room. The students danced for joy as they unwrapped themselves like a thousand modern day Lazaruses fresh from the tomb. The printer finally got quiet.



Everyone was laughing and celebrating. Even the terminals seemed happy to come back on line. They blinked a friendly "HELLO" to their operators all except one the one whose screen would never light again.

#### EPILOGUE

##### The Greatest Lesson of All

Things returned to normal after that. The command that no one understood had exiled VSAM to a lab in the Province of TI where classes are never held. The magic dust now has the wizard chasing himself in a never-ending loop, dooming him to an eternity of frustration where he can't bother anyone.

The JCL preacher is still alive and well, walking the halls and riding the elevator of Gilbreath Castle, promising a quick fix to all who are dumb enough to listen, then

leaving them stranded.

Gnoskw carried out Pretty Cute's frame herself and buried him where only she knows. Then she went to see Queen Nnub.

She entered quietly wondering if Nnub was hiding behind the ever-present pillars of paper.

"I wondered when you'd show up," a familiar voice bellowed. She came around the corner of the desk and smiled at Gnoskw, "I wanted to give you something."

Gnoskw eased in a little closer. "I'm afraid I didn't do a very good job. I forgot what you told me; I fell for a quick fix; I

The Queen broke in, "Child, the mission is done. All is well now. But most important, you have learned. I asked you to rid Gilbreath of the VSAM wizard and to free the other students. You have done that, and now you deserve a reward."

Gnoskw thought for a minute but all

that came to mind was Pretty Cute. "Queen Nnub, all I ask is that you honor Pretty Cute."

So Queen Nnub erected a lab right across the hall from the place where Gnoskw and Pretty Cute fought their battles. In it, she placed ten small computers. To honor Pretty Cute's contribution, Nnub inscribed on each terminal the first letter of Gnoskw's challenge to her partner. "I'll Be the Master, Pretty Cute."

Queen Nnub continues to rule her kingdom, assigning too much work with not enough time to complete it. Gnoskw went back to her normal life. And to this day, when students enter the computer labs in the basement of Gilbreath Castle, they remember the day a normal girl, using her ability to think, conquered the VSAM wizard of Hell.

#### Third Place, Graphic Design



Fathi Bakkoush, Pac-Wiz Promotion Poster

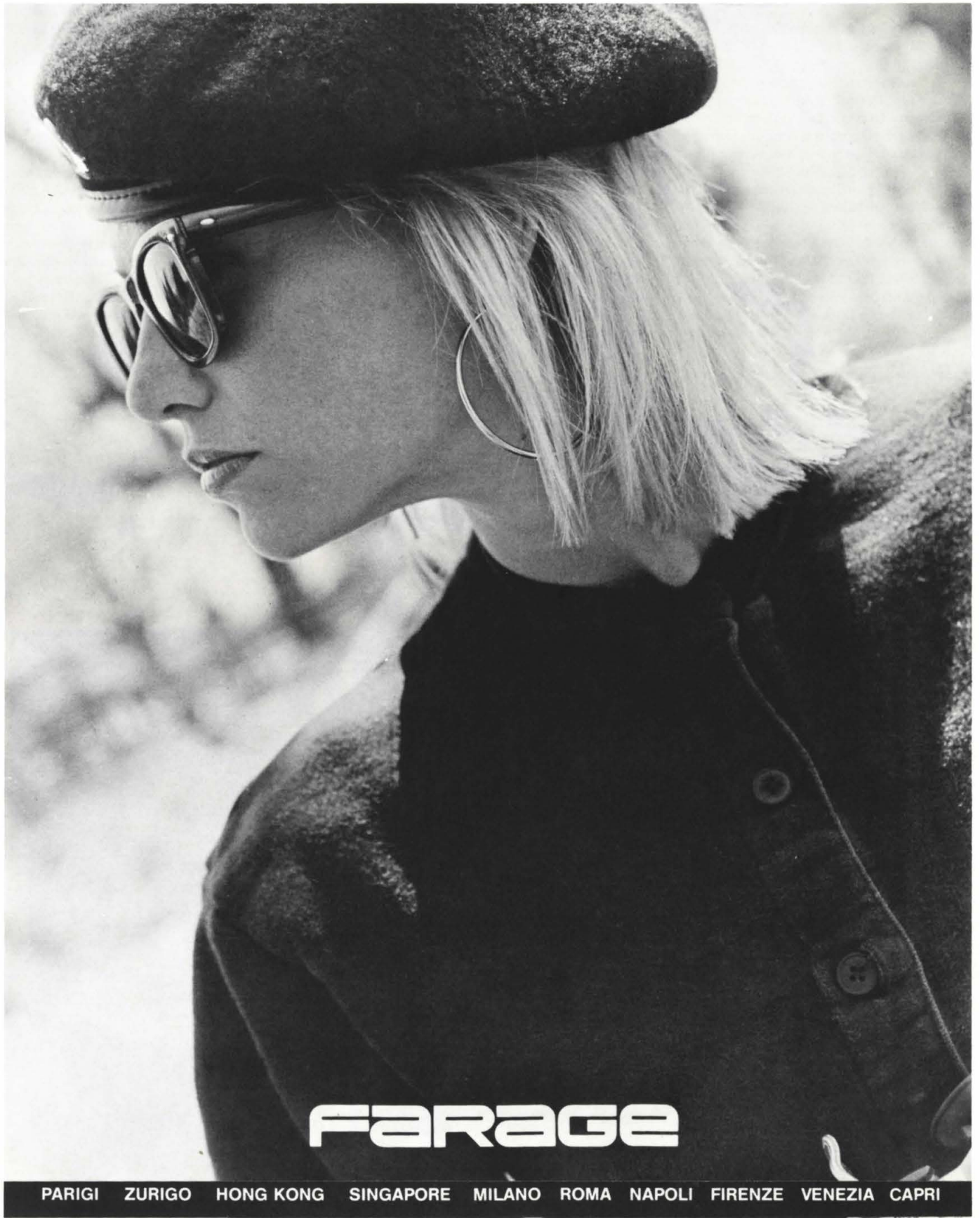
# SPELL DANCE

*Rebecca Alford*

The ole wrinkled man  
Not a care in the world  
Picking petunias for Nola  
Came across weeds  
The happiest of these  
In their wild exuberance  
So he plucked them instead  
And she placed them in a vase  
Between their faces at dinner  
So they had to look around them  
To see each other  
And her skin became smooth again  
And his hair grew back  
As the moon rose above the cottage  
And the silence took them to bed



David Rowe, **Untitled - New York**



PARIGI ZURIGO HONG KONG SINGAPORE MILANO ROMA NAPOLI FIRENZE VENEZIA CAPRI

Fathi Bakkoush, **Farage**

# THIRTY-SEVEN DAYS

Special Category: Drama

Christine Lassiter

In the first scene of *Thirty-Seven Days*, Marla, Justin, Ruthann, and Dan arrive at a small theater to meet each other for the first time and begin a project together. They have been contracted for substantial pay by an anonymous sponsor to write and produce a play over the next six weeks. The only stipulation is that the play be titled *Truth*.

Marla is a young actress who is struggling desperately to forget her recent stint as a topless dancer. Justin is an accomplished but bitterly sarcastic actor who is even more reticent than Marla about discussing his personal life. Soon after they meet, he tells her that he's seen her dancing at the club on South Broadway. Shortly thereafter, she spills her anguish to him, precipitating their tumultuous love affair, the progress of which punctuates the writing of *Truth*. Dan and Ruthann, with assistance from Marla, are the playwrights. Dan is a young writer who has written two unproduced comedies. Though he is outwardly confident and charming, he is frequently plagued by subconscious doubts about himself and his complacent existence. Ruthann is a high school art teacher and sometime poet whose husband killed himself three years ago. When Justin first suggests a suicide theme, she rejects the idea unequivocally. However, after a struggle with herself, she changes her mind and convinces Dan to work with the suicide theme. Both of them attempt to avoid confronting their difficult emotions, but despite this tendency, they manage to finish writing the play. The scene excerpted here is the final dress rehearsal before the production of *Truth* that evening. Marla and Justin are acting in the play that Dan and Ruthann wrote:

\*\*\*\*\*

## Act III Scene i

(The stage is bare; Justin stands in the center. There is a medium-size box by his feet. He holds a paper in his hands and recites from it at first, but after a few lines, he doesn't look at it again.)

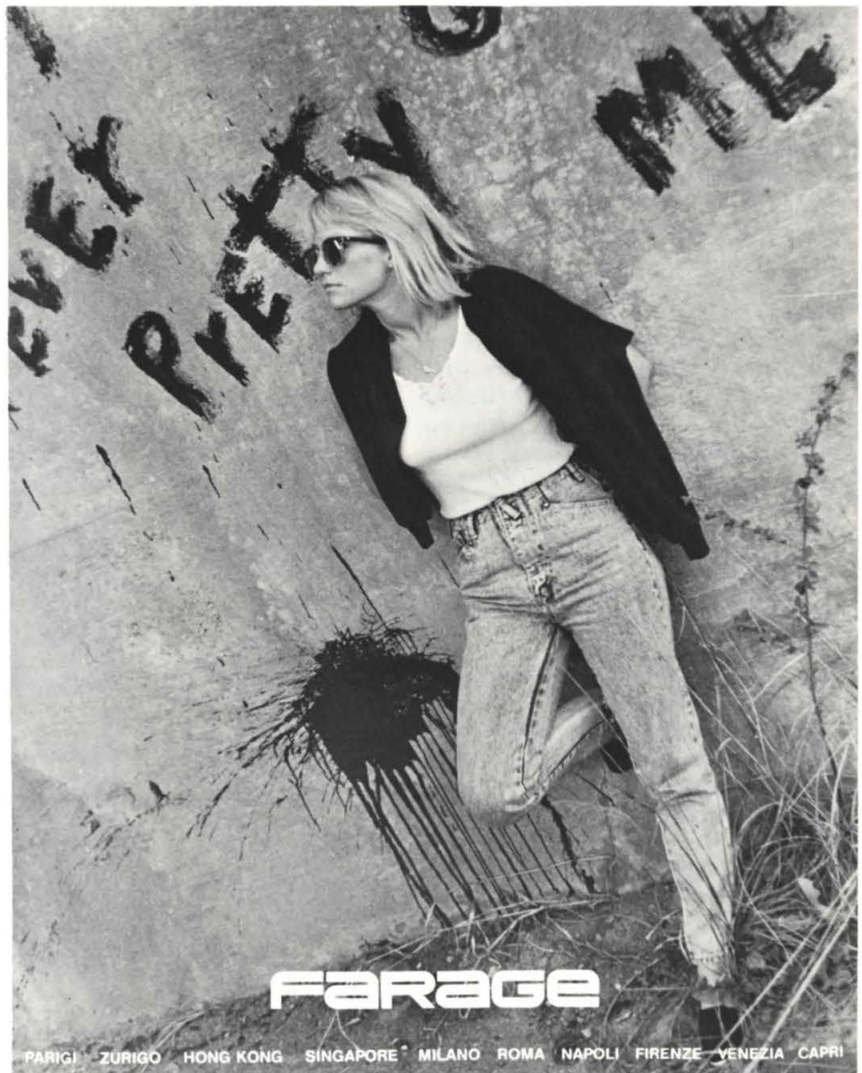
**Justin:** When anonymous eyes look my way, they see the flipside of their lids sketched in celluloid simplicity, a 30 second interruption in their Saturday night saga of marketplace dreams. If just once I let them see my reality instead of hawking a safe banality, would I shatter the tube of their video world, or would remote control flick me off in time? Would I then move to the gutter where I'd scribble my heart onto cigarette cellophane and paint it onto the asphalt with iron poor blood? Who would arrest the street cleaner for his crime? Perhaps I could climb out of this commercial and get on their prime time dream. Would the glaze in their eyes disappear? Would I even graze their

awareness? And if I did finally reach them, who would have changed from the time when I couldn't? Because this love which

*"One by one, all the characters are catapulted by their interaction with the others into the repressed pain of their own lives."*

now carries me through calamity, it tends to leak from the heart and dribble down the alleyways of daily dealing until finally

when the dream arrives, it bounces off the walls of a hollow heart. (He slowly and methodically tears the paper to bits, then throws it up like confetti, looking at it sadly) I never did put a name to that piece, did I? I have the perfect name for it now. (laughs) Now that it's gone I have the perfect name. "Talking to Myself about Nothing." Yes. Perfect. If I did an autobiography, that's what I'd name it too. "Talking to Myself about Nothing." (laughs) (There should be two distinct voices emanating from Justin during this suicide prologue. The first, who has just spoken, is sensitive, introspective, and agonized. The second, which starts now and continues to alternate with voice one, is practical, urgent, and much less vulnerable.) The dream has arrived just like you said it would. It's bouncing around inside your emptiness. It wants to escape from the prison of your emptiness. Let it escape. It's time. It's time to let it go. (change, scoops up some of the paper) Here it is!



Fathi Bakkoush, Farage Fashion, Inc.



My suicide note. My suicide note, my autobiography, my epitaph. *(throws it up)* Every thing that's left of my life lies scattered on the ground at my feet. It's staining my toes. *(pleading)* I want to get there without dying. Please, can I? *(change)* You know that's impossible. If you want death, you have to die. You've always known that. It's only one second. Seconds have ticked by endlessly for your entire life. You haven't even noticed them. All you need for dying is one long second. You pull the trigger The next second you're dead. Do it now Let your dream fly free. *(change, he bends down and takes the gun from the box, then holds it in his hand considering, laughs suddenly)* Isn't this absurd? I almost prayed. I almost prayed to God to give me the courage to do this. Has absurdity ever reached such absurd heights before? *(laughs, but turns into crying)* I don't want to die. *(change)* Let your dream fly free. *(continues to stare at the gun blankly, then with profound sadness)* I can't even feel the emptiness anymore. *(Resolutely lifts gun to his mouth, cannon goes off as lights go out)* *(Ethereal music begins, soft spot comes on angel who is spinning. She stops and looks surprised)*

**Marla:** Am I really here? *(Takes a few exploratory steps, then sees body, peers closely at it.)* I am. *(She gracefully cleans up the mess, putting every thing inside the box. As she does, the spot expands its diameter to include about eight feet. When she's finished, she takes both his arms and pulls him to a sitting position. He opens his eyes and looks confused. There's blood smeared across his face)* Oh dear, let me clean your face. *(She uses scarf to gently wipe off blood, then puts it into the box too. He watches what she's doing closely, but is still dazed.)*

**Justin:** What are you doing?

**Marla:** I'm cleaning up this mess you made.

**Justin:** What...*(Starts to ask, but then seems to remember)* Who are you?

**Marla:** Your friend.

**Justin:** But I don't know you. Why do you look like an angel?

**Marla:** Because I am an angel.

**Justin:** There's no such thing as an angel.

**Marla:** I know; you can imagine that I'm not here if you like. You can imagine that all you feel is emptiness. That you can't even feel the emptiness anymore.

