

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

**ScholarWorks @ UTRGV**

---

riverSedge: A Journal of Art and Literature

Special Collections and Archives

---

Spring 1978

**riverSedge Spring 1978 v.2 no.1**

RiverSedge Press

Ted Daniel

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/riversedge>



Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

---



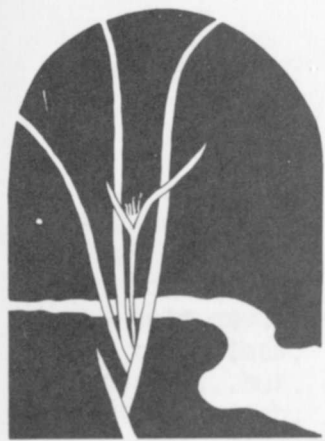
# riverSedge

Featuring poetry by  
**LOUIS McKEE**

**F.S. Fallis**  
**Emilie Glen**  
and others

Fiction by  
**Phillip Corwin**

**Vol. 2 No. 1**



# riverSedge

special editor  
ted daniel

associate editors  
jan seale  
patricia de la fuente

general editor (on leave)  
dorey schmidt

riverSedge press  
edinburg, tx 78539

Spring, 1978

Writing

Gilbert Benton. . . . .	.1
K. Wm. Eibell. . . . .	.2, 3
Errol Miller. . . . .	.4
Laureen Ching. . . . .	.5
Jessie T. Ellison. . . . .	.6
Michael Moore. . . . .	.7, 21
Katharyn Machan Aal. . . . .	.9, 37
Gloria Hulk. . . . .	.10
Marie Danti. . . . .	.11
Daryl Scroggins. . . . .	.12, 34
Maeve Butler. . . . .	.14, 34, 36
Melissa Cannon. . . . .	.15
Emilie Glen. . . . .	.16
L. S. Fallis. . . . .	.17
Charles Fishman. . . . .	.19, 20
Bob Fauteux. . . . .	.20
John Levin. . . . .	.22, 23
Barbara Crooker. . . . .	.24, 25
Ulf Goebel. . . . .	.26
Jim Corder. . . . .	.27
Louis McKee. . . . .	.28, 29, 30, 31
Donna Cobb Vogt. . . . .	.33
Phillip Corwin (Fiction). . . . .	.38 thru 44

Graphics

Berry Fritz. . . . .	.7
Barbara Zapffe (Back Cover). . . . .	.13, 25
Ulrike Gaspian. . . . .	.16
Norm Browne (Contributing Artist). . . . .	.8, 17, 32
Cindee Grisham. . . . .	.18

Copyright 1977 riverSedge press



Albert Benton

POEM SKINNIN'

Hang the carcass high.  
Scrape it clean and  
bare it to the bone,  
leaving only enough muscle  
to firm the joints.  
Clear the fat, but  
leave blood enough  
to make life throb in it  
each time it's tried.  
Take only the parts which  
dull it, then let it lie  
in readiness for the eye.

Flay the hide to softness.  
Work it till it  
feels unworked.  
Smooth out the rigid edges,  
curving them gently  
so they become naturally graceful.  
Rub in the stains of violence  
so they become sensed, not seen.  
Let them lift the surface,  
straining beneath the smoothness  
which the eye tries to see  
but the heart won't let be.

K. Wm. Eibell

SCENARIO

(to Jean Cocteau)

I

you are a  
sleepwalker  
tailing a black  
horse.  
it moves on  
hind legs. it  
pulls you,  
sleeping,  
into death.

II

there is a fountain,  
an iron sphinx,  
the water  
slapping down  
in the sound of  
applause.  
you drink from its  
bleeding lips.

III

a beast  
weeps for the  
beauty  
of a rose,  
while the torn  
petals of your  
hand  
suck together,  
become a flower  
again.

#### IV

a man,  
horse-headed, leads you  
to the sea.  
the sea convulses,  
sprouts  
in the form of  
a long-dead brother.  
you ask him to  
show you the way  
back into life.

#### V

at the end of a corridor,  
a door.  
you bend to the keyhole  
and see  
yourself  
mirrored as you  
always were,  
peering through the  
same hole  
on the other side.





Laureen Ching

OMENS

For weeks  
I have been in and out of water.  
My eyelids were puffy pumpkins  
my fingers limp asparagus  
my bed a litter of soggy kleenex.

I gather my bones  
in a paper sack  
tied loosely with a brown cord.  
In there they rattle  
and burst  
like birthday balloons.

I lay my fortune out flat  
on a green blanket  
on top of the wobbly table.

Today I believe  
in the shaking of the salt.  
I set the splint  
against my own cracked shin  
knock wood  
and listen to the scream  
of the misty dragon.

Jessie T. Ellison

## THE CHINESE LADY'S SHOE

There in the lighted case  
a tiny shoe--separated from its mate--  
and in no way resembling  
the twisted, bunched up swollen foot  
that wore it--

the red embroidered satin giving off  
such splendid lights and colors  
we divorce it in our minds  
from the hideous cast of mind and  
flesh and bone that made it  
possible.

the letter from my second cousin  
written on initialed and pristine  
stationery, in the squared and disciplined  
hand of old boarding schools in their  
heyday  
told of rising executives  
socially aware children  
pups with all their registry-papers  
did not even mention  
that suicide in April  
the sudden change of schools  
the two divorces  
and fleas in the carpeting

Berry Fritz



Michael Moore

## PRESENT ADDRESS

we keep busy, have meetings,  
sing pioneer songs on the weekends  
& drink  
a little less now than we used to.

it's a start.  
being part of something  
our grandchildren might be at home in  
still matters.

but nothing old was born here.

carpenters don't yet retch  
at the thought of nails or nightmare  
over lives going on  
in houses they put up.

we haven't known a rape  
or quit a milkman.



