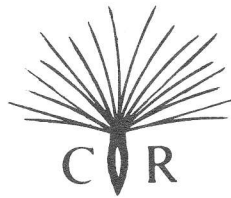


COTTONWOOD
REVIEW



COTTONWOOD REVIEW



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Fall 1970

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CONTENTS

NAMES	Pages
Victor Contoski	7, 47
Lawrence Bruno	8, 21
Leslie Baird	9
Richard Deutch	9
Herb Williams	10
Daniel Langton	11
Judson Crews	11
Clyde Fixmer	12
Emilie Glen	13
Wladyslaw Cieszynski	14, 31
Jack Anderson	14, 15
Richard Colyer	16
Charles Berry	17
Bud Wiles	18, 19, 20
Al Dewey	21
Ken Lauter	22, 29
Stephen Bunch	23, 46
William Hart	24
W. E. Ryan	24

NAMES	Pages
Cortland E. Berry	25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31
Roy Berry	27
Edgar Wolfe	28
Rachel McCracken	30
James Minor	30
John Blasdel	32, 33, 35
Steve Cromwell	34, 35
Steve Ewert	37-41
John Judson	42
David Wilson	43, 46
Harry Weldon	44, 45
Walt Stevens	45
Paul LaRosa	48
Robert Moss	49-52
Eric Chaet	53-61
Randy Attwood	61-64
Jim Scofield	65
Richard Cunningham	65-69
Notes on Contributors	70

LECTURE

Victor Contoski

I don't like poetry,
said the one-handed man.

I've tasted pepper, salt, and chocolate,
and poetry is none of them.

It is neither the face of a woman
nor the dirty workman at dusk returning.

It is not the strength of my father
nor my mother's love.

You can't tell me it's not phony
to twist a thing to paper.

I offer you a world without metaphor.
Here is the sun; there is the moon,
said the one-handed man.

ABORTION

Victor Contoski

An upside-down thing
that never was
hangs somewhere still
like a perverse fruit
that will never ripen.

A helpless little monster....

A smashed egg
that held the heart of the world.....

THE PUNCH BOWL

Lawrence Bruno

Come here poor boy
Come and join us at the punch bowl
Pure Venetian glass – the best
Embroidered with symmetrical flowers
Widely spread petals and
Interlacing stems – truly a work of art

We're talking about you poor boy
Lady Watson heard of you
She speaks of you in her long
Flowing robe – it matches the
Purple liquid in the bowl
She's well known for her punch
And here's Professor Jonson having
Another cup – he read about you
In well balanced sentences
Full of clever metaphors and imagery

Ah! The lemon slices are at the bottom
The bowl is empty – but there's more
But you're crying poor boy
Are you hungry?
Are you hungry poor boy?

UNCERTAINTY

Lawrence Bruno

I wonder if
The subtle scent
Of violets nearby
Is enough,
Or should I
Dare to inhale
The soft fragrance of
Honey-colored hair
Scattered among grass
And then shield
Closed eyelids
From the sun.
But whom do I ask?
The clouds?
You?

HANGIN JUDGE

herb williams

“seated high
with justice
blinded”

marshall
bring em in
everytime
they’ll not escape

scum

you listen
rope creak
snap

hangin judge
on

high up bench
silence
you’re all guilty

die

UNTITLED

herb williams

the old cowboy
swaggered into town
into a bar
looking for a familiar face
in the crowd
was no one who recognized him
as having been there before
except for an old picture
over the door

THE APPROACH OF RAIN

Daniel J. Langton

The wind knows first.
It fans the earth
In warning.
The wind pushes
The lounging air
Of dry days aside.
Slightly wet,
Like the breath of a drunk,
It breezes the taut,
Reproving,
Trees.

The spear grass bows
As to a passing king.
The power clouds,
Rightly black,
Making greener
An earth ready to

Bounce

With eagerness.

Drop

On stem.

The thick birds settle.
The frightened worms,
Shorter of memory,
Climb.

The wind stops:
The chatter stops:
All stops:
Except the marching darkness.

THE SEASONS

Judson Crews

For if
I cherish
that

Which is
about
to perish

A snowflake
upon
a rose

Will it
therefore
live forever

Outlast
a sudden
dying

Will it
hear my
heart's soul

Crying
and thereby
be born again

AMBULANCE DRIVING: KOREA, 1953

Clyde Fixmer

My passenger flew five and one half missions:
He fluttered on fire
Into a stinking ricefield and burned.
We had to identify him from his teeth:
Two chipped incisors and a gold molar,
Still bright, gleaming like fire thru torn cheek.

The road wavers before my eyes,
The 180 big guns shake this mountain I drive on,
Send orange streaks, like angry exposed nerves,
Thru the night sky over me. Will I last
The twenty muddy miles to his graveyard?

In roadside ditches there are trucks and jeeps
Where rain and mud have sent them sliding
Overboard, like burials in muddy seas.
On the hill ahead a great dead tree
Smoulders as the rain falls, hisses,
Turns to gray smoke in the branches.
I hang my head out the window
Letting the rain clear my head.

The compartment door is jammed,
His remainsbag zipper is jammed:
I smell broken zippers,
I can think of nothing but zippers:
The song of burned bone is everywhere.

HOW I AM

Emilie Glen

How I am

My wife won't live with me anymore,
I went into a coffee house for a sobering cup,
And there she was on a tea-table stage,
The little folk singer golden of hair and voice,
Making a square rigger of her stage
With sea chanties

Sing me *Tom Dooley* I called out,
Hang down your head *Tom Dooley*
She sang brook clear,
The good old mountain dew
I asked for over my black coffee,
And she was off with *they call it*
That good old mountain dew,
And them that refuse it are few,
True true,
On her own she sang me
Whiskey whiskey Nancy Whiskey
Whiskey whiskey Nancy O

Something sweet Molly Malone about her,
Something of cockles and mussels,
Of violets who'll buy my violets
As she passed her basket to a quarter fall,
And when she came round to me,
Violet shadows across her freshness
From the lateness of the night,
I pulled out my wallet
To my last four dollars,
Put all four into her sweet-grass basket,
And went out into street winds,
Last four dollars blazing higher
Than a sixty-foot Christmas tree,
I slept on a Park bench,
Awakened in a cave of snow,
No I don't expect any woman to live with me long,
But I have my rocket moments,
How I am

THE DAUGHTER

Wladyslaw Cieszynski

probably she will not
stop screaming

and wrenching poems
with her tiny fists.

the mother dance will
be done only in her room

the world of small joys
and quiet debated pains.

fitting that she is woman

of the species that
begat poetry.

some day
may i tell her
that the poem has a father.

PAIN

Jack Anderson

As a man kneels
upon the grave of his pleasures,
his pain
—grown larger than life
like hair standing on end—
claims all that he is:

it fills his place
with a fire so bright
no one can see
the man behind it

give himself up
until nothing is left

but his pain:

immortal,
it pierces through time
with the white heat of history,
the gold light of fame.

FEBRUARY

Jack Anderson

O my darling, February
has come into the room
early
and stands afraid

looking
just the way
I had imagined her

slender and naked
almost silver white
(even her hair
in which she receives
telegraphic messages
from the South Pole
which sound like icicles
falling from a wall)
her eyes are downcast
and she crosses her arms
before her breasts

Yet her sudden presence
frightens steam from the pipes
we keep searching for sweaters
and pawing through bureaus
for grounds for divorce

What shall we do with her?
for the time has not yet come
when she will marry John of Gaunt
and go off to live
in the Castle of the Counts of Flanders
where she will dream all day in the kitchen
by a bubbling kettle
and study the Old and New Testaments
painted on the tiles
even so
she will die young of consumption

How shall we entertain her?
we have no snowshoes
Olaf the walrus
gazes sadly at his frozen dish
the boardwalk is closed
and the little stands
where they sell candy apples
the watch dogs snarl through the mesh
which shutters the merry-go-rounds

If we were in Flanders, my darling
the three of us
could eat hot fried potatoes and mayonnaise
from paper cups
which warm the fingers
no matter how cold it is

THE PRESS SECRETARY'S MORNING REPORT

Richard Colyer

Gentlemen, I believe it is safe to say,
despite the way things may seem to have turned,
we stand ready and willing to negotiate today.

Our advisors' reports have shown that the way
we proceeded was correct. Our position has been earned,
gentlemen, I believe it is safe to say.

Regarding the press rumors of the other day,
the villages we sought to reach had burned.
We stand ready and willing to negotiate today,

however, on the terms of that offer, and to weigh
any sincere overtures of peace. We're greatly concerned,
gentlemen, I believe it is safe to say.

Again, I commend the role our men play.
Because of them our purpose will not be turned.
We stand ready and willing to negotiate today

because of their loyal sacrifice. I may
conclude by re-stating what I'm sure you have learned,
gentlemen. I believe it is safe to say
we stand ready and willing to negotiate today.

ELEGY FROM VIETNAM

Charles Berry

To my love.

Do not greet me
with rumors of hate.
But greet me,
like the sun greets another day.
Greet me with warmth.

Do not greet me
with rumors of death.
But greet me,
like the mother greets her first child.
Greet me with life.
And;

Do not greet me
with rumors of sorrow.
For if I should die,..
greet me as Christ did death.
Greet me with faith.

BECKONING FAIR ONE

Charles Berry

My window looks out
towards the horizon,
and each day
of every week
I stare into that which is infinite.
I find that it beckons—
the horizon,
calling me though it is
seemingly an eternity away.
And like time,
it does haunt me,
feeding upon my very soul,
tempting me
with the beatitudes of
its early sunrise,
entrancing me
with the loveliness
of its waning evening.
...And I being mortal
can but heed.

The wind blew the paper northward,
First flying it high in the air
Then scuttling it along the ground.
The old man picked it up and read.
The words freedom, peace, and war
Appeared and reappeared throughout the paper.
The old man smiled,
Then threw the paper back to the wind
And went again to his work.
Death smiled too.
At dusk, when the old man came from the fields,
They would talk.

Bud Wiles

John went crazy today.

He kissed and hugged two girls
Who were gawking through the museum;
Then he unlocked the forbidden door
And walked among the stuffed animals.

He looked like Adam in the Garden
As he wandered through the calm
And fluorescent light.

It seemed like God was shining
On his beautiful insane face
When he gazed smiling at the painted sky.

But man has been banished from Paradise.

The Angels escorted him to the real world
And put him in jail for tasting too much Paradise.

Bud Wiles

Today was October 15, 1969,
The day of peace and
Ted's birthday,
11 years old today.
We gave him a hunting knife,
Telling him to use it only in carving
And cutting bales of hay open.
He cut our words off
By slashing his new knife in the air.

Bud Wiles

His clothes lay like a headless, handless, footless, dead man,
Sprawled limply below him,
As he lay in beginning sleep, a naked half-formed form.
They lay waiting until his dark descended.
Slowly, they uncoiled from each other,
The socks snaking lastly to their positions.
He turned in his sleep—the clothes crouched,
But he fell back to his vague dark form.
The ghost clothes continued.
They danced around the dark
Chanting familiar terms used during the day,
Re-enacting crucial scenes of the day life.
He mumbled in his sleep, opening his eyes still asleep.
The clothes stood like the trees outside.
The air slackened and grew heavy again—he slept.
Gently now they talked as the wind chime did.
The night air turned to a morning breeze.
It filtered through the screen window
Knocking down the hovering clothes.
He woke from his sleep
Feeling his mind come from the deepness.
Looking down he thought he saw a sock move among his clothes.
The dawn-night turned early day.

Bud Wiles

Houses never seem to get tired.
Hundred year old houses are still standing
Staring at each other.
They talk when they think nobody is listening.
Their stories are filled with aged suffering
Told in the voices of scraping chairs,
In thundering throbbing voices of children running
up and down stairs,
In the groans of roof beams on windy nights.
It is usually on windy nights that houses talk.
They know that people will mistake their conversation for the wind
Or disregard them as dreams.
They talk about the dreams of the people inside them.
Simple dreams: Old people dreaming of death,
Young people dreaming of life.
It is like when you were a child
And woke up knowing it had snowed while you slept.
But found the morning clear and no snow on the ground.
It is here among these dreams the houses seem to sag,
Feeling the hundred years of dreams failing in them,
Falling in them, falling with them—
And now snow is falling
Fulfilling the dream of a hundred year old child.

Bud Wiles

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Al Dewey

Gut screams rise
with this snow-throb
on my face.

Wind howls
through American trees—
old snow crunches
in the Minnesota night—
deer in the clearing
rake snow off limbs,
antlers rasping.

I follow them
away from the moon.

My pack bulges:
(clothing,
a Toronto address
and your last letter).

Also, there are
burdens.

TO A POETESS

Lawrence Bruno

When I saw you on the island
Your hair blended with
The colors of the Night,
And your eyes were lost
In the shadows, although
The greenless cypress trees
Could not hide your shape.

And I heard your cry.
I did not hear the owl screech,
Nor the Wind-god playing
Among the leaves—
Your parted lips froze all—
As with arms outstretched
You tried to touch the Sky.

Song of the times:
in two movements

"Without music, life would be a mistake."
—Nietzsche

I.

Rising out of the hot black soul of night
like smouldering jazz, the banshee sirens
prelude a concert, improvisations of rage:
machine-gun staccato and dynamite crescendo,
the faint flat buzzes of snipers' solo shots,
the ricochet's vibfatto; a cacophany
of curses drones the bass tone
to soprano scrdams and a thousand hoarse voices
chanting the pagan opera chorus, allegrissimo,
allegrissimo, blood-beat tempo pounding
pounding in the throat—
splitting chord of finale
still bellowing behind the curtain of flames.
The streets ring with the ovation
of death, the city rocks
to the jangled symphony of riot.