**Justin:** *(startled, he's staring at her)* Why did you say that?

**Marla:** Oh, don't mind me. I was talking with myself about nothing.

**Justin:** *(startled again, then angry)* Are you ridiculing me?

**Marla:** No.

**Justin:** What exactly are you doing?

**Marla:** I am loving you.

**Justin:** *(confused, but demanding)* What is happening here?

**Marla:** I told you that. I am loving you.

**Justin:** That doesn't explain anything! I'm dead, aren't I?

**Marla:** Do you think that this is how death is supposed to feel? *(pinches him)*

**Justin:** Ow! *(dubious)* Why aren't I dead?

**Marla:** You don't want to be dead.

**Justin:** Yes I do! I decided to die. I shot myself. I wanted to die!

**Marla:** So you shot yourself in the denture. Don't you know that's not a vital organ?

**Justin:** *(suddenly horrified)* No! I am still alive. Who are you?

**Marla:** I told you already

*"All you need for dying is one long second. You pull the trigger. The next second you're dead. Do it now. Let your dream fly free."*

**Justin:** No you didn't. You said you were an angel, but then you said that angels don't really exist.

**Marla:** I only agreed with you.

**Justin:** But I was right!

**Marla:** Of course you were!

**Justin:** But that doesn't explain anything!

**Marla:** You're right about that, too.

**Justin:** I don't want to be right anymore!

**Marla:** You're wrong about that.

**Justin:** *(confused)* Wrong about what?

**Marla:** About being right.

**Justin:** *(still confused)* What did I say?

**Marla:** You said you didn't want to be right anymore, but you're wrong.

**Justin:** You mean I do want to be right?

**Marla:** You've *always* wanted to be right. That's what brought you to this predicament.

**Justin:** What brought me to this predicament?

**Marla:** Wanting to be right.

**Justin:** Right about what?

**Marla:** Right about your story

**Justin:** What story?

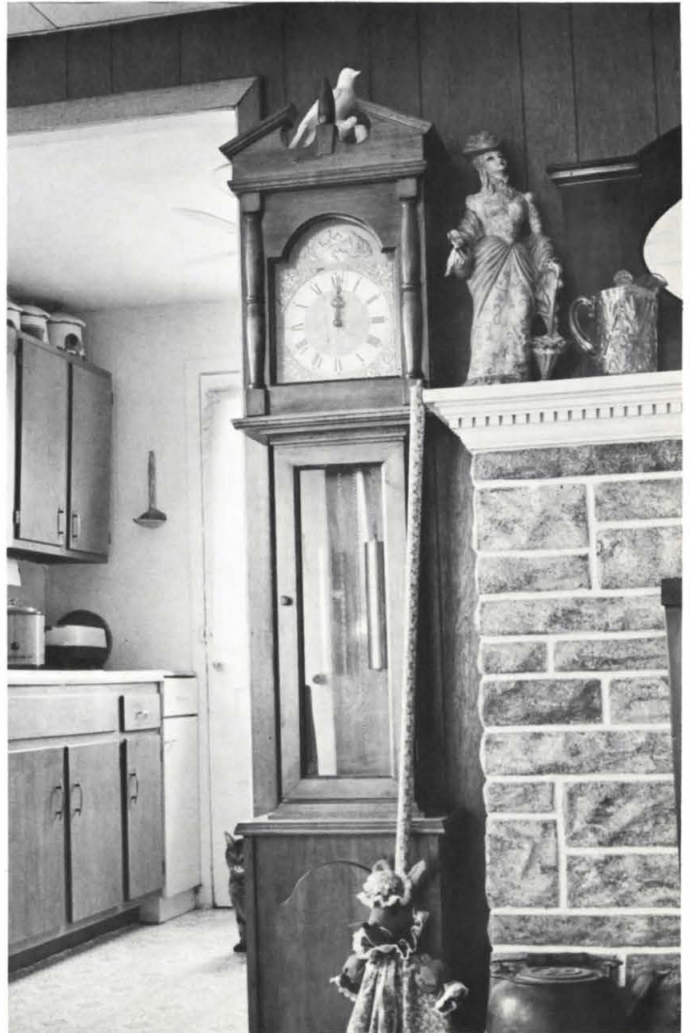
**Marla:** You tell me. It's *your* story

**Justin:** What the hell are you trying to do?

**Marla:** I told you that already I am...

**Justin:** You don't have to repeat it.

I think I will just the same. I'm



Chris Ballard, *It's Just a Matter of Time*

loving you. Now, what is your story? Why did you shoot yourself in the denture?

**Justin:** (angry) I thought I was shooting myself in the head! I told you I wanted to kill myself!

**Marla:** Why did you want that?

**Justin:** There was no longer any reason to live.

**Marla:** Love had leaked down the alleyways of daily dealing, had it?

**Justin:** Yes.

**Marla:** Why didn't you fix the leak?

**Justin:** (scornfully) That's a metaphor!

**Marla:** I know. You could have kept love in your life by fixing the metaphorical leak.

**Justin:** No, I couldn't. I didn't know until it was too late. The leak had done its damage.

*So you shot yourself in the denture. Don't you know that's not a vital organ?"*

**Marla:** You did know though. You wrote your poem while you still had love. You let the leak happen. You let love go.

**Justin:** (amazed) You're right! I did know! Why did I let it go?

**Marla:** Because your story had to be right.

**Justin:** My story again! I don't know my story. Do you know my story?

**Marla:** Yes. And you know your story too. The problem is that you don't know that you know it.

**Justin:** Then help me to remember it! Please?

**Marla:** (goes off stage and returns with the air chair) Sit down and close your eyes. (he does) (in a smooth hypnotic voice) You are becoming more and more relaxed as you sink down into the soft air. You feel yourself merging with the air. You are floating. (she looks at him closely) You are a five year old boy again, and you are very sad. Very, very sad. You have been sleeping, but suddenly you awake. Open your eyes. (he does) You remember that your mother died two days ago. She cannot hold you in her soft arms anymore. She cannot whisper words of love in your ears. You start to cry and go to find your father. (he starts to cry, gets up, and starts to slowly walk, calling "daddy" as he does. Suddenly he sees something and stops short.)

**Marla:** What do you see, Paul?

**Justin:** (in a scared little boy's voice) My aunts are in there. They're talking.

**Marla:** Why are you scared?

**Justin:** I don't want to listen to them.

**Marla:** Why, Paul?

**Justin:** I don't know.

**Marla:** You have to listen. Go a little closer and listen. (He tiptoes closer, appears to put ear against door and listens. All of the sudden he winces and contracts as if in pain.)

**Marla:** What is it, Paul?

(He hunches over and sinks to the floor sobbing, he curls up on the floor in a fetal position.)

**Marla:** (firmly) You must tell me, Paul. What did they say?

**Justin:** (sits up and looks at her for a long moment still sobbing intermittently, then blankly) I don't remember.

**Marla:** (severely) No, Paul. That's what you did the first time. You can't do that now. Remember!! Then tell me what you remember.

**Justin:** (searches memory, winces and contracts) They said ... They said.

**Marla:** (holding him) It's all right, Paul, I'm holding you. What do you remember?

**Justin:** (seems to gain strength, sadly) They said that when I was born I made my mommy sick. She got sicker and sicker. Then she died. (terrified) I killed my mommy! (breaks into sobs) No one will ever love me again! (he snaps out of the little boy, bewildered) I never remembered that before. (gets up and brushes himself off)

**Marla:** (triumphantly smiling) You've remembered your story!

**Justin:** But I don't know what it means. I still don't know what you mean about my story being right.

**Marla:** How's your father these days?

**Justin:** We haven't spoken in years.

**Marla:** Why not?

**Justin:** He's hated me ever since I can remember.

*"Marla was a whore! Your angel is a whore!"*

**Marla:** Didn't he give you a nice home and all the advantages in life? Didn't he quickly marry again so you would have a mother?

**Justin:** You think he did that for me? You think he married for me? All he ever did, he did for himself.

**Marla:** He took out a second mortgage so you could go to college.

**Justin:** So What?

**Marla:** Then you flunked out your last semester and told him that it was his fault for pushing you to attend in the first place.

**Justin:** (angry) You think you know all there is to know, don't you?

**Marla:** Don't be angry. I'm doing this to help you. What did you do after that?

**Justin:** I went into the art business with him.

**Marla:** And?

**Justin:** We went bankrupt.

**Marla:** How did that happen?

**Justin:** He thought my art was trash. He never believed in it.

**Marla:** I supposed that's why he used his retirement fund to buy the gallery.

**Justin:** He thought he could talk me into

Second Place, Graphic Design



Melanie Spangler Charlie Chaplin

doing decor paintings.

**Marla:** Did he?

**Justin:** Do you think I'd sacrifice my integrity as an artist to make money for him?

**Marla:** How many paintings did you sell?

**Justin:** Not enough, obviously.

**Marla:** But you were able to create quite an "artistic" lifestyle for yourself, weren't you?

**Justin:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**Marla:** Is a Cressida included in your artist's manifesto?

**Justin:** It's none of your damn business.

**Marla:** What about European vacations and designer drugs?

**Justin:** OK. Maybe I went a little overboard at times. The commercial aspect puts a lot of pressure on an artist.

**Marla:** What did your father say?

**Justin:** His usual Protestant tripe, I suppose.

**Marla:** You know that's not true, Paul.

**Justin:** (thinks, then subdued) Why? He asked me why.

**Marla:** What did you tell him?

**Justin:** (ashamed) I don't remember.

**Marla:** (gently) Yes you do. Tell me.

**Justin:** I told him ... I said that if he hadn't been such an inadequate father all my life, I wouldn't be so insecure and need all those things.

**Marla:** Don't you see what you did? You hurt him again and again. What else could he do but hate you?

**Justin:** Ten minutes ago I would have said that you were crazy.

**Marla:** But now?

**Justin:** You're making sense to me in the craziest way.

**Marla:** So we come again to your story

**Justin:** My story?

**Marla:** Yes. Didn't you say when you were five years old that no one could ever love you again?

**Justin:** *(thinks back)* Yes, I said that. *(seeing the connection)* He tried to love me, but I wouldn't let him. *(sadly)* I believed my story was right, so I made him go along with it.

**Marla:** What about your wife?

**Justin:** *(thinks, then regretfully)* My God! I did the same thing to her!

**Marla:** Do you think that you should insist that your story is right for one more minute of your life?

**Justin:** *(directed to Dan and Ruthann who are watching from the audience, but walk to stage during)* I can not tolerate this for one more second of my life! This script is an actor's nightmare! First, the angel drags the victim through her simple-minded theory of suicide and somehow persuades him to live. As if that weren't enough, she proceeds to engage him in an even more inane conversation. She has simple-minded theories not only about suicide, but about every problem our backwards hero can manage to bring to her attention during the course of an hour. I refuse to play backwards hero to some mindless angel for one more minute of my life. You do it, Dan. You wrote it.

**Dan:** *(entering from front stage)* First of all, I did not write it. We wrote it *(indicating other two)* I'm sure that each of us feels that she

or he might have written a better play alone, but that doesn't matter now. We were hired to do a group project. And that group includes you. You can't back out now.

**Ruthann:** Why did you wait until now, Justin? What can we do now? You could have told us two weeks ago when we started rehearsals. Why did you wait until now?

**Justin:** I didn't. I made my suggestions when you first started writing. I told you then that Marla should play an earth angel. An angel who teaches me to savor life, not one who feeds me stale philosophy

**Ruthann:** I never heard of an earth angel.

**Justin:** *(is surprised momentarily, then looks at Marla with venom)* Marla?

**Marla:** I didn't like that idea, Justin.

**Justin:** That isn't what you told me. You said, "It was a great idea, Justin, but they didn't go for it." Of course they didn't. You never told them.

**Marla:** I'm sorry.

**Justin:** Marla is sorry I wonder exactly why she's apologizing, don't you? Do you think she realizes that she's taken what could have been a good play and destroyed it with her petty hangups? No, I don't think she does. She is sorry though. Marla is definitely sorry Marla is, in fact, haunted by shame.

**Marla:** Justin, please don't...

**Justin:** Then you tell them, Marla. Tell

them why you're sorry Tell them why you ignored my suggestion about an earth angel.

**Marla:** I didn't like it, that's all.

**Justin:** You didn't like it because if you played an earth angel you'd have to dance. Then you'd remember how you used to dance naked for hundreds of men every night. And then you'd remember how later on, after all the dances were over, you fucked them. *(to others)* Marla was a whore! Your angel is a whore! *(runs off the stage)* *(Marla stares wild eyed for a moment, then runs off in the other direction. Lights off on others who look shocked.)*

\*\*\*\*\*

From this point on, their project is forgotten as Justin's brutal revelation triggers a series of events resulting in a flood of personal catastrophe. One by one, all the characters are catapulted by their interaction with the others into the repressed pain of their own lives. Marla struts the stage in her sadist dance costume acting out her rage against men for victimizing her sexually Justin is transformed into a whimpering child; Ruthann sees him as her dead husband and acts out her desperate fantasy to rescue her spouse from suicide. In response to all this, Dan loses his tenuous grip on sanity and plunges into catatonia. By the end of Act III, all of the characters lie strewn about the room in various stages of tentative recovery



Sandra Hunt, *Eyes of the World*



Charles Lawson, **Matthew's Boat**

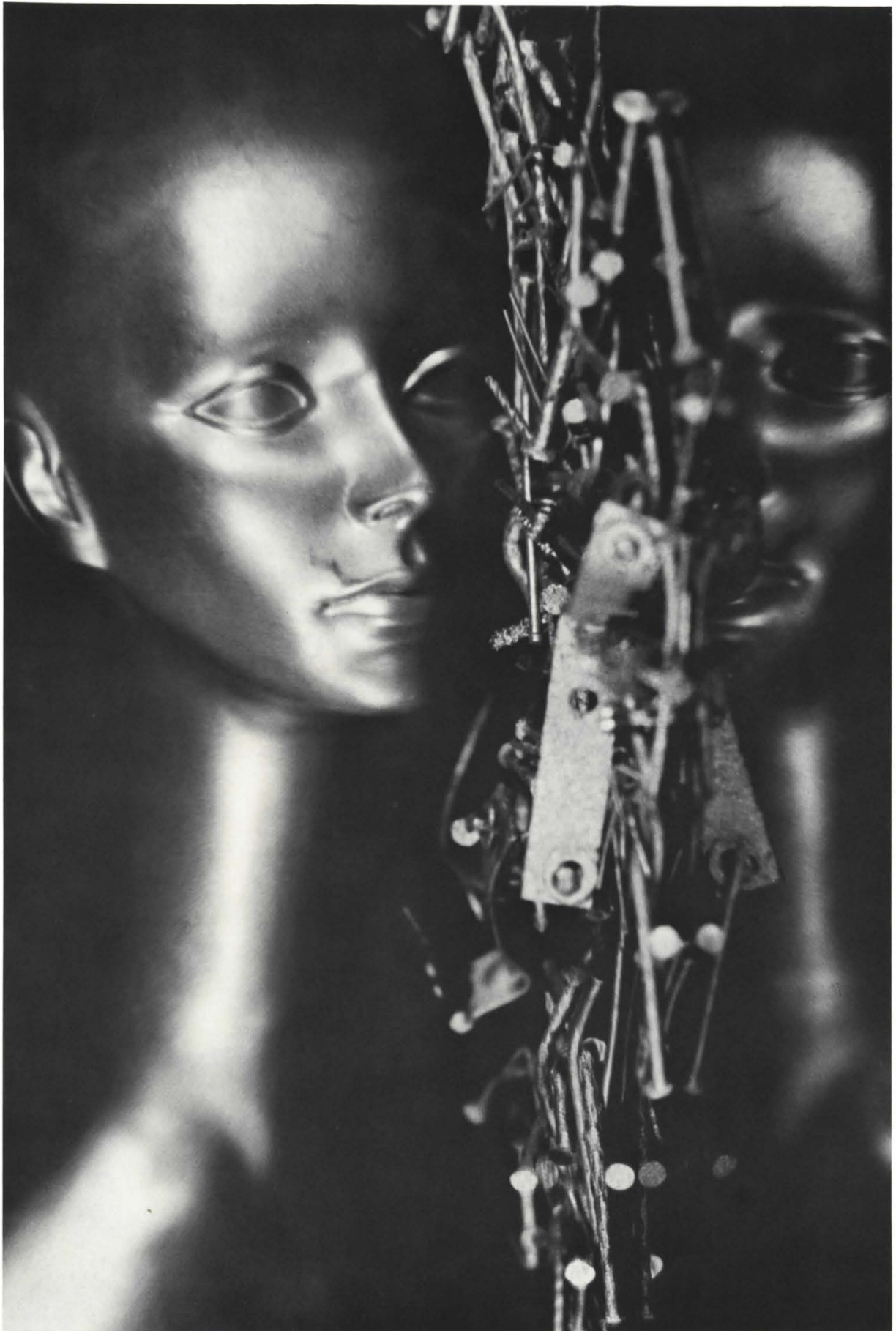
# THE WATERS OF THE TOE RIVER BELOW LOST COVE, N.C.