# Katharyn Machan Aal

## HARRIET

I want to say to you  
I want to say  
that the stars prick me like thorns  
when I reach for the blossoming moon--  
that the root of the night eludes me,  
tangled by cloudy vines.  
I am drunk on light,  
but the air won't let me breathe.

I want to say  
I wrote to you  
but the words refused to touch the page,  
curling back inside me  
like thoughts exposed to fire or ice.  
The message is too important;  
it needs the moon as its medium,  
your eyes to comprehend silver in black.

I say to you  
my days wind around you like a stem  
green and growing.  
That is all:  
so simple,  
so complex.  
In the heart of the flower  
waits the meaning.

Gloria Hulk

RED RHUBARB

Every spring the rhubarb  
would come up  
in the backyard

We never ate it  
it was too sour

We would wait  
until the leaves were huge  
and the stocks were long  
then we had, rhubarb umbrellas  
they kept out the rain

Rhubarb hats, it was a game  
rhubarb swords, we had duels  
in red rhubarb

We never ate it  
it was too sour.

Marie Danti

SUMMER'S BRASS

morning glory blue  
horn into the sky  
sun reveille

she remembered this  
planted the tight black seeds  
to climb the gutter  
and bold plastic trellis

sun high  
when she rises  
the gravel paths white

now the blooms  
of morning glory  
pull in their tongues  
the boom of daylight rests,  
the colors twirl about, sop  
like a ready paint brush,

the daily resolve:  
eyes to see  
one by one  
the blue spread notes  
the glorious unfolding,  
the sound of morning opening

Daryl Scroggins

THE FARMER'S NEW DISPOSITION

I have caught up with the garden  
I did not plant last year. I have  
swallowed the dreams I had  
of pale yellow squash, of sweet peas  
and cabbages.  
Things are much slower now.

Withered among potatoes  
I rock to the earth's deep sighs  
and listen:  
rains hiss into dark loam,  
where grubworms siphon light from  
root nodes and phosphorescent bones.

I take a year to wipe my lips  
with the spreading nourishment of my hand,  
and glowing in the dark  
I drift  
toward all those places I saw pictures of.



Barbara Zapffe



Maeve Butler

PENULTIMATE

Is it wrong to alter seasons with blossoms  
in a kitchen pitcher--to tease the universe  
and hail syringa in the teeth of March?  
Have April over before April?

Uncertain of the month, clipping apple branches  
I remember sun after snowy mornings;  
spyrea hung  
with snow blossoms before its leaves were sprung.

Forcing time might stop the equinox.  
The bark might not stretch further on the birch;  
or catkins quicken; spruce not push  
its pale misshapen caps of growth.

Think of an oriole's watery call as silence;  
No startle of dropping mist from lumping clouds  
filling late light for meadow ponds--  
or lilacs failing in their redolence.

Melissa Cannon

WALK IN EARLY SPRING

This labor is too delicate  
you cannot help with it

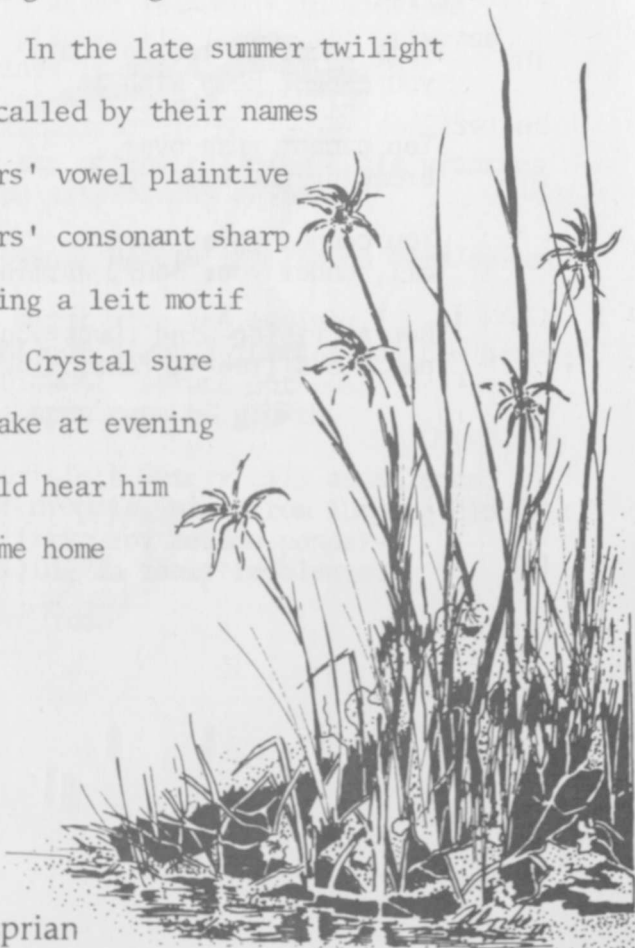
You cannot rush over  
breaking the buds open