II.

Tonight, we are quiet, listening
in the rhythmmed darkness.
From the radio, Beethoven's
warm, fluid chords deepen
the shadows of the room,
and our blood beats out
the melody of singing skin;
our limbs move together
in rocking sibilance
until the arpeggio ends
in unison.

Outside the window, as if on cue,
a police car hums by, its lights
swinging white bars over the black street:
virtuosos of violence, tuned
to the slightest lawless note, they conduct
our lives with batons that cripple.

The music, the invisible ringing shapes
break into discordant babble: midnight news.
I turn it off. And now
in the silence,
we listen again to the old refrain
of our breathing, hearing
the regular rhythms
that key all harmony.

Ken Lauter

LETTER FOR LEVERING

Stephen Bunch

The waves move in, out
 continual, continuous
 the moonlight's rhythm.

The voice is not revealed
but I know it exists,
moving

 sinuous
beneath the black water.

I have been writing words,
poems, oracular sayings
on the rocks

 dead men's bones
strewn along the beach
& at night the words glow
 fox fire in a dark wood

luring the waves, pulling
them in

 a wet shroud
to the shore.

The rocks go under, my
markings dissolve, carried
by the water's curl
to their source

 the voice
I sense but cannot prove.

mar70

He said that making
revolution is
like making love. I
said that making love
is revelation,
& I say to you
that the struggle must
therefore reveal our
crying in the night,
our striving for the
orgasmic event
which will break man's chains
or we will have come
together falsely,
losing our love-seeds
in history's sheets.

nov69

Steve Bunch

the sun's bread bakes
on a smooth flat stone

leave me alone
leave me alone

the sun's crust burns
in the stone of my eye

Stephen Bunch

the month exudes her.
August
enormous and white.

I have in mind a harvested field,
a white day unwinding
from enormous wooden spools.

I cannot have her.

therefore she is wind
slipping into dresses the trees
hold for her;
all of this beside my field.

in August she is queen.

William Hart

A SEASON'S SONG

W. E. Ryan

Time turned away
its light of day and
night crept on like
a cat in slow
punctuated steps
and we sat there
(barefooted) between
the springwind smells
of warmed earthbreath
and frog gurgling
sounds, and I said
to her as best I could
how hard it was
to say where you were
when you're a song.

TO MY LOVE OF DEATH FROM LIFE'S GRAVE

Cortland E. Berry

Are you with me tonight, my love,
In the moonlight where tears never start,
On the heights of a ghost-stained heart;
Are you with me tonight, my love,
Where the babes in Time never whine.

Do you hear me tonight, my love,
Hear my shadow's soft run through the grass,
Know the cry of the ground as I pass;
Do you hear me tonight, my love,
Where the seasons are part of life's crimes.

Can you touch me tonight, my love,
Touch the shrine of my lip's cold rush,
While your heart, in sputters, adjust;
Can you touch me tonight, my love,
Where my spirit-stuffed shadow will dine.

Can you kiss me tonight, my love,
In the presence of a ghost-stained heart.
With the knowledge of my cold lip's rush;
Yes, can you kiss me tonight, my love,
Where Death is the king of all times.

SHUFFLE TROT RUN

Cortland E. Berry

Tramps relegated to railroad tiers
With their thumbs hooked through belt loops
watch boxcars hooked with iron shoots
locked onto eight hundred paces
 of wood and iron
Now the slow motion shuffling through smoke-filled space
 the mean convulsion of dark metal
and mighty sinews
as mail hangers wave goodbye on sidehooks
and everywhere
the fleeting location of wood and iron and farm boys

And the tramps watch
iron casting caught in a crucible of mechanical power
 shine and gleam
 shine and gleam
hissing hard and pissing steam
 iron resolved to shuffle trot
 iron resolved to shuffle hot

Oblivious to man, yet controlled by him,
It sets across a set course
 in a set time and place
Roll on rumbling heat whore
Laden down with rail-sores
Your tramps dream of renewal
While thunder clouds conceal their charged envy
And the gods shuffle trot not

CAPTIVITY

Cortland & Roy Berry:

Co-Poets

Trees blooming pass reminiscences
while cold rocks shadow our dreams.

Yes, a course in nature paves the way
for eternity.

Yet, the ages will do more than just pass,
as the dawning of a new day traces itself
from the time when one did not see,
to the certainty of a time to be remembered
however briefly held
in captivity.

THE BEAUTY SEED

Cortland E. Berry

Aye, she was fair. So fair the spirits
sought to claim her beauty for themselves.
They seized her one night in spring
when her beauty dazzled the countryside.
Some say it was a falling star that struck
the solid loam, but her lover—poor fellow—
saw her leap from the cliff's beetling ledge
and miss the slithering ocean.

Her father mourned not her fate. Aye,
the crazed shepherd had prophesized both her
beauty and death performance. Now he waits,
(unlike the lover) for the reincarnation,
the striking of a lesser vein.

RARA AVIS IN URBE

Edgar Wolfe

That call! "Bird call" I hesitate to say,
but still it is a bird and, I rather think,
up in our cottonwood. So maybe now's
a chance at last to get straight whether
those sounds come from a bill that's black or yellow.
But no, I'll keep my seat and not go out
to stare. The tree is big, he hides too well,
and all I'd do would be to stop his rattling
conversation. O rain crow, cuckoo (no
offense now, I know your call is not
for clocks, or eggs for others' nests; you're true
American), I hope you know just what
you're doing, visiting Lawrence. Never have
I heard you in a place before quite
so unwild, not even that time years ago
on that triangular half lot at Washington
and Roach Road in Kansas City. There were
a good two blocks of open ground between
your nest tree and the bridge over the tracks
of the interurban heading out southwest
for City Park, Muncie, Edwardsville,
Lake of the Forest, Bonner Springs, with woods
enough for many of your kind along
the steep sides of the cut. Well, the interurban's
long gone, and I can imagine high rise
apartments or something equally progressive
crowding that triangle and those two blocks ...
but I wonder about that cut, if it ever paid
anybody to fill the thing up
and put an end to that well-nigh intolerable
refuge for shy and virtuous birds.

HOW QUICK THE DAYS TO SCORCH A YEAR

Rachel McCracken

They are not long the days of our years.
Too soon from NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP
to ivory of the grave.

Wisemen know the quarrel lies beyond
this day's reasoning;
beyond the measureless winds of time
that whittle walking sticks of bone.

The dumb rhinoceros knows
how darkening waters reflect fading suns.

They are not long the days of our years;
like sunsets on mudholes.

Not long,
the sanguine dreams and burning desires
that shall fade like butterfly truths on
edge of night into that greater darkness.

To spy through a glass darkly
without sunlight
or love
you can only hope to see
a silhouette of death.

Cortland E. Berry

ECLIPSE

James Minor

In the evening

I sit
manacled to the moon,
bent to death bed
and piped dream,
smoking,

the grave keeper
quietly comes,
a gimp in raglan silk
black as night,
fractured,
carrying woodwormed coffins,
empty, depleted,

I sit
in full light.

OCTOBER POEM

Wladyslaw Cieszynski

colors slip
from the sky
in tempermental piles.
the wind prods
them and whispers
invitations to a wake.
sedately, the elms
brush a black
funeral edging
onto the sky
and the air is
clear and ringing
like the sound of
steel spades biting
into the earth's
frostbitten womb.

melancholy breaks suddenly
as
a bird claps its
wings to the sky.
my eyes startle
from their sockets,
reaching into the horizon
before they are
jarred back to
the reality of retinas.
they cannot follow
the bird
to his end.

the weathered wood
hangs in grey suspension
across the bridge,
our eyes
build a pyramid
to the bird.
it dissolves
into the sun.

you wave,
across the ashen bridge,
almost—
wave it away,
and your hand,
your hand
holds an image
for us both.

SALVAGE

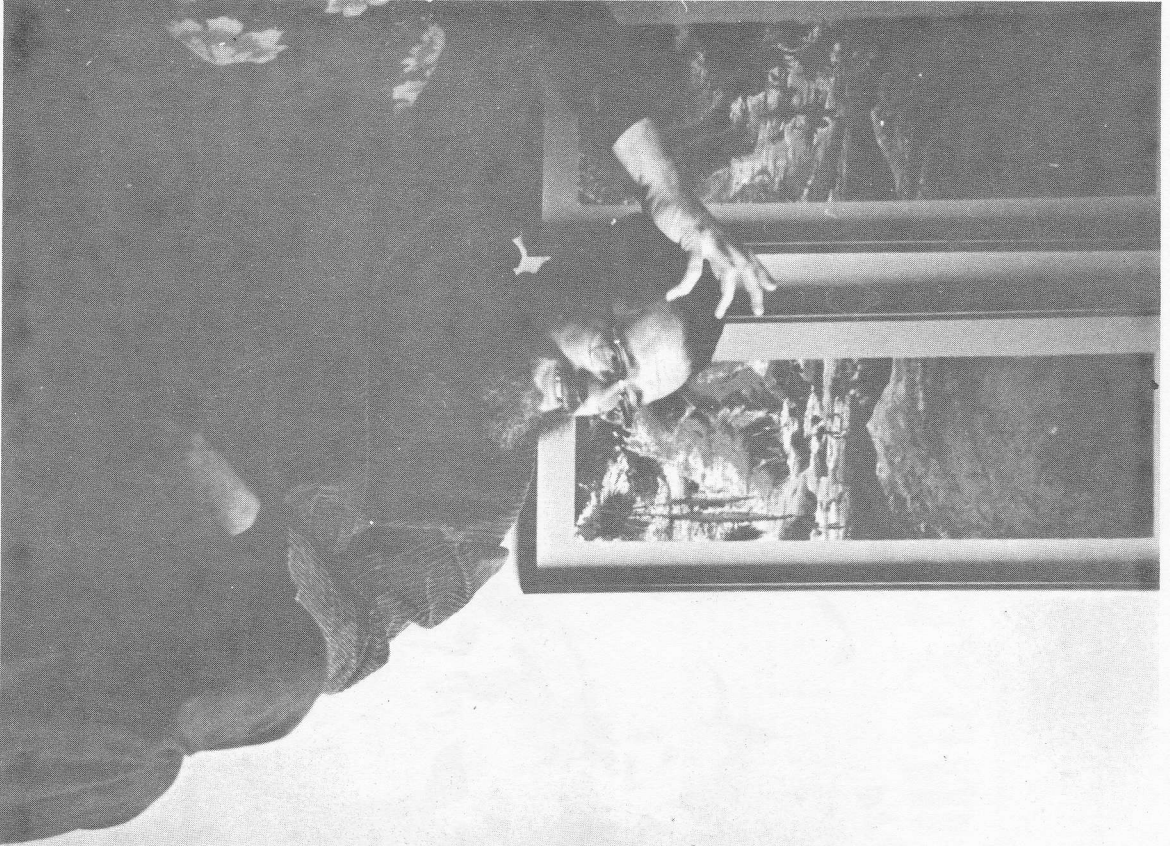
Cortland E. Berry

Poking into the ruins of my life,
she searched for the flame that once blazed
at the sight of her.
No more, Lenore.
All that remains now
are charred fragments of the life
you blasted.