Lon Tobin

With the commotion  
of a thousand dogs scrimmaging  
for a single bone, you cut  
your path like a saw,  
the hills of Appalachia for a mitre box.

A rafter's roller coaster, canoe + carnivore  
trout fisher's  
rainbow's end, you sing  
siren's songs so sweet they lure  
men like fish and dash them along your shore.  
You excite me like the taking of a sixteen year  
in the shadows along your way and then terrify  
me like her brother when our sin comes to light.

In you surges the life  
of the land, and fish, and me. Some places opaque  
as sausage gravy ladled over river rock biscuits,  
but others clear as distilled "spring water,"  
you mirror  
trains that bask along your bank  
and at night, as I lie trying to sleep,  
you course  
from the head waters of my dreams.



Katherine T. Houser, **Somnambulism**

2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE  
Non-Fiction

# A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY INTO THE SELF

Cathy Whaley

The Biblical quote from James 1:8 states, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." This is used to set the tone for *Divine Right's Trip*, Gurney Norman's "folk tale" of a young man's picturesque trek across the country. While the trip outwardly resembles the rhythms of the 60s counterculture movement in terms of travel, drugs, and religion, Divine Right Davenport is on a spiritual journey back to his roots in Kentucky to discover his true self.

D.R. considers himself "the famous truth seeker," traveling from California eastward with his girlfriend Estelle in a psychedelic VW microbus he affectionately calls "Urge." He feels he can use acid as a catalyst between mysticism and Nirvana. While he used the *I Ching* as a guide in his self-induced course, the irony lies in the fact that he has to suppress his mental reflexes by artificial means; his view is not progressive thinking, but retroactive passivity.

**While the trip outwardly resembles the rhythms of the 60s counterculture movement in terms of travel, drugs, and religion, Divine Right Davenport is on a spiritual journey back to his roots in Kentucky to discover his true self."**

At one point in the trip when he throws the *Ching*, the hexagram comes up Chien, meaning Obstruction or Trouble. Soon afterward, D.R. has a bad trip which leaves him unable to speak. He then finds himself under the spell of the Greek, a false prophet who expounds on how to eradicate mucous to solve the problems of the world. By the time he slowly regains his senses (and refuses Estelle's warning), the Greek takes control of Urge and leads him down the garden path. A huge dose of reality can be a real heady trip.

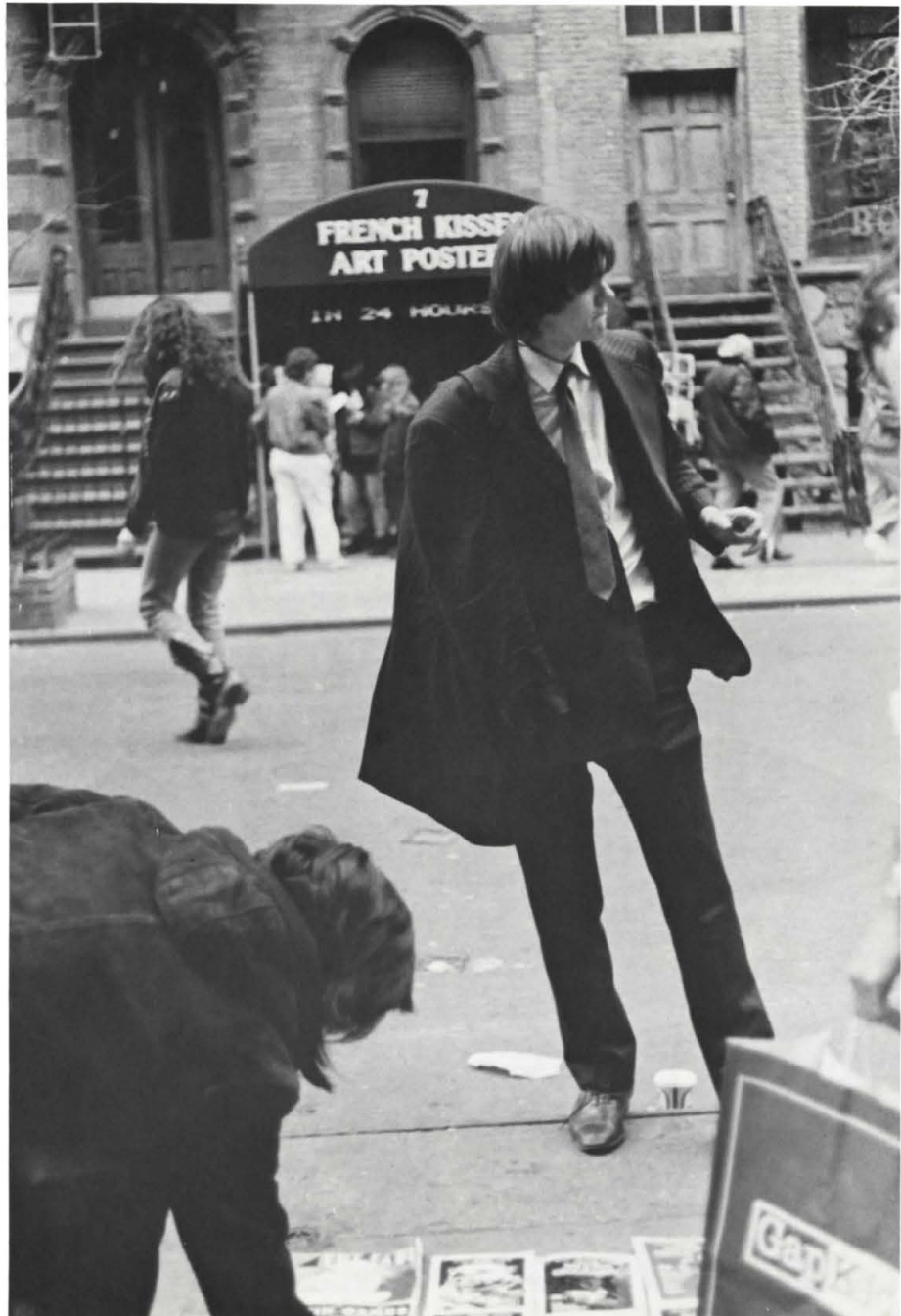
D.R. and Estelle stop in St. Louis to attend the funeral of their friend Eddie. His friends are gathered in a stoned wake that echoes the Merry Pranksters and the Acid Tests rather than a formal ritual of mourning. D.R. shows the first stirring of being discontent with himself when he is offered Eddie's copy of the *Ching*. In a combination of anger and grief, he throws for one hexagram in search of hope; when he doesn't get it, he throws it repeatedly,

going against sin. Stagnation, Adversity, Weariness, Estranged, Opposites, and finally, the Abyss — life isn't headed in the right direction.

As the tour continues, D.R.'s vision becomes more tedious. After hearing a radio contest asking for the definition of "balance," he takes the matter to extremes; when he sees the sign "Cincinnati" on his way to visit his sister, D.R. dissects the

word for all of its symmetrical beauty. Once he arrives at Marcella's house, he carries this analysis to the niece and nephew he is trying to balance on his lap. This is a plea of despair in a lopsided universe.

After breaking with Estelle and taking sanctuary in Marcella's home, D.R. is idle and lonely amidst the warmth and love of her family. When Mrs. Godsey calls from



Katherine T Houser, **French Kisses**

Kentucky with news of his Uncle Emmitt's illness, D.R. is rejuvenated by this important message straight from God. He is brought down to earth by his need for intimacy following his floating sense of coping and soul-searching.

Once he arrives in Kentucky, D.R. is captured in a flood of memories. In the climactic moment of his life, he is caught in a surrealistic swirl of transformation in which his recollections blend back to the David Ray Davenport of his childhood. This provides the groundwork for his baptism into realistic maturity and his link to the past. D.R. cares for Emmitt until his death and then becomes the patriarch in a sense, for he must now carry on a family tradition of enriching his place up at Trace Fork.

D.R. realizes he can give back to the land

that nurtured him by continuing the work Emmitt began before his death. In what D.R. calls "the scheme," Emmitt tries to replenish the soil depleted by strip mining with rabbit shit. Once he has had the feel for a regular schedule for working (instilled by a neighbor who needed his help on his hog pen), D.R. believes he can breathe new life into the land; this motivates him to expand his late uncle's labor into an enterprise named The Magic Rabbit.

Settling into a moderate lifestyle, D.R. is using the work ethic as a satisfying feeling of release. On one quiet evening, he throws the *Ching*; the hexagram is Ken, or Keeping Still, Mountain, in which one views the outside world without struggle and with great harmony. After learning that Estelle is returning to marry him, he throws it to see what the future may hold. The

hexagram, Wei Chi, Before Completion, denotes a gradual change from the static to the productive. This allows the *I Ching* and David Ray Davenport's life to come full circle in a rewarding experience.

Gurney Norman has created a meticulous framework of combining two entirely separate cultures to show how one's values and heritage are tied not only to a sense of place, but also to the environment in which one is raised. By accomplishing this feat, Norman has created one of the best Appalachian novels of our time. He may have also written the ultimate counterculture novel; while most deal with an idea of openness and infinity, *Divine Right's Trip* literally goes underground for the truth.



# Night Air

Richard V. Lilley

Our countries eat their young. They devour children all over the world. Though it is said that any large living thing will have an appetite to match its size if it is to sustain itself. That is a part of the darkness I roam through in my dreams. There the only light shining is the brilliance of your presence. I hear angel music. It is your gorgeous laughter tearing the silence like wet silk; a sound as dazzling as a handful of sapphires, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds tossed into the air to sparkle, glint, and shimmer in the sunlight; golden, orange, saffron, and crimson leaves swirling and capering in a wild, circular wind. If I imagine hard enough I can almost feel your heart beating against mine as we cling so fiercely to one another. Then I realize I am alone. Darkness surges. There is no starlight in this city

\*\*\*\*\*

Three of us there beneath the streetlight, leaning against the wall, smoking cigarettes. It was a windy night. We could hear babies crying, radios playing, the rumble of traffic and trains, people speaking, shouting, laughing, crying out, but those sounds were subdued. It was still and quiet on the street, late, near the decrescendo of the day's activity. Paul, Jose, and myself had just finished a little soccer with some of the kids in the barrio. We were beat like diseased hairless dogs by boys five to ten years younger than we. It happened too often to be pensive. As usual we agreed to blame the loss on our steel-toed boots.

We play on the street. It's a little like indoor soccer. The ball is played off walls, parked cars, doors, windows, sleeping figures. We play fast on the pavement so it can get rough. One of the others, Enrique I think, fell scrambling for the ball and lost two teeth when his mouth found the bumper of an old Ford Falcon. He knocked them clean out of his gums and was bleeding like crazy. We couldn't find the teeth. Either he swallowed them or spit them out without thinking. If he did spit them out I suspect Paul has them. He has a collection of people's and dogs' teeth he has found. He keeps them like treasure in a little pigskin bag. At any rate, that guy left, so our three stood against two. They were still killing us, so we didn't mind when they also quit to join in the effort to stop Enrique's bleeding.

We were underneath the only mercury vapor lamp on the street. These lamps cast the light most closely resembling actual moonlight. Though it is only a black and white TV's moonglow, it is superior to the unnatural pink-orange color of those sodium lights. Jose maintains that such lights contribute to high cancer rates because of the highly irritating color and

quality of light they cast. Under that bogus moon we tried to ignore the sense of humanity so close around us and imagine that the rumble of traffic in the distance was really the thundering course of a huge river, gathering at a confluence of streams to cast itself into the alien sea. A sea broad and empty, quiet but for wave, bird, and wind song, lit by crystal stars and a gentle moon. We leaned against the wall feeling the heat of the day seep into our bodies through the sweaty shirts on our backs and thought about the river joining the sea. Still as we were, we could feel the vibration of the city trembling in the uneasy and troubled sleep of its night time.

Paul and I had come here six weeks before, with a mission group to fix the house of a Methodist bishop and his family. There are not many protestants in Mexico City, and those few are not affluent so the need was a present one. We at first came for a week but ended up staying after the rest of the group left. To be sure, we wanted to finish what we had started, but religious sentiment was not what kept us there. It was more a sense of incredible wonder at the strangeness around us. We moved through it, lived in it, but it was not real to us. We sought the moment but our lives still seemed elsewhere. The team left all the tools and the money they had left over after souvenirs so we could work on.

*Jose said they use men here because they are cheaper than the big earth-rending machines we gringos use."*

The soccer proved not enough for us so we decided to wander. Around midnight we happened upon the construction site of a high-rise building, a skyscraper. The foundation was being dug when we passed through the site. Along the far wall of this huge pit, several hundred men in colored plastic hats were digging with picks and shovels, hewing out a place in the earth for the bottom of a very large building. Below the din of voices and machine sounds we could hear those hundreds of tools, metal biting earth, all those blows gnawing away at the huge wall of dirt raised before them. It was like the sound of a giant insect nibbling away, rooting under the city. Some men were digging from ladders, others were hanging by ropes. Most of those in the pit were at the base of the wall moving away the dirt as it fell.