You cannot cover them  
all, under your body, warming

But as rising wind turns you back  
one blows free--infant, pink

Emilie Glen  
WHISTLER

My Father whistled me in from play  
    Whistled me down to dinner  
His whistle purred through  
    The long calling of other Mothers Fathers  
    In the late summer twilight  
They were called by their names  
    Mothers' vowel plaintive  
    Fathers' consonant sharp  
His whistling a leit motif  
    Crystal sure  
Across a lake at evening  
    I could hear him  
Whistling me home



Ulrike Gaspran

L. S. Fallis

MARIPOSAS

butterflies

WHITE

butterflies

THE

butterflies

RIO

butterflies

GRANDE

butterflies

COTTONWOOD

butterflies

HOT

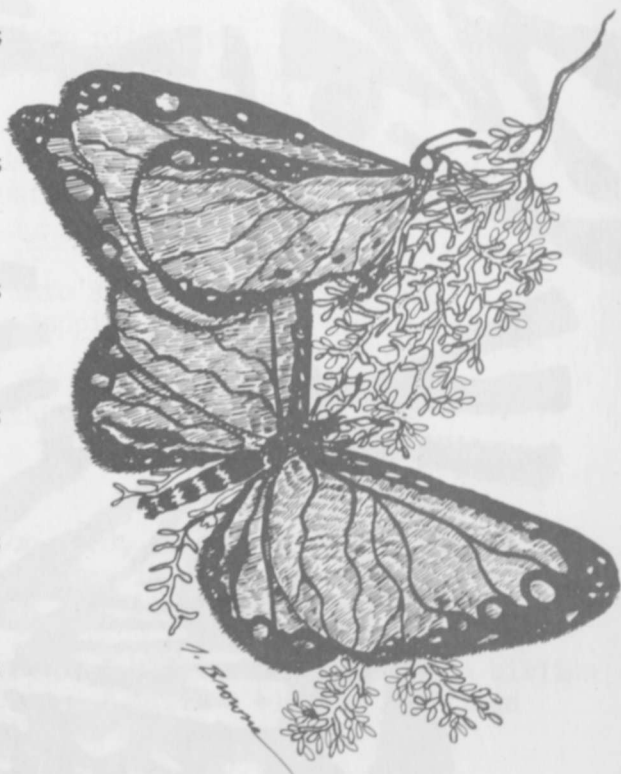
butterflies

JULY

butterflies

AFTERNOON

butterflies



Cindee Grisham



Charles Fishman

## LET'S SAY MAN

Let's say May 2, '57, 6 A.M., the bulldozers  
took life like Frankenstein's children, inched  
forward, eating time:

crushing willows into pitchforks, plum orchards  
into prunes, red oaks into deck chairs, chestnuts  
into dung,

crumbling dogwoods into bark, hacking the honey  
out of honey locusts, forcing the hemlocks to cry  
like peacocks,

squashing sumacs into succotash, birch stands  
into sour juices, tapping the possum cry of maimed  
beeches:

sealing these deaths with concrete and lime.

\*

Let's say a billion died, let's say a trillion,  
let's say whatever comes into our minds, let's say  
the bulldozers slew like living creatures . . .

A billion earthworms. A billion centipedes. A billion  
inhabitants of slime. A million birds. A million  
salamanders. A million turtles on logs.

Let's say one bone per second. A thousand sharp-nosed  
foxes. A thousand muskrats trapped under paved  
embankments.

Let's say the dreams of uncountable children: secrets,  
burstings, startling concoctions, leafy havens, unheard-  
of connections,

magical pools locked in supermart basements.

Let's say October 7, '49, 2 P.M., the men who rode  
the machines, who lived by them, put down their cups  
brimmed with official reasons,

scratched and twitched, pissed and zipped, hitched up  
their uniform passions. Climbed into place. Struck  
a match.

Let's say the earth took flame and drank flame  
and lay back in a dream of natural death  
and didn't raise a fist and didn't scream

and burnt flat. Let's say it happened like that:  
6 A.M.--or 2 o'clock. On a day in spring--or fall.  
One tree felled--or all. By accident--or plan. But

let's say Man.

Bob Fauteux

## COTTONTAIL IN TOWN

On my way to the store for ice cream,  
my headlights froze a rabbit.  
I left him red on the exit ramp,  
flat as frost in a crook in the road.

In the same time,  
with the same sound,  
I often crack my knuckles.



Katharyn Machan AA Aal

OH YES HE WILL

oh yes he will  
talk with all the right  
people the ones  
who matter  
count  
when it comes to  
making points  
in this on-going game  
of basketball  
he calls life

unless you are  
a wire hoop of personality  
a name like a woven net  
hanging into the wind  
he will pass you by  
muttering energetic compliments  
practicing  
for the championship finals  
he dreams of  
in bitter sneakers

you stand there  
a piece of audience  
you know when he smiles  
he is aiming beyond you  
gauging  
his next perfect shot

John Levin

MONGOOSE

1956

visiting day at overnight camp  
my father is telling me about the guy  
that has moved in with us  
he's 16 & has had a rough time  
i walk over to meet my big 'brother'  
he looks like Charles Starkweather  
same face & head they dress the same  
I come home from camp

1958 & look who's holding down my bed?

