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## The Pentagram, No. 1

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the

a magazine

# Pentagram

of poetry, short stories and essays



CONTENTS

The Temper of Love.....poems.....p. 2  
A Fathers Remembrance of Boyhood  
Night Song  
#2

Hymnal--Hope.....poems.....p. 3  
where  
The Tomb  
Blessed Is He  
Epitaph

Hymnal--Despair.....poems.....p. 6  
Companions  
#7  
Untitled  
Devotional

Science: the Absolute...poems.....p. 8  
Daphne And Chloe  
#11  
Specks

Past A Point.....short-short story....p. 9

This College Town.....essay.....p. 10

Breezes Off The Sea.....poems.....p. 11  
The Sea  
Siren

Notes On Melancholy.....poems.....p. 12  
Symphony For Bass Voices  
#21  
Daydream  
With Yound Timothy's Passing



WELCOME to the verse of a bunch of guys who think writing should be a part of every educated man's experience. We are a group sanctioned by none, other than our own selves, sanctioned with our own belief that we have something to say. Spend a few minutes with us. Be you science student, English student, agriculture student, whatever your forte we believe there is interest for you in the following pages.

Who are we? Students too. But students egotistical enough to want to have our ideas, any ideas, spread throughout a few minds other than our own. We have talked to ourselves and to each other. Now we want to talk to you.

Glance through the following pages. If you see something of value, talk about it.

If you wish to contribute to the PENTAGRAM submit your work precisely as you wish to see it in print. Send poems, short stories and essays to: PENTAGRAM, c/o BOX 5445, S.F.A. STATION, WACOGDOCHES, TX 75961.

editors:

Jim R. Harris

Bill Armstrong

John M. Good

Sonny Hyles

Gemette McGuire



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The Temper of Love

## A FATHERS REMEMBRANCE OF BOYHOOD

He stalked me to the clearing,  
My curley-headed sprite,  
And brought to my lips a smile  
Of wrathful mirth.  
My glistening tools lay scattered  
Around the green,  
And a flimsy shack of high-grade wood  
Stood under a skinny pine tree.  
Before the shack in a glowing bed  
Was a campfire of brown pine cones.

"Can I camp out tonight, dad?" the face  
Of freckles said.  
"I won't be afraid of tigers and bears  
Because I have my pop-gun  
And a nice warm camp bed".  
He wistful-eyed looked at me  
And pleaded, "Can I dad?"

I rubbed his mother's curls down smooth  
And answered, "Yes little man, if I may  
Stay with you."

Gemette McGuire

## NIGHT SONG

My darling steps upon the snow at night,  
And floats into the soft caressing wind,  
And gently tiptoes past the waiting clouds  
Into the myriad of vast unending stars,  
And chases after moonbeams, fast and light.  
She shuts her eyes, and angels swarm about,  
And beauty shines around her golden face.  
Amid this splendid sight she stops and glances  
Down on the heart that lived but for her touch,  
And nods. With hands outstretched she spans the gulf  
That separates this world from that she left,  
And beckons with a voice, impassioned, warm...  
"Come to this place." And all my soul responds,  
And rises to her calm enchanting touch,  
And rests with her, until there is an end.

John M. Good



#2

Spring fell fast, I guessed,  
Over the rail a thousand feet  
To pavement, movable crowds  
The city sprawled in ordered fashion  
West the chalky smoke shoots  
Up, a laboring many toil  
Sickness not of body works quickly  
Taking from me precious hours  
And how sacred they  
To be handled by any but me.

Spring fell fast, summer gone  
I kiss my fleeting soul till  
Another day, year when we  
Shall mate somewhere in a field forlorn  
Or in another hour of desperation  
When the kissing relatives again  
Descend like bats to suck  
My blood, my life, my precious  
Humble minutes of self-glory in  
Solitude.

Jim R. Harris

Hymnal--Hope

WHERE

Caught in the swirl  
Of a mad, dashing world  
I know not where  
To put my face.

Whether to lift it  
To Thee, O God  
Or let it hang  
Amid the crowd  
Of nameless,  
Faceless  
People.