Around fires, among which we walked, groups of men huddled, waiting to relieve the men on the dig. The light was odd. It was a mixture of the soft wavering light of the fires, flames ripped around by the wind and the glare of the big klieg lights trained on the digging wall. Those powerful lights brought a false day to the bottom of the pit. There men moved about with wheelbarrows and head boards piled with the deep red clay, the color of dried blood, from the bottom of the pit. As the men worked, orders were shouted, remarks repeated directing the human mass that was pushing back that immense curtain of earth.

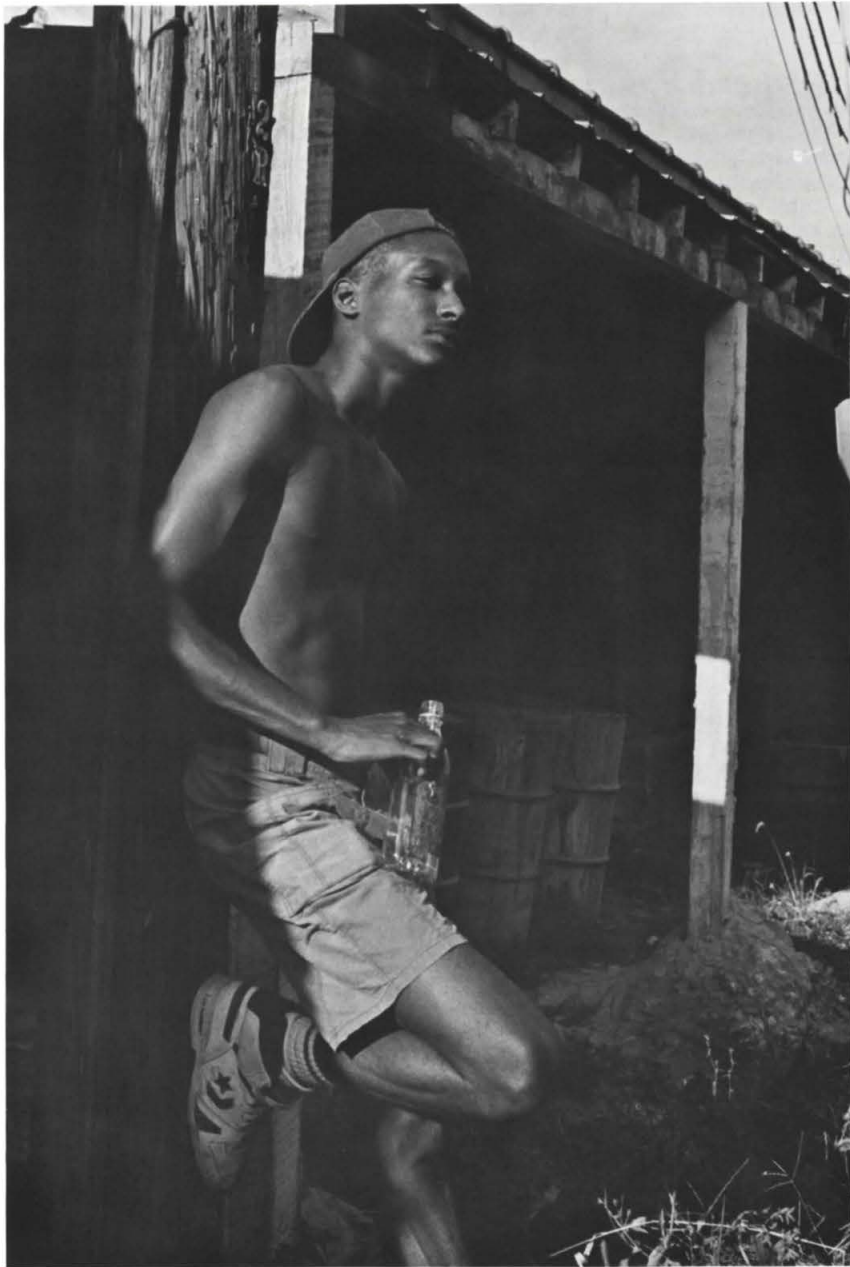
Jose said they use men here because they are cheaper than the big earth-rending machines we gringos use. The place thrummed with intensity as all that human energy was spent in such large measure. The fecund odor of that enormous open pit mingled with the river of hunger-inspired sweat shed by all those desperate men. Those humours mixed with the acrid smoke of the trash fires, the scent of human waste, and burning metal, lending the place a wild animal air. It put a coppery taste in our mouths. As our eyes adjusted to the light, the wildness of the place awed us less, and we paid more attention to where we were standing. Our tension grew. We were being stared at, our white, white skins so pale and awful there. We felt very alone. Some of the men waiting in the crowds of the dark were thieves. We clutched our knives in our hands, holding them in our pockets. We were not fighters; we held them as talismen against evil. We hurried away, each of us disturbed.

Jose was the only one who knew where he was going. He knew the ways of this barrio though he grew up in a different part of the city. Jose listened far more than he talked. He led us back to the bishop's house. The brisk night began to set teeth in the face of the wind. Jose left us sitting on the curb underneath our artificial moon watching for rats coming out of the alley. Our conversation was unspoken. Some little time passed and Paul went to bed. As I sat there braiding together straw from the gutter I felt myself passing from one dream to another.

\*\*\*\*\*

If God had a human form that She hung out in and I knew where She sat, to take in the light of evening's coming, seeking out the address I would walk trembling to the door, knock timidly, and if my knock were answered, the voice indistinct, yet soothing, I would enter slowly. Perhaps I would be able to walk, or maybe driven to my knees I would shuffle slowly to Her place. My heart would evaporate into a





Richard Righter, *Life*

haze of grateful mist. Somehow I would bring myself near enough to hear each breath drawn and spent. Taking the fingers of one of her hands in my two, I would kneel, rest my fevered forehead on the back of God's cool hand, and through my tears and the mist of my heart beating in my throat I would whisper "thanks," over and over again, "mercy," over, over, and over, grace, love I wonder. Hope keeps its space in my heart so dimly lit, and yet even at midnight, no stars or moon, I somehow know how to find that place. Even with the rhythm of the tires slapping me crazy as they roll over the seams between the highway's plates of concrete, dryness with a presence of its own more the presence of dryness than the absence of moisture, even with my throat drier than a bushel of that dust,

cramps like a tiger-clawed mole, rabid and blind thrashing away in my bowels, visions of vague scenes of childhood mingled with quetzals, cacti, boulders, crayons, sand, creek beds like dry scars, streams through ground as rich as dung, plants lush as leeches three days on the neck of a horse, enough light gets through to make me think I can glimpse hope's little door.

\*\*\*\*\*

I felt like seeking rest. Leaving the kitchen where I had just washed my face and hands in the sink, I was thrown against the wall by the shifting of the floor. A few pictures clattered down on me. There came deep rumbling and the lights went out. Violently shaking, the house

groaned and creaked. In flashes of real lightning, I saw book shelves heaving away from the wall five or six inches and slamming back. Lamps hanging from the ceiling were jingling on their ornamental chains as they swung back and forth, glass globes smashing together, showering glass. Outside light poles moaned and swayed. Wires crackling, spitting sparks from naked ends snapped with lightning bursts of light and instant thunder. The air smelled like brimstone and ozone. Children cried. Groans, screams, and shrieks filled the air as the motion of the earthquake eased. The voice of the bishop's wife was snaking thin and wavery through the chaotic music of the quake, "It's all-right It's all-right It's all-right " She was terrified but she sent her voice out to act serene for us.

*In flashes of real lightning, I saw book shelves heaving away from the wall five or six inches and slamming back."*

Another rumble came and shook for a bit more after the first had passed. It was quiet in the house after the motion stopped. The sounds were small ones. The children cried softly; their mother cooed to them, putting calm hands on them. The roof dogs were howling and snarling, barking into the deep darkness at the bizarre sight of the real moon, slight in its quarter, smiling sad and coy at the baying dogs. Sirens moaned like coyotes all over the city. Water was dripping. Every once in a while a little piece of glass would work loose from somewhere and fall with a tinkle. The house ticked very slowly as it settled. The bishop's wife sang, "It's all-right; go to sleep," a few consoling times as the darkness collected rather heavily and settled. A flashing light passed in the street beyond the wall of the tiny courtyard. Speakers on a police car advised staying calm and indoors unless seriously injured. They said damage and casualties were slight. As I drifted hoping to be enchanted by slumber, I could smell the muscles of the earth oozing sweat, brimstone, ozone, diesel fumes, baby diarrhea. The earthquake had disturbed little Isabella.

I have no idea how long I lay there on my sleeping bag, the darkness covering me like heavy dust. I lay there feeling tremors pass from the earth through the floor into my body. Paul slept as if he were on ether. I had not heard him stir the whole time. I wondered sometimes if he dreamed or whether he just gnawed on old memories with that little bag of teeth. The wind blew in. I remember doing little more than breathing in and out listening to sounds filter through the darkness. I heard someone close by call my name. It was

Jose. Rather, I heard Jose's voice. I whispered to him.

"How did you get here?"

"Doesn't that seem like a silly question to you?" he asked.

I thought of the glass in the top of the wall then I thought about how isolated his voice seemed in the darkness and ceased wondering.

"Did you notice the quake?" he asked after a brief silence.

"Of course. It scared the hell out of me but I think it shook Isabella more. The bishop's wife, I mean Senora Aquila, stilled the house with her voice," I replied with a discreet attempt at humor.

Jose ignored my joke. He usually ignored my jokes. He responded with another question. Jose inquired, "Do you think the men on the dig noticed the quake?"

I paused for a moment before I answered. My words had peculiar weight as they hung by themselves suspended in the darkness.

"You know," I mumbled, "I'm ashamed to admit that I hadn't really thought about them. Even "

"Ashamed?" said Jose softly, not mockingly

"Yes," I whispered, "Do you think they are all-right? How bad was the quake? It would have to be bad down in a hole in the ground I mean, it "

"Please," Jose interrupted, something I had never noticed him do before. "Those men. If any of them were hurt or killed, which seems likely, we won't hear about them. The poor are mentioned in the news only if they suffer in numbers great enough to abberate some statistics. 'That's politics,' as you would say "

"I doubt that wall they were working on held together very well. I don't know why "

"I did not go on. Jose interrupted me again.

*"If God had a human form  
that She hung out in and I  
knew where She sat,"*

"Please. May I tell you something about yourself," he said.

"Feel free," I murmured. I had no idea what to expect.

"You are still primarily an imperialist, an oppressor. You come here and work to export memories of strange and alien things. You want to be here and be with us not so much to know us, to cultivate respect, but to use us to obtain an experience. You are an oppressor because you see us and use us as objects isolated in a way from our humanity, not fully human beings but human-like inhabitants of the world of unreality you are visiting. You think that by immersing yourself in a different culture you can drown some of the whiteness out of you. You can't. You

are creating an artifice to soothe you from the disease of imperialism. Even if you do not want it you have it. You didn't catch it, you inherited it. You come here to expropriate one of our most abundant raw materials, reality. Poverty festers with reality. We have much here. The suffering helps increase the air of reality here. But what is a commodity like suffering worth in the world? Suffering does not command the scales of this world's justice like pride and greed. Pride wears pale skin. Many of our own people are becoming pale. They are becoming imperialists. They are abandoning mercy, grace, and love in favor of the ethic that most erodes truth and love, the ethic of greed. Just as it seems with the fruit of human knowledge, the ethic with compassion in it might be starting to succeed. Not just in some hearts and spirits but in the world. People have gotten that compassionate ethic too confused with religion. Religion knows that ethic can not guarantee us what the culture of dollars teaches us to seek. The

*"I live the life my guilty  
skin entitles me to. It is  
easier."*

Catholic Church says a great deal about love but has acted through history more in the spirit of greed. The church was early infected with imperialism, one of the viruses of greed. The church grew so large it began to live as something on its own in the world. It had to eat. Feeding on the world as the disease of imperialism infected the body of the church, the church began to devour out of proportion to its needs. Now it is sick to dying. Perhaps it is inevitable, and I rail against one of the central and irrefutable laws of thermodynamics. Random order does increase.

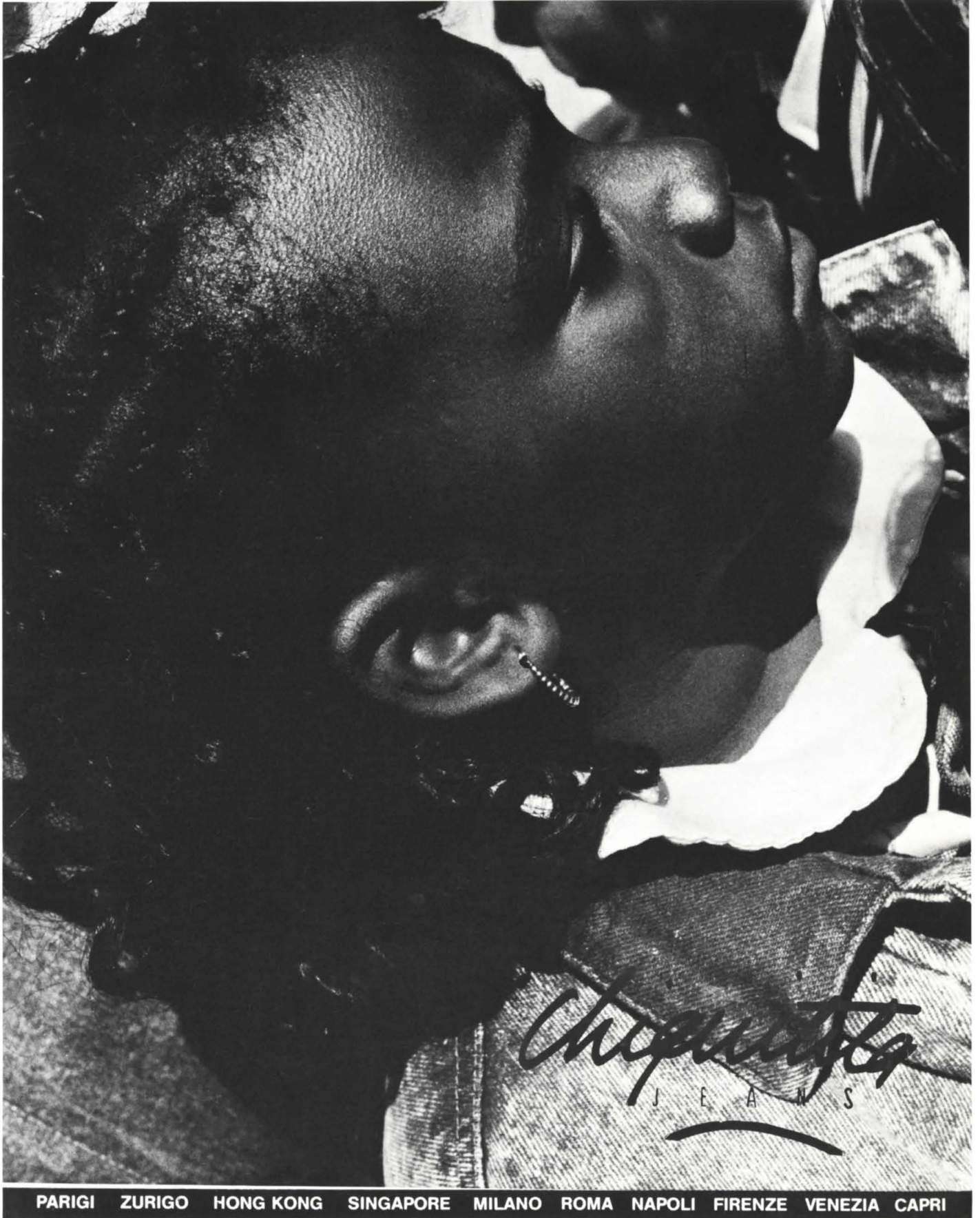
I can forgive it. I can forgive you, if you will allow me the presumption to do so. I believe in your heart, it is good. I believe in redemption. It is the only way I can live in this world. I stand in severe need of some redeeming myself. Can you forgive me?"