i'm quietly making a sandwich  
a section of vacuum cleaner pipe  
has just connected with my back  
for no reason i'm in serious pain & pissed  
Fuck You You Fuckin Sonovabitch  
he picked me up & threw me  
i landed on my bed  
where he commenced to slap punch grab  
thru rotting gritted teeth  
he was The Texan  
The Rifleman  
The Dakotas  
Colt 45  
Maverick  
Lawman  
Wyatt Earp

swaggering around the place without a shirt

chain-smoking Marlboros  
a flesh-raised M on his upper arm  
dug the rot from his teeth with a knife  
his feet were shaped like the 'spades'  
                                  he used to wear  
he was rejected by the draftboard  
they said he was 'a neurotic psychopath'  
one wrist had never been set from years before  
when he jumped from a 3rd floor ledge  
escaping from one of many reformatories

1964

he went to work in a baby wear factory as a shipper  
they liked him he took it seriously  
                                  saved them \$\$\$\$  
bought books to improve his grammar  
got his license--bought a Valiant  
they were getting ready to put him on the road

1965

he moved in with a go go dancer  
drinking & speeding--waiting for her to get off  
his liver had been thru hepatitis & bad diet  
i saw him tied down to the hospital bed  
nothing but bones & death sunken eyes  
the nurse talked to him like he was alive  
he was out of it--already finished--cirrhosis  
25 yrs old  
the doctor said he had the body of an old man  
he was always old

Barbara Crooker

from the MUSEUM of NATURAL HISTORY

We are not chameleons, that's for sure;  
we don't adapt--how ridiculous, absurd.  
Our surroundings must fit us,  
we live in the comfort zone:  
our cars, a breath of cool air;  
our bilevels, warm as a toasteroven.  
We need our bigmacs

reddye #2  
colored charmin  
farrah dolls  
color tv  
trashmashers  
disposalls  
blodriers  
crockpots

paper products, more varied than trees,  
tinfoil, more shining than mountains.

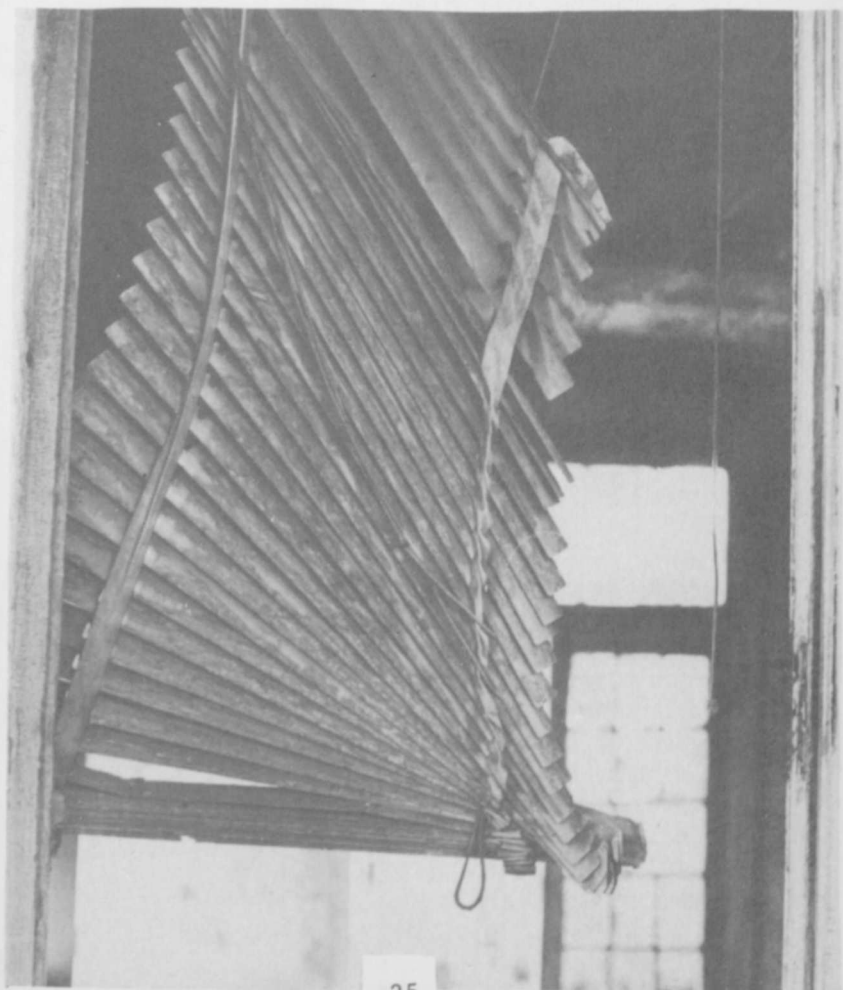
Until one day  
on a sixlane  
limitedaccess  
straightaway,  
we all run out  
of gas,  
of time.

The planet cools down,  
and we've sucked our last  
sweet drop of crude.  
We don't hear the long, slow  
singing of our blood,  
but stare, bewildered  
at the neonless night:  
the stars and their awful glare,  
the air, thin and cruel  
on our furless skin,  
the moon, obscenely white  
and unreachable.

We wander,  
until we lose all ways,  
sink into the tar,  
and dream the last dream.

Until our relics  
are unearthed  
and repostured  
beside a winnebago  
(reconstructed)  
in a diorama  
on 79th Street.

Barbara Zapffe



Ulf Goebel

MYSTERIUM TREMENS

the one grey hair  
in the full black head  
also        curls

catches the light that is hazy  
silver from reflection in  
the gaze        whispered  
intimacies and

again  
brighter when  
you watch your fingers pluck  
and discard

neon flickers out  
of an old  
tube

Jim Corder

## GUITAR GEOGRAPHY

The lines of the map separate my parts.  
The edge of the open runs up my chest.  
Wherever I stand is the Great Divide:  
I check my weather looking west.

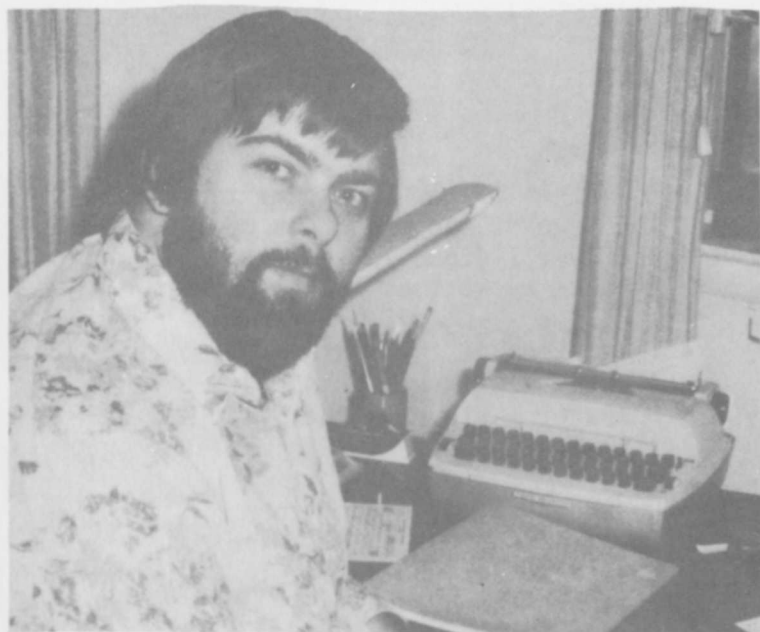
The cities of the north are always up,  
And the cities of the south are down.  
Wherever I stand is the Great Divide--  
I always say over for an eastern town.

Up in Tulsa, over in Durham,  
Down in Houston and New Orleans.  
Wherever I stand is the Great Divide--  
It's out in Abilene.

Up in Scranton, down in Beaumont,  
Over in Macon and Tupelo.  
Wherever I stand is the Great Divide.  
I go out to El Paso.

The lines of the map separate my parts.  
The edge of the open runs up my chest.  
Wherever I stand is the Great Divide.  
I check my weather looking west.

Louis McKee



## SUSPICION

An uneasy  
laughter laps the room  
like wine rinsing around  
the sides of a glass,  
painting the walls  
with sweetness,  
disfiguring the vision  
and tinting the world  
that looks back  
at the eyes behind  
rose colored glasses.



## WAITING

The moon  
has been stuck  
in that tree  
like that  
for hours now.

I'm afraid  
to say  
another word,  
you still  
thinking  
about the last  
ones I spoke.

The question  
hung in me  
that way  
nearly as long  
before I let  
it go.

## TROJAN WORDS

Trojan words were left  
outside your gate, a gift  
to you, a surprise.  
Inside are thousands of  
thousands of men, sleeping  
now, after having spent,  
at your request,  
a joyous night with you  
and yours. They were worn  
out by the festivities.  
I left them behind to  
take over your waking eyes,  
to help you to remember  
the weakness of your fortress  
and relive its penetration  
in a crown of shock/smile.

## AESTHETICS

I saw a poem  
by Stephen Dunn  
on a bus  
the other day

written  
with puffy clouds  
of off-white  
across a sky blue

and locked  
on its curved shelf  
next to a couple  
smoking cigarettes  
in springtime

& a number to call  
for rat control

## WE NEVER EXPECTED

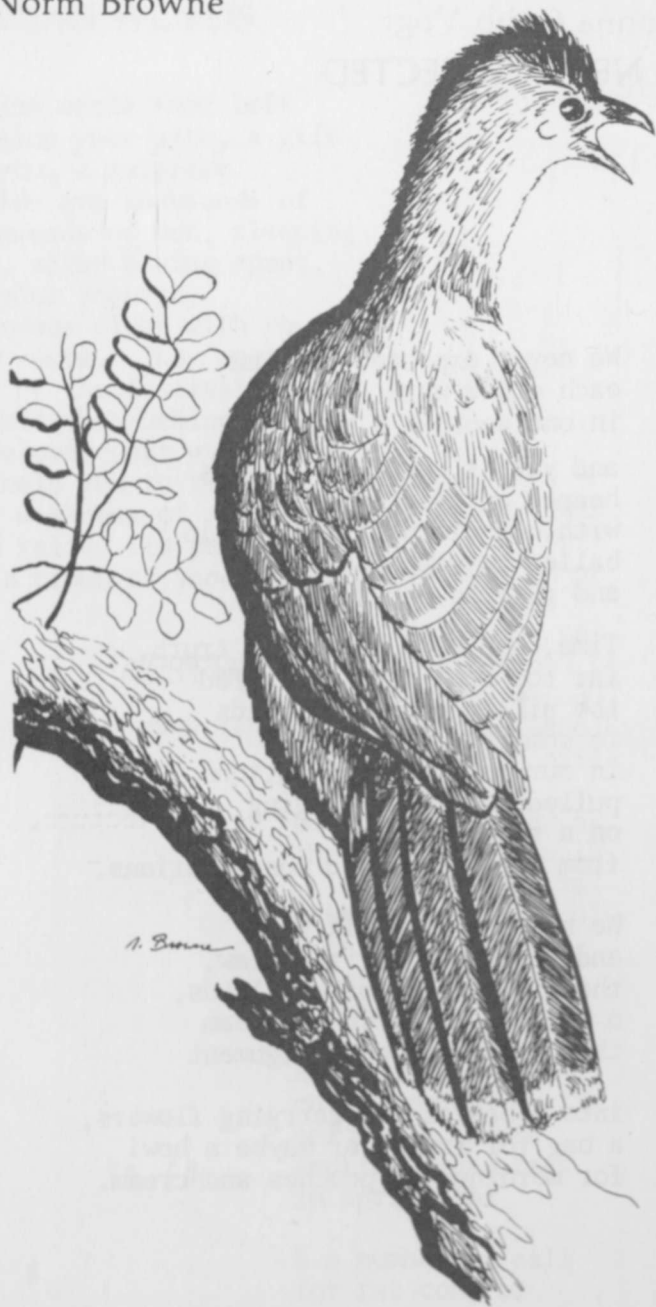
We never expected to find  
each other warm dents  
in one another's beds  
and yet it happened: masks  
heaped on the floor  
with our clothes, friendship  
balled up with the socks  
and gagging our shoes.

Time, too much time, and truth,  
far too much truth, fluffed  
the pillow under our heads  
to comfort; no bumps  
in our mattress, no buttons  
pulled loose and hanging  
on a single thread  
from our dreams and conversations.

We spent hours talking  
and searching for the flaw,  
the rip in our cotton clouds,  
a missed stitch in the seam  
that binds our best argument

into a basket for carrying flowers,  
a bag for fruit, or maybe a bowl  
for mornings of peaches and cream.

Norm Browne



Donna Cobb Vogt

## THE LECTURE

He said that short stories  
Rise rapidly to a climax  
Then fall  
No denouement.

She turned and winked--  
a crooked smile exposing teeth--  
"So do men.  
Loose ends tucked quickly away  
Like shirt tails."

We waited for the end of the lecture,  
Wiser than he,  
Fat Buddhas  
In graffittied desks.

Daryl Scroggins John Levin

FRAGMENT FROM CHILDHOOD

Because the sky was so big  
I fell on the ground. And then  
I parted the grasses and watched  
aphids--lime green and almost transparent--  
move on shaky legs across minute plateaus  
of orange leaves, lit  
by the twinkle of purple flowers.

Later in the tree house birds  
flew in and out of the stories we told  
and there was a sadness there  
that our stories could not come into  
but then we threw the doll out  
with a string hung 'round its neck  
and when its head popped off  
there was no more killdeer song-alone  
on-the-beach-all-day-feeling there  
was only the little funny and  
the blueblinking eyes way down  
down Down and wondering  
if anybody saw.

Maeve Butler

## BEFORE WORDS

What if we could bring back  
the white whale  
and the snow leopard;

could we, by the slap  
of sea, or inlands, harshly dry  
on black rocks and pale stone--

hale in the Darwin history of spines,  
jaws, talons, veins,  
ashes, and marsh grass;

sow again the atmosphere;  
bring in the carboniferous time  
in smouldering peat?

A person found a bone,  
part of a wing,  
reptilian,

that might have flown  
years and years ago  
over sand or plains.

Imagine the wings  
of the creature  
frenzied for its prey

flap of an angled  
shadow, vast,  
shuttering a desert black.

Bat-like, macrocosmic,  
above the sea's old bed:  
calcedone and lime.

Could we bring back  
the pterosaur,  
its spread and web?

Perhaps it never rose  
above the earth;  
centuried windblown chemicals

may have altered the growth  
of useless wings  
that caught and dangled on a frightened beast,

whose humped bill with thrust  
and snatch could take  
the dactyl and the platypus.

Pollen after pollen,  
bone after bone.  
Scientists with tents and calipers

and patience,  
as they prowl this dust,  
may yet bring back the dawn.



Katharyn Machan Aal

PICKING FRUIT

All day they picked apples.  
The boy, the girl, the old woman,  
reaching into the green thick branches,  
twisting the stems with a tiny pop,  
lowering the sundappled fruit  
into waiting baskets.  
The woman told them stories as they picked,  
fairy tales, memories of her youth,  
all the same, her voice  
like a song made of bees.  
And the boy and girl listened  
as their arms grew heavy,  
heard the stories the old woman told,  
believed and rejoiced  
as the sun sank like an apple  
into a basket of trees.

Phillip Corwin

## THE WAY THINGS ARE

The letter came as a surprise.

On the first page was the normal data one finds in any job application: a brief curriculum vitae, an expression of deep desire to obtain a staff position with our particular humor magazine, and a request, actually a hope, for a personal interview.

Harrison Hardy was 27, it seemed, a college graduate, and presently employed as a copy editor with a large New York City publishing house. But he did not want to remain a copy editor, a "printing galley slave" as he called it, forever. He wanted something more creative. Specifically, he wanted to become a good humorist -- a kind of literary emperor of ice cream -- (his phrase again), and he was sure he could demonstrate his abilities if only I could give him the opportunity.

Stapled to Mr. Hardy's letter, meanwhile, with no explanation, was the following note:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The man who wrote this letter and is posing as Harrison Hardy is really someone else whose identity has yet to be determined. Although he pretends to hold a respectable position with a large New York City publishing house, he is in fact the notorious,

libeling editor of the Journal for Hysteria. In recent years he has also served as an undercover public relations agent for such organizations as Hatred International, Kill or be Killed!, and Centre for Misanthropic Alternatives.

His subversive, hypercritical pronouncements on the state of reality are known to every editor in the nation. His irrational ambition to be treated as a human being are an open challenge to the democratic process. He is a dangerous man.

I cannot say any more at this time because I am being watched. I can only urge you not to employ this imposter if you value the integrity of your publication.  
Yours truly,

(his mark)

Abu el-Shabazz Bunker

Director, Institute for Political Paranoia  
(P.S. PLEASE DESTROY THIS LETTER AS SOON AS YOU  
HAVE READ IT)

Also stapled to the original letter was another note:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It has come to my attention that someone has been intercepting my mail recently. My sources (who must remain unnamed) tell me it is the infamous Abu el-Shabazz Bunker, who, despite his respectable credentials, is financed and influenced by an Argentinian group operating in Paraguay, and believed to be directed by Martin Borman. An investigative reporting team from the Washington Post has traced financial contributions to Mr. Bunker's institution to a bank in Asuncion, and is now exploring the possibility that those funds may originally have come from Louisiana, and been "laundered" several times en-route: first, through Mexico, then back into

Dallas, out again to Bhutan, Qatar, and Panama and finally back into Mr. Bunker's organization. The Institute is also believed to be hoarding large amounts of Eurodollars in a numbered account in Switzerland.

None of this information has been published yet because of extreme pressure from influential friends of the Institute, brought to bear on the Post.

(Two Congressmen are involved as well, but I cannot mention their names in print for obvious reasons.)

I implore you not to believe any slanderous accusations about me until I have had the opportunity to defend them.

Very truly yours,

HH (initialed in ink)  
H.H.

I decided to interview Mr. Hardy. I sent him a note and suggested a time for him to appear at my office. A few days later he telephoned (or at least, I assumed it was he) to confirm the appointment. He left a message with my secretary saying that Mr. Hardy would agree to the terms suggested in my note. The caller identified himself as a spokesman for Mr. Harrison Hardy, but gave no name. He was very polite, actually jovial, my secretary said.

On the appointed morning he arrived punctually at 10 o'clock. He was handsome, energetic and alert. With one glance he seemed to absorb the contents of the entire room. Indeed, I was sure that if I had asked him suddenly to close his eyes and describe the office he would have been able to do it with frightening precision, without omitting one detail.

We shook hands and I told him how much I

had enjoyed his letters. But he denied any knowledge of them. He said he had no idea what I was talking about.

"That's very funny, very much in keeping with the spirit of your letters," I said.

"What letters?"

I decided to play along. "The ones you sent asking me for an interview, particularly the one you signed."

He looked away for a minute, off into the corner, as though trying to recall some obscure fact. "Just a minute," he said. "First you said letters, then you said the one I had signed. Was there one letter or more than one?"

"Well, there were actually three, but they were stapled together."

He took a deep breath and looked genuinely distressed. "I'm sorry to waste time on this, Sir, but there's something very strange going here. Are you saying that I sent you three letters, all in one envelope, and signed only one?"

I had to admire Hardy's poise. He was an original. "That's right. Only one was signed another was initialed in your name; and the third was initialed in someone else's name. But they had all been typed on the same typewriter, I'm sure of that." (I thought the business about same typewriter was a clever twist, a way of niftying anyone who cared to know that I could still jest with the best. Besides, Hardy might have been an emissary from the publisher, sent to evaluate me, and I had to set him straight. He might have even been a potential replacement for me. You never know in publishing.)

"Mr. Alger, I only came here because you sent me a note saying you wanted to interview me. But I want to make perfectly clear that I know nothing about the letters you're describing." He was totally serious, not even a hint

of a smile.

I laughed. "I wish I had a tape recorder to keep track of this discussion," I said.

Hardy bolted in his chair. "Why? For God's sake, why?" he said fearfully.

His reaction was so spontaneous that it was almost convincing. I was puzzled. I was sure he was acting, but I was puzzled nonetheless. Perhaps he was wacky. "All right, let's forget the performance and get down to business," I said.

There was a pause. Then he raised his hand as if to defend himself and said: "Excuse me, Sir, but before we continue, could I ask a small favor of you?"

"Certainly."

"Would you please pull that blind in your window all the way down? When it's half down like that, it makes me feel like someone is watching me. It reminds me of an eye, half open."

I walked over to the window and pulled the blind all the way down. Actually, I realized, the sun had been shining in Hardy's face, so his request had been perfectly legitimate. But as I returned to my desk I noticed he had withdrawn his chair back against the far wall.

"Mr. Hardy," I said impatiently.

"I can hear you perfectly well from here," he said. "I have extremely good hearing. I just feel more comfortable with my back to the wall, so to speak."

I moved into a lounge chair that was closer to Hardy. "All right, let's get down to business," I repeated.

He said nothing.

"There really are no staff openings on the magazine right now. On the other hand, we can

always make room for someone with the right abilities. It's not as though we have a fixed number of people on the staff. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I think so."

"What we usually do in cases like yours .

. . . "

"Excuse me, Sir, but why do you keep saying we?"

I ignored him. "What we usually do in cases like yours is to ask for a sample of your writing, one that would be especially suited for publication in our magazine. A trial, in other words."

He looked troubled. "Excuse me, Sir, but why do you keep saying we, as though you represent some kind of collective moral authority? And this business about trials . . . ."

"Now look here, Hardy, damn it! I've had enough! This isn't funny any more."

He stood up on his chair and braced himself against the wall, arms outstretched. He looked terrified. At that moment my secretary came in and shrieked.

"Miss Carson, close that door before the whole office gets disrupted," I said.

Miss Carson closed the door. Hardy held his ground and said nothing. He still looked terrified.

"There's someone on the telephone for you," Miss Carson said.

"Tell him I'll return the call."

Miss Carson glanced oddly at Hardy and shook her head. "I think you'd better talk to the man," she said.

"Why?"

She came over to me and whispered: "There's a man on the phone who says his name is Harrison

Hardy, and that a psychopathic cousin of his, who looks very much like him, has been impersonating him recently, and giving him a bad name. He said he had reason to believe his cousin was here now, in your office, and . . ."

"It's not true, it's not true," said the man in my office, leaping down from the chair and edging cautiously toward the door. "I heard every word. I told you I had superior hearing. It's not true! I'm Harrison Hardy! He's the psychopath, that anarchist rat!"

The episode ended quickly. Before I could say another word, the man in my office ran out the door and into an elevator. When I picked up the telephone, it was dead.

Several days later I received a letter, signed by Harrison Hardy, and postmarked Washington, D.C. In it was the following note:

Dear Sir:

Since you never answered my request for an interview, I can only assume there are no job openings on your staff. However, if you will permit me, I would like to submit the enclosed story for publication. Please consider it as a sample of my writing.  
Yours truly,

(signed) Harrison Hardy

The title of the story was "The Way Things are." We printed it and received many favorable comments about it.

Since its publication, I have had no communication at all with the author.

NOTE TO EDITORS: This story is to be printed at your own risk. The author is unknown and disclaims all responsibility for political in-judgments relating to anyone living or dead, including himself. God Bless America.)



*riverSedge* THANKS

ECIAL FRIENDS:

First State Bank and Trust, Edinburg  
Nathan and Margaret Winters

TRONS:

Norm and Pam Browne  
Robbie C. Cooksey  
First National Bank, Edinburg  
First National Bank, McAllen  
First State Bank and Trust, McAllen  
Violette Metz  
Robert Manning  
Mrs. Hale Schaleben  
Valley Federal Savings and Loan  
Frederick vonEnde  
Rene and Jack Wallace  
Barbara Zapffe

UBSCRIBERS:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1.50 a copy \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 a year  
lease include payment.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

ITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_

pecial Friends(\$100 \_\_\_ \$150 \_\_\_ ) and Patrons

\$20 \_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ ) welcomed and acknow-

edged in *riverSedge*, a nonprofit press.

AIL TO: *riverSedge* press  
p.o. box 1547  
edinburg, tx 78539

## contributors

GILBERT BENTON is making his second appearance in riverSedge and resides in Alvin, Texas. KATHRYN MACHAN AAL lives in Ithaca, N.Y. and has published many times in riverSedge. She has recently published a collection of poetry, The Book of Racoon. ERROL MILLER has published more than 1,500 poems and three chapbooks including The Booray Poems and Dreams of the Silvery Night. K. WM. EIBELL has published in The Labyrinth and Vortex. ULF GOEBELL, says Carol Berge, is "a writer whose gift is telling." JESSIE T. ELLISON has recently published in Blind Alley. MICHAEL MOORE is 24 years old and lives in Pennsylvania. JIM CORDER is Chairman of the Department of English at Texas Christian University. LAUREEN CHING, published previously in riverSedge, is a freelance writer and poet. MELISSA CANNON is a writer living in Nashville. MARIE DANTI has published many poems in Cedar Rock, riverSedge and other magazines. GLORIA HULK studies poetry with Nelson Bentley and has published in Wind, Pegasus and others. DARYL SCROGGINS has published in Blackberry and will soon appear in Circus Maximus. MAEVE BUTLER teaches literature and writes book reviews as well as poetry. L.S. FALLIS is a well-known writer of concrete poetry. EMILIE GLEN has served on the editorial staff of the New Yorker and has won the Stephen Vincent Benet Award for the best narrative poem. BOB FAUTEUX published poems and photographs in Cedar Rock. BARBARA CROOKER is a poet currently living in New Jersey. CHARLES FISHMAN keeps an

organic garden and is associated with Xanadu. LOUIS MCKEE, the featured poet of this issue, also writes radio dramas for the P.B.S. network. JOHN LEVIN says he relies on small presses for his sanity. DONNA COBB VOGT teaches at Texas A. & I. MARGOT TREITEL teaches English at a community college and has published poems in Epoch and Hanging Loose. Phillip Corwin writes his fiction in New York and has published extensively.

GRAPHICS: BARBARA A ZAPFFE is currently a free lance photographer living in McAllen, Texas. NORM BROWNE designed the original cover for riverSedge and makes custom knives for sportsmen. CINDEE GRISHAM is an art student and model at Pan American University. UBRIKE GASPRIAN's drawings have appeared in riverSedge and she teaches art at Pan American University. BERRY FRITZ recently gave a one-woman art show in McAllen, Texas.



**\$1.50**