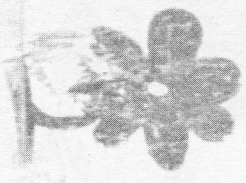






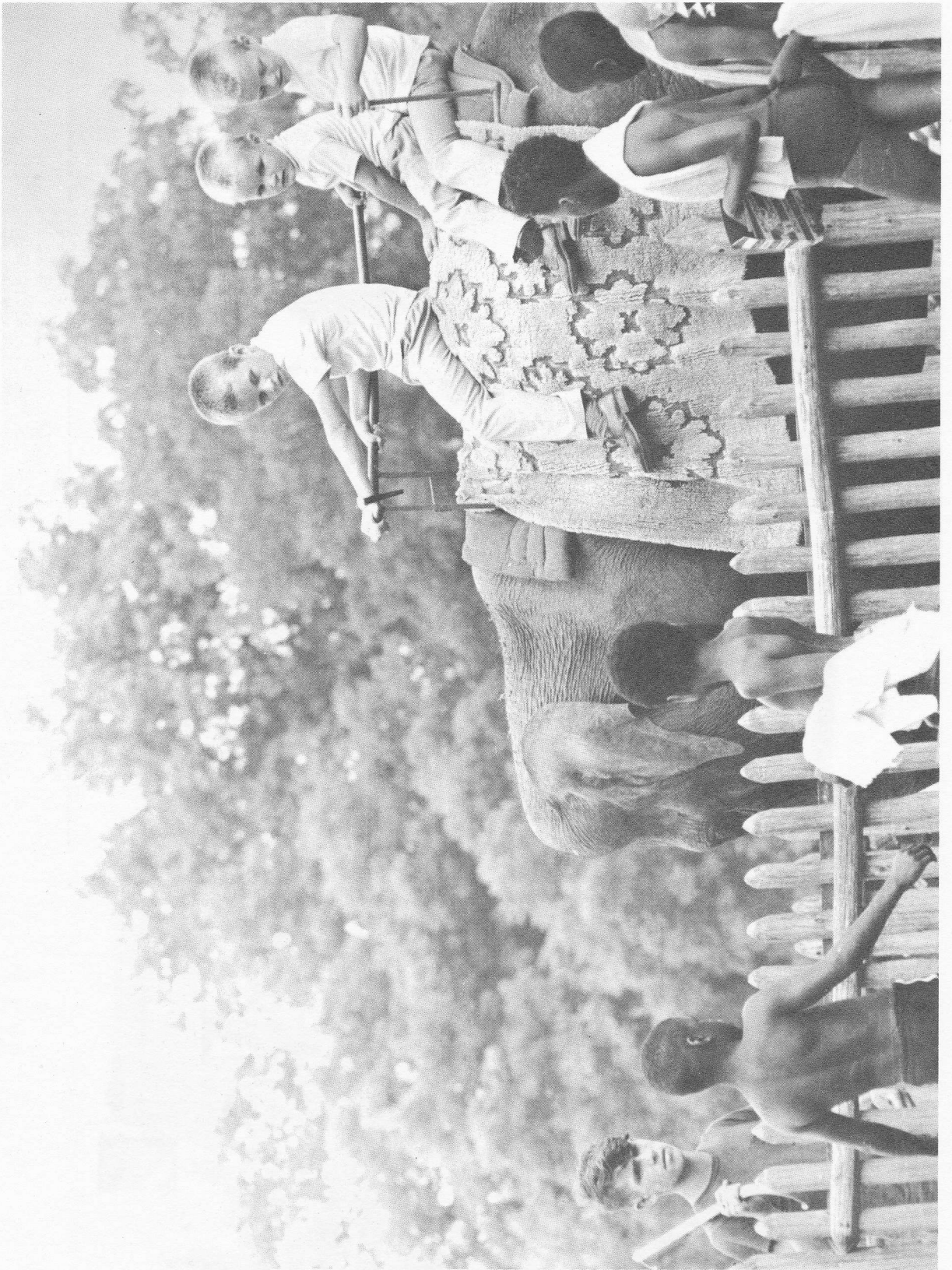
ice cream truck

for PEACE & CHILDREN



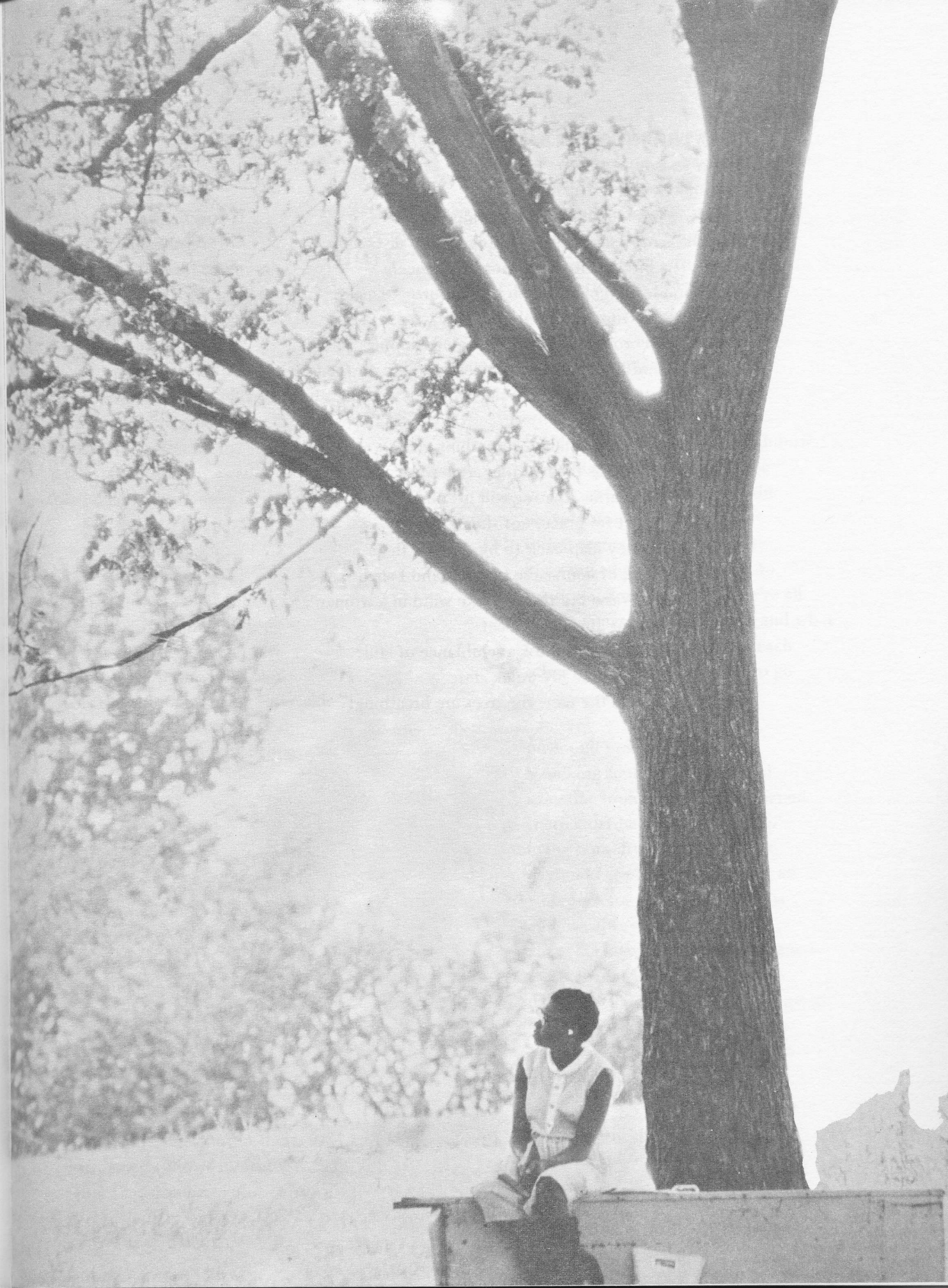
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30.00	29.00	28.00	27.00
31.00	30.00	29.00	28.00
32.00	31.00	30.00	29.00
33.00	32.00	31.00	30.00
34.00	33.00	32.00	31.00
35.00	34.00	33.00	32.00
36.00	35.00	34.00	33.00
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41.00	40.00	39.00	38.00
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91.00	90.00	89.00	88.00
92.00	91.00	90.00	89.00
93.00	92.00	91.00	90.00
94.00	93.00	92.00	91.00
95.00	94.00	93.00	92.00
96.00	95.00	94.00	93.00
97.00	96.00	95.00	94.00
98.00	97.00	96.00	95.00
99.00	98.00	97.00	96.00
100.00	99.00	98.00	97.00









HAWTHORNE NEAR SALEM

John Judson

Yes, witches would so tease the blood,
but these move as sunlight on fog. In the distance!
See! The birches. Are they not like dancers
nude and leaping? The flesh is, of course, suspect.
Spirit unable to see through it clearly, trees
on the path crossing, cobwebs tangled, ripping
as I pass; and the tree of my namesake there on the left,
how it stems from moss like the root of a yearling's horn!

I beg of you Sir, a symbol, something civil!
For I know that as they turn in arabesque
and raise their arms, the fog will lift, and out
of pure respect for grace, not shame, I will bow
my head as they leap back to birch. And then
the wood will, of course, be suspect; and I shall feel
its frail green raise my thought like wind in a woman's
hair, rooting my fingertips. See!
How all the clearing is now a semblance of still?
Yet this cobweb like my quick state
of mind detects the fact: the trees are breathing!

FOUR-PRONGED POPPY POEM

David Wilson

who cares about one
loaf of bread-india?
that's what i said when
someone snuck in from
the rear and laid a golden
egg—

but that's ok i said again
then someone laughed and
a naked girl climbed the
stairs— led directly to
the stars inside my head
seduced by a thought of which
led directly to the next 50
years consumed with.

there is a surplus of food
here and of robots in cars
(i was thinking) when i saw
a rose walk past whose blouse
was too short, revealing some skin
which i portrayed as the only
truth that mattered just then

one day
when van gogh
was dead— who is
god anyway, instead
of cornfields en Provence
the gravity of flying
dutchmen, squirrels, orb
and sunlight-shadows might
be for whom the bells
cast themselves on the wind
to the ear of man working
a field of poppies near
madrid— the town in which
young girls, chestnut in their
hair, saw swallows returning
from Capistrano.

lets have lunch i have
one ripe tomato and a hanful
of yellow pills which provide
all the protein a fellow need
take during the 24-million year
wait for the ship with three
masts to appear off the sandy
neck of someone dear should
mention how many lives she's
lived for happiness.

what her people will do for
her depends on something— oh how
and is it possible after all these
trys, to get closer than the skin
provides for even love is talk
to fall across in the dark, not
knowing who it is lying next to
for that— does it matter— we're all
the same person needs wants and what
of either can we get without each
other seeking a simpler way to go
on living with day to day

push-pull push-pull push-pull
a sucking sound was heard and
someone looked sideways, groaned
there must be more to life than
living hum-drum day to endless
day and even laughing about it all
who does for the whole world is
and has always been crying
about its lot— to be said, bemoaned
the fact that we are and one
day won't be anymore than compost
for poppies, carrion for extinct
birds— silent and forever without
toothache.

SPEAKERS

Harry Weldon

Let's turn the eye
and the ear
toward the very old,
the wizened on their porches,
the difenbachia watered—
carefully placed in the shade.

Old Arth in No. 6,
bat blind, has polished
the year off his medal.
The eagle — worn smooth,
a faint outline,
is to his finger
brass bright and bold to the touch.

Arth, excuse me, my insolence.
Your tongue's been exercised.
Your herd has been auctioned, and
has rumbled up the cattle plank,
soothed by Sousa, and
into the crushing hammer.

Pardon me. Shoving you so
close to the edge of the stage.
But it's my turn and place
on the evening program
to offer my
goods.

COME

Harry Weldon

Together —
an inappropriate
set of syllables.
Set them apart
and they will
represent a command —
prepositional, directive.

Join the sounds
of consonants —
and the crash,
the sounds
of different metals
twisting suddenly
around each other

THE BOYS IN BLUE BALL

Harry Weldon

Buster,
you like it, don't you —
anything to coop?
Not able
to find a coop;
how, necessarily, easy
it is
to become
a cooper.

THE WOMEN ON THE SOFA

Harry Weldon

trapping an image
is an old profession
glass tin celluloid plastic
prints impose themselves
flat on the back
of the skull

motion arrested
squeezed
through the black
spot of an eyes
splats dries and sticks

matthew bradey
grey
historical
in the instance caught
once
the immediate image

the bodies split and tender
eyes dry as a wart
forgetfully left open upon
one final Virginia sky

Mouths shaped
in a strained surprize
operatic

there

the women on the sofa
static
staring into
the air before them
as bitter crows must discover
a gum wrapper
that had glittered in the sun

FOR A YOUNG WHILE

Walt Stevens

For a young
while
I
ran with
river
mountain
and violin
Now
it's women
but
I am
often
lonely

-it dont take christ or harry critchfield-

for sharon

what happened by accident
or even planned by somebody
alas—well, i never heard
about it til it was past—
so i keep it going for myself,
make it more than it is,
perhaps, to start out with
 the luxury of morning
 hope for the aged
 the children of israel
 everybody and all told,
 climbing that sam hill,
 with torches—

i was looking for salvation
when i found a woman, who
the fashion of her own life
if i can love—will save me,
at least from myself who,
out of despair, i turn to
find who there doesnt even
care what i do—so long as
i be him.

David Wilson

we hid under tables
 a bistro
 second world war
close to the floor
the music playing bombs
falling
 watching
the ankles of mad dancers

Stephen Bunch

DOUBLE EXPOSURE by Ian Young. NEW/books, R.D.3, Trumansburg, N.Y. \$2.00.

Ian Young is a poet who celebrates the moment. "Sense of the Present," the title of one poem, could serve as a motto for the entire collection, for his best poems are short lyrics, snapshots of lovers (both male) that he presents without overt editorializing. In one poem, in fact, he describes the pleasure of looking at the body of one he loves in photographic terms: "I took pictures of Jimmy/ with an imaginary camera." The objects of his love change abruptly from poem to poem--Jimmy, Rich, Mark, a boy of fifteen, the sixteen-year-old brother of a friend--so that ultimately Ian Young celebrates not the objects of his passion but the passion itself. The reader comes to know his lovers through their bodies, not their minds.

I lie in bed
watching Rick,
his body just now smooth against mine,
now crouching, naked, by the window,
leaning,
motionless,
in the black air.
One arm draws back the curtain,
the other
rests upon the sill...

(from "Angel")

A poet of pleasure, one of his better-sweet pleasures is the remembrance of past delights. Like Swinburne, or Wilde, he is decadent in that he leans toward unusual, sensual subjects and rejoices in them and in their memory. But unlike the reminiscences of those two writers, Ian Young's memories smack of actual experience. They refer the reader to life, not literature.

I have forgotten if there were puddles
on the wood steps.
I remember your hair,
your wrist.

(from "Trying to Remember a Beach")

Tableaus speak so eloquently for him that he needs no overt comments. Indeed, it seems at times that he does not need to think--only to exist, to feel. Look, for instance, at "Vignette," surely a lyrical masterpiece.

Thinking of you,
I looked down to the pavement.
A black squirrel,
half-crushed and motionless,
lay on its back in the gutter.
It stared up at me
with a bloodsmear'd little grin.

But the poet as thinker is less convincing, for the questions he asks himself are simply too obvious.

Have I been too long in cities
that I have such fear
of the landscape?

(from "Fear of the Landscape")

Where are the young lovers
this October morning...

(from "October Morning")

One doubts whether the poet himself realizes how ludicrous his dialogue becomes when one lover says to another, "Man, everything is so profound." And sometimes the poet's personality intrudes into a scene that is complete without him, so that he gives the effect of milking the meaning for the reader. When he looks at a Chinese gallery, for example, he thinks "of Rick, and Karen,/ those I've loved,/ and those I've lost forever,/ quiet death growing inside me,/ taking my years,/ my beautiful friends..." Yet even this poem is memorable because the poet's personality then recedes and Young returns to what he does best, presenting an emotionally-charged picture.

One last look
at the timeless still procession
marching through years
and dynasties
to the funeral of an unknown courtier.

The strengths of Ian Young's poetry are the qualities he admires in those he loves: a quiet, stoic acceptance of man's temporal existence; a keen ear for music and silence; and an ability to arrest one moment out of the chaotic flux of time and make it seem emotionally significant. He deserves to be more widely known.

Victor Contoski

COLOMBIAN GOLD

Pablo La Rosa

I

His skin was black and liquid under the heavy sun. Addison was walking unhurriedly along the road, his bare feet sinking deeply into the thick sand, when the green jeep caught up with him and pulled alongside, almost coming to a stop. The woman was smoking a pipe.

"Going into town?"

"Yes."

"How about a lift?"

"Thanks."

Addison climbed into the rear of the jeep. The road twisted; it went up and it went down. When they hit a bumpy spot her boobies went up, went down, and he thought they might pop out of the bikini at any up or down now. It was funny, this woman driving a jeep in a bikini and smoking a pipe. Her beach hat was funny also, and Addison smiled.

"Are you from this island?" the woman asked, holding the pipe with her hand momentarily before shifting to second to climb the last hill. Their eyes met on the rear-view mirror.

"No ma'am; I just came to work here."

It was useless for him to ask the same question. Her peeling skin was an indication of her fresh arrival. Another tourist escaping New York, maybe her family and his husband. For the customary two-week period. A seventeen-day excursion fare is cheap on Pan Am. Take the airbus and leave the flying to us. Wheee.

They reached the top of the hill and the town's bay came into view below, with its lone dock raping the smoothness of the waters. The woman shifted back to third and the jeep dangerously picked up speed in the downhill stretch. Now her boobs were really flying wild. She spoke again and her voice matched the undulations of her body. It also picked

up speed as if to keep up with the jeep; by the time they got to the bottom of the hill she was almost shouting.

"You are not very talkative, are you?"

"I guess not."

"But you are very handsome, you know. You got nice features and a beautiful skin."

Addison didn't reply. She kept glancing at the mirror and he wished she kept her eyes on the road more.

"You work at the resort, don't you?"

"That's right."

"I think I've seen you there, sweeping and mopping the floors."

There was a final big bump and as if by magic, everything became smooth. The clanking of metal was replaced by the humming of tires on the pavement. The first houses of the village, all brightly white-washed and with sparkling red roofs, were spread on either side of the road in chaotic formations. The woman beeped freely at the hens and goats traveling on the road.

"Where would you like off?"

"By the dock."

The waterfront was busy. The jeep had to move slowly, working its way through the crowd assembled around the dock. It drew open stares from the men unloading cargo from the lateens, and one of them was bold enough to wave an overgrown plantain at the lady in the bikini. Taking advantage of a stop the woman had to make to avoid hitting a bicycle, Addison jumped out and said thanks. The woman turned around.

"Wait! What's your name?"

"Harry Belafonte", Addison replied, as he began the short walk to Freddie's Bar.

A CHOICE OF WEAPONS

Robert Moss

There was a slight wind blowing when the two men reached the driving range. It rippled silently through the rich, close-cropped grass. He'd have to remember to adjust his strokes accordingly, Norton thought. Failing to allow properly for such breezes had always been one of his chief shortcomings as a golfer. He'd seen others do it often enough, but he could never quite master the knack himself. He was too slow and steady about it, people told him, too rational. You had to rely on your instincts. But this did not work for him, Norton found. When he turned to his instincts for assistance, they were not there.

"Say, this wind is getting kind of brisk," said Norton's companion. "You sure you want to play?"

Norton looked at him.

"I'd rather, Jim--if you don't mind," he replied, and added with a smile, "After all we can correct for the wind. It'll make the game more a contest of skill."

Jim cleared his throat. "Well, I just meant we could go back to the bar," he explained. "We could always talk there if you wanted."

"No, I like it better here," said Norton.

Jim conceded the point with a shrug. "Well, I drink too much anyway," he declared heartily.

Norton chuckled politely. He planted a tee in the ground and looked out across the spacious green, the beautiful, rolling curves of the course. The symmetry of it, the classical purity of its design, struck him with fresh delight each time he saw it. This was easily the most beautiful course in the city. The club had seen to that. The expense of its upkeep rose every year, and it seemed that at any given moment a small army of gardeners and groundkeepers was deploying quietly over the fairways-- clipping, trimming, ordering, shaping and reshaping the already perfect pattern.

"So who's going to tee off?" Jim asked. His ruddy face gave a robust, vigorous quality to even the simplest statements.

"You go first," said Norton.

"No," Jim declined, laughing. "I've had more to drink than you. I need a couple of extra seconds to sober up."

Norton smiled. "All right," he replied. He put the ball down on the tee and took a few practice swings. He was a slender man of medium height; his slenderness gave him the illusion of being smaller than he actually was. His skin was unusually smooth and his eyes very large, rendering him almost childlike. Norton swung--

"Good shot," Jim shouted. "Good shot. Oh, Jesus--it's banking off. That damn wind. Tough luck, Len."

He dropped his own ball onto the tee. He took his practice swings with great power, putting all of his stocky build into them.

"It's the wind," said Norton, leaning dejectedly on his club. "I can't seem to judge it correctly."

Jim was stepping up to the ball, but keeping his eye on the distant hole.

"Oh can't you?" he repeated in a preoccupied voice. "It's a bitch, I agree. But it just takes a mountain of practice, that's all."

Norton kept his eyes on the ground while his companion swung. He heard Jim's grunt as the club came around and the thwack of the ball. "Damn," Jim cursed. Norton turned and saw the ball rolling to a stop on a fairway some distance from the green.

"Too much loft," Jim declared. "Too much loft."

"Oh, you're still better off than I am," Norton pointed out, as they climbed into the golf cart. "Think of it that way."

Jim looked at his partner but did not reply. He started the cart and headed for the first hole. The motor, well-tuned and adjusted, purred obediently. Norton who had kept his driving club in his hand, lowered it over the side and allowed it to skim lightly across the top of the grass. After a few seconds of silence Jim glanced over at Norton, but could not

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wrest his friend's attention from the grass. He uttered a prefatory and official sound he had perfected for bringing board meetings to order; it began as a low murmur and ended with a rising inflexion--"uhhumm."

But this time it was ineffective; and in addition it sent a backwash of awkwardness over him. Nevertheless, Jim forged ahead.

"About Clare, Len," he began.

"Yes?" Norton's voice was flat, unemphatic; he did not take his eyes off the club. There was a steady lisp rising from where the iron touched the grass.

"I think--well..." Jim faltered, losing his command of the situation for a moment. "I think you ought to try and see things her way, Len."

"I suppose you're right," Norton replied. "I ought to try and see things both of your ways." He gave a small, embarrassed laugh, as if he had just said something rather silly. Then he added: "But then I guess you probably both see things the same way."

"We do, Len," said Jim. "That's why I can act as spokesman for both of us."

"Jesus," Norton broke in, lifting his gaze from the ground. "I guess we aren't going to be alone after all. There's Herbert and Strickland."

He waved to a pair of tiny figures down near the third hole. But they did not seem to see him. He returned to his former posture and Jim heard the hiss of the club again. They pulled up near the first hole. Norton was in the rough and needed three strokes to get out and two to finally sink his shot. "You don't put enough into it," Jim advised him. Norton explained that he was afraid of overshooting. Jim himself overshot twice on the hole and made it with a one over par. "Well," he told his partner jovially as they climbed into the cart. "Seems like you've got some catching up to do."

"Seems like it," Norton agreed, staring straight ahead.

"Actually," said Jim. "What I wanted to ask you

particularly was--well, look--" his meaty face condensed suddenly into a forthright, resolute appeal--"I can speak frankly, can't I?"

"Certainly," said Norton.

"Well," said Jim. "It's nothing really. Just that Clare and I were a little concerned, you know, about how you were taking all this. You've been sort of quiet lately. We were wondering especially-- well, you aren't going to make things difficult, are you?"

"Difficult?" Norton replied, watching the fluttering pennant on the second hole. "You mean like bringing the divorce charges myself? No, I'd never do that. My god, why should I do anything like that?"

"Oh, hell, I knew you wouldn't," said Jim, in an apologetic, comradely fashion. "Clare just wanted to be sure."

He relaxed again, leaning back and letting the dispelled tension flow out of him. His ebullient, outgoing manner returned.

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Len," he told his companion. "Things'll run much smoother this way."

"I don't see why Clare would think that..." Norton began and then trailed off.

"Oh well," Jim put in palliatively. "You know how these women are. But look, Len, as long as everything is going to run smooth, we're all O.K. And hell, why shouldn't it? I mean, these things just happen, that's all. Nobody can help it really. And civilized human beings just have to adjust, as I see it."

They played on. Norton's game followed a somewhat fitful pattern. He shot into roughs and sandtraps several times and had difficulty playing the ball out. "You've got to put more weight behind your swing," Jim advised him. But when Norton tried to follow this advice, the ball angled off in the wrong direction. "Now you're choking up too much," Jim observed. He couched both criticisms in the hale, exuberant manner which had raised him from a salesman to a board chairman in twenty years.

However, his own game due to a mixture of bad luck and overplaying, remained only a few strokes ahead of Norton's. "You're going to pull out in front of me yet, Len," he predicted, with a shake of his head, after each new mishap.

On the fifteenth hole Norton was four strokes behind. His palms had grown sweaty, he noticed and wiped them off on his pants. He watched Jim drop his ball onto the tee and then turned away. To his right, just off the perimeter of the course, there was a small pond, surrounded by a protective cordon of willow trees. One path led up to the pond from the far side and another led away onto the golf course. The trees about the water were evenly spaced and several ducks--including two brilliantly colored drakes--floated serenely on the surface. It was magnificently laid out, Norton reflected and even more magnificently kept up. Like the rest of the course. The whole thing was a real triumph he decided.

Jim had studied the distant hole carefully and now his attention was turned to the ball. He brought his club up against it several times, pursing his lips as he did so. Then he stopped suddenly and turned around. His expression had become sober again. "Oh Len," he said. "I almost forgot to mention it, but it is sort of important. The grounds for--well, Clare and I thought mental cruelty would be best. I mean, you could use a couple of other things, of course, but it might get sort of messy, you know. And nobody wants that to happen."

"No," Norton agreed, looking away from the pond. Jim's face confronted him, heavy and solid, his eyes set in deep pools of shadow as the sunlight made him squint. He himself must be squinting too, Norton thought. The sun was very bright and there was no shade anywhere. "I'll go along with mental cruelty," said Norton.

"Good," said Jim, showing his pleasure with a grin. "This way it'll be easier on everybody. You'll see."

He returned to the ball and had to line it up once more; but he analyzed the problem quickly, judging with one swift, confident glance the angle, distance and power that were required. He drove the ball in a straight, unbroken line towards its target. The ball dropped onto the green and rolled to within ten feet of the hole, as if responding obediently to the over-mastering force exerted on it.

"Beautiful drive, Jim," said Norton.

"Thanks," Jim replied. "The wind was with me for a change, that's all. Bet you put yours five feet closer."

Norton smiled wanly and stepped up to the tee.

"Where are you and Clare going afterwards?" he asked over his shoulder.

Jim was leaning on his club. "Oh, I don't know," he answered. "We thought maybe the Riviera. We thought we might live there for a while--maybe two or three months."

"That's a good idea," said Norton. "Clare always wanted to live on the Riviera. We visited it once or twice, but just for a few days. Frankly, I never had the money for any more than that."

"Oh come now," said Jim. "You don't have to be modest with me. You've gone pretty far since school."

Norton considered this for a moment. "Not as far as you," he pointed out.

"Well," said Jim slowly; the note of embarrassment sounded in his voice again, but he shook it off briskly like a man who wishes to walk freely, who refuses to be encumbered. "You've still got time. You're young yet. Me--I just had a streak of good luck, that's all."

Norton swung sharply. The ball soared into the air, a bit too high, but directly on course. It reached the edge of the green.

"Well, see now, didn't I tell you?" Jim laughed.

"Yes, you did," said Norton.

As they drove down to the hole, Jim was quiet, almost pensive. His expression took on a

contemplative look. He steered the truck along keeping his eyes straight ahead, staring into space.

"Thing is," he remarked thoughtfully. "Thing is, you have to keep moving forward in spite of the drag that tries to slow you up. It's like a football game in a way--when you've got the ball and you're hustling along the field. The other team's trying to bring you down of course. They're out to stop you cold, or at least slow you up a little. But you can't stop 'cause a couple of two hundred pound tacklers hit you. You just got to push past them if you want to make the touchdown. You got to bull your way through to the goal posts. Because that's the only way you're ever going to make it."

Norton did not reply at first.

"You're probably right," he said finally.

When they reached the eighteenth hole, Jim was ahead by three strokes.

"Well, this is your last chance, Len," he observed heartily.

Norton answered with a smile. Jim was about to place the ball on the tee when his relaxed features tightened again, prefacing a new sally into serious matters.

"Say, Len," he asked, turning to face his companion. "You aren't still--well, what I mean is--" his former awkwardness had returned, crippling the smooth, free flow of his speech, rendering it halting and chopping; but this time at last, he shook it off resolutely and bulled his way through--" what I mean is, you and Clare were washed up before this, weren't you? "

Norton touched the stiff, upright surface of the grass with his club.

"Yes, we were," he answered.

"Then you aren't still...attached to her in any way? "

"No."

Jim's features relaxed again. "Well, that takes a

load off my shoulders," he said. "In fact, I can't tell you how glad I am to hear that. Why, if I thought..."

He let the sentence die away and put his ball down. "Well," he said, "let's see where this one goes."

It went high into the air, a well-lofted, towering shot; then it veered off to the right and plunged into a sandtrap.

"God damn," Jim cursed, shaking his head. "Now how the hell did that happen? "

Norton stepped quickly up to the tee. He put his ball down on it and elected to forgo his practice swings. He glanced down at the tiny flag fluttering weakly in the middle of the green. A wind leaped up suddenly. Norton shifted his feet immediately, hunched down a bit, widening his stance and brought his club around in a smooth, powerful swing, driving the ball hard towards its target, much harder than usual. It surged forward through the air, describing a soft, arcing curve, like the rounded archway of a cathedral, then glided downward in a graceful descent, bouncing onto the green. Norton's fingers closed tightly on his club as he watched the ball's course. His jaw line grew taut. His eyes followed the ball as if to urge it on. The ball rolled slowly forward, almost stopped, leaned to the right, recovered its momentum and struggled forward slowly to the edge of the hole, lingered there momentarily, almost teetering on the rim and then vanished into the tiny pocket of darkness.

"Son of a bitch," Jim gasped, staring down at the distant hole, his eyes filled with amazement and disbelief. "Son of a bitch."

Norton did not reply. He walked over to the cart and bounded in with one quick leap. Jim stood watching his club in hand.

"Come on," said Norton, motioning to his partner; his tone wavered indefinably between good-natured raillery and a gloating, satisfied joy as he added, "I'll drive you down to the sandtrap."

FINDING THE HIGHWAY
Eric Chaet

Does this path have a heart? All paths are the same: they lead nowhere. They are paths going through the bush, or into the bush.

--THE TEACHINGS OF
DON JUAN

I

Saskatoon stands new and clean in central Saskatchewan, north of most of Canada's people. Eccentric woodsmen, hunters, a Jack London adventurer or two, the ice-squatting Eskimoes--these are men's vanguards into the land of geese and wolves and bears, into a land beyond property. Saskatchewan stood near the strange border to that land. Tom found himself on Saskatoon's sparkling streets, looking up at an austere cement-walled department store with HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY FOUNDED 1643 etched on the side.

He stood on the shoulder of a Saskatoon highway and stuck his thumb out, announcing that he wanted a ride south to Regina and to Canadian Highway Number One, a road that stretched from Atlantic to Pacific, through mountains, forests, and cities. Tom was ready for the road now.

The sun was already nearly overhead when two boys in a pick-up truck came by and gave him a lift to a truck-stop twenty miles south of Saskatoon. They faded off down a dust storm that the wrung from the quiet dirt road.

A mountie stopped his car to check Tom's identification.

"A hitch-hiker robbed some folks from town the other day," he explained as he returned Tom's wallet. "People might not want to stop for you today. I'd give you a ride myself, but I just go back and forth on this stretch of road here. If you're still here in an hour, I'll give you a ride back to town if you want it."

Tom grinned and shook himself. Chicago police-cells died in the marrow of his bones.

California state troopers in TV Western uniforms and original sin badges were cast from their outposts in his blood. Tension fell from him like weary rust. He was stream-lined.

A huge semi pulled out of the truck-stop, like an ox pulling an elephant on wheels, steamed to a stop, and waited for Tom to throw his duffle bag and guitar up into the cab and follow them. The driver was in his mid-twenties, with close-cropped hair, and bright eyes that smiled. His huge cigar made his mouth forceful. He introduced himself: "Cliff."

Cliff had driven his rig through the Alberta mountains in a howling rain storm a day and night ago, and was going to keep on driving to Regina without stopping to sleep. Tom was supposed to keep him awake by talking if he could. But Cliff drove two tapes into his player and Elvis Presley roared down the highway, and rippled off into the wheatfields.

"Hey, that's good!" Tom yelled, and nodded at the tape machine. The driver just beamed--he couldn't hear Tom. So Tom added, "Good thing to share!" and drummed on his knees.

They stopped at a clapboard restaurant clinging to the edge of the woods like a squirrel. Cliff matched Tom's pie and coffee with two orders of each, glancing happily at Tom, in recognition of a secret ecstatic comradeship they'd found and agreed not to mention. Tom swallowed a gob of fresh blueberries and dough and flashed a smile back. Cliff insisted on paying, a happy knight repaying his squire's loyalty along the difficult path of the campaign.

How long can it last? Tom wondered. Is it a dream? My dream or Cliff's? Or maybe everyone else is dreaming but just us two?

When they were suddenly out of the wheatfields and into the glass and cement of Regina, they spiraled their way through clogged traffic and searched for the dairy warehouse Cliff was bound for, gawking at the tall white buildings and squat plastic drive-in shacks. The sun glared harshly into the edge of their vision as

they made their way south in the city.

A handshake, and Tom was on his own again, walking, looking for Number One.

A weariness gradually overtook him as he walked through the city seeing groups of men and women, an old man here, a girl there, walking Tom's way or toward him, none of them knowing who he was or how far he was from home, none of them even seeing him and wondering, What can he do with that guitar in his case?

He was strong and clean in his blood and bones now. Police and anger had been purged and flushed from his system to fertilize the endless prairies and rot under the sparkling skies. But a weariness was creeping in on him, waves of loneliness that engulfed him as he walked among these strangers who had no purpose in common with his own.

He stopped in a park surrounded by banks and towering office buildings to set up shop. Sitting beneath a green-flaming maple tree, he opened his case, took out his guitar, and began to tune the instrument. He cocked one ear toward the soundbox, unfocused his eyes, and gently plucked a string, slowly turning the knobs at the end of the neck. When an E-chord that made sense arrived, he sat up smiling.

He warmed up playing simple chords blue-grass style, playing a lot of notes fast, getting his thumb into a strong foundation of thick bass notes, first and second fingers flying in a frenzy through the high notes. Then he switched to a slow, weird progression in what he called "koto-style," and the park took on the flavor of a Japanese print. While he played, a parade of suited businessmen and casual old men marched across the park.

Two girls with dimples, sixteen or seventeen, sat down in front of Tom: "May we listen?"

"Sure."

Soon there were ten kids sitting in front of him, watching Tom or the leaves of trees against the sky,

listening quietly to the music. Tom began to sing, bringing each song from his head like a precious nut stored all winter. He sang old Irish songs and Scotch songs from the North Carolina mountains, and a song from the South Side of Chicago. And he sang songs of skies and ocean waves, of love and skepticism, of anger. The guitar washing time and commerce from the park, until the words of the songs shone, and what was strange and senseless other days was known and certain.

"The musician is his own Adam--
With his music he names the world.
He pulls the earth from chaos,
And fills the seas to mirror his wavy vision."

Putting his guitar into its case he announced, "I'm gonna leave now. I wanna find Highway Number One before dark and get a ride."

"You play fine," someone said.

There were nods and grins of agreement.

"Thanks."

"Do you smoke?" a gawky, long-haired boy asked. Tom hoped he meant marijuana. "Yes."

The boy gave him five cigarettes-tobacco. Too bad. But someone on the road would want the cigarettes. Tom pocketed them, thanked the boy, and walked off toward where they told him the highway passed through the outskirts of town.

Walking up a quiet residential street, Tom saw a thin young man walking along timidly, as though begging the air to part for him.

"Am I close to Highway Number One?" Tom asked the thin fellow.

The fellow jerked himself to a stop and said, "No--nowhere near." He waited, but Tom didn't hit him, so he looked at Tom's boots, guitar case, beard, and eyes. "It's too far to walk, I guess--you want a ride."

Tom's weariness evaporated, traded for cigarettes

in a park and a ride to the highway. A good deal, he figured. For the cigarettes he paid the songs he couldn't cork up in his mouth though his life depended on it. For the ride he paid nothing. He wasn't only living cheap: he was making a profit.

Dropped off at the crossroads, he looked back and watched Regina looming up behind him, casting its shadow on him, while the sun sank behind it, hovered just above the wheatfields stretching out behind Regina right to the sheer blue wall of the Rockies, and headed for the Pacific and Japan.

A boy began to hitchhike between Tom and the crossroads. Tom walked away from the crossroads and the boy so that a car could cross the road, pass the boy, and still have room to stop for him. After watching several cars whizz by in the dusk, he changed his mind and walked back up the shoulder of the highway to confer with the boy.

"Hi," Tom said. "Where you comin' from? "

"Vancouver," the boy said, eyebrows pulled together, suspicious.

"If we stand close together, probably nobody'll stop for us."

"Right," the boy said, pulling himself together in order to get the best of the encounter. "It's harder for two to get a ride than one. People are scared of two. And I don't blame 'em," the boy smirked.

Tom figured that the boy had no intention of walking up the road. He seemed to have a store of Reasons for Being Afraid.

I was here first, Tom thought--but there are undoubtedly good things to see up the road. The gods seem to sprinkle good and evil all over the place, and man can make the most of it if he's calm.

"I'll walk up the road, I guess," Tom told the boy. "By the way, do you smoke cigarettes? "

"Yeah." And crouched, ready to protect himself from any generous spark that might hop out of the universe at him, or that might escape from him to nourish the hostile world. Maybe he's thinking I'm

the murderer the mountie told me about, or maybe he thinks I'm a policeman.

"I don't smoke 'em myself," Tom said, handing him the cigarettes.

II

Soon after he had stationed himself over the horizon and out of sight of his fellow hitchhiker, Tom was picked up by a man in a flashy car who admired Tom's beard.

"I used to have one when I was in college," he bellowed, as he slapped the accelerator with his foot. "I useta have one when I was in college. Boy, I had a good time in those days--lots of dope and women--but now I have a steady job in an insurance company--and a wife! And I'm twice--twice as happy! Look at this car! We're doin' a hundred, and it doesn't feel like it, does it? "

Is he bragging or pleading? Tom wondered. Bragging, he's really bragging! Can he really be happy living like that? Tom chose to believe that he could--but it took some work.

The insurance man kept shouting into the roar of speed: "I'm only goin' twenty miles out to the fork-off to L'Entice. That's where I live. There's a lot of good people there. Why don't you come in and spend the night? You can get back easy in the morning. I'll introduce you to a bunch of my drinking buddies."

"No," said Tom, admiring the smooth speed of the car. "I'd rather stick to the road. God, it's a beautiful car! "

"Yeah, isn't it? Just got it yesterday. My dad's been workin' his ass off thirty years and I already got a better car than him. I get a better salary. And he's glad for me--he really is."

"That's good."

"Where you headin' for? "

"Toronto, I guess."

"How long you figure it'll take you to get there? "

"I don't know really," Tom said. "A day or two,

maybe. Does that seem a reasonable amount of time?"

"More like four or five days! There's kids stretched out all across Canada this time of year--hitchhiking to Toronto to be hippies. And even if you could keep gettin' rides all the time--rode day and night--it'd take you three days."

"Oh."

"You got a sleeping bag?" the insurance man asked.

"No. I've got a blanket though."

The insurance man gave Tom a doubtful look. Tom felt some of the strange strength melting again, and weariness hanging over him like a cloud of gas. But at the turn-off to L'Entice, he got out of the car, waved the driver off cheerfully, and stood underneath the darkened sky on the shoulder of the road, surveying miles of marshland.

III

There was still a streak of blue and pink wash in the west. Tom set his stuff down and stuck out his thumb. But the cars that dashed past were less and less substantial. The darting past of two parallel lights became algebraic shorthand for "car."

Mosquitoes swarmed up and out of the marshes on both sides of the road. Huge, gangly mosquitoes that swarmed along a shoulder and couldn't be budged, while a similar swarm colonized a knee or thigh. Tom turned up collars and buttoned shirts and sleeves to cover as much skin as possible. But he thumbed first with one hand, then the other, and his hands soon tingled with bites and showed signs of beginning to swell.

That called for quick action. He seated himself on his duffle bag, opened his guitar case, and tuned the strings to the tones he carried in his head. Then he began picking out an approximation of a theme from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, staring up at a sky bright with two thick rivers of stars flowing across the

highway, a greater and corresponding highway, it seemed to him, that ran through plains to mountains, lakes, and seas no man had a notion of.

He sang softly, as though his true love lived in the cavity of his guitar:

"Time kept out of his way,
Time could only sigh.

He never had time to find himself bored,
And he never had time to die."

His strength quickly drained from him, and he put away the guitar. He found a can of beans in his duffle bag. He also took out a can opener and a large spoon. It seemed his hunger came from depths he hadn't know his stomach reached. Perhaps from the pit of the sleep he felt himself hovering over, as he chewed the cold beans. When he was through eating, he scoured out the can with a handful of gravel, stomped on the can, and put it back in the duffle bag.

Then he took his blanket out. Though August was half over, the night was already sharp with chill. The mosquitoes had vanished. Tom walked for a while, trying to find a spot less marshy than others, so he could climb down from the shoulder of the highway and sleep on the slope, out of the cold puddles. He finally found a nearly dry spot.

But he stood silently watching a squat, four-legged creature staring at him from just beyond Tom's spot with fiery eyes. A wolverine? Tom wondered. No. A badger? Yes, badger, he decided. He had never seen a badger before. Its fur was black and white, it stood close to the ground, pointing a sharp nose at Tom. Teeth? Maybe an irritable creature? But, no, the animal tip-toed off into some high grass and rustled away.

Tom settled down to sleep with the blanket wrapped around him to make the returning mosquitoes' certain triumph a costly one. One last holding action and an honorable retreat from waking.

It was as though all his life he had been waiting for the two rivers of milky, blue-white stars that swept

across the sky. He felt no impulse to shut his eyes, to blot out a world, to sleep. His will to focus himself had evaporated into the depths of the cool, open skies, like bubbles of air released from a drowning man who ceases to struggle for his life. He could breathe underwater now; the struggle was over. He could breath at the bottoms of rivers of stars, and in the abyss of the deepest skies. He was past life and death.

Gradually Tom's eyes shut of their own heavy accord and he felt himself flowing like a great tide through vast spaces. Now he was a cloud calmly changing shape, swinging through the blue air. Now he was an oak tree, swelling in peaceful ballet, while birds and squirrels, businessmen and professors jerked by as though possessed by hustling devils. Now he was the earth itself, round, complete; he forgot the ways of seeking.

IV

When he woke up, the sun was a huge red sphere he could look at. Tom watched it shiver in the silver stripes of puddles slicing the green ground to the east. He stuck out his thumb, and the sun climbed and climbed toward him. He stood while the heat shimmered up from the pavement in waves. He walked a while, stuck out his thumb, stood some more. The dream--was it over? His thumbs were sore, his feet hurt, he was irritable with thirst. Yellow flowers and thistles began to cast short shadows from west to east, and his tongue throbbed. He crossed the road to try hitchhiking back to Regina, looked gloomily west a few minutes, then crossed back to the other side of the highway, and resumed hitchhiking east.

He walked over a hill, down into a valley, up and over another hill. He had had enough of standing still to last him all his life. He walked off the highway up a dirt road he'd spotted from half a mile away. It was a wide, well-worn road, curving under a sign ornately

letters RESPECTFUL FARM.

There was a string of houses and barns and chicken-houses around a bend. Only the chicken-houses, full of bustle and squawk, seemed to hold life, but Tom climbed one house's steps to a porch and knocked on the front door. A strong-looking woman, with her hair in a tight bun and soft eyes, opened the door and looked square into his face curiously.

"May I have a drink of water?" Tom asked. "I've been stuck on the highway all day."

The woman closed the door silently. Presently the door opened again and she handed Tom a glass of ice water. Tom quickly began drinking. The door was silently shut again.

As he was finishing the last of his water, the door opened and the woman presented Tom with a tray, removing the glass from his hand. On the tray, hot, steaming coffee, and thick toast covered with butter and marmalade. "Would you like some coffee?" the woman was smiling.

"Yes, thank you."

The door was shut again. Tom ate the toast and drank the coffee slowly, savoring the burst of flavor each bit or sip presented him. He left the empty cup in the tray with a note of thanks he scribbled on the back of an old receipt he found in one of his trash-filled pockets. "Thank you for the coffee and toast and water. And thank you for being here. Reap well." He thought that the note was maybe a bit sentimental, childish. He seemed to himself to be making up an identity, as though the trip was an initiation that gave him the right to provide the details of his new character and fate. I am the traveller of highways, pursuer of old wisdoms, plucker of guitars, singer of ballads, companion of truckers and kids, equal of desperate angry boys. I'll leave sentimental notes. Childishness is good. It'll be harder to be proud. And the lady'll get what the note means, even if she thinks it's foolish. And she'll be

pleased.

So he walked back out to the highway, stuck out his thumb, decided he was refreshed and ready to stand waiting for another two or three hours at least, when a car hauling a camper stopped, a white haired couple smiled and urged him to get in and make himself comfortable.

V

He was in a charmed world, it seemed. Cars came by when he first stuck out his thumb, or not at all. Everyone was kind, or almost everyone, and he who wasn't kind was perhaps a murderer. This old couple--the man round and smiling with a baseball cap, grin, and wireless glasses, talked gruff, smiled, his words cut off British-fashion, his smile Teddy Roosevelt's and friendly; the woman thin, birdlike, looking fragile but holding herself as though she were hardy enough to care for herself and the man and the boy as well, talked about good camp-sites and the endless line of hitchhikers along the highway, some just kids, she'd seen some "boiling their pot," and so young too, wouldn't they get addicted and ruin their lives?

Tom explained that marijuana wasn't habit-forming and nowhere near so dangerous as television, which *was* habit-forming. (You're turning into a goddamn evangelist! he told himself.) Luckily, he hit a chord of agreement with the man, who didn't have any use for television, loved to work his Manitoban farm and to wander across the wide expanse of Canada, bird-watching, smiling, and talking gruff.

Perhaps people are co-operating with this dream I'm living in, Tom pondered, because they want my dream to come true? All the horror and despair that I fought through to get alive, they live with and struggle with too--and their yearning to live is a spark in them too, a spark that flickers and grows when it can. Maybe they sense my dream, and jump into it,

and act their parts. We've sailed off from our earth and are spotting the possibility of new ones. The people riding the highway are all thinking somewhere in the midst of other thoughts, why not always the highway? why not always motion toward home or motion from home, smooth, powerful, sensible, the places and events sinking away behind, not always a welter of static complication, born, but never burst through?

Tom looked for the common ground, to cultivate it. The man liked to talk of the spots he and his wife camped on--beautiful spots full of mountains and streams. And his own land in Manitoba flat and covered with mile after mile of wheat was exciting to him too. Tom tried to get himself inside the enthusiastic spot in the man's brain, to share the joy of being attached to the earth, not a seed blown across barren rock in search of a rich, soft spot where he could take seed and grow, but a ripe cluster of wheatstalks, waving in the sun-light, thrashed by rain, attached with roots that ran beneath the soil, rubbery, powerful fingers grasping in the dirt and holding the huge source of life from which it must never be blown or washed, God save it!

Tom and the old man threw horseshoes by a roadside table. The woman was busy making them salmon sandwiches and coffee. The old man knew all about camp-sites. He was parked, setting up a table, locating the outhouses, and tossing horseshoes at a peg he found before Tom had finished checking out the huge billowing clouds that the sun was exploding through as he got out of the car. The old man beat Tom at horseshoes without any trouble. His grace and delicacy in tossing the heavy shoes, his balance as he let go, made him seem wise to Tom. If he knew nothing else, nothing of the skies, nothing of love for the wife who fixed his sandwiches and listened to his gruff talk, nothing of the wisdom of Socrates or Buddha, so what? He could toss horseshoes as gracefully as a hawk flying through a valley on a calm

day.

Ah, Tom, he told himself, you're working yourself up into a frenzy. The old man isn't as old as all that, isn't as blind to his wife as all that, isn't as graceful as all that, isn't in touch with the land over which he sails delicate, heavy horseshoes as all that. He's just an old guy, square, on a vacation with his wife! All true, he conceded to himself slyly--but he's magic! Look at his left foot reaching out and pointing behind him like a swan's head, look at the heavy horseshoe balance in mid-air, turning, turning, then falling, bang! right up against the post, kissing it! Why, he's playing with the earth! He's peaceful now. This is his sex and his ecstasy, this is his prayer. If he's dull or awful any and every other way, he's beautiful now and holy.

Not bad at all, Tom weighed it in his mind, munching a salmon sandwich. All the holiness of Buddha in the wilderness, and salmon sandwiches when you're hungry. The fish swim upstream just to sustain the holy game of horseshoes! Dive and skip over rocks, past the paws of bears--so more salmon can spring from their billion clear eggs, so an old man may stick his left foot behind him, and toss an iron crescent through the air. Over the round earth, that stretched out in all directions, waving wheat.

This was a new world he was living in, holy and vast and full of portent as the Old Testament. Each sandwich was a magic feast of strang river-fighting fish, a strange link between the fish that fought to fulfill their nature and the man who danced and tossed horseshoes to fulfill his. And the sandwich tasted good.

VI

The old man peered curiously into Tom's eyes. "Are you all right, lad? "

"Oh yessir, I'm fine," Tom beamed. "I just enjoy being out here"--he motioned in all four directions--"so much." And the old man, a traveller

of sorts himself, knew what that meant, and beamed back.

The old couple fed Tom and took him into Manitoba where they turned off toward the farm. They wished him well. The old man seemed genuinely moved. "God luck, lad! "

"And good horseshoes to you! Thanks for the ride! And the sandwiches! Have a good trip! Bye! Bye! "

Tom set his bags down, wondering if he should jump into the truckstop by the side of the road to get something to eat before sticking out his thumb to resume his journey--when a bright orange Lincoln, an old model, huge and loud, roared to a stop at his feet.

"Goin' east? " a grinning cowboy asked out the window.

"Sure--sure."

"Throw your ax on in"--pointing to the guitar--"hoist yourself up next, and we're off--Winnipeg, Montreal, Nova Scotia, the Atlantic Ocean, and all points east, oh, all points! "

VI

They were roaring up the highway before Tom knew what had hit him. He hadn't even stuck out his thumb!

Tom looked the cowboy over curiously. He was wearing a stetson hat cocked off to one side, and small side-burns of curly jet black hair stuck out on either side of his sharp little head. He had an immense grin on his face, this cowboy.

"Where you think I'm from? " Tom was asked.

"I don't know--where? "

"No--guess."

"Oh, Alberta or British Columbia. I don't know."

The cowboy chuckled, took off his hat, and announced with a flourish--"Naw, name's Brennan Wheeler. I'm a country singer. You heard of me? "

"No." Tom was worried that his lack of knowledge of a famous country singer might cost him the

enthusiasm the man had greeted him with.

But, not a chance!

"T'sall right, you will, you will. I look like a cowboy, don't I? Right out of Alberta-round Calgary, maybe? Yippee! and git along little dogies! I ain't. I'm from a fishing village in Nova Scotia. But my daddy could sing. I picked you up cause of your ax--your guitar that is. You don't know the lingo, eh? Never picked up a hitchhiker before in my life. Saw your ax, figured maybe we could sing to each other, keep company, sort of. You sure you ain't heard of me? Put out a hit song, "A Man's Made to Travel," a while ago, two maybe three years back, was a big hit, number one a couple of weeks! No matter, no matter if y'ain't. Name's Brennan Wheeler, like I said. Pleased to meet ya. Are you a hippie? "

"Um--my-my name's Tom." Tom was slightly overwhelmed. He felt like a beach after a hurricane, wondering what had hit him.

"Are you a hippie? "

I don't know what a hippie is exactly. It seems to mean so many different things to so many different people, I don't worry about it. I'm just a man. Just like you."

"Hey, that's all right, man! I know that! Hell, I was just worryin' cause if you're a hippie, you wouldn't like my music none, and, well, I'm a professional country singer, you know--not rock 'n roll, though I like rock 'n roll, mind you."

"Slow down! " Tom laughed. "Halt, cease, desist! call your men off, Brennan Wheeler! I'm pleased to meet you. My name's Tom Neblin. I'm heading east no place in particular right now, I'm delighted that you stopped for me, and I love country music. You wanna sing some, maybe?"

Brennan Wheeler, professional singer, didn't know whether to be pleased or merely baffled, then decided and beamed at Tom. "Hey, man, you can talk! "

"You're not half bad your own self."

"I ain't never met a hippie that liked country

music before." He scratched his head for dramatic effect. "Course, I ain't never met none that *didn't* like country music neither, mind you."

"I don't know a lot about country music," Tom added, "but what I've heard I liked a lot. Hank Williams especially."

"Oh, yeah! " Hank Williams, well, hey, I see what you mean, right." Brennan talked now staring straight up the highway. He knew what Tom looked like now, and beamed up the highway. Tom would understand, of course, Brennan was sure of that. Brennan began rattling off the names of country singer, good old boys, and sweet kids, and did Tom ever hear of so-and-so, had he ever heard of such-and-such? Occasionally, Tom said, Yes, he'd heard of that lone, liked the way he picked his guitar, or liked the way she sang--all the words scrunched up, then a lot of twangy guitars, then another short burst of singing.

Brennan was all but bouncing up and down, with delight. "Right! Yeah! That's what she does, o.k., never thought of it that way, wow, hey, that's somethin'! "

Tom began to notice a strange odor in the air. "Say, Brennan, do you smell anything? "

"Oh, hey, don't breathe a minute. That's poison gas I think. It's the damn radiator. Blows up at least once a day. Open your window, wide there, wider! Aw, never mind. It's too late."

Brennan pulled the huge car off to the side of the road. It roared, then made a gasp and quit. Greenish smoke poured from between Tom's feet. "Better get outside! " they yelled at one another. Somehow they seemed to have become mates in an adventure. They were giggling together over their disaster like a couple of schoolgirls.

"That's awful--smells off-awful! " Tom gasped. He was giggling.

"Aw-aw-awful! Just awful! Awful stuff. Terrible green smoke. Aw! Aw! Awful! "

"Haw-haw! He-he-he! Haw-haw-haw! " The

laughter rising over the wheatfilled prairies, rising with the green gas from an old gaudy orange Lincoln in a Manitoban land of grain and sky. "Haw-haw-haw! He-he-hee! Hee-hee! He-he-he! A-haw! Haw! Haw!" Now they were laughing at the laughter.

When Tom's laughter had gone from him and he sat in a heap by the road, he looked up and looked Brennan in the face. Brennan was staring at him, amazed, troubled. "Where did you come from? What's going on? I ain't laughed like that before ever!"

"Where'd I come from? I was just standing by the side of the road wondering should I run in real fast and grab me a hamburger, when this cowboy sticks his head out of an old orange Lincoln and invites me

in, never letting me know that I was sitting on top of all the poison gas in the world!"

Brennan grinned sheepishly.

"Anyhow," Tom continued, "I'm glad you picked me up. I'd rather be stranded in good company than stranded alone."

Brennan kept staring at him, staring and grinning.

"Well, good, sorry, hey, I mean...."

"No, it's o.k. Really. What kind of gas is that, you know? Smells like hydrogen sulfide we used to make in labs in high school-whew! what a stink."

"I dunno. The battery gets hot as hell and commences boilin'. and the shit comes floatin' up askin', *Whatya think about this, bub?* about once a day."

AWAY

Randy Attwood

I. A Beginning

I awoke at three that morning and, although it was an hour too early, I couldn't sleep and so I dressed quickly in the cold room. They were making a strike that day at one of the candy factories and I wanted to see how they did it. But we were not to meet until four-thirty and I used the time to walk alone in the dark town. Perugia was a good town to walk in, a little sad now that I was the only person about, and I wondered if there were any polozia who would stop me. In the morning my Italian was insecure and I did not want to have to talk to anyone.

When I turned onto the main street I was surprised to see the street sweeping crew at the opposite end. The six men were slightly illuminated through the fog by the street lamp hanging over the middle of Via Vannucci. They were not talking, but the scratch of their large straw brooms against the stone reached me and was strangely muted because, I suppose, of the fog. Slowly they swept the dead refuse towards me. They looked as phantoms and I wished one of them would speak or make a joke, but they only swept in slow steady rhythms. I decided that I didn't wish for them to see me and I turned left to walk along one of the streets paralleling Via Vannucci. One of them

raised his head to look at me as I turned the corner.

When I neared the end of this street, I was surprised to notice that a bar was open. It was cold that morning and I could already taste the thick coffee and I hoped the place would be warm. The bar was half-filled with men who must also, like the street sweepers, have jobs early in the morning. Dressed in the typical Italian gray, they stood at the bar. The young Italians wore neat and expensive clothes. Even all the high school boys wore a suit, or a coat and tie, to class. But the men in this bar were the older Italians, the ones who woke early to go to work, or who awoke early and came here to fill that early morning void before the newspapers were out.

Some of the men were ordering sambuca, an anise tasting liquor, in their coffee. Others were drinking cognac. I remembered a friend of mine who had said that it was only the English and Americans who had made hours for their drinking, so I resolved to have brandy in my coffee. It tasted wonderful, the coffee sweet and smooth down the throat and then the smell of brandy in the nose as it hit good and solid on an empty stomach.

I left the bar soon after that because there were no tables and, unless there were tables, then the bar was not made to wait in. You stood at the bar, finished your coffee, and went about your business. I did not have any real business to go about and would have liked to stay in the bar and have another brandy and coffee and wait for the morning paper.

The strike was like any other Italian strike. We sang "Avanti Popolo" going to the strike, there was a lot of yelling at the strike, we sang "Avanti Popolo" returning from the strike, and all the young workers went back to work the next day.

ONE YOUNG AMERICAN

I was sitting at a table next to the window in the front of the bar when I saw him walking on the other

side of the street. I hoped he wouldn't come in. I had talked to him once before and had heard all of his complaints about the lack of hot water, the lack of heat in his room, the lack of ice, the lack of things to do, how he missed American coffee, and finally I asked him to stop complaining. But he went on about all the comforts he missed. He wished he was in Rome where there were at least American bars and where there was much to do. I asked him why he didn't go there and he said he was stuck here in Perugia because of his scholarship. I said that was too bad.

I hoped I wouldn't have to see him again, but he walked across the street and came into my bar.

"Well, if it isn't Mr. Harper."

I looked up from my paper. "Yes?"

"Don't you go to classes anymore?"

"No."

"What about your certificate?" He sat at my table.

"I came here to learn Italian, not to get a certificate."

"Sure. What do you do all day in this rotten little town?"

"I translate a paper. I do some writing."

"Oh, trying to be a writer are you?"

"Yes."

"Well, how charming. Say, who's that Japanese girl that you wait for after class?"

"Her name is Haruko."

"Why is she studying Italian?"

"She wants to go to the University at Florence and study art history."

"Say, I ought to meet her. I'm going to study the Baroque period."

I did not want him to know her. "She doesn't speak any English."

"Well, you seem to get on with her all right. How is she anyway?" He asked grinning and leaning forward a little.

"What do you mean?" I asked sitting very still.

"I mean, you know, how is she? "

"Watch your mouth."

"Oh, come on Phillip. I didn't mean anything."

Still not moving, I asked, "Why do you stay here? You don't like class. You don't like the town. Why do you stay? "

"I need to get the certificate so that I can have the hours on my college transcript back home."

"But why did you come in the first place? Why didn't you just stay in the States? "

"I want to go to graduate school and it'll look good on my transcript to have studied in Italy. And my professor got me this scholarship."

"Well, damn it, why don't you stay over at the Biccieri Rosso and mope around with the Americans there. Be sorrowful over there but don't do it around here."

"Christ, Phillip, can't a fellow American even talk to you? What the hell do you have to be so righteous about anyway? What do you do all day but sit in a bar and drink and then go pick up your Jap piece of ass? "

I stood up. "Get out. Don't come back here and don't talk to me again."

He left quickly.

I wished I would have hit him, but after another coffee it was time to meet Haruko and after the walk to the school going past the shops then remembering that this was the day they baked the special bread with cheese and ham inside of it, I stopped at the bakery and when I left the store with one of the round loaves under my arm and still smelling the bread's fresh warmth, I was not angry anymore. When I saw her come out of the door of the University, I knew how luck I was and (was very happy.)

AN UNDERSTANDING

Ted was very understanding and realized that we did not have many private places where we could go. The three of us by now were very good friends and

we spent many of our evenings in Ted's room drinking wine and listening to records of his cheap stereo. Haruko loved classical music and I was never happier than during those quiet evenings. The necessity of returning to the States and finishing school then taking the physical for the draft and unthinkable thoughts after that, were so far away they seemed almost non-existent.

She and I sat on his bed with our backs against the wall and our legs out straight. Ted sat in the only chair smoking his pipe, and either talking about the German girl he had just married, or quiet in his own contemplation. Ted was from Trinidad and had been educated in British schools. He was studying Italian while his new wife remained in a small town in central Germany where she taught high school Ted had invited Haruko and I to visit him and his wife during Christmas time before I had to return to the States. We talked of all the fine food and drink we could have, and of all the books in English he had stored there that we could read by the fireplace in their small three room house. I could try to ski if I wanted, or we could go to Berlin for a day, or we could just stay at home. It was great fun to speak of all these things, and then Ted and I would explain it all to Haruko in Italian and she was as excited about going as I was.

Later, the music and the wine and the light from the small candle would engulf us, but left Haruko and I entire and together in the engulfment. Somehow, I was always intensely aware of the small things when she was near: our shoulders touching and her thumb slowly tracing and pressing against the print of my thumb and the tips of my fingers, as if it were vital that she remember each detail of every finger and the size of each bump of every knuckle. She would measure the length of my fingers by comparison with her own tiny hand, as if she needed to know and have that knowledge for always. She would raise her hand to the side of my face and I would turn my head to

smell and kiss her palm. Ted would put on his coat to leave. He said nothing, not wishing to break in on what we had. I knew what bar he would be waiting in.

The nights then in the high altitude of Perugia were cold. When I walked her across town to her home, her hair became cold, still smooth as ivory, but now a black cold ivory and I wished to crush her head with both my arms against my chest to warm her hair. Instead, I kissed her, feeling my cold tongue in her warm mouth. We would say good night and it felt wrong to leave her. It always felt wrong. I was never happy to be away from her, and I tried not to think about really leaving her. I would go back to the bar where Ted waited and we would have one final hot rum together.

We really intended to visit Ted, but because of heavy rains and a train strike, Haruko was late in meeting me in Munic and we did not have time to go. I wrote Ted a note trying to explain this to him, but it sounded as hollow as I felt.

AN END

She had left on Saturday and, being Japanese, she did not wish to cry in the crowded train station. She had made a resolution not to cry and sat very straight while we drank a final cup of tea together. Looking into her cup her head was bent forward making the ends of her thick, straight, glistening hair meet at the tip of her chin framing her face in an oval of black. I didn't want to look at her eyes, but she glanced suddenly up at me and gave a small cry and slid in on my side of the booth and I put her head on my shoulder as she broke her resolution. Soon, she stopped, and said she was sorry and I told her not to be sorry about the crying. I told her please not to be sorry about anything. I told her that I loved her and would write to her and hated that she was leaving and hated that I had to go back to the states and didn't we have a beautiful time together.

The next day was Sunday in Munic and I was restless with the cold weather. Klaus and Anna, who we had stayed with, decided to show me the English

park. It was a fine park but it made me feel lonely being there without her because she would have loved it so much. Because it was cold there were only a few people in the park and the footpaths and horsepaths were empty.

We stayed for a long time at a small bridge and watched the ducks fight the swift current of the stream below us as they swam to try and catch an occasional piece of bread. There was a very small island in the stream and the water behind this was calm and many of the ducks would congregate there. Then, one of them would see a piece of bread rush by and paddle out to grab at it. The duck had to work very hard to catch up to the bread in the swift current and many times missed when he bobbed for it. Then, it was harder work for him to swim against the current to attain the quiet behind the island. Only a few of the ducks even attempted it.

Later, we walked by the large lake that was partly frozen. The geese would land on the ice, their long white wings extended, beautifully breaking their speed, then slide on the ice to finally plop clumsily into an open area of cold water. Having attained the open water they would then stretch their long necks down for the bread that a few people had thrown in. Occasionally, one of the birds would try and leave the lake. I suppose they became tired of the cold water although I have been told that they are not supposed to feel that sort of thing. There was a little girl who stood guard duty on the bank and would kick at them forcing them back into the water as she shrieked and laughed.

We left the lake area and chose a path that took us by a large field where the snow was light and the old fall leaves could be seen as spots of brown speckling the white snow and I wondered what the weather was like in Italy where she was by now.

Klaus and Anna were very kind and we did not talk as we walked back to their apartment. Klaus prepared one of his famous chinese soups and we ate with bread and had one of the bottles of white wine that his father had sent him from their farm. I should have been excited about going back to the states but I wasn't.

A Look at *BIG SUR AND THE ORANGES OF HIERONYMOUS BOSCH*
by Henry Miller by Jim Scofield (or maybe it isn't)

Whew, reading can sure be tiresome work. Especially BS&tO of HB, it's so good, but thoughtful, detailed, every page a thousand things crawl around yelling or politely speaking at you. It's uplifting too; peaceful-like, almost gives you hope. Reviews should be made ten years after a book's been published. At least ten years. That way everyone's not excited because it's "the new thing." Yaknow after ten years a new bunch of kids are running around reading the shit. And, well, they can see what you wrote a little better. Because it stands out as truth or falsehood or shit or just pretty words--purely on the basis of being itself, of being what you read, not what everybody knows about or reads into it. Also if it's popular there's all the popular notions that you've heard and if they don't keep you from reading the book you'll find out that it's never like what *LOOK* says. Never like what it's supposed to be. If it seems like it is, then go to hell, reader.

This is my first serious attempt to recommend a book, by the way, and I'll keep doing it maybe. But I won't review books that publishers just printed. Rather books that have been around and nobody's reading but are good, and books that haven't ever been printed. Maybe I could get publishers to notice things that I've read. (Ha ha). Of course what I recommend won't sell very well. Just good enough for

the writer to get along; not worse, not better. But I'm far away from BS&tO of HB by H Mr. Of course if you're already sold on reading the book, stop reading my "review" and get the book.

Now for those of you that would like to know a little something about the book, I'll say a word or two. It really doesn't have much to do with Bosch, more with Big Sur, at least ostensibly that's the case. He'd have never written as good a book without Bosch. It's a true book, no little lies that climb into bed like in other books, and it's like a peaceful talk about what he's been doing. A lot of wisdom and nonsense from doing nothing, from living the "good life." Actually the book is just reenforcing what you've felt all along, (and that's about your hopeful views on the world). Of course I have only read 132 pages out of 404 but why write a review or recommend a book if it's not good enough to get excited about (or really what's happened is it's exhausting, it's work reading that book, far from boring, and I'm only writing this for something to do to keep me from forcing myself to go on). Which, dear reader -- if you're not in hell, or reading the book, (which you're obviously not) -- I'm going back to read. So...(For all you who read the book and came back to finish my little writing here, no apologies.)

FRAGMENTS FROM THE YEAR OF THE TIGER

Richard Cunningham



The boy brought the coffee over and set it on the table. It was very thick coffee, hot and black and foul-tasting, and after the first swallow I poured some whiskey into the cup. A few minutes later I heard

someone running. Looking up from the paper, I saw a Buddhist monk race by the door, his saffron robe hiked up around his hips, his head strained forward, and then he was past and I could hear his sandals

slapping against the pavement. A few seconds later three of Nhu's special clattered by, carrying rifles with fixed bayonets. When they were past I went to the door. The monk had by that time reached the grounds of a large building surrounded by an iron fence. He was halfway up the fence when one of the soldiers bayoneted him in the back. The monk lunged forward against the fence and dropped to the ground. He lay on his back, his right leg jerking spasmodically. Then one of the soldiers stepped over him, raised his rifle high in both hands like a harpoon, and plunged it into him. I watched the three of them walk off and then I went back to the table.