It seemed very quiet to me. I heard the noises of the house. The voices of the city beyond the walls of the tiny courtyard began to rise a bit. I could not think of anything to say. I did not hear Jose's voice or the sounds of his breathing. He may have stayed there for a while. The only thing I heard was the ascending throb of the city and the beating of my own heart.

\*\*\*\*\*

I live the life my guilty skin entitles me to. It is easier. My own living is quite real enough to satisfy me in spite of that. Now I

am married. I found the woman whose laughter gilded my dreams and whose presence sustains me through my days and nights. I step out in the late evening and breathe the air. It flies with snow now. I hear the sigh of wonder in the wind, and I send a prayer into the wind to be carried to the ear of God. Though it shows little enough in my living, I am still seeking better ways to love.



PARIGI ZURIGO HONG KONG SINGAPORE MILANO ROMA NAPOLI FIRENZE VENEZIA CAPRI



# MOTHERHOOD-BY DEGREES

Kathleen Cornett

In this day and age of climbing the career ladder and looking out for number one, the world seems to have taken the honor and prestige out of the traditional role of homemaking. The media boast of the woman who "can bring home the bacon" as well as fry it up in a pan, and the choice to be "just a wife and mother" is, to some, no choice at all. However, I can honestly say that there is more to being "just a wife and mother" than meets the eye or anything else for that matter!

Mothers get enough hands-on experience in the School of Hard Knocks to qualify them for several professional degrees. In this field, experience is truly the best, albeit only, teacher.

Most every mother is unequivocally qualified to run a maid service. Whether her style of housekeeping is like that of a saint or Porky the Pig, she knows what needs to be done and how to do it. Each woman has her own system, and anyone who can wade through piles of laundry, scour stacks of dishes, wrestle the family Hoover and still smile at the end of the day should own her own business and really "clean up"!

**Every mother needs to hear that her Billy is not the only child swearing in Sunday School and picking his nose in public.**

A mother is also a teacher from the moment of her child's birth. From the first smile to the unending trips to the bathroom, she teaches her child a multitude of things, all the while answering questions. At the end of a frazzled day, as she tucks her little whirlwind into bed, she is again bombarded: "Why do worms come out when it rains?" "Where does God live?" "What is bologna made of?" Sometimes sweet and sometimes frustrating, the constant barrage of questions can be a difficult thing to handle, and it doesn't take long before Mother has earned her B.A. Battalion of Answers degree.

Along with the other list of credits, mother belongs in the Accountants Hall of Fame. Many times she must feed a family of four, pay Cub Scout dues and buy light bulbs from her first-grader on less than some folks spend for a pair of shoes! Let her try her hand at the national debt we all may eat a lot more macaroni and cheese, but that deficit wouldn't last long!

Mothers are also professional peacemakers. Somehow they manage to settle disputes when both parties are bitten, pinched and crying and yet remain

loyal to them both. This takes the kind of compassion that won Mother Theresa worldwide acclaim.

With all of these responsibilities, in order to maintain a good grip on herself and her family, a mother has got to have a social life complete and separate from the children. This time away is very important and serves as sort of mini-vacation so she can be revitalized and stimulated by adult conversation. The rookie mom, however, can be spotted in public by such words as "no-no" and "bye-bye" and excusing herself to the "potty." This poses no real threat as she is probably just giddy from drinking a beverage without swimmies in it. Besides, it will probably pass when the kids get into school.

That network of other moms is crucial. Every mother needs to hear that her Billy is not the only child swearing in Sunday School and picking his nose in public. But, as in all social situations, there are subjects to be avoided. Never bring up grades or organized sports unless you want to spend the rest of the afternoon in an exaggeration spree similar to Dad's fishing tales. The first-time mother of an infant won't be able to share in these discussions and will insist that grades do not matter and sports are just too dangerous. Don't worry her child will grow up like all the rest! And if you want to pick her out of a crowd right away, look for the woman with a diaper bag on her shoulder, puff bags under her eyes and a grocery bag of baby pictures waiting to be shared.

Mother is also known as the CEO of the household Chief Etiquette Officer which also involves a certain amount of disciplinary action. Somehow she has to teach her little urchins to remember to brush their teeth, say "please" and "thank you" and chew with their mouths shut. And when they don't, she needs a plan of defense. I like one famous mother's plan for keeping her children in line and herself sane:

There was an old woman  
Who lived in a shoe,  
She had so many children  
She didn't know what to do.  
She gave them some broth  
Without any bread,  
She whipped them all soundly  
And sent them to bed.

With all the oddities and ironies of mothering, there is no substitute for the experiences collected along the way. No nursing degree can prepare you for the pitiful cry of a feverish child, or the anguish of rocking a colicky baby for hours on end, or the tear-stained cheeks as you bandage a scraped knee or kiss a pinched finger. Mothers definitely earn their R.N. the most important degree in Registered Nurturing.

I have attended the School of Mothering for eight years already and have about four more to go. After that I think I'll call it quits and take a rest. I think I'll get a job!



Jenny Lokey, **Untitled**

# OSBORNE

Honorable Mention Short Fiction

Mark F. Thompson

The two girls from across the street, Coretta and Betina, were twins. When Osborne insisted they be rechristened, they were allowed to choose "Chlorophyll" and "Boutique," respectively, as their spiritual names. The rest of us were awarded more Biblical names for use at church. My best friend in those days, Harrison Hart, was known as "Exodus" when the flock was gathered together. We were given the names in what Osborne called a "knighting ceremony" during which each of us knelt at his grapefruit crate pulpit and was tapped lightly on both shoulders with a long, narrow water pipe. To the end of the pipe was soldered a small chrome statuette with wings. Of course it was a hood ornament, but, since we didn't recognize it as such, Osborne easily led us to believe that the shiny creature was the exact likeness of the woman God would one day send him to wed. She would be called Mercedes and would be equipped with the power to afflict the enemies of Osborne's church with any manner of pestilence from head lice and pink eye to consumption. "If'n any man shall speak evil against thee," Osborne would instruct us, "write their names thrice times on the back of a manilla envelope, once in brown ink, once in black ink, and once in red ink. Fold the envelope thrice times and putteth it in the spell box of Mercedes, and on the next full moon, the evil one shalt be heaped upon with magical wrath." The spell box was a small

souvenir cedar chest, and over the months we had faithfully stuffed it full of curses.

Osborne's church services were never scheduled. The flock was called together on days when the members were out and about with sufficient time on their hands. These circumstances were most apt to present themselves on Saturday afternoons but even mid-week services were not unheard of.

*Of course it was a hood ornament ... but Osborne led us to believe that the shiny creature was the exact likeness of the woman God would one day send him to wed."*

A complete congregation numbered no more than nine, and it was Boutique's calling in pre-pubescent life to gather us all together whenever Osborne sent out the word. The church building itself was Osborne's roomy tree house. Compared to the rest of our families, his parents were well-off and had contracted with an area odd-jobs wanderer to construct the place for their son on his seventh birthday. We thought Jack could not have discovered a greater architectural wonder on his ascent of the mythical legume tree.

Osborne's tabernacle had three wooden stories, each about half the size of the one beneath it. A ladder-like staircase, parallel to the trunk of the tree, was planted sturdily in the earth and bisected each floor. The tree that supported the structure was once a thriving, sinewy giant but a few years after the tree house was built the old oak had started to die out. Its leaves fell earlier each year until, one season, there was no foliage at all. We thought this for the best since the bare limbs afforded us an unobstructed view of the whole neighborhood.

At church time, our thirteen-year-old minister would remain above, in the uppermost room, while we were seating ourselves in the larger lower room. As he was heard descending the steps, Chlorophyll would make her way to the front of the group. Osborne, carrying the Mercedes staff, would join her there.

"Welcome to you all," he would greet us. "Before we begin, Sister Chlorophyll shall lead us in singin' " He then took his place atop his grapefruit crate to observe the musical prelude as Chlorophyll's segment of the service began.

Chlorophyll took on a distinctive aspect

when speaking to the congregation. She would thrust her head forward on her shoulders and tilt it frequently from side to side on an imaginary vertical axis. A puzzled puppy shifts his head the same way "Today," she announced in a slow cadence and self-assured volume, pausing between phrases as Osborne had taught her, "we gonna begin (pause, tilt) with a song that's well-knowed (pause, tilt) to us all. Join with me now (pause, tilt) as we sing 'Brangin' in the Sheaves'"

I usually sat right next to Harrison (Brother Exodus). As is usual among the tone deaf of any age, he had no idea how badly he sang but chimed all the louder for his ignorance. On the whole notes, he would even add an exaggerated vibrato. My worst fear was that anyone would attribute to me the noise coming out of my best friend's mouth, so, during song time, I would inch discreetly away from his side. After an opening hymn or two, Chlorophyll took her place among the seated worshippers and the part of the service we all came to see and hear began.

If Reverend Osborne's sermons had any point or moral, we never discerned them. The messages fell into two categories, scary tales and dirty tales.

The scary ones were full of brimstone and disaster. Osborne spoke with a confidence and feigned wisdom that in no way revealed his youth. He was tall for his age and when he looked down on us from his crate with all the determination of a butte-top eagle scanning the desert floor for prey, we could be easily convinced that the ten plagues of Egypt were about to befall our small Georgia town or that unscriptural satanic amphibians from the imagination of our teenaged minister were presently dining on the entrails of children who lived along the banks of the swampy Sewanee to our south. Osborne's mythologies became indistinguishable from the stories of the ancient Jewish prophets and patriarchs but each was unfolded with irresistible intensity.

Thunderbolt sermons comprised the staple of Osborne's invective entertainment but the evangelist could also sense when his followers were of a more fleshly composure. On these days, the less theologically oriented scriptures provided basis for discourse. The seventh and eighth chapters of Song of Solomon were our favorites as there are more breasts per square verse here than anywhere else in the Bible. Osborne, himself, seemed most taken with the poetry of Numbers, chapter twenty-two. He would repeat, to the best of his knowledge, the words of the Lord to Balaam: "Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass, Balaam? Thine ass shall not be smoten anymore! Thrice times hast you smotest thine ass and the thrice time shall

Honorable Mention, Photography



W. Eric Layne, Relief #1

be the last! Smotest not now anymore that ass of thine own or assless thou shalt be!" The discourse on Balaam's ass-smiting continued in this way for some ten or fifteen minutes, during which we were all cautioned most emphatically to treat our asses kindly and responsibly and to avoid smiting them, at any cost. Surely the exclusion of ass-smiting from Moses' commandments was a most unfortunate oversight on the part of that great Old Testament leader.

Each service ended with a final hymn, chosen by Sister Chlorophyll, a reminder about the power of Mercedes, and a closing prayer at God from the reverend. Immediately after, we all scattered to our various stations of play, having saved the price of comics and movies.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"I remember thinking that the goddess must be very busy..."*

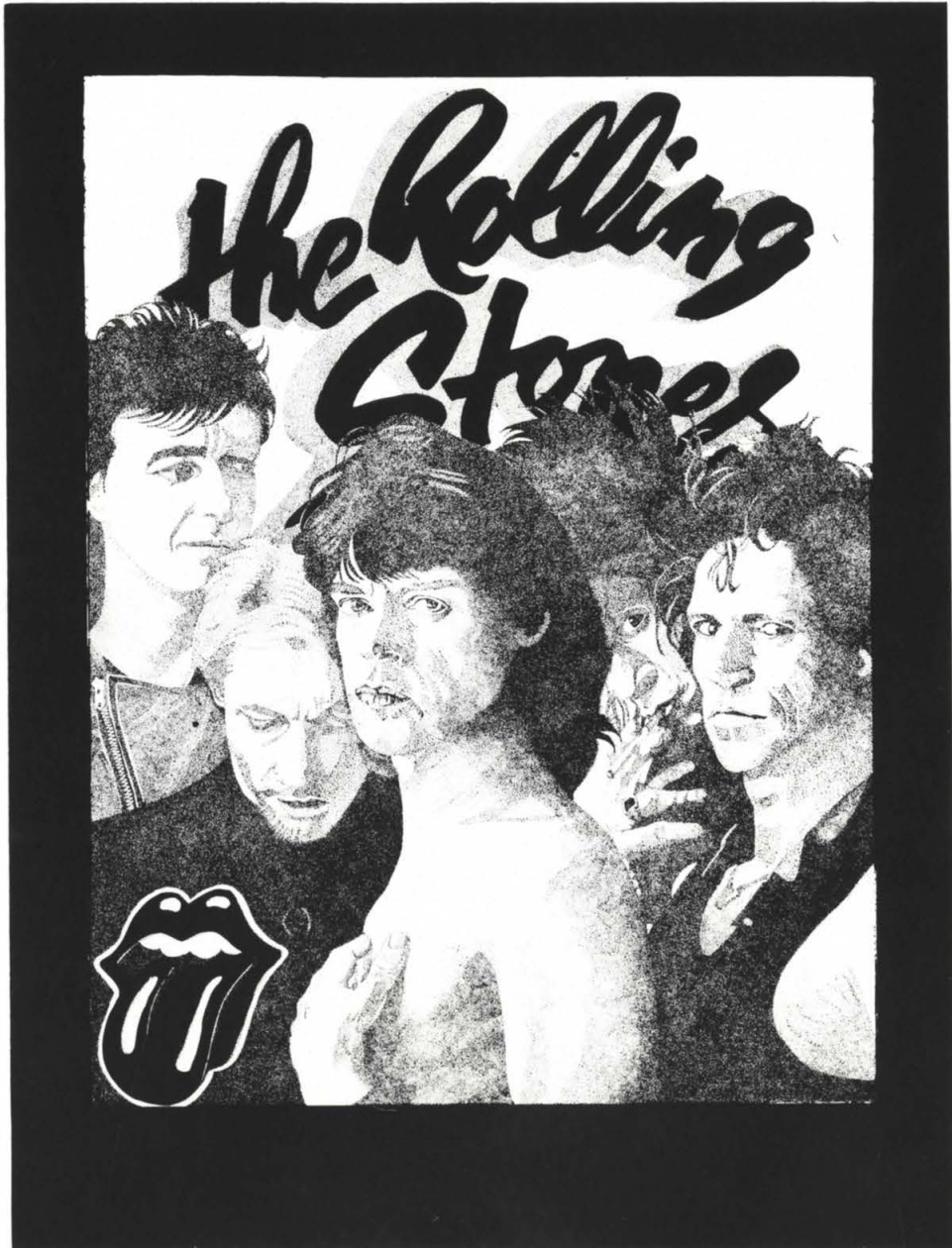
Despite the fact that the oak supporting Osborne's church had become leafless and begun to hollow, we never thought of it as dead, nor did we suspect there was any hazard in climbing it. The oak and its parasitic three-story structure seemed perfectly sound. But Osborne's father decided the risk was present and determined their destruction would be in our best interest. Over the years, vines and shoots of all kinds had quietly twined themselves from the ground, up the tree, and around the several parts of the tree house. Some had grown to the size of large branches and roots. For this reason, the building was as unsalvageable as the tree.