Bill Armstrong



## THE TOMBS

From that first stone the sepulchre grew  
Until the first light faded away.  
The ancient wisdoms, how much they knew,  
From time unmeasured have a isen.  
The stones sit mute, a burying place,  
So that all who see wonder  
What age of man, what holocaust has  
Left this place untended.  
The fiery gasp of life is lost  
Within the walls quiescent.  
The kings and pharohs that built  
Have left it unprotected.  
Still it points its head  
Toward the skies,  
And leaves breath bequethed  
To funeral pyres  
And magnificent spires which are like  
The sword unsheathed.  
They lay alone, in death masks final.  
And gaze amid the treasures  
Of untold wealth and finery  
And, stranger still, their pleasures.  
The temple virgins in their gowns  
Of pious regal splendor,  
Still dance the dance that once retold  
The gaiety and careless thoughts  
That reigned supreme, then ended.  
The endless time, much of it lost,  
Still lingers in the image  
Of great men sitting, unsurpassed  
In velvet, silken plumage.  
Then life is through and begins again  
And strips this place of grandeur.  
Verbage, vintage flow within  
The confines of without an end  
And voices, careless, still the plend  
Within the walls contained,  
The tune is played, the sin is sinned  
For that unseen, fathomless day.  
The skies are darkened from the rage  
Of the sightless, mirthless men.  
The cycle flows from day to day.  
One knows, perhaps, the only way  
That death may conquer thoughts.  
For the walls they hear and hold too dear  
What blood and toil have bought.  
The game is played the same once more,  
For nowhere is variation known

(continued page 5)



## THE TOMB (cont.)

From the sudden beauty that may spring  
 From decadence and decay alone.  
 Over and over and over again,  
 The tomb rings out its cry.  
 That aging, lifeless song and sigh  
 That shudders from the by and by  
 And thunders from the stars up high,  
 And, then, prepares to lie  
 Within the arms of the whence and why  
 Cast down from the heights and depths unseen  
 And grasps the thought that seem to mean  
 That life will never die.  
 Within the tomb it goes on and on and on,  
 That eerie, feeble, constant tune.

Sonny Hyles

## BLESSED IS HE

Now we have crossed the dark veil,  
 It has been rent asunder,  
 And all can enter.

The man who died  
 Yet lived in death,  
 (With a three day journey  
 In Hell)  
 Then arose from the grave  
 Has died for us.

The Easter-lily has wilted  
 From that eventful day,  
 Yet He lives on,  
 Sitting and waiting.

Waiting for us to heed the comforter,  
 Sent to guide us along the way.

Now it is over,  
 And the cold bed of clay  
 Has beckoned;  
 Yet our soul floats freely,  
 Waiting for the marriage feast.

Glorious day.

Gemette McGuire

## EPITAPH

So, fisherman,  
 With all your grit and will  
 You're going to tackle dogmas,  
 Reach out through the centuries  
 And trample kings.  
 Are you sure you have the  
                   stomach for it?  
 What right have you,  
 Who's never had the learning,  
 To tell us how to live?  
 Don't say it's not your word  
 But His--almighty His.  
 We've had your kind before  
 Certainly,  
 But we'll be damned  
 If we'll have your kind again!

John M. Good



Hymnal---Despair

COMPANIONS

#7

We walked through wonderlands  
Of man's great rise  
Kicking skulls and torsos  
From our path.

Looking into my comrade's face,  
There shown in empty sockets  
And upon his lipless mouth  
A giant smile--profound.

Dancing a rickety dance,  
He bellowed to the ground  
Obscenities of devotion--  
We laughed.

Bill Armstrong

I hear bells  
It's time for church  
And all the people gather

Remember when we rode  
With dirty faces, unkept hair  
About those crowds  
Exhausted from a night of drink  
Of love, of bed and dirty girls  
Exalted at our rejection  
Of simple hours and families

Next week I go for coffee  
To be sure a dirty face  
A bitter taste  
Will smirk those around  
As I greet the sun  
With a sacred smile

Jim R. Harris

## UNTITLED

A man came to my door one day  
And said that he had lost his way,  
So I butchered him and hung him  
Up to dry. And I chastised him  
And said that he must know  
That this was the way to save him.  
He died, hanging upside down,  
Blood running in his eyes and on  
My glassed-in patio.  
I wept and cut him down  
And deified him.  
But he did not move or blink,  
So I sacrificed his body  
To the misty gods that I had  
Read about somewhere.  
And then I screamed  
And beat my hands upon the wall  
Until they broke  
And lay shattered at my feet.  
Sonny Hyles



## DEVOTIONAL

The bell shrieked, and all the walls  
Wobbled within the eerie space,  
And all the people stood in files  
And placed their hands high  
And promised goodness, and honesty,  
And God's love. Then God said,  
"Have all love me and pay respect,  
And suffer, and give, and hope,  
And be blessed." Yet one man,  
Hiding in the corner of a hall,  
With stuffy dress and multicolored tones,  
Said quietly, "No."  
And the bell stopped.  
So all the people turned and looked  
With nodding satisfaction on the scum.  
They whispered saintly actions,  
With arms outstretched they called aloud  
For fiery vengeance from the Lord.  
And then they gathered 'round the trouped one,  
Picked up his state with eager hands,  
Above their heads they carried him  
Majestically bound,  
Onto the funeral pyre.  
A leader came from within their midst and read.  
A mother cried into the placid frowns,  
To bare her gentle heart.  
A realist, a man of action,  
Stepped sternly from the crowd,  
Picked up the torch and placed it to the wood.  
They all fell back respectfully.  
An awe rushed through them and a fear.

The bell shrieked and they turned their backs  
As the walls wobbled,  
As they smiled and raised their hands,  
And promised.

John M. Good

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DON'T FORGET. You've been kind enough to look at some of our work, now let us look at some of yours. Our address again is PENTAGRAM, c/o BOX 5445, S.F.A. STATION. Let us hear from you.



Science; the Absolute

DAPHNE AND CHLOE

#11

o one in paradise, the world seems grey  
 and patterns and designs are thrown away  
 o make a din of noise and clatter.  
 here is no tranquility.  
 Yet in a garden, hidden and dim,  
 Daphne and Chloce, in ignorance, swim  
 And while away the hours  
 Amidst the grasses and the flowers  
 Where not a boot or shoe has traveled  
 And no trucks and men have graveled  
 Or oil-slicked inroads snake their way  
 Into the subtleness of their day.  
 They frolic in the water, never wondering  
 To finish some insignificant job  
 Or, from some day or evening, rob  
 A second of their time. They are taken  
 With each other, never needing eggs or bacon  
 In the morning or beef or stroudle  
 Or chicken noodle  
 In a can  
 Or a moving van  
 To carry petty possessions  
 Or a shrink to cure obsessions  
 Or a travelog,  
 A catalog.  
 Daphne and Chloe, cloaked in simple beauty  
 Never strive to do their duty  
 To a world of mass production  
 And scientific deduction  
 Full of air pollution  
 And substitution  
 And things as yet without solution.  
 From the water a reflection  
 Of their loveliness undecayed  
 And upon each face a recollection  
 Of youth and fervor unafraid.  
 Their grey disheveled hair  
 And wrinkled brow  
 Show not a care  
 Or a hint of how  
 Their bodies looked before their backs  
 Were bent and their ears went deaf and sacs  
 Appeared upon their breasts.  
 They stumble off and then they rest.  
 Their aging bones and toothless grin  
 Can never show just who they've been.

Sonny Hyles

One youth lingers  
 Outside a complex  
 Of buildings, computers  
 Drawn by Huxley  
 To be sure,  
 While other youth  
 Grown old with  
 Their own disassociation  
 Hurry about inside  
 To the tune of IBM.

The day so sweet  
 Fall the season  
 When crumpling leaves  
 Disturb all reason  
 The sun shines ripe  
 Warming a body not  
 Yet ready to leave  
 The comfort of a  
 Small confining place,  
 The temple where he worships.  
 Not yet ready to work.

"Personnel" it read  
 And he heard someone mutter  
 "Now what can we do for you"  
 Outside a chuckle  
 "Poor fools. I shall sit  
 Cross-legged by the sea  
 Dreaming of times  
 When Man, in hand  
 With the elements  
 Ate from his own back-yard  
 And I shall sing  
 'Now what can we do for you?'  
 Jim R. Harris



## PAST A POINT

Jim R. Harris

Whatever the experience, life goes on.

Jekinson couldn't really remember where he had first heard that, but it kept running over and over in his mind now, as he played with sweat on the window. It's funny about lines like that, lines that have some poetic quality for you, and how they seem to spring up at the strangest times. Well maybe they are not really strange times for the thought, but simply poetic times. Perhaps winter or summer, or some season has just come on the scene, or you've lost a lover, or maybe it's just one of those nights, and something someone has said or something you've read comes to mind again and again. It's hard to get things like that out of your mind. That's the way it was with Jekinson tonight.

"Who has the seeds?" A fix would be good now. It's been good all evening. Been a long time. No, not really. Just seems like it. He ground the flower seeds in the tiny pepper box, and swallowed them.

"So it's Jekinson. Thought you said your name was Dailey?"

"Who are you?"

"How many times do I have to tell you? My name is..."

"Never mind. I know. I'm sorry. It's just that you talk so much I get confused."

And she really did. For God's sake, she talked a lot. And this guy that was driving was a real nut too. He didn't talk, but the way he kept turning around and looking back, you would think someone was following him. And the girls next to him squirmed about making the car seem a capsule of confused movement.

It had rained earlier in the night and there were little puddles spread all over the streets. Jekinson took note of them and he looked down at the street waiting for one to shoot by, bright with the light of all-night gas stations. He pretended the water was really the source of the light and there were little cities beneath the pools where it was never dark and the cities had tiny people who were always happy. That's the way he would have it if he could--always sunlight, no booze, and no people who talk too much. People who talk too much always come at night, he thought. Ever notice that? The sunlight seems to stifle peoples ability to talk.

Jekinson took another pinch of the seeds. Flower, flower, on the wall...

"I would never have dreamed it, Price Jekinson."

What had happened? He looked down to his hand resting on his left knee. He liked to rest his hands on his knees when he had something important to think about, but it was so crowded here that only one hand could be placed in the reflective position. What had happened? There had to be a logical explanation. Then he thought of another sentence. "When we are born, we cry that we are come to this stage of fools." Somehow it seemed to tie in with what he had been thinking--life goes on, the puddles of water. And he felt satisfied.

end



## THIS COLLEGE TOWN

Joe Bobb

A graduate student working toward his Masters Degree in the sciences recently related a story of an experience with the Nacogdoches police department. An officer stopped him for "questioning" and the student took issue with the officer over reasons for his delay. The policeman took offence with the "smart college kid," and the student nearly had to bend his knees to the policeman--he had to beg off being taken to jail.

It is obvious that the near-illiterate policeman was prejudiced against the student, who wore glasses and had an air of intellectuality about him. This particular policeman is typical not only of the law enforcement in Nacogdoches but of the town's peoples and organizations in general. Elderly women attempt to censor magazines that have been accepted throughout the country. Merchants and waitresses, who gladly take the student's money, sneer at having to serve the "fresh, smart students." Nacogdoches citizens are biting the hands that have made their town as prosperous as it is.

It is a backward, stifling, anti-intellectual, strickly East Texas air that surrounds Nacogdoches. And it is choking any progressive attempts on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State College. How far can a college progress intellectually, how far can it extend its sphere of influence when it is fenced in and ruled over by townfolk who seem to distrust and disrespect "those wild kids who go to the college."? How will this college ever cease to be the school dwarfed among the pines when the people of Nacogdoches continue to believe that students are a necessary nuisance? What chance does this school have of attaining a university status when its professors are forced to live among people that consider them alien money?

Have you ever looked at the local newspaper? Typical stories include a front page announcement that the manager of the local discount store will speak in a near-by town at an important meeting of the W.M.T. sewing circle. Or perhaps you would rather hear from page two that Aunt Sally's relatives from West Texas visited her last week at route nine. Students and teachers must go to a Dallas or Houston paper to read even the least relevant news. This necessity carries with it a feeling of isolation. The newspaper in a community where the processes of higher education are conducted must not remain a small town paper, but must cater to the needs of the educated or assist in the hindrance of any further education.

Uneducated minds running a town's police department, elderly women attempting to censor the student body with Victorian ideas about sex on the news stands, and newspaper officials who write to please antiquated communities hanging on to the skirts of backwoodsmen ideas, will kill a college even as that college doubles its enrolment yearly.



## SPECKS

The specks are far away,  
Needlepoints pricking blackness,  
Letting through the light  
Of millions of years ago.

Receding into the distance  
Like long, narrow tunnels  
Colors of white, red, and blue  
Dancing dart into sight.

A great red giant bursting forth  
Proclaims age-old secrets  
Of life amid rumbling beasts  
Blind to their calling.

Bill Armstrong

Breezes off the Sea

## THE SEA

I,  
A wanderer in this dreary land  
Stand looking upon the white,  
Flowing sand,  
At the loveliness of the sea.  
Whitefoam rushes  
White and black,  
Crashes on the age-seamed rocks,  
Then recedes,  
Lapping gently at the Earth's bosom.  
The thick-skinned  
Foam hides the peacefulness  
Of ancient cities and wrecked  
treasure ships  
Lying in undisturbed sleep.  
The high rise  
Of tide displays unrestrained rage  
In angry winds.  
I stand alone  
Upon the shore,  
And Wish.  
Gemette McGuire

## SIREN

The water lashes angrily  
In slanting, slicing rain.  
The rocking pitch of deck beneath  
Reveals our lives' wet bane.

The skies are cast with angry clouds  
Their middles torn asunder  
With flashes--ripping, fiery ones  
And deafening, rolling thunder.

Into the distance moves the din,  
Replaced by smooth blue seas.  
The phosphorescent glow of life  
Appears with soft sea breeze.

It curls about my arms and throat,  
Caressing hands of love,  
To lure me back with Circe's charm  
To the crashing hammer of Jove.

Bill Armstrong



Notes on Melancholy

## SYMPHONY FOR BASS VOICES

#21

Solitary station--  
 Burnt--  
 In trains--  
 Seeds between tracks  
 Whisper silence  
 And the bass murmur of winter winds.  
 Nostalgia lives with metal monsters,  
 Littered with copper-colored disease,  
 And spreads its ignorant cloak of  
     serenity.  
 Imagine only thirty years back.  
                     Sonny Hyles

Should I say that now  
 the time has come,  
 when warped faces turn about  
 to view a soured soul?  
 Should I say  
 it's time to descend,  
 close all the mocking pages,  
 leave, make ready,  
 to mate with some roots of grass?

How far have we gone?  
 Around the block,  
 when ports and airports  
 restlessly waited the arrival,  
 so many miles away.

How many have we known?  
 One, two, surely enough.

How much have we felt,  
 how many emotions unknown?  
 Too many to climb, or  
 remain here where I stand.

I do not count you out.  
 Back to your own,  
 perhaps a different, better shape.

Tomorrow I'll wear my yellow shirt.  
 Tomorrow, tomorrow  
 things will be different.  
                     Jim R. Harris

## WITH YOUNG TIMOTHY'S PASSING

He always ran caught up,  
 Bright flowers, paintbrushes dancing,  
 Chattering past his ears  
 Leading soldiers and enemies  
 And secret places sheltered from  
     the rain,  
 Wet, wonderfully sticky,  
 Covered with ants and muck and  
     smells,  
 With a dog and a bird,  
 His and God's if he'd thought of it,  
 To the edge of the woods  
 And down in the dirt.  
 He ran a thousand times  
 Knowing but once.  
 He gathered in this world  
 And wallowed in his innocence  
 With a dog and bird,  
 His and God's if he'd thought of it,  
 And if he hadn't, will now,  
 And know it better than us.  
                     John M. Good

## DAYDREAM

Chico stood with hands on hips,  
 And watched the train go by.  
 "One day I'll ride that train,"  
     he thought,  
 "Then I won't be someone who's  
     cheaply bought,  
 "To pick these pears and peas.  
 "I'll get a suit, and go to school,  
 And do just as I please."  
 Chico smiled, skipped a rock along  
 The road, then walked towards town  
 And smiling Maria.

Gemette McGuire