There was a leper who pedalled a cyclo to and from Saigon, and he worked only at night. A cyclo was an inexpensive, if slow, method of getting to the city, and those without motors were the slowest and cheapest ride of all. You could, however, sit back and watch another world gradually unfold itself for you during a seven-mile ride, all of it for less than fifty cents. The leper wore long-sleeved pajamas, white gloves, and a white gauze mask over his face. The first time Doc saw him he said, "My God, it's the Lone Ranger!" At the time it seemed a funny thing to say, but one night I leaned back in the seat and looked up just as the breeze blew the mask away from his face, and after that I never laughed at him. He worked the base until one evening when three Americans he had brought back from Saigon ran without paying him. They were very young and very drunk, and one of them stumbled and fell. He was on the ground laughing when the leper, who was very tall, leaned over him. The white gloves clamped onto the boy's shoulders like talons, and then the leper lifted him, drew him slowly and inexorably up until they were face to face, jerked off the mask and, while the boy screamed with horror, kissed him hard on the mouth. The leper did not come back after that.



The Officer's Club was on the top floor of the Majestic Hotel, and every Sunday they served steaks for the members. Alone, dressed in civilian clothes, I discovered that with a certain amount of arrogance and the ability to keep my mouth shut I could go there unmolested; and so I began dropping in regularly, every Sunday evening.

There were tables set out on the terrace in front of a small bar manned by a Vietnamese bartender who never said anything except, "yes, sir." A piano stood in the midst of the tables, and on Sundays it was attended until dark by a young Vietnamese student from the university. He was small and neat and graceful, and a great admirer of Chopin. He played Chopin softly while middle-aged men with cruel faces tamped their cigarettes out in the baked beans and reminisced about battle. When it grew dark he would gather up his music and leave quietly without looking at anyone, and watching him go gave you the feeling of seeing a bird set free.

The steaks were grilled at the other end of the terrace by a Vietnamese cook who wore a white chef's hat. Here, there were several tables, laid out smorgasbord-style, from which one chose from a variety of salads, fresh vegetables or fruits. Here, also, there were several pitchers of whole milk, not the powdered kind we were served at the base, that tasted slightly chalky, as though it had been strained through an eraser. In the beginning, the amount of milk I drank aroused suspicions. One evening, however, I struck up a conversation with a young Lieutenant who worked for the C.I.A. and after that they accepted me. And yet, although I was, in a manner of speaking, a member of the club, curiosity about my milk-consumption remained unsatisfied. One night I was standing at the bar when a Major, with white crew-cut hair and red splotches on his face, turned around to me and said, "Son, why the

hell do you drink so damn much milk? ”

“Bone condition,” I said matter-of-factly.

He turned his head to one side and gave me a puzzled look. Then, staring into his glass, he nodded his head slowly. There was a sudden loud commotion at the elevator door, which opened onto the terrace. Two Americans and a Vietnamese girl were being detained by an officer who had recognized one of the Americans as an enlisted man. The Major who had questioned me walked over and told them loudly to get the hell out of there, that this was an officer’s club. After the elevator door closed the Major returned to the bar.

“You have to watch ’em all the time,” he said indignantly.

“You’re damn right, sir,” I agreed, finishing the martini.

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“Let me tell you what happened. It must have been around two, three in the morning, and I was coming around the corner across from the Continental when I hear this wierd sound. Wierd, man. When I get around the corner, there’s a bunch of Vietnamese standing around that big Irish cat from the UTT. Shamus, yeah. Anyway, they’re just standing there quiet, and all of a sudden Shamus bends down and picks up a little VN, and I think, what the fuck’s going on? And then he throws him down on the sidewalk, you know – foomp! Like that. Yeah. So I run up to him. He’s so drunk he can’t hit his ass with a shovel. I said ‘Shamus, what the hell’s going on?’ You know what he said? He said, ‘the bloody little bastard won’t give up.’ I bent down and checked the VN – his head’s caved-in, blood coming out his ears, the whole bit, man. ‘Won’t give up’ I said to Shamus, ‘Shit, he’s dead.’ He looked at me, dumb-like, and said ‘dead?’ ‘Yeah’ I told him, ‘Let’s get the flock out of here.’ I stopped a cab and we got in. It’s a good thing I came along. Those Vietnamese were just waiting for Shamus to pass out.

And you know what happened? The bastard passed out in the cab.”

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Milt had a sheepish expression on his face the first time he reported to the dispensary with a dose. It was after five when he walked in, and Doc and I were having a drink at my desk.

“Hi,” I said, “Want a drink? ”

“No, man; I got a problem.”

“What’s the matter? ”

“My dick’s dripping,” he said sadly, shaking his head.

When he removed his shorts I saw that he was wearing a prophylactic.

“What the hell is that for? ” I asked him?

“Shit, I didn’t want to ruin my uniform, Dave.”

“How long have you been dripping? ”

“All day.”

I pictured him walking around all day wrapped up in that ridiculous rubber, gritting his teeth while he urinated, making certain his uniform stayed clean.

“Well, take it off, for Christ’s sake,” I said.

He had gonorrhoea. The head of his penis was slightly swollen from the constant irritation of the pus.

“How many did you have to use? ” I asked him.

“Twelve,” he said, staring angrily over at the Doc, who was strangling with laughter.

“You ain’t got no call to laugh, Doc. You been burned same as me.”

“Uhuh. But I got better sense than to go around all day with it wrapped up in plastic.”

I gave Milt the penicillin shot in one buttock and the bicillin in the other. As he was leaving I said, “Don’t drink anything for a couple of days.”

“Shit,” he said, grinning.

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One evening an Indian came into Marcelline’s Bar with two lovely French girls. The girls were very tan

and they wore loose-fitting dresses. When they sat down the dresses billowed up above their thighs for a second, and Milt said very softly, "Coowee!" Marcelline sat down with them and they began talking in French. The Indian used elaborate gestures when he spoke, and I could see that he was excited. Everyone was staring at them. After a while Marcelline stood up and pulled the man to his feet. As she led him onto the floor you could almost see his pupils dilate. She said something to him in French and he looked quickly over to the bar, smiling. And then, while a blues record grieved in the background, the man began to dance.

I was a little drunk but even I could see that he was a good dancer. He was about forty, with grey streaks in his black hair, and he was getting fat. Moving gracefully down the length of the bar, he did a pirouette, throwing his hips to the rhythm of the blues, and glided back again while Milt yelled, "go, baby, go!" His eyes flashed on Milt and he came near our table, weaving the air with his hands and rolling his hips while we called out to him for more, a look of ecstasy on his face, and soon even the French girls were shouting. His eyes were heavily made up and his long fingernails were painted a peach color. He wore tight chino trousers, a shirt open to reveal the hair on his chest, and sandals. I felt suddenly sad watching him, made frantic by the presence of so many young men, turning around and around with his eyes wild, an ex-ballet dancer reduced by age to bump-and-grind. Even the fact that his feet were filthy made me sad. When the record ended he dropped to one knee in front of Milt and said, "Marie is getting older, but she is still pretty, no?"

"You look real good, cupcake," Milt said, laughing.

He bounded up when the music started again, making straight for the bar. He danced by a Vietnamese man wearing a tee shirt who sat sideways in his chair drinking a beer. Pausing, the Indian stroked the man's arm and said something softly to

him. The man followed the Indian with his eyes as he whirled coquettishly off. The next time around the man at the bar knocked the Indian's hand away and spoke sharply to him in Vietnamese. I wondered why Marcelline didn't stop him. She was standing behind the bar, smiling. When the Indian came by the man the third time he raked his arm so sharply you could hear it over the music. This spun the man around in his chair, and he came to his feet in front of the Indian, eyes narrowed in pain, his face set hard, and I could see blood on the sleeve of his tee shirt. The dancer waved his body in front of the man like a fan, a slow smile growing across his face.

What are you smiling at? I thought; he's going to kill you.

"I'll be damned," Milt said slowly.

My eyes followed his to the Vietnamese. Looking down, I could see the outline of his erection bulging against his trousers.

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During March, Nicole and I lived on Phan Dinh Phung street in a small apartment on the third floor. Another American and his girl lived next to us, a man from Kentucky who once showed me the photograph of his children that he carried in his wallet. The girl he lived with was about seven months pregnant. She was very pretty and spoke excellent English; and she did not know that the man was married, of course. I did not like the man, who was drunk a great deal of the time and in his drunkenness beat the girl. She visited Nicole and me often. She asked me questions about the United States, and I answered them, wondering how she would take it when she learned the man was married.

As it turned out, she never did. One night I woke up hearing screams coming from the next apartment. When I went out on the landing the door was open, and so I went in. The lights were on, and the girl was on the bed, her legs wide apart, and the man was straddling her, driving his knee viciously into her

groin. I pulled him off and threw him against the wall.

"What the hell is going on?" I shouted at him.

"I ain't gonna have no nigger baby," he said loudly, slurring over the words and swaying on his feet.

The girl on the bed moaned and I went over to her. She was losing blood from between her legs, and her face was screwed up in agony.

"You did a good job, you son of a bitch," I told him.

Nicole and several old women came in. The man left while they were washing the girl's body. I never saw him again.

I saw the girl one month later, walking down the Rue Catinat with a Sergeant in the MP's, smiling and

looking very happy, her body slim and seductive in a tight sheath dress.



The bridge into Kanhoi crossed over a filthy little bad dotted with sampans. Early one morning I was going back to the city, and I stopped on the bridge to watch a fisherman's wife bathe herself. She washed her hands and face, and then she lifted her blouse and washed her breasts. When she had finished, she lifted a baby into her lap and began nursing it from her breasts. Looking down, I saw the river, brown water full of debris and all manner of filth. I waved to her and she turned away.

CONTRIBUTORS

John Hudson won a Hart Crane Award in 1969. He is editor and co-founder of NORTHEAST and Juniper Books, now in the 8th year of publication . . . Daniel J. Langston lives in San Francisco. The poem in this issue marks his hundredth published poem . . . Emilie Glen has a volume of poetry out called MAD HATTER and Other Poems . . . James Minor and W. E. Ryan are two poets from Illinois who do things together (like writing poems and making their first two appearances in *Cottonwood*) . . . Rachel McCracken says she is relatively new in the field. She has been published in over a dozen mags — and two anthologies . . . William Hart dropped out of KU when he realized that writing was the only occupation he took seriously . . . Al Dewey, also formerly of KU, is hiding somewhere in New York . . . Leslie Baird has a recently published book of poetry called THE SMILE OF CONCRETE ANGELS. She plans on making a career of writing . . . Walt Stevens is a professor of English and Speech at Oklahoma State University . . . Ken Lauter has two poetry projects underway. One of them deals with “bridge building” between the world of poetry and the world of modern science . . . Robert Moss lives in New York. He is presently working on a novel . . . John Blasdel, “flatland photographer”, formerly of Lawrence is presently working as a professional photographer in New York City . . . Professional photographer Steve Cromwell still keeps busy in Lawrence . . . Photographer Steve Ewart, if not working in Kansas City, is probably traveling through Europe or somewhere . . . Richard Deutch is a widely published poet and editor . . . Herb Williams is a graduate of KU and writes and lives in Lawrence . . . David Wilson lives in San Francisco. His prose and poems have frequently appeared in *Cottonwood* . . . Victor Contoski (grand wizard of the Carruth-O’Leary crowd) is an assistant professor of English at KU . . . Paul LaRosa plans on writing a much longer sequel to the fragment in this issue of the *Cottonwood* . . . In between trips across the country, Randy Attwood finds the time to live and write in Lawrence . . . Steve Bunch is one of the co-founders of the Lawrence Bureau of Surrealist Inquiries . . . Charles and Roy Berry are the younger brothers of Cortland Berry, who believes in exploiting family talent. They plan on attending KU like their older brother, but he hopes he’s not around when they do . . . Bud Wiles is a hard-working family man, but you can’t tell it by the poems he writes . . . Richard Colyer teaches a popular poetry course at KU . . . Richard Cunningham is a senior majoring in English at KU. He served in Vietnam during 1963, which, on the Buddhist calendar, was the year of the tiger. The fragments appearing in this issue of *Cottonwood* are excerpts from a novel he is writing about that

year . . . Lawrence Bruno was born in Italy. He teaches French at KU and hopes to write prose . . . Clyde Fixmer was born in New Mexico in 1934. He has lived most of his life in Oklahoma and Kansas. His poems have appeared in many little mags . . . Harry Weldon has published in four previous *Cottonwoods*. He teaches English in Sheet Harbour, Nova Scotia . . . Edgar Wolfe teaches a writing course at KU . . . Wladyslaw Cieszynski began writing seriously four years ago. He likes good trips (travels a lot), good booze, good women, good poetry, and the other fine things of life . . . Jack Anderson is an active poet now living in New York . . . Judson Crews is a well-known “little mag” poet who lives in Texas . . . Eric Chaet plans on finishing his story sometime in the future. Hopefully, the remaining segment will appear in a forthcoming issue of the *Cottonwood* . . . John Carter, one-time art major at KU, now lives in Lawrence.