Osborne's father was a decent man. He climbed up to the tree house one day when we were all there together to explain his decision. I had no doubt then, and have none now, that he regretted what he would have to do.

After he explained and apologized, Osborne went quickly up to the third room. The rest of us filed out sadly and quietly past the only adult ever known to enter our sanctuary.

Once on the ground, we had not yet left the yard when we heard Osborne begin to cry, softly at first, then louder and louder. Finally, the crying turned to screams as Osborne wailed to Mercedes for deliverance. I remember thinking that the goddess must be very busy, for surely she could not help but hear.

First Place, Graphic Design



Fathi Bakkoush, **Rolling Stones**

# OF DEMONS Within

Honorable Mention Non-Fiction

Barbara Edens

Do the names Clive Barker, John Carpenter, and Stephen King make your heart beat faster? They do mine. I am an admitted and confessed fan of gruesome, gory art. My present warped taste for the macabre began with my first experience with *Shock Theatre* when I was three-and-a-half years old.

*Shock Theatre* was one of the *Twilight Zone's* forebears. The original program aired weekly with a different story in each installment. By the time I was born, it could be seen only in reruns.

My father, who is as much of a gore connoisseur as myself, used to watch old episodes of *Shock Theatre* every Saturday afternoon. Usually around three o'clock, he would turn on the television and send me to my room to play. I was never allowed to watch because he believed I was too young to see monsters and ghouls running around on the TV set.

I rarely questioned my father's judgment. One rainy Saturday, however, I did get the urge to sneak a peak at this show Dad was watching. I can very vividly recall standing in front of my desk drawing a picture as I thought more and more about seeing what was on the television. My father had said that the program was about vampires. I had never heard that word before, and being an extremely curious child, I was almost bursting to know what a vampire was.

*"I am an admitted and confessed fan of gruesome, gory art."*

I waited in front of my desk, listening to the rain and drawing, until I knew Dad was giving *Shock Theatre* his undivided attention. Then, I put my crayon down and carefully opened the bedroom door.

From outside my door, I could see down the hall into the den. There on the television screen, in glorious black and white, was *Shock Theatre*. I crouched against the wall and started to watch.

At first, I was slightly confused. Who were all the men with dogs? Why were they carrying so many crosses? I finally managed to figure out that they were hunting since some of them had guns. After all, my grandfather had that many dogs, and the only time he ever let them out was to go fox hunting.

The lady in white was a real mystery to me. She ran around the screen, chasing people and sleeping in coffins. For a child not yet four, this was a great surprise. I thought only dead people slept in coffins. She, on the other hand, obviously did not appear to be dead.

But who was the lady in the white nightgown who kept kissing people's necks and making them bleed? Everything else had a name and a purpose. The men were hunters. The animals were dogs. I realized that she had to be the vampire because she was the only thing I did not understand.

*"I thought only dead people slept in coffins."*

In the end, the hunters found the woman sleeping in her coffin. One of them took a pointed stick and hammered it into her stomach. Black blood gushed up and soaked her white gown. She pulled her lips back and revealed pointed teeth beneath.

Another man put a necklace with a cross on it around her neck. I thought it was all pretty neat, and certainly more fun than crayons.

As curious as I was, I never got to see the very end. My father found me, and I was sent to my room once again. Several days passed during which I showed no ill side effects from seeing the program, such as fear of the dark or nightmares. My father was convinced that I had not been scarred, so he invited me to watch *Shock Theatre* with him every Saturday afternoon.

And I did watch it, every single week until it was replaced with pro-wrestling. Since that day, I have been reading and watching books and movies featuring all manner of scary creatures. The wonderful part is, they are as fascinating today as they were fourteen-and-a-half years ago.



David Crigger, *Lost Childhood*

# THE CELLAR

Honorable Mention Poetry  
*Douglas Miller*

It is damp in the cellar,  
But I go there anyway  
To watch the mice scatter  
From my light.

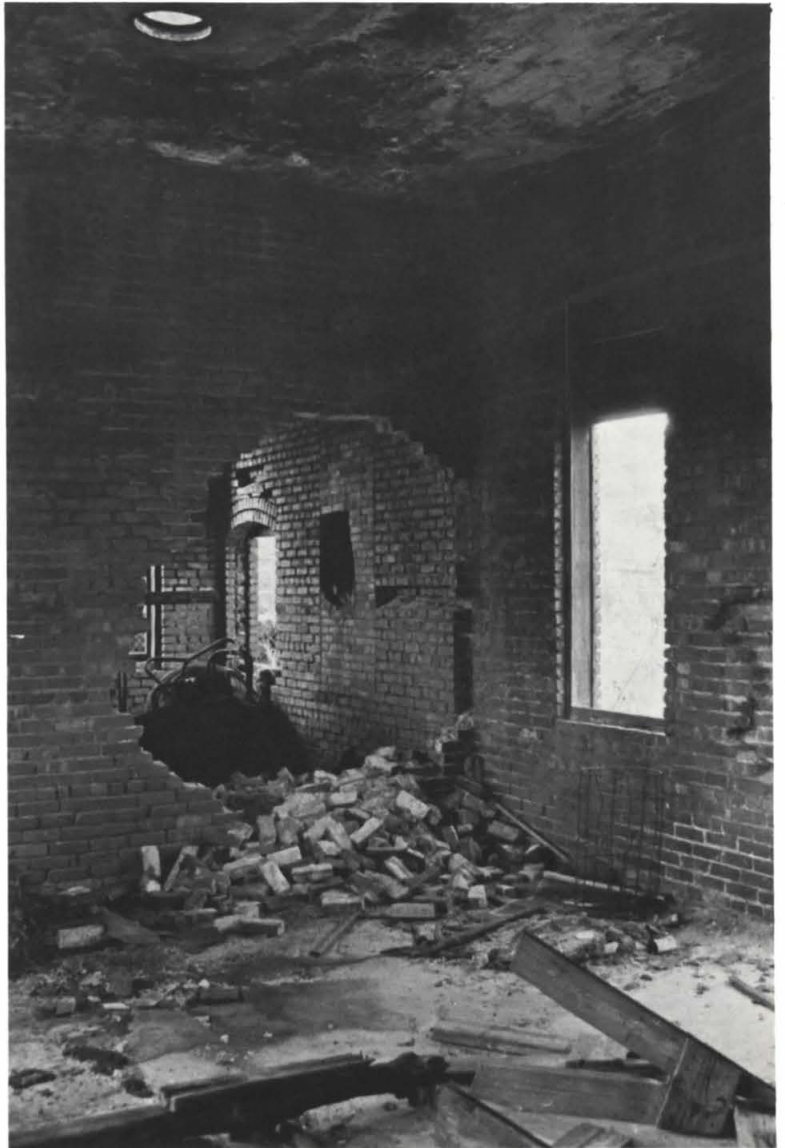
It is damp in the cellar  
Because the rain seeps in  
Through cracks I have found  
In the walls.

But it is my cellar,  
So I make do.

Once, though, I called a man  
To come and see  
If he could fix the cracks.  
He said they went all the way down  
To the foundation,  
And it would take a long time  
And a lot of money to fix.  
And even then, he couldn't guarantee  
They wouldn't come back.

I thought a while  
And told him to never mind  
Because I was used to the dampness  
And the mice.

Besides,  
No cellar is perfect.



Richard Righter **Time**





Andrea Worley, **Composition #1188**

1st PLACE  
Non-Fiction

# WHERE FREEDOM DOES NOT RING

Linda S. Hensley

## "America"

My country 'tis of thee  
sweet land of liberty  
of thee I sing.  
Land where my father died,  
Land of the Pilgrim's pride,  
From every mountainside,  
Let freedom ring.  
Let music swell the breeze  
and ring from all the trees.

\*\*\*\*\*

The reservations of the Cherokee people are considered to be a true separate nation. This statement is thought by many people to be absolute and exact; but are they really a self-governing nation? Can a separate nation exist within a nation, especially the United States? Are the government and the people of the United States being fair with the proud native people? Does freedom ring in the Indian nation?

Analyzing the history of the Cherokee people gives us a better understanding of America's diplomacy in dealing with all American Indians. As the white frontier developed, the Indians were forced by government policies to live on reservations. And it was the same government interference that uprooted the Cherokee people to make the memorable "Trail of Tears" to a new land reserve in Oklahoma.

In 1831, the Indian Removal Act not only affected the Cherokee people but also the other tribes in the Five Civilized Tribes. The Five Civilized tribes included the Choctaws, Creeks, Chickasaws, Seminoles and the Cherokee Indians. But of the five tribes, "the Cherokee removal was the most bitter and is held up as an example to all of the other tribes today" (Stein, *The Trail of Tears* 20).

During the early nineteenth century, the Cherokee Indians settled in lower Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and upper Georgia. By that time they had assimilated into white society and had adopted some of its customs. The Indians were largely successful and prosperous farmers, some were even plantation owners with slaves (Stein, *The Trail of Tears* 9). However, "Indian treatment of slaves was more refined than that of their white neighbors" (King, *A Troubled History* xvi). They had their own tribal government with a written constitution and elected representatives who were sent to Washington on a regular basis, all of which was modeled after the U.S. form of government. The Cherokees had their own educational system and printed a newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*, in their own language, both of which contributed to the literacy and awareness of the Indians (Stein, *The Trail of Tears* 10).

There were "four events combined in 1828 to bring the question of removal into open and heated debate. First, the Indians

began to publish their own newspaper. Secondly, gold was discovered within the Indian Nation. Next, Andrew Jackson was elected president; and lastly the incorporation of Cherokee lands as counties of the state. The idea of an organized Indian republic within the state boundaries enraged many Georgians" (King, *A Troubled History* 129). So, the Georgians, who were greedy for the Indian land, forced Jackson (a known Indian fighter who favored removal) to pass the Indian Removal Bill in 1830. The vacated property would be divided and distributed by lotteries to state citizens (King, *A Troubled History* 129).

Can a separate nation exist within a nation, especially the United States?"

The Indians could not believe that they were being forced off property that had been part of their ancestry and heritage for centuries. The "traditional Indians regard their land as a living spiritual entity that cannot be divided, sold, or traded for any other land" (Johnson 16). The Cherokee people, trying to utilize white man's laws and ways "sought to find protection under the very courts who ruled for their removal" by petitioning for new amendments. Their case went to the Supreme Court as the Worcester vs.

Georgia suit. As in the past, their pleas fell upon deaf ears (King, *A Troubled History* 129).

During the time that elapsed from the signing of the Relocation Bill in 1830, until their actual removal in 1838, the Indians were under constant harassment from the white settlers. The Indians had trouble with men who would sneak on Indian property "destroy timber, take gold and steal" (King, *A Troubled History* 141). Some Indian women were attacked, raped and whipped by some of the intruders. Once the officials were notified, the Indians were informed that it was against the law to protest against a white man (King, *A Troubled History* 142). The longer their removal was deliberated in court the more violent and hateful the settlers became.

In 1838, as one of their desperate measures, Chief John Ross sent Chief Junaluska to plead for the protection of his people. Chief Junaluska had saved Andrew Jackson from being killed by a Creek warrior at the Battle of the Horse Shoe. Jackson received Chief Junaluska with abrupt indifference and said, "Sir, your audience is ended, there is nothing I can do for you" (Barnett, *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 183). It was with a mixture of relief and despair that in May 1838 "General Winfield Scott led 7,000 troops (approximately one soldier for every two Cherokees) onto the reservation. Without any warning they dragged people outside of their homes toward camps that held an estimated 17,000 Cherokees from all ages, sick or crippled" (Stein, *Trail of Tears* 26). Chief Junaluska, who stood silently by,



Jenny Lokey, **Flags**

watching the cruel, inhumane removal of his people, had "tears gushing down his cheeks lifting his cap he turned his face toward the Heavens and said, 'Oh my God, if I had only known at the Battle of Horse Shoe what I know now, America's history would have been differently written'" (Burnett, *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 183).

The Treaty of 1828 "provided that each family head enrolling for removal was to receive a rifle, a blanket, a kettle, five pounds of tobacco, and an additional blanket for each member of his family" (King, *A Troubled History* 133). Their other property would be appraised and the government would reimburse the Indians once they were relocated in the West. However, once some of the first immigrants arrived in the West, they found that the western agent (appointed by government) didn't know about the payment that was due the Indians (King, *A Troubled History* 136).

The rest of the Indians followed soon after to make the six month journey in which the combination of exposure, malnutrition, and disease claimed the lives of 4,000 men, women, and children. Because of the graves that dot the trail from the Smoky Mountains to the West, the Cherokee called the trail "Nunna-dal-tsun-yi" — "The Place Where They Cried," and later it became known as the Trail of Tears (Stein, *The Trail of Tears* 26).

Some 1,000 Indians stayed behind either because they were too old for the trip or because they hid in the mountains. "Those few who stayed were granted official right to remain by the North Carolina legislation in 1866" (Chiltoskey 2). From those people, the Eastern Band of the Cherokees came into being.

Their removal had both immediate and long-term economic and cultural effects. Splitting the tribe into two separate tribes weakened their support group from the time of their removal in 1838 until 1984, when 20,000 members met at Red Clay, Tennessee (Chiltoskey 2). In the Western Band, different factions emerged within the tribal government because of power struggles. Their differences led to murder, riots, and arrests, until the U.S. government intervened on August 6, 1846, with a treaty to end factionalism (King, *A Troubled History* 159).

Before the treaty of 1846 was signed, a man attending The Treaty Party in Washington stated:

If there was a crime in the Treaty of 1835 (one for removal), it was more your crime than ours. We were opposed to selling our country east, but by state laws, you (meaning your countrymen) abolished our government, annihilated our laws, suppressed our authorities, took away our lands, turned us out of our houses, denied us the rights of men, made us outcasts and outlaws in our own land, plunging us at the same time into an abyss of moral degeneration which was rushing our

people to swift destruction (King, *A Troubled History* 158).

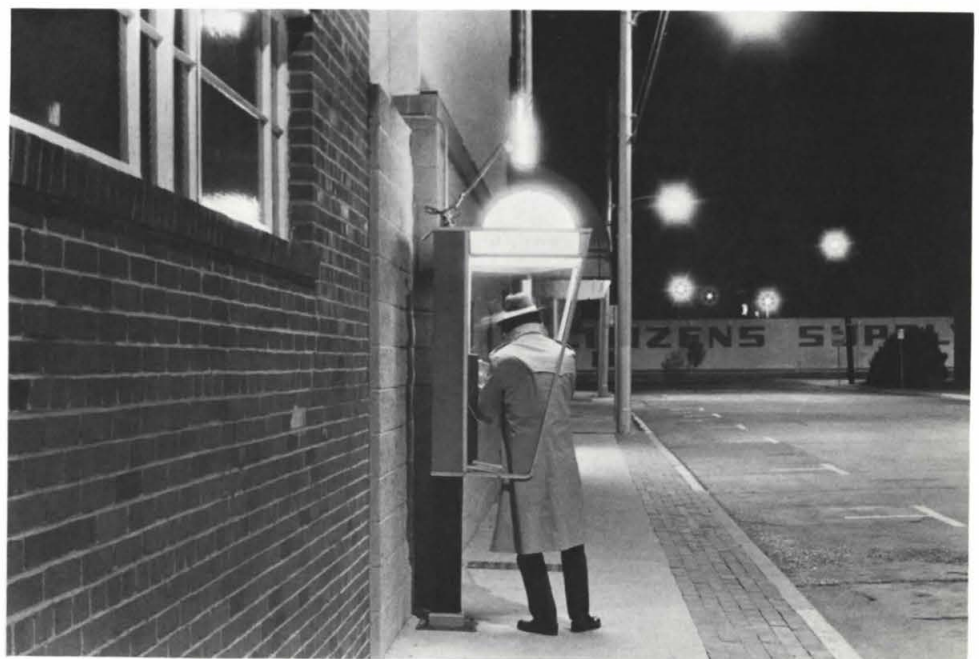
Since 1876, the Eastern Band has occupied 56,575 acres covering five counties of North Carolina bordering the Great Smoky Mountains' National Park. The Eastern Band is a small tribe numbering 8,822 "with nearly 3,000 living outside the reserve. However, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma has 53,097 members with 30,000 living in their 14 counties" (Chiltoskey 2).

If the history of economically and culturally suppressed peoples is static and unimproving, then the future of the Cherokees and other American Indians seems bleak. This hopelessness is compounded by those cultural and social pressures which contribute to universal poverty and alcoholism. Though 1988 marked the 150th Anniversary of the government's forced removal of the Cherokee people, the U.S. still seems too unwilling or unconcerned to put much emphasis on saving these proud native peoples. The U.S. seems more interested in Amnesty International, than in the apartheid taking place in our own backyard.

"The Indians' special status goes back to 1871" when Congress passed a law making most Indians "wards of the state" (Williams 28). The law made the Indians and reservations answerable to both State and Federal Government policies. "The only place in the free world where a citizen can be prosecuted for defaming the state is on an American Indian reservation. The U.S. Constitution does not apply on reservations. Property may be signed without just compensation" (Williams 28). Other freedoms that most Americans take for granted, such as "freedom of speech

and assembly, are routinely and legally denied" (Williams 28). The Federal Government provides an agency called the Bureau of Indian Affairs to help coordinate and manage funds. It acts as an informative agent on Indian affairs. The reservation Indians get "free legal counsel, pay no state or federal taxes on land, automobiles, or income derived from their land, and receive free educational privileges" (Williams 28). In 1985 the B.I.A. reported "that the unemployment rate on reservations had reached 49% and approximately 400,000 Indians (1/4 of the Indian pop., or 40% of those on reservations) lived below poverty level" (Williams 29). "The reservation system is the American form of Apartheid," it's a lesson in "learned helplessness" when they are being "conditioned to be totally dependent on handouts from taxpayers" (Williams 30). This creates a broken spirit which fuels depression and generates high rates of suicide and alcohol abuse.

With this vulnerability comes the constant threat from outside influences. In 1986 the Federal Government ordered "about 100 Hopi and more than 10,000 Navajo Indians to vacate the Arizona land they had shared for generations" (Johnson 15). They were to be moved to "The New Lands 365,000 acres south of another reservation" (Johnson 15). However, the Indians found that the property was undeveloped and that the water "was of dubious quality" The Indians "stubbornly refused to leave," or to be moved (Johnson 15). "Senator Barry Goldwater, who was in favor of the move, declared that he would have no objections to summoning the National Guard to take care of trouble makers," but he was unable to enforce the policy. It soon became a topic of discussion and "evidence was gathered



Timothy Perry, *Twelve Midnight*

that led people to believe that Arizona politicians and business tycoons devised the land bill not to assist the Navajo but to facilitate a large scale development scheme of their own" (Johnson 17). Also, "the appraisals of both the New Lands and old property were fraudulent" (Johnson 17). This relocation is still in dispute, but for the most part, the Indians don't have much choice and are voluntarily complying with the law. Once again it appears that greed plays an important part in the fate of another Indian reservation.

There were three pieces of "Anti-Indian legislation" under the Carter Administration that if passed would have really "turned the screws on the Indian people one more time ... and seriously erode Indian identity" (Monkres 351). The bills in question, "HR4169 and SB842 offered by Representative William S. Cohen (R, Maine) and Senator Edmund Muskie (D, Maine), would extinguish Maine Indian titles to all lands under treaty. Similarly, HR9906 (Walsh) would void all New York Indian titles to land under treaty. Finally, HR9054 (Cunningham) would seek to abrogate all Indian Treaties in the U.S." (Monkres 351). It would seem that this "is the response to the increasing number of successful court cases to force various government agencies to honor treaties" (Monkres 351).

Despite this superficial encouragement, the U.S. government treats the Indians as second class citizens who are not afforded or expected to have the same privileges or human rights as some of our enemies. The U.S. government calls the Indian tribes "nations," yet fails to recognize their rights as citizens of our nation much less their own nation.<sup>3</sup> In this atmosphere of impotent laws and often blatant unconcern, the question remains: Does freedom ring?

\*\*\*\*\*

*Sweet freedom's song,  
Let mortal tongues awake.  
Let all that breathe partake.  
Let rocks their silence break.  
The sound prolong.*

Rev Samuel F. Smith

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Duane H. King. *The Cherokee Indian Nation*. (Knoxville: U.T. Press, 1979). King also states that the treaty lasted for fifteen years until the Civil War divided the Cherokees between North and South "according to factional backgrounds" (160).

<sup>2</sup>Trebbe Johnson. *The Nation*. "Indian Land, White Greed." (4-11 July 1987). There had been a long dispute between the two tribes over boundary rights, and the government intervened to settle differences. It became a tool for unscrupulous businessmen to use against the Indians.

<sup>3</sup>Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Planning Board. *Comprehensive Plans*. Vol. III. (Washington D.C., 1974). The Supreme Court on March 1, 1886 held that the

Cherokee in "North Carolina had dissolved their connections with the Cherokee Nation and ceased to be a part of it when they refused to accompany the main body at the Removal" (66). Instead, they became a corporation under the laws of the state in 1889 (67). "The exact legal status of the Eastern Band of Cherokees is still under debate; they are wards of the government, citizens of the U.S., and in North Carolina a corporate body under state laws" (68). "It is under this framework that the tribal government's resolutions and ordinances operate and function — to the bewilderment of the non-Indians" (69).

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Works Cited

- Barnett, J.D. "Military Orders and Correspondence on the Cherokee Removal." *Journal of Cherokee Studies*, 3 (Summer 1978): 145.
- Chiltoskey, Mary "Cherokees." *Now and Then*. Vol. 33. East Tennessee State University Autumn 1986.
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Planning Board. *Comprehensive Plans. Vol. III The Impact of Land Tenure*. Washington D.C., 1974.
- Johnson, T "Indian Land, White Greed." *The Nation*, 4-11 July 1987: 15-18.
- King, Duane H. *The Cherokee Indian Nation: A Troubled History*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979.
- King, Duane H. and E. Raymond Evans eds. "The Trail of Tears: Primary Documents of the Cherokee Removal." *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 3 (Summer 1978): 145.
- Monkres, P "The Longest Walk: An Indian pilgrimage." *Christian Century* 5 Apr. 1978: 350-352.
- Smith, Rev Samuel F., and Henry Carey "America." *The Methodist Hymnal*. Methodist Publishing House, 1963.
- Stein, R. Conrad. *The Trail of Tears: Cornerstones of Freedom*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1985.
- Williams, T. "America's Apartheid." *National Review*. 8 May 1987: 28-30.
- . "Indians on the March Toward Self-Rule." *U.S. News* 84. 27 Mar. 1978: 72-74.

# CONSUMMATE COMBUSTION!

*Susan Roper*

It smothers  
like the smoke  
from the campfire I feed  
as the lake-heavy breeze fans  
across the point.

It cuts  
like the crack  
of a dry limb breaking  
beneath your axe  
in the silence of night.

Still, it grows,  
drawing us to its heat  
like the flaming fire  
nourished with dead timber  
and spawned by the Wind.

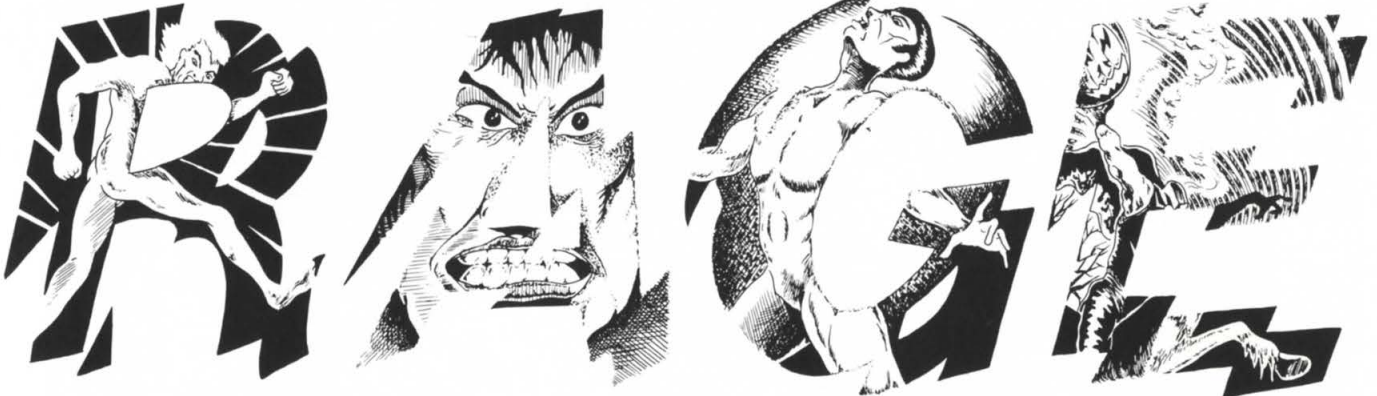
# Lik in Wait

Angel Y. Bryant

I smell their fear like copper  
as I walk among them;  
its static makes my hackles rise  
as the whites of their eyes flash.  
They know me swift as death  
and scatter in my wake.  
But today I give them pardon  
and pad among them tense  
just to feel the rumble  
of their flight in my bowels.  
I could take them,  
and that is enough  
for I like to tease my hunger.  
Into the cacophonous jungle  
I twine — silence follows  
and waits with me.

I rise with the moon  
eyes narrow; sinews taut  
I feel the night  
wound like a coil  
by their fear  
and already my soul knows  
its next victim.  
We will be one heart pounding,  
one graceful deadly moonlight dance  
away from eternity

Honorable Mentton, Graphic Design



Chris Ballard, **Rage**



James J. Wilson, **Untitled**

Rebecca Alford

Now we'll all be married. All except Beth. Beth. She'll be okay She'll be glad for me. She will.

\*\*\*\*\*

There she sat on her encyclopedias, all white and skinny Her carrot-top, curly-top shined like little lights. She put a lima bean in the center of her bread slice, folded it, and shoved it into her mouth. She always ate her beans like that. She didn't want to taste them.

"Darlin', must you?" asked Mum. Beth's blue eyes watched the rest of us as we ate our supper.

"Take a bite for Daddy," Mum said. Beth stabbed one small lima bean with her fork and put it between her lips. It just hung there like a green mole. She wasn't going to eat it.

"Eat your lima beans, Elizabeth." Father spoke like Montezuma and excused himself from the table. Beth played the game. She ate a bean for Mum and Dad, and each of us three sisters. None of us could leave the table until the game was done. Except Dad. He could do anything he liked.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Now we'll all be married.  
All except Beth. Beth.  
She'll be okay. She'll be  
glad for me. She will."*

Beth was six years old and still sucked her thumb. Cherries, she said it tasted like. Dad hated Beth's thumbsucking. He made Mum put this stuff on her thumb that burnt her mouth if she put it in there. But Beth started first grade, still sucking her thumb. Dad said she couldn't go to school if she sucked her thumb. But she sucked her thumb, and she went to first grade.

What finally got her to quit was when Dad said he would beat me and her both if she kept sucking that ole thumb. Said I was all the time with her and just letting her suck it, never doing a thing to stop her. Said I was ten, all the way to the double digits, and should know better. Anyways, that made Beth quit. I guess she didn't want to get me whipped.

\*\*\*\*\*

Every night, I knew to expect it, Beth would crawl out of her bed. I'd hear her feety pajamas scuff across the wood floor. (Beth didn't pick her feet up when she walked.) She'd come to my bedroom door and ask me, "Kaffy, can I sleep with you?" I'd almost always let her. Always I did. She'd bring Martha, her wounded doll, with her. Since she was wounded, Beth

always kept her close. Martha got wounded by Rascal; he was our dog.

Mum always scolded us for wrestling in bed. We loved to wrestle. I'd keep my right hand behind my back and use just my weak one. Still I'd pin Beth. She'd giggle and tickle me back. Mum would say, "If you girls don't settle down, I'm gonna separate you." But she never did. Not once.

In the morning, Beth woke up looking like a chicken, just hatched from its egg. Her hair would be all wet, sticking straight up. She got so hot when she slept. She was my heater.

\*\*\*\*\*

*She hugged me goodbye  
so tight, then got in the  
car without me. She didn't  
look back to wave."*

Beth's fish died. Scarlet. She wanted to name her Ramona, but Mum said Scarlet was a better name 'cuz Scarlet was red, and red and scarlet meant the same thing — sort of. Scarlet was really a boy, but we pretended she was a girl. Beth said she had to be 'cuz she watched her undress. Yes, Beth said, Scarlet was truly a girl.

Beth never cleaned Scarlet's bowl though. Well, she did at first. I guess she got bored. Mum said, "Beth, if you don't take care of Scarlet, Scarlet's gonna die."

The next day, I mean the very next day, Scarlet bit the big one. Beth blamed Mum. Said she wished her dead.

We had a funeral for Scarlet. I was the preacher. I preached on taking care of the people and fish we love, the way I took care of Beth. Beth sang two hymns. She was the congregation. Scarlet was all dried up. We buried her in a toilet paper roll. We folded the ends of it closed for a fish casket. Poor Beth. Poor Scarlet.

\*\*\*\*\*

Beth would rub my back for, must have been hours. Having my back rubbed is such a warm, restful thing. And Beth, she'd straddle my back, lift up my shirt, and rub-n-rub to please me. I'd make her go 'til one hundred. Kinda mean I guess, 'cuz she could hardly count that high. Every time she messed up, I'd send her back to zero. She liked to do all these different things on my back, and give 'em all names. She'd say, "This is my dancing butterfly," or "that was the swim." But I didn't much care. I just thought having my back rubbed was the most restful thing.

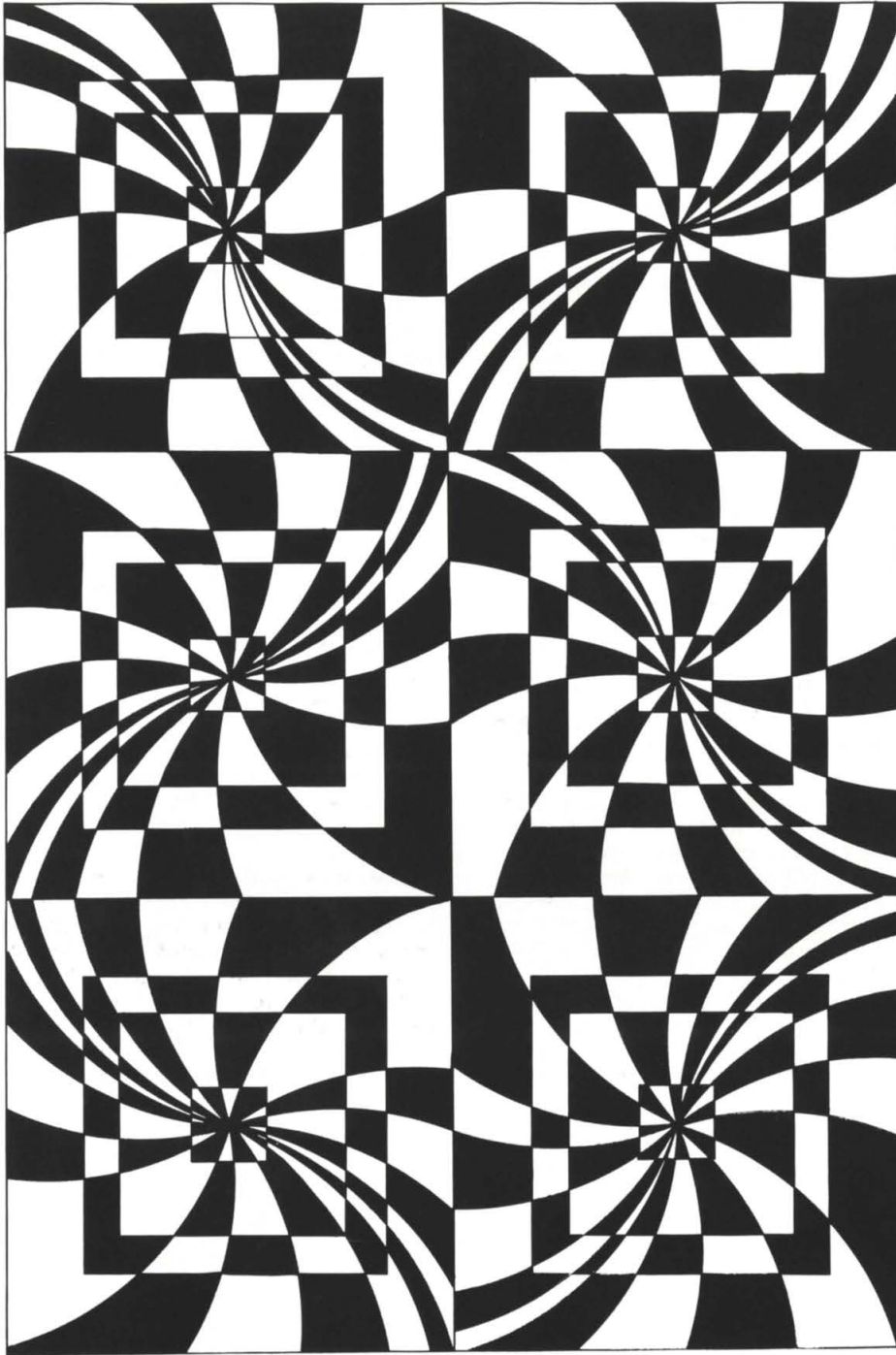
\*\*\*\*\*

Mum got so mad at Beth. I'll tell ya what. She dumped a whole box of Dad's Alka Seltzer into the bathtub. Said she wanted to see how much it would fizz. She just sat there, naked, in a tub full of fizzing Alka Seltzers. Mum said it couldn't be good for her skin and made her take an Avon Skin So Soft oil bath. Then Beth smelled like an old woman, and I didn't want her to sleep



James J. Wilson. Untitled





Theresa A. Bellamy, **Gradation**

with me. But I let her, on account of she'd had such a rotten day and all.

\*\*\*\*\*

When Beth turned ten she got some new peewees. Small baby dolls, smaller than apples. I was fourteen. I'd outgrown baby dolls. I liked boys. But Beth really wanted me to play, and it was her birthday and all. We got out all the peewees. We had a whole bunch of them because our older sisters used to play with 'em too.

And here, Beth had brand new pretty babies, and she still picked all the ugly ones to play with. I don't know whether

she thought she was doing me some kind of favor by letting me play with the pretty babies, or if she thought she was doing the ugly babies a favor by playing with them.

\*\*\*\*\*

Every summer we go to the beach. Beth loves the beach. Our maid, Ninny, taught us how to paint seashells and build drip castles with wet sand. Ninny stayed in the maid's quarters, a little building about the size of a shed, close to our cottage. One night she brought a man home with her from a bar. He was a guitar player in a band. Dad was mad. Ninny had a baby

We made up a song about it. Beth and I ran around the cottage in our bikinis singing it:

"Ninny had a baby  
She can't work no more, no more  
Every time we need her  
She's got to walk the baby 'cross the flo-or-or  
She can't work no mo-or-or."

\*\*\*\*\*

Beth made friends with Henry. Henry came once a week or so to do jobs for Dad. Henry only had one leg; the other one was cut off at the knee. He would sit outside on the old tree stump to take his lunch, and Beth would go sit with him. He'd share his Vienna sausages with her. She never ate Vienna sausages, 'cept with Henry. Beth said she liked Henry on account of he was a gum grinner, and he told her secrets about why things were.

Beth all the time wanted to know why. Why we had to go to bed at night. Why her teeth fell out and why they grew back. Why Henry only had one leg. Why people got married. Why she didn't have any brothers. Beth said Henry knew all the answers. Well, alls I know is, Beth knew all the questions. Sometimes she'd ask the darndest things. Then I couldn't quit thinking about it.

\*\*\*\*\*

When she was in eighth grade, Beth got a boyfriend. He had red hair just like her. He walked her home from school in the afternoons, and they held hands. I teased them about it until Beth asked me to please stop.

She got real serious one day, came in my bedroom, and just asked me to stop. She sat on my bed and leafed through my Trig book. She wanted to talk. I could always tell. Turns out, Billy wanted to feel her. God, she was only thirteen years old. What was there to feel? Beth told me her friend Ann Simpson let her boyfriend feel her. Now what was I 'sposed to tell the poor kid? She was flat as a floor, and too young besides. So I told her to wait until she blossomed. When was that going to happen, Beth wanted to know. Beth's friends were starting to get little boobs. Guess she was feeling left out. I told her she would blossom before she got married. She didn't like that.

I suggested a bike ride. We rode to Drug Fair and got Chillie Willies. Beth got grape. It turned her lips purple.

\*\*\*\*\*

I ran track and played basketball in high school. So Beth figured she'd give basketball a go. Mostly, she sat the bench. She scored two points the entire season.

She was on the Junior Varsity team; I was on Varsity. I was in the bleachers, half studying, half watching, waiting for the Varsity game. Beth never shot the ball never. She rarely got the ball, but when she did, she never seemed to want it much. But this was a fast break. She was the only one on her team's side of the court. Selena

threw her the ball from across court. She had to shoot. It was a lay-up. She made it. I saw her score. I dropped my books through the bleachers.

Two points made Beth grin for a week.

\*\*\*\*\*

I graduated Valedictorian from high school. Beth was sick, but she wanted to hear my speech. She sat in the balcony I kept hearing her sneeze during my speech, even though I knew I couldn't possibly hear that.

Afterwards, Beth put on my cap and danced around in the parking lot. She had the curliest head of hair. I wondered if she would ever make it through high school. I wondered if she'd ever learn how to drive. I was going into a new world and leaving behind my leprechaun.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mom, Dad and Beth took me to college in September. Beth looked at my new roommate the way a cat looks at your toes, right before he pounces. We all went out to dinner. I talked about high school. Winchester. Football games. Friends. Classes. Teachers. Clubs. Beth didn't say a word.

She hugged me goodbye so tight, then got in the car without me. She didn't look back to wave.

\*\*\*\*\*

She wrote me letters on pink paper that smelled like cherries.

\*\*\*\*\*

Beth came to visit me at William and Mary I was a sophomore; she was a junior in high school. She still didn't wear makeup. My roommate, Elisia, put eyeliner on her. Beth said she felt like a cat. I thought she looked pretty We drank strawberry daiquiris. Beth kept asking me when she was gonna feel them. "I don't feel drunk at all," she said. Next thing I knew, she was asking us not to drive so fast; we were sitting at a stop light. Beth threw up, tore her pants, and scuffed her brand new clogs. Said she loved William and Mary, and she was **definitely** going to college.

\*\*\*\*\*

We went on a picnic, up on the Drive, just the two of us. We hiked to the waterfalls and ate lunch. We had nectarines. Beth loved nectarines. She told me her boyfriend didn't turn her on anymore. Said he had sweaty palms. She'd been dating Dean on and off for two years, and the guy had sweaty palms. I never knew that. She asked me how to break it off smoothly so they'd still be friends. She had this crazy idea to start appearing unkempt and stop brushing her teeth before dates. Dean with the sweaty palms had a fetish for cleanliness. I told her that idea was in poor taste. So we planned the whole break-up. She actually wrote down

everything I said and memorized it.

We talked about sex that day Beth wanted babies more than a husband, she thought. But she hated five to eight year olds. She guessed she'd have to figure out something to do with her kids during those "awkward ages." She giggled, and changed the subject.

\*\*\*\*\*

Beth liked my boyfriend, Tommy Most of the time. She liked him when I liked him.

\*\*\*\*\*

Her first year in college, Beth was devastated. Love unreturned. I met him only once. Craig Kendall. Beth said she truly had passion for him. They spent a lot of time together at first. Then it wore off. For Craig, but not for Beth. She called me one night crying. She cried so hard that I never heard a word she said. But I just let her cry — long distance tears. After that, she got real homesick for a while, came home almost every weekend. But she wasn't Beth. Her grades were good, and her eyes stopped dancing. But only for a while.

\*\*\*\*\*

Beth borrowed my green dress for winter formals. It was too big in the boobs, and she had to stuff herself. Poor kid. With having three older sisters, she'd been wearing hand-me-downs all her life. But Beth said she liked it. Said she felt like me in it.

As thanks, she sent me a mason jar full of fireballs. I taught Beth to drink beer by sucking on fireballs. The candy makes your mouth hot, then you take a gulp of beer to cool it. Beth never acquired a taste for beer though.

But she loves fireballs.

\*\*\*\*\*

I went to visit Beth at Virginia Tech. We drank tequila shots with salt and lemon. Beth threw the rinds into the air and tossed her carrot curls back and forth. She'd just changed her major for the third time. Yes, this was it. She'd found her niche. She was going to study Biology and Communications. Eventually, she wanted to talk to dolphins. I told her she'd been reading too much Carl Sagan. "I love Carl Sagan," she said and she kissed the air.

We drove out to the Cascades. Beth climbed up on the slippery rocks behind the waterfalls and let the cold water splash over her body The place made me think of the Garden of Eden. Beth was Eve.

\*\*\*\*\*

Summertime, we girls always stayed in the attic of the beach cottage together. Lots of people came to the beach with us Grandma, Granddad, Aunt Chleo and Uncle Clyde, Aunt Eleanor and Uncle Jimmy, Bernie and Baby, and all kinds of cousins. But only us four girls stayed in the attic. The sisters. That is, until Steph got married, and then Ellen. They moved to rooms downstairs with their husbands. Then it was just Beth and me up there.

\*\*\*\*\*

I just told Beth I'm going to marry Tommy Showed her my diamond. We lay there, basking in the sun, quiet for a while.

She squirted Coppertone on my stomach and spelled "H.A.P.P.Y" in it. Then she hugged me tight. Her hair smelled like cherries.



Chris Ballard, **Body Rhythms**



Fathi Bakkoush, U2



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC:  
A LOOK AT ETHIOPIA

Honorable Mention  
*Dede Norungolo*

A rib  
could be  
taken  
without  
pain  
from her  
side.  
She'd  
not miss  
the  
extra weight.  
Her skin,  
too,  
is  
a  
burden.



Richard Righter, **Feeding the Cows**

# THE HILLS WHISPER

*Todd Norris*

My easy hand set you  
on a sandy South Fork bank.  
My soothing voice lulled you  
lazy Autumn afternoons  
with creaking rocking chairs  
and evening cattle call—  
in rushes down ridges—

Mama's footfall on the kitchen floor.

I woke you early mornings  
with a mist-chill-knock  
on your window pane  
and a goose-down-tickle  
on your nose.

I've tied many hearts  
to this rich earth—  
wrapped many destinies  
'round these hills.

You washed your dreams here,  
rocked in my ancient arms,  
lost yourself in my woods.

I sang,  
and Daddy's guitar echoed  
from that old porch to your mind—

And I called you home.  
but you were never mine.

# GRAVESITE

*Janet Robinson*

Here is your grave, Father,  
what else can I say? It is oblong  
with a flat, embedded tombstone.  
On it is written your name.

The earth patched the barren spot  
with grass after they covered  
your vault. It is greener  
than the surrounding lawn.

A small vase, concrete-gray,  
was donated by the monument maker  
for flowers. Every year it waits  
to be filled.

I imagine you in your box  
in a suit, as when I saw you last  
overflowing the satin as if you  
resented death's luxury and wanted out.

But no, the suit would have decayed  
by now, like your flesh, peeled away  
and there is nothing so naked  
as bone.



Jenny Lokey, *Lily Pad, Bays Mountain*



David Rowe, *Exit*







**EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY**