

REVIEW FALL 72

COTTONWOOD

John Mcluhan

Recovering Fasting From Bachs glide





COTTONWOOD REVIEW

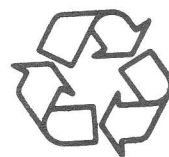
COVER SILKSCREEN by John McVicker

COTTONWOOD REVIEW is published three times yearly with a subscription rate of three dollars. Please address all mail to: COTTONWOOD REVIEW, Box J-Kansas Union, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66044

My gratitude to the contributors for their writing and photography and to my co-editors: Steve Cromwell for editing the photography; Richard Cunningham, James Grauerholz, Susan Stein, Gary Taylor, Marla Watson & Jan West for editing the prose and poetry; Richard Colyer for advice; John Moritz for editing a broadside folio; Myra Ogrizovitch for typing; April for help in editing and layout; And the Student Senate for their continuing support in funding this magazine.

Jim Schmidt

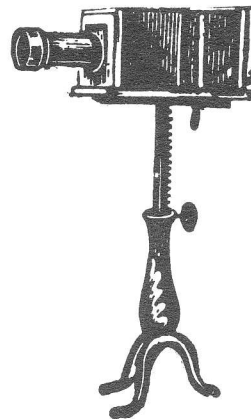
Copyright © 1972 by COTTONWOOD REVIEW
Lawrence, Kansas



THE WRITING ● ● ●

Hiroaki DeHara 1-5
James Grauerholz 5
Jim Bogan 6, 11-14
Mark Thiessen 14, 15
Danny L. Rendleman 16
Jim McCrary 17-21
Wayne S. Propst, Jr. 21, 22
Harley Elliott 27
Randy Attwood 28-33
Michael L. Johnson 34
William B. Fisher 33-38
George H. Szanto 43-46
Judson Crews 46
Gary Taylor 47
Richard Cunningham 48-51
Herb Williams 51, 52
Kell Robertson 56-60
David Ohle 65-66
Ken Irving 67-68
William Conger Beasley, Jr. 69-70
Jim Garmhausen 53-55

Steven J. Cromwell 7, 40, 63
James Enyeart 8-10, 23, 39
Gary Brown 24
Dan Younger 25, 62
Margaret Lanoue 26
Pat Howard 41
Anna Bush Crews 42
Larry Schwarm 61
Paul Greenbaum 64



UMEKICHI

On this side of the stream the concrete bank, which had been raised and made to slant at an eighty degrees angle by the severe earthquake several years ago, was exposing itself to the afternoon sunlight; oysters and laver had left their marks on the surface of the concrete.

As the tide rose the stream slowed down. As it did so the water became more transparent. In the water sea-fish -- black porgy, horse-mackerel, swellfish -- were seen running. They came in with the flood tide from the U bay.

A flatfish came to the sandy bottom of the water along the bank. It had covered itself with the stirred sand. Its body had the same color as the sand. From the sand its pair of eyes were shining. Its eyes seemed to be odd because they were set close together on one side of its face.

Not far from the bank, across a small vacant area, a blacksmith's shop stood; hammers striking iron were sounding in the air. The shop was a small house roofed with galvanized iron sheets; its roof, its sides and all the other parts outside were tarred black.

Behind the blacksmith's shop stood a hut, which was also roofed with galvanized iron sheets. The hut was not tarred. It was tilting a little, its pillars and walls being very old and dark. The ceiling and the upper parts of the pillars were thickly sooted. The hut consisted of only two small rooms and a kitchen. The tatami in the rooms were broken and dirty. It was hot and stuffy inside. The back room was shut tight by the closed shoji or sliding door. But the room showed through the shoji silhouettes of people moving busily inside.

Sometimes, metallic medical appliances, touching each other, sounded cold from there. At the entrance of the hut there was a new pair of women's shoes, which seemed too new to belong to anyone living in the hut.

Umekichi, lame of one leg, had come to the bank from the hut; he had passed the blacksmith's shop and walked across the small vacant land. He was sitting at the edge of the bank right above the camouflaging flatfish. His father had told him not to come back to the hut before the sunset. He had to spend time somewhere. A certain ceremony which he must not see was going to be held in the back room of the hut. But Umekichi knew what the ceremony was. For a long time he had been expecting that the day of the ceremony would come.

He had wanted to keep a rabbit; he had saved money. When he had saved enough, he bought a baby rabbit at a small warren. Gripping the baby rabbit by its soft ears, he hurried back to his hut, limping; he was out of breath when he came home. Mother, a big woman, came out of the sooted kitchen. Seeing the creature hanging from Umekichi's hand, she cowered. The distance between Umekichi and mother was about six meters; she stood with the dim darkness of the kitchen behind her. In

contrast to the dark background the contours of her big body looked surprisingly clear. Her two small eyes shot metallic sharp lights into Umekichi's widely open eyes. He kept standing there, gripping the rabbit's ears. The baby rabbit wriggled, kicking the air with its four legs; Umekichi felt its muscles move rhythmically. Mother intensified her stare and said, "Umekichi!" At that moment her big lower abdomen looked swollen enough to break the strings of her dirty apron.

"Go and return it. You may keep a rabbit sometime but not now!"

Her voice was quivering a little, but, at the same time, her eyes were almost imploring. Something sad and powerful in her moved Umekichi; he obeyed her, as was unusual.

When Umekichi went back with the rabbit to the warren, the master there conjectured the reason his mother had prohibited his keeping the rabbit.

The master told Umekichi a superstition: if a rabbit was kept in a house where a woman was pregnant, the woman would often have a hare-lipped baby. He added, "Look at your mama's abdomen. Isn't it big?" He glanced at Umekichi's lame left leg. Umekichi hid his left leg behind his right leg. He did this rather instinctively whenever anybody looked at his odd leg. His left leg, bony and short, was less than half as large as his right leg.

The river was at high water. But the raised, swollen bank on Umekichi's side was much higher than the water; marks of oysters and laver were still exposed to the sunlight there. In contrast, the opposite bank, which had been made to sink by the earthquake, was almost under the water. One could see rows of cherry trees with the post-blossom foliage along the lower bank as far as one's eyesight could reach.

Boys, girls and a few adults were swimming along the opposite bank, diagonally across the water from Umekichi's place. The swimmers had left their clothes under some of the cherry trees. Their shrill voices and laughter, though interrupted by the strong sounds of the hammers, reached Umekichi's ears. Umekichi watched the swimmers for a while and shifted his eyes to the flatfish, which kept itself still covered with sand. Its one sided eyes showed timidity; the eyes shone very weakly. Umekichi soon shifted his eyes again to his deformed leg.

The swimmers' laughter reminded him of what had one day happened to him.

One day he was walking across the playground after school. He was limping as usual; he carried a bag on his right shoulder so that it weighed on his healthy right leg. His classmates were playing baseball in an area of the ground. They were too devoted to the game to notice Umekichi walking across the ground. A tall boy ran from base to base. Shouts of joy went up. When a new batter came to the plate and the pitcher stepped

on his mound, tense quietness came back. Umekichi turned away his eyes from the scene and continued to walk. His limping shook his body up and down. The batter hit the ball. Shouts of joy arose. A silence. Jeering cold laughs arose. An outfielder came running and picked up the ball which had tripped Umekichi by hitting his lame foot. Their laughter was continuing. Umekichi tried to get up in a hurry. In his consciousness a grey curtain fell down between him and them, which shut off their jeering laughter. He turned his back to them and walked across the ground; as he walked, his limping shook him up and down.

The swimmers' fuss was continuing, which called back that grey curtain from the depths of his consciousness. The flatfish lay quiet keeping its odd eyes open under the transparent water.

The hammers continued to sound. In the back room of the hut behind the blacksmith's shop a new life was going to come out from the big woman's womb. Umekichi stared at his deformed leg; it projected from his knickers. The odd leg, from knee to toe, was reflecting the sunlight on its front side; its back side was dark. The odd leg was scanty of flesh and bony; its shadow was unnatural and ugly. From the same womb as the leg had come out another pair of legs was going to come out.

He had seen a number of babies; babies of his neighbors and relatives. He had had many chances to see babies. Whenever he saw a baby, almost instinctively he looked at the baby's legs. All the babies' legs that he had seen were healthy and plump. One day, seeing a baby in its baby carriage, he searched for its legs wrapped in the baby clothes. The baby started crying and he was rebuked by its mother. Every pair of babies' legs that he had ever touched was normal. Whenever his fingers touched such a normal leg, he pulled down that grey curtain in his consciousness to shut off the outside.

The swimmers along the opposite bank suddenly became quiet; most of them had left the water. Surrounded by them, a boy was crying on the bank. A few adults, stooping over the boy, nodded. Before long a fishing boat was sent to the middle between the banks. Several men with hydrosopes dived into the water one by one from the boat. They were searching for the body of a drowned person. Bystanders on the bank increased. The water was so transparent that the body was easily found. From the surface of the water appeared first its lean white face covered with dark long hair, then narrow shoulders, slender bony trunk, . . . Umekichi was staring at it breathlessly. The grey curtain between him and the crowd was partially broken and through the rift was seen the body being pulled up. But the next moment the rift was closed again in his consciousness because the drowned man's normal legs came out from the water.

The boat carried the body to the crowded bank. As soon as the body was laid on the ground, two men started to practice artificial respiration. The surrounding crowd hid the body from Umekichi's eyesight.

Another fishing boat carried a doctor in white from Umekichi's side

to the opposite bank. The boat moved smoothly on the water which had stopped flowing now because of high tide.

From the right of the row of cherry trees appeared a woman with a baby on her back. She was running. She was bare foot; she must have taken off her wood-clogs somewhere. Her hair was disheveled and her baby was crying. The woman's eyes were toward the crowd; then were bloodshot, focused on nothing. Apparently she was the wife of the drowned man. The crowd made a way for her to reach the body. Almost at the same time, the doctor in white arrived there; the crowd gulped him, too.

Surrounding the body, the wife and the doctor, the crowd became very quiet. The crowd was as quiet as a forest on a windless day. The doctor diagnosed that the drowned man was dead. The crowd started scattering. People became so sparse there that Umekichi could see the dead body and the wife again. The doctor was already on his way back on the boat. The dead body lay quiet under a cherry tree. The wife, with their baby on her back, continued to cry beside her drowned husband who would never recover breath. Their baby was hanging on the woman's back quiet; it seemed to have got tired with crying. As the sunset approached, a little breeze started up. The tops of the cherry trees over there were swaying a little. Several men, with a stretcher, came onto the scene. They carried the body to the right along the row of cherry trees. The wife followed them. At that time clouds in the sky had already been tinged with the light of the sunset. The water had lost its blue color; it was reflecting the twilight. The breeze was making whitish spots of ripples on the water.

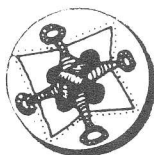
The tide began to ebb but the flatfish still kept itself covered with sand under the transparent water. Its odd eyes continued to shine timidly. Umekichi stood up by moving both of his legs, normal and skillfully. Suddenly stirring up the sand, the flatfish disappeared. The blacksmith's shop had been closed; no sound of hammers were heard any more. Limping, Umekichi passed in front of the blacksmith's shop. He came back to the hut. The ceremony in the back room was over. The pair of mid-wife's shoes had gone. No sound of medical appliances touching each other came from the room any more. The inside of the hut was a little dark even during the daytime. Though it was after the sunset, no lamps were put on yet in the hut; the rooms were dark and quiet. Umekichi stood in front of the shoji for the back room.

"Umekichi?"

Father's coarse voice called him from the dark back room. Umekichi opened the shoji. Mother was lying in the darkness there. Beside her a newly-born creature was sleeping.

To search for the baby's legs, Umekichi put his hands into the futon. He felt the baby's perfect legs. The moment his hands touched them, the grey curtain fell down again between him and the others. On this side of the grey curtain, Umekichi was sitting and, on the other side, father,

mother and their baby were keeping themselves silent. Mother intensified her stare as if she were trying to break through the curtain between him and them. But Umekichi said, "It is not lame, is it?" which made mother turn away her face. Father turned away his face, too. The grey curtain became thicker. On this side of the curtain, suddenly Umekichi was moved by the warmth of the baby's legs. He almost murmured, "It is alive, isn't it?" His emotion swirled in the inner part of his heart like a hot breath.



James Grauerholz

Deja Vu

the Vision, then reVision--
the align of words is not a canon, but
more like ordnance-- trajectory
not always a function of co-ordinates, and
never the geometer's expectations;
ideas the thought is shadow to--my walkie
talkie not a tenet but transistors
and fallible, at the leap of static
across the sodden fields (and like
the nameless unfortunate who, bright
eyed at finding himself where he was
on his map, called in his own co-ordinates--
too hastily explaining, I am vaporized
by my own artillery)

so, my word barrage is readied;
adumbrating the substratum, bed rock
bottom--the sense that lies along
the continuum from idiolect to icon, at the point
where even etymology has a part (and I
feel blown, pig eye blind--less here
than absentees, opaque, dissembled)
and I affix my hand, timorous, impositive
misgiven that, lighting the poem like a stove,
the damn thing will blow itself out

Re/Union

"The body is earth, is female."

P. Gauguin

And the mind becoming universe
left the body weak, shaking and gasping
(known only at the moment he returned
for she had unconsciously pumped
independently
she breathed)
she was patient and waited
waited for the return of him to notice
she was straining
but willingly so--

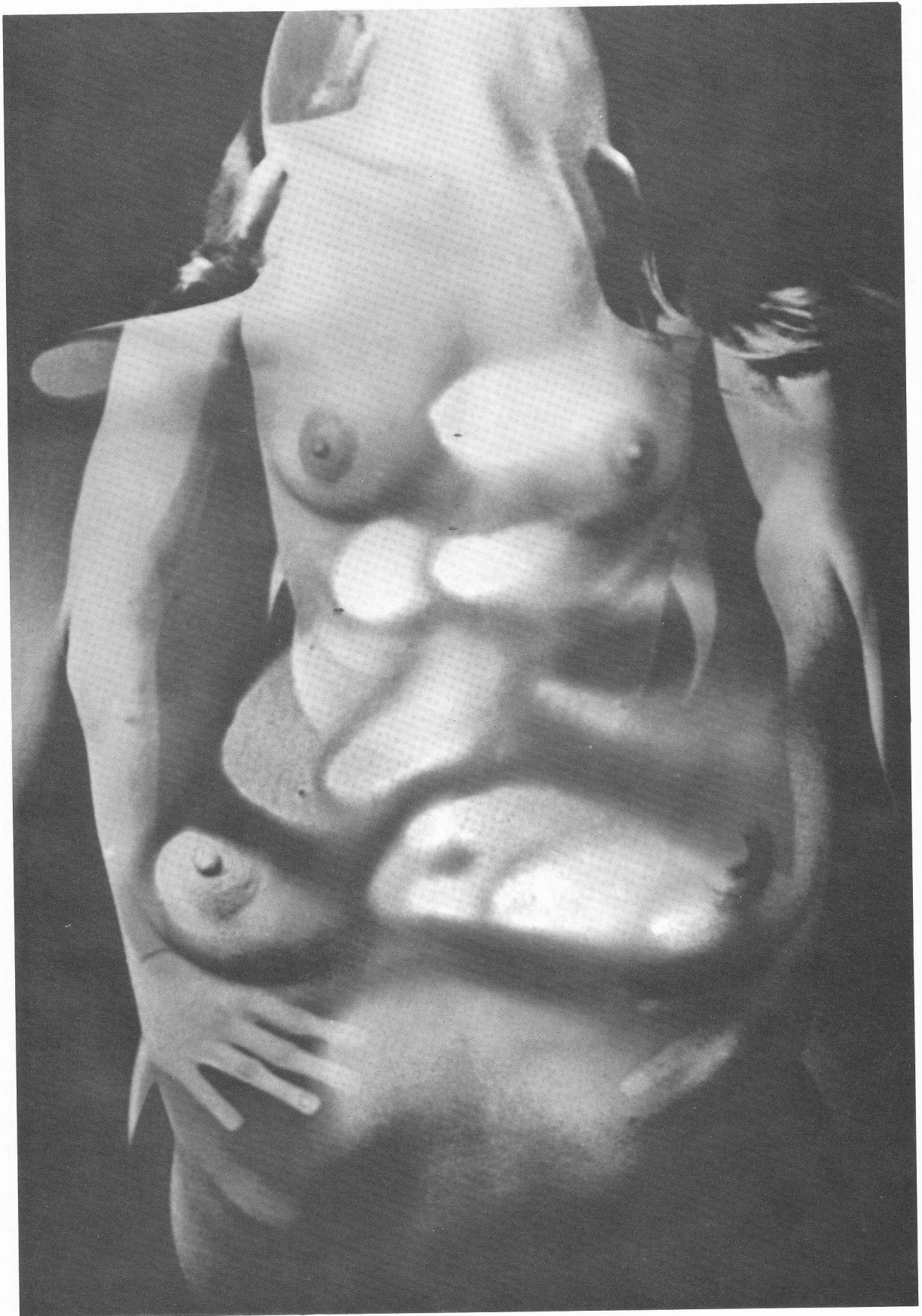
And he was gone for two thousands of heart pulses
and she was glad and waited because she knew
she was necessary
Knew he that had gone to the purple spinning
and suns revolving around suns in the galaxies far beyond NASA's
furthest time-reach
and the sound that ceased to sound
HAD-TO-RE/TURN
Knew that he had to rest.
Knows that he will go again
And that she will wait again.

And the body did not dissolve,
Though she was alone and on the edge.

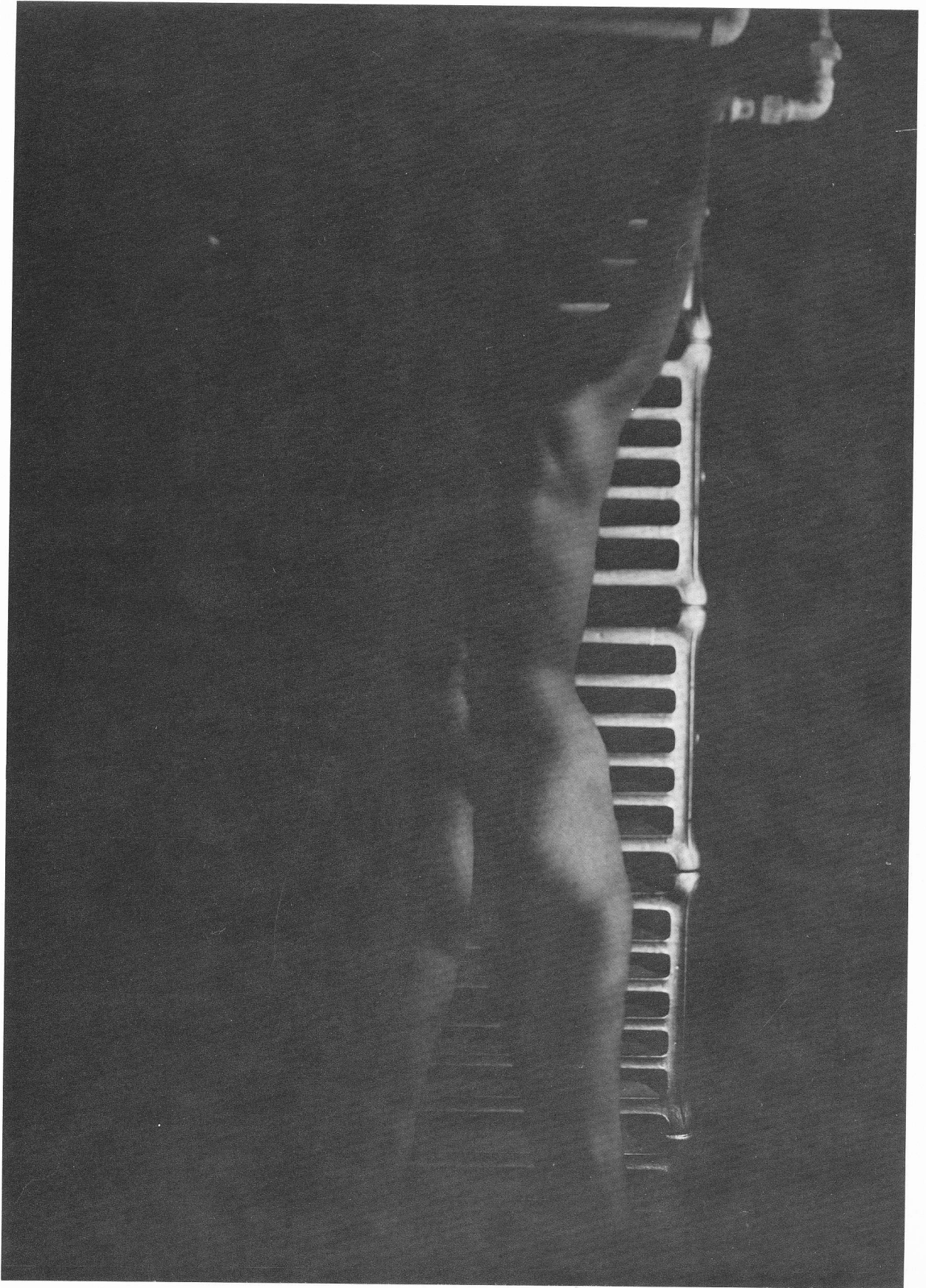
* * * * *

Certainly Theresa was such a sight,
such a roar
of soundless energy.
And the body waited for her.

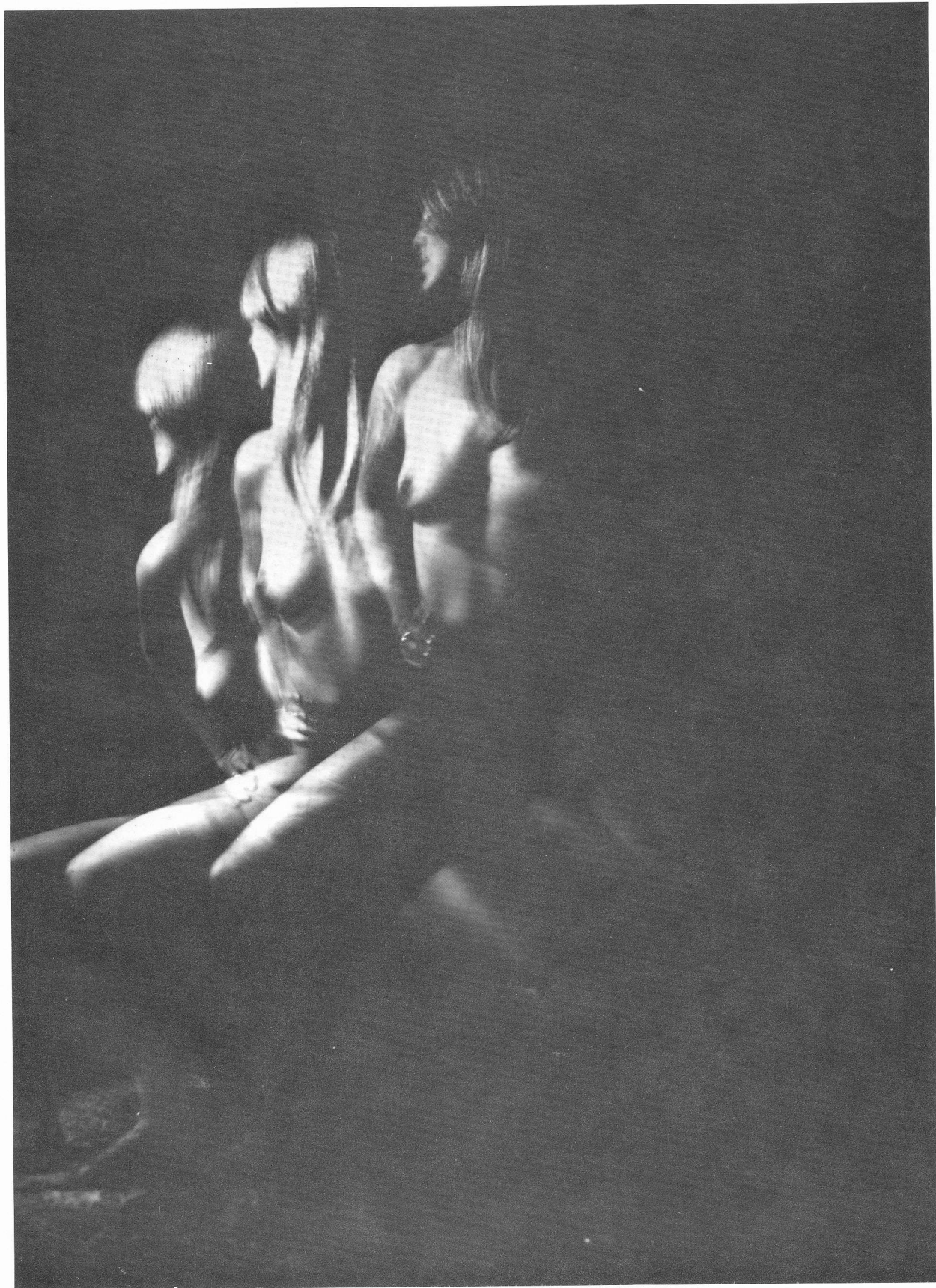
As bodies will.



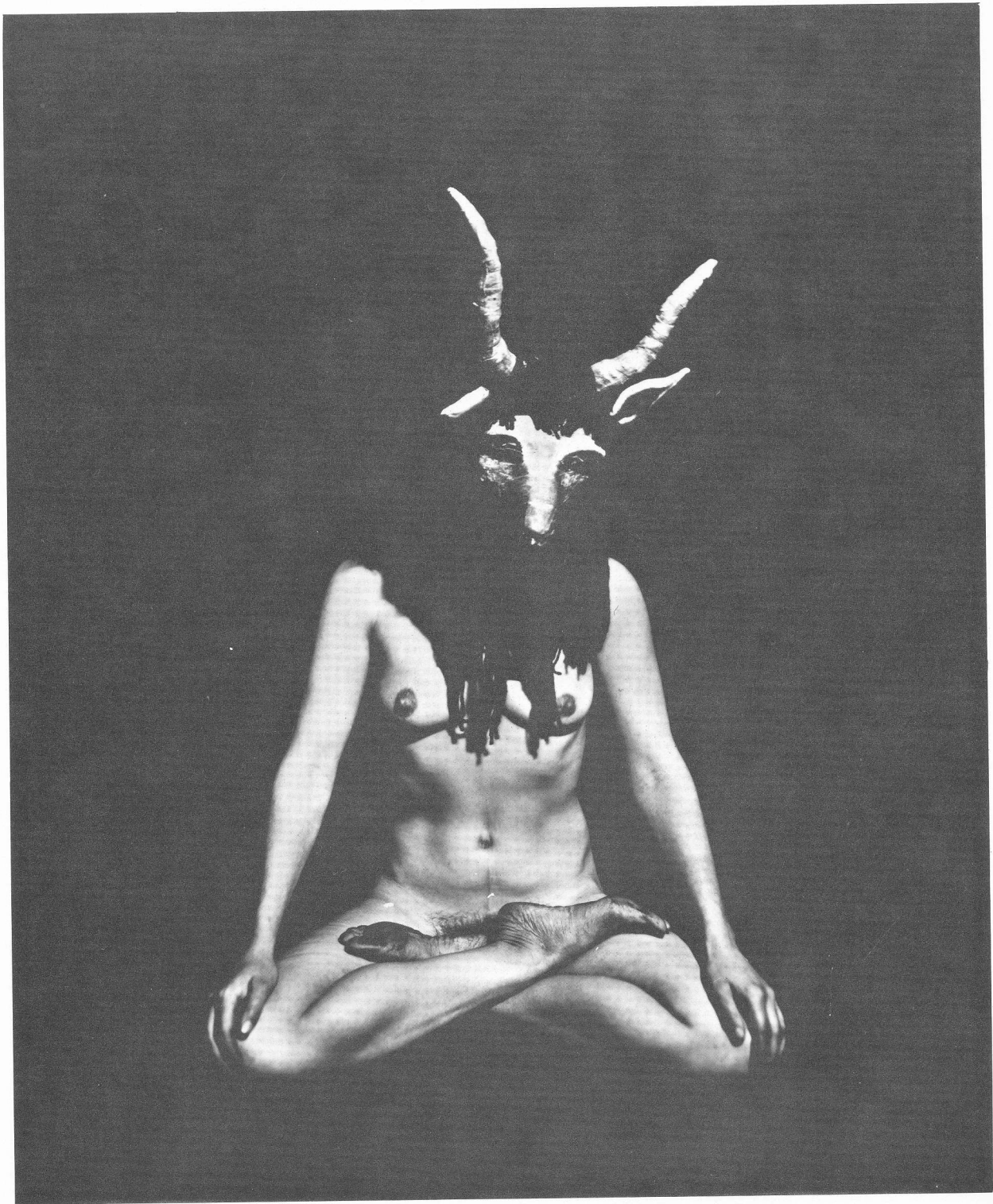
Steven J. Cromwell



James Enyeart



James Enyeart



James Enyeart

What Happened When I Read in Grossinger's Book of the Cranberry Islands from Chapter Ten, THE LONG BODY OF THE DREAM, on a Spring Afternoon in 1972 Between Four and Four-Thirty at Finch Farm, Phelps County, Missouri-- Much Abbreviated.

It has happened before, Many times. Many witnesses. Many have noticed. I have noticed.

* * * * *

Remember that during this Period of Time the mystic, Ohnedaruth, known as John Coltrane is playing "Offering" and then "Expression," recorded on February 15, 1967 and March 17, 1967 respectively. John Coltrane died on July 17, 1967.

* * * * *

I read [from Chapter Ten, THE LONG BODY OF THE DREAM] in Earth Geography Booklet No. 1 of IO magazine. ("IO," pronounced "eye-oh": a magazine, a moon of Jupiter, in Hebrew -יָי - the most ancient name of God):

"Children drilled and nagged to insanity in the U. S. Army." (Last Night reading Carroll Hawley's legal pad manuscript on the consequences of the army conditioning in the shadow of a tank masturbating while lying in mud mixed with buffalo piss; an old man of nineteen for whom murdering with a machine gun becomes more natural [!] than making love.)

"You're in for the asking. And anyway, you're in It's the start of remembering that we do remember other lives, as we shall remember this one." (Coming off of Crossing Brooklyn Ferry and the miraculous presence of Walt just around the bend in the road, in the soul:

"Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me now. I had as much of you--
I laid in my stores in advance.
I considered long seriously of you before you were born . . .
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good
as looking at you now, for all you
cannot see me?"

"A chain of restaurants arises named Dante's Inferno, steaks on hot coals attended by chefs with pitchforks, the damned, meat eaters all . . . sneezing because, as the ad says, Dante's Inferno is now air-conditioned." (Henry Miller knew the Air

What Happened When I Read in Grossinger's Book of the Cranberry Islands from Chapter Ten, THE LONG BODY OF THE DREAM, on a Spring Afternoon in 1972 Between Four and Four-Thirty at Finch Farm, Phelps County, Missouri-- Much Abbreviated.

It has happened before, Many times. Many witnesses. Many have noticed. I have noticed.

* * * * *

Remember that during this Period of Time the mystic, Ohnedaruth, known as John Coltrane is playing "Offering" and then "Expression," recorded on February 15, 1967 and March 17, 1967 respectively. John Coltrane died on July 17, 1967.

* * * * *

I read [from Chapter Ten, THE LONG BODY OF THE DREAM] in Earth Geography Booklet No. 1 of IO magazine. ("IO," pronounced "eye-oh": a magazine, a moon of Jupiter, in Hebrew - י - the most ancient name of God):

"Children drilled and nagged to insanity in the U. S. Army." (Last Night reading Carroll Hawley's legal pad manuscript on the consequences of the army conditioning in the shadow of a tank masturbating while lying in mud mixed with buffalo piss; an old man of nineteen for whom murdering with a machine gun becomes more natural [!] than making love.)

"You're in for the asking. And anyway, you're in It's the start of remembering that we do remember other lives, as we shall remember this one." (Coming off of Crossing Brooklyn Ferry and the miraculous presence of Walt just around the bend in the road, in the soul:

"Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me now. I had as much of you--
I laid in my stores in advance.
I considered long seriously of you before you were born . . .
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good
as looking at you now, for all you
cannot see me?"

"A chain of restaurants arises named Dante's Inferno, steaks on hot coals attended by chefs with pitchforks, the damned, meat eaters all . . . sneezing because, as the ad says, Dante's Inferno is now air-conditioned." (Henry Miller knew the Air

Conditioned Nightmare and he was not dreaming either. More evidence, Diet For a Small Planet shows that our carnivorous culture which murders the cow for its hamburgers could live with better health without meat. [Flash on a Zap cartoon of the panic filled man being chased by the grinning hamburger with knife and fork in hand saying, "It's my turn now!"] The cow, the car, and the carbine are the tri-partite base of the American economy-- plus interest. Look: "The percentage you're paying is too high priced while you are living beyond all your means and the man in the suit has just bought a new car from the profit he's made on your dreams." [Traffic.] Add inflations. One of them: it takes twenty pounds of vegetable, grain, or fish feed proteins to make one pound of cow-processed beef protein. A rump roast tonight, a Plymouth in the driveway, and last year close to \$1000 towards the maintenance of a B-52 that dropped bombs on Haiphong. Implicated Further: "Beginning over 300 years ago the wealthy Western powers established the plantation system in their subject lands. The plantation's sole purpose was to produce wealth for the colonizers, not food for men. Thus, most of the crops selected by the colonizers--tobacco, rubber, tea, coffee, cocoa, cotton, and other fibers--have negligible nutritional value. The name subsequently given to them, 'cash crops,' is quite an appropriate label. Cash crops became established in world trade as the only proper exports from the Third World; so that even after emancipation from formal colonial control, Third world countries were 'hooked' on cash crops as their only means of survival. Coffee alone is the economic life-blood of forty developing countries [and coffee ain't really too good for you], as in the African country of Rwanda, where coffee represents 87.5 percent of earnings from foreign exchange. Obviously cash crops usurp land, often the best agricultural land, that could be growing food for an undernourished local population." What then? "Indicating the Task: his followers, becoming free of cars, houses, canned food, universities, and shoes, master the Three Mysteries of their own Body, Speech, and Mind; and fearlessly chop down the rotten trees and prune the sick Limbs of this country America and then burn the leftover trash.")

"Its all hitting at approximately the same point, though I can't say Begin with: YOU DON'T NEED CAUSALITY. The geomagnetic, electroastrological gravitational-synchronous field of the Earth says: IT'S ALL CONNECTED, without connections." (Reading Grossinger because Fred reminded me. It waiting in one of three or four high priority book stacks for this afternoon Moment to arrive.)

"NOTHING IS ARBITRARY, but that's not good enough."
((With awareness accelerating co-incident becomes syn-chronicity. There is no such thing as accident and even the tire chains snapping on a wet snowy drive away from Kansas is opportunity. A Year later a radioless drive towards Kansas via Centertown, McGirk, Tipton--Home of the World's Largest Eight-Ball, Syracuse, Otterville, Dresden, Knobnoster, Concordia, over and over again singing lyrics from the Grateful Dead's "Black Peter": "See here how everything lead up to this Day / And its just like any other day that's ever been!" In Eric's trailer, these lines an epigraph to a picture he had drawn of an old woman rocking and smiling with a huge sun rising from the background. Glad Day. And Now the music plays somewhere beneath my hearing threshold as Concentration raises barriers against the senses.))

"we. have. been. here. before. we.
have. been. here. before." (Lately been thinking that to know past lives wouldn't be much help since you are in this one Now. But I ain't gotta right to say.) "we. have. been. here. before."

"We see where we are. It is synchronous because way back then we all set our watches together and then left on different time scales, and in the end we're all supposed to meet at the top of the empire state building at the same time, which means the same place." (Albion back together again. Long Time-no see! And the immortals laugh after their fashion, emitting Worlds of Energy.)

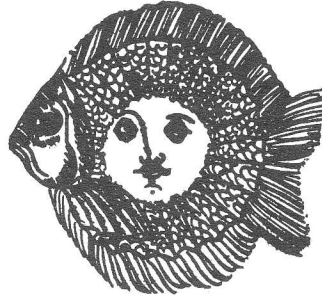
"WE. ARE. ALL. ON. THE. SAME. TIME."

(And as I reel to the final words: "which is to say: who can tell one time from another. As we are, let us live," "Expression" rolls to a conclusion having floated four and a half pages of reading high above even itself, most going unheard, yet none passing unfelt. The Period called forth by the Song. The sixty-cycle electric clock in another plane mutely marking nineteen minutes and seven seconds. Times there have been--many witnesses and myself one, having and not having control over it, when I've known it was going to happen that way, muse/ic and words meeting and finishing together atop a stately pavilion, essentially unlike the Empire State Bldg. For example, Thelonious Monk phrases matching Blake's"

"But Others of the Sons of Los build Moments & Minutes & Hours
And Days & Months & Years & Ages & Periods, wondrous buildings . .
And every Minute has an azure Tent with silken Veils:
And every Hour has a bright Golden Gate carved with skill.") . .

"WE. ARE. ALL. ON. THE. SAME. TIME."

"We move to the beat because we hear it; we find ourselves listening thank god."



Mark Thiessen

Distance

I never tie my shoes because the way they fit with a loose knot lets me slip them on and off without the bother. The reason I mentioned it was because a minute ago I was thinking about retying them. They've been a little loose lately and have a tendency to fall off when I have to run. Anyway, I was looking at them just now until I realized that its been so long since I tied them that one string has rotted and fallen away in two places. I thought about you shortly afterwards and decided I wouldn't do anything until they were both shot.

Up yours

Well,

all I can say is

there he came,

shootin' his way

strait off an old time billboard commercial

in a 1953

red flashy Pontiac convertible

never lookin' back

as he tooled down I-70

in a cloud of colored hats

and laughin' girls

leaving us

feelin' shitty

eatin' dust

thumbs up

still pokein' holes

in the sky

The Bath

The wife steps into her bath. Sounds of far-off thrashing, a golden retriever, slow motion of green and yellow. The ivy on the sill trails into the water. The ivy silhouettes its valentines upon the translucent glass. A spider on one of the new pearly tendrils watches the bathing, or the oily bubbles, or something else.

She smokes and reads. For her the sky is covered with old circus posters. She strokes her breasts and nipples for The Human Fly and The Tom Thumb and The Tattooed Lady. The circus went broke in Poughkeepsie.

Her mind is on her children, all the hundreds of children she said hello to and taught to count and read and said goodbye to. All the schools, a broken string of brick beads. All the children peek over the rim of the tub and wonder who she is. The wife steps into her bath. The spider and circus folk have not yet arrived. The wife steps into her bath and the children cheer and cheer this stranger until her friends arrive.



She is settled

infinite scene of brown

leather

knarled skin

Mother of all.

She has been fucked for the last time

until spring

sleeps her cold cracked sleep

shapes herself for us to see

frozen tough to walk over.

Across the two mile road west

empty trees for borders

clean hills flow to ocean

where sun sets as pacific in kansas

as anywhere we wish.

This year I am closer than before

waiting for cold to come

body adjusted to lack of heat.

Now I watch and wait

until she opens up again

warm..... wet of spring.

John Browns Brother

thru these woods is easy
not much left in Douglas county
farmers bored by winter
speedy woodsmen
bulldoze em down. .
"fuck them oak
cow cant feed on em. ."

i hear copperhead move away
inhaled my sweaty fear
which pulls me into the creek
Springer Creek
runs from just south of here into the Kaw.

here the blood of his brother
ran down and stained the fossil rocks
i stare into.
the brother marched in chains
from Osawatomie to Lecompton
august '65
close to 100 degrees that day
"he was crazed when we got here. . no use hangin em. ."

thats what pissed John off.

he split to east coast ferry landing, shortly.

i wade thru the creek
up & out to new plowed field
beans just laid into it

turn towards the house quarter mile west
pup spots it thru the sun. . . takes off

earth steams as i move into alfalfa
two weeks rain rises up around me
i walk thru waves
the house shimmers.

blinded i enter
she comes down cool
"wheres the visitor with cold beer?"

no one comes and i dream coors out of business
close to john browns brother
in his dreams past.

"...take this case, consider it fairly,
impartially, and dispassionately to the
end that you may discover the truth and
express it in your verdict."

Judge Hugh Means
Feb 1926

Judge Means sat on the bench for some
40 years
in Lawrence, Kansas
Douglas County

here and now trying Clarence "Springtime" Cooper
and Mrs Cooper
in violation of liquor law
that is conspiring:

"...against the peace and dignity
of the State of Kansas..."

that is
Springtime ran a speakeasy at 1009 New York Street
house still stands
he now runs pool hall on Mass Street where
Apache, Cherokee teenagers stagger
drunk tonight.

and it all started in high school
Goran and Cooper schoolmates
one becomes D. A.
another bootlegger
buddies until Springtime turns up later
running shine through Lawrence
Eudora
Baldwin
LeCompton
Tonganoxie
until Goran goes out after him and
finally on Christmas Day 1925

imagine
out on a bust
Christmas Day 1925

out to new york street where
to quote the warrant
was found:

"...for sale, barter and delivery...bottles,
glasses, jugs, kegs, cases and other
receptacles and furniture, fixtures and
property..."

Springtime says:

"...no knowledge of liquor, no idea how
it came to this house. must've been planted!"
the mrs remains silent.

and the warrant does say he created
a common nuisance.

and it states:

"You are therefore commanded, forthwith
to arrest the said c. c. and have his
bod before this court..."

along with the "inmates"

george p. bob r. w. j.
charlie c. levi w.
joe g. henry w.

wasn't a long trial, cold in the old brick court house
the old men curious
rooting with dry mouth for springtime
state presents
clarence denies
mrs cooper denies

judge means dont believe it

jury dont believe it

yet carry nation somewhere lurking
down from topeka hatchet sheathed
she believes it

so the verdict

"guilty"

and the sentence

quaint

"That Clarence "Springtime" Cooper be confined to the
jail in Douglas County for a period of 9 months
and be fined not more than \$500.00..."
the same for her.

So be cool in Lawrence, Kansas
play pool with Spring
but keep the paper bag of wine
in yer pocket
Springtimes un-written rule.
And remember Olson

"That we are only
as we find out we are..."
maximus



.
.
.

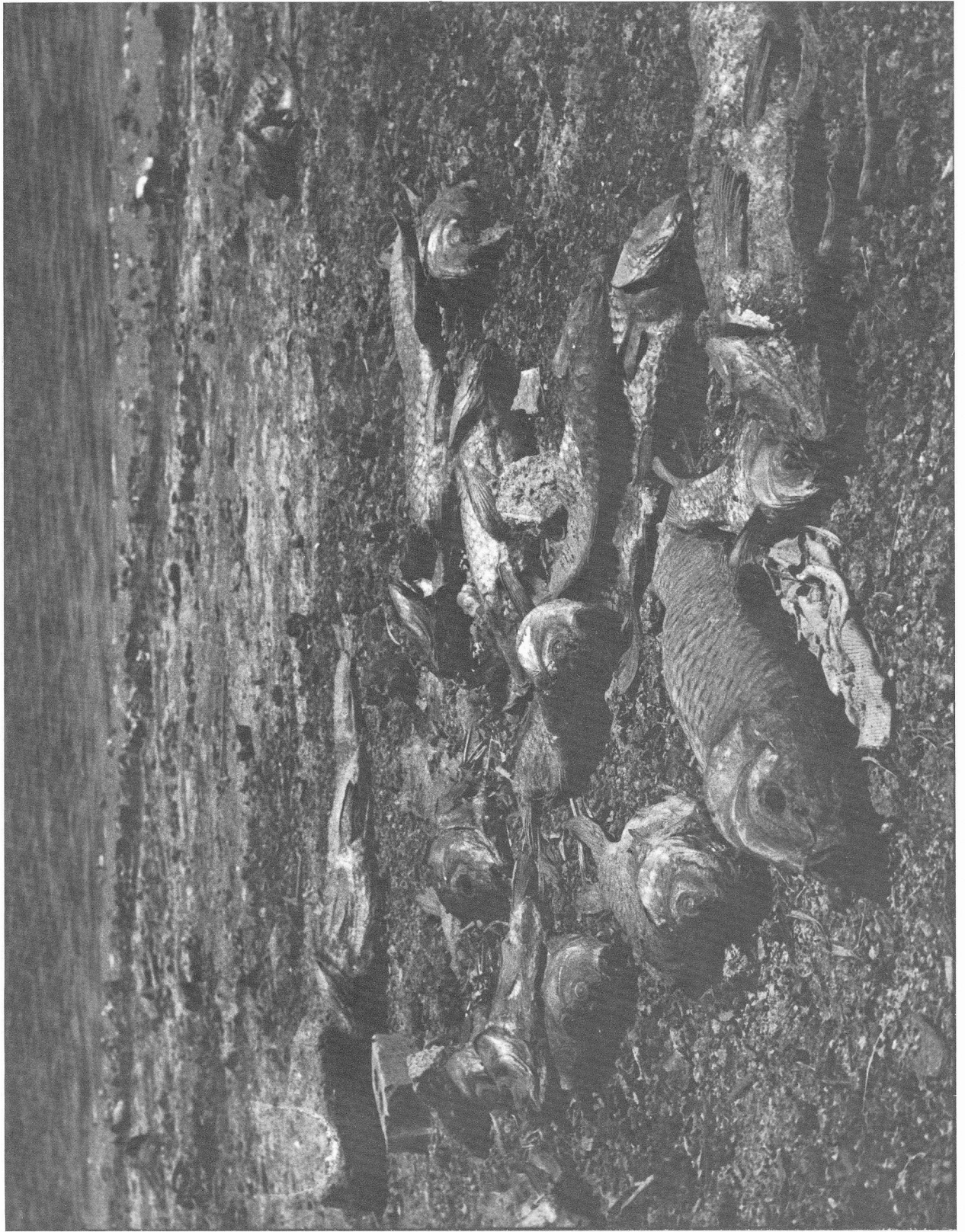
Wayne S. Propst, Jr.

Kansas Inter-Disciplinary Endocrine Systems, Inc.

A short study on studies
has shown that
aggression on the one part
or of another can be
developed in such a way
as to be of value in problem solving
the solutions to which are
often obscured by the inability
of those involved to grasp
the amount and magnitude
of studies to which they may
avail themselves, it is however
necessary to maintain a totally
unrestricted attitude of acceptance
as well as rudimentary
ability to resolve both as individuals
and within the framework
of eliminating the misguided
or what you call your bull
and what you call your shit

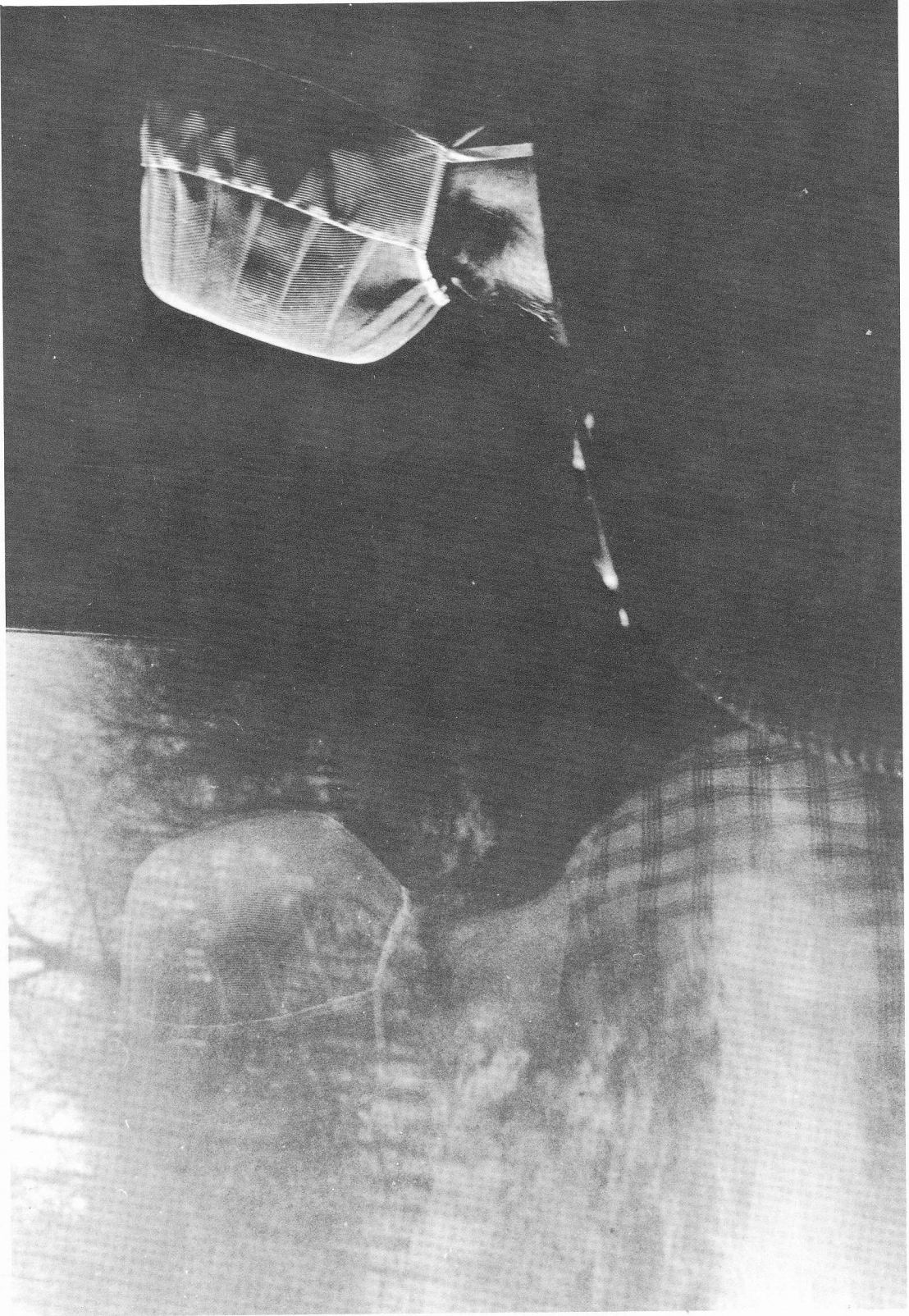
Kinky Midget Episode

Yesterday 6 June, 1972 they found the body of an unidentified midget in the Kansas River -- Wyandotte County cops caught it just before it was about ready to join the Missouri beneath the Choteau Bridge which is just south of the Gallo wine plant which is where they unload tank cars from California -- My friend David M. Melvin worked there for a time -- They gave him a long piece of bathroom type shower spray hose which he would use to syphon out the tank cars -- He would sit at the edge of the tracks -- on a little 98¢ canvas and wood camp stool -- sucking the hose and squirting burgundy into quart bottles -- Along the siding he would move back and forth filling the bottles -- fact is that's where he met his first wife Ann -- her job was to lick and stick on the labels after Melvin had filled them -- she also had to screw each lid into place -- As she followed him through the yards he would talk to her about his work and how it was great for a person with a taste for wine -- one day towards the end of their shift -- he blurted out that he wanted to be married because of all the toasters and electric can openers that would surely be given -- she agreed pointing out that sometimes couples often received monitary remuneration for nuptual exchanges -- so later that afternoon Ann and David boarded a bus for Oakland where they were married -- receiving afterward a toaster from his widowed mother, an electric can opener from her folks but disappointedly no envelopes with fat or skinny checks -- They lived poor in Oakland -- David trying to maintain a struggling hash pipe business and Ann learning to type -- Melvin got here just a few minutes before I heard about the midget who was later identified as 26 year old Richard Dechilly an inexperienced sailor from Topeka -- he leaves a normal sized mother and short father -- Melvin and I have scheduled a discussion for this afternoon -- the topic "Do midgets have anything to do with his estranged wife (who is now in Des Moines) or is it the wine factory that is to blame" -- It will be a round table format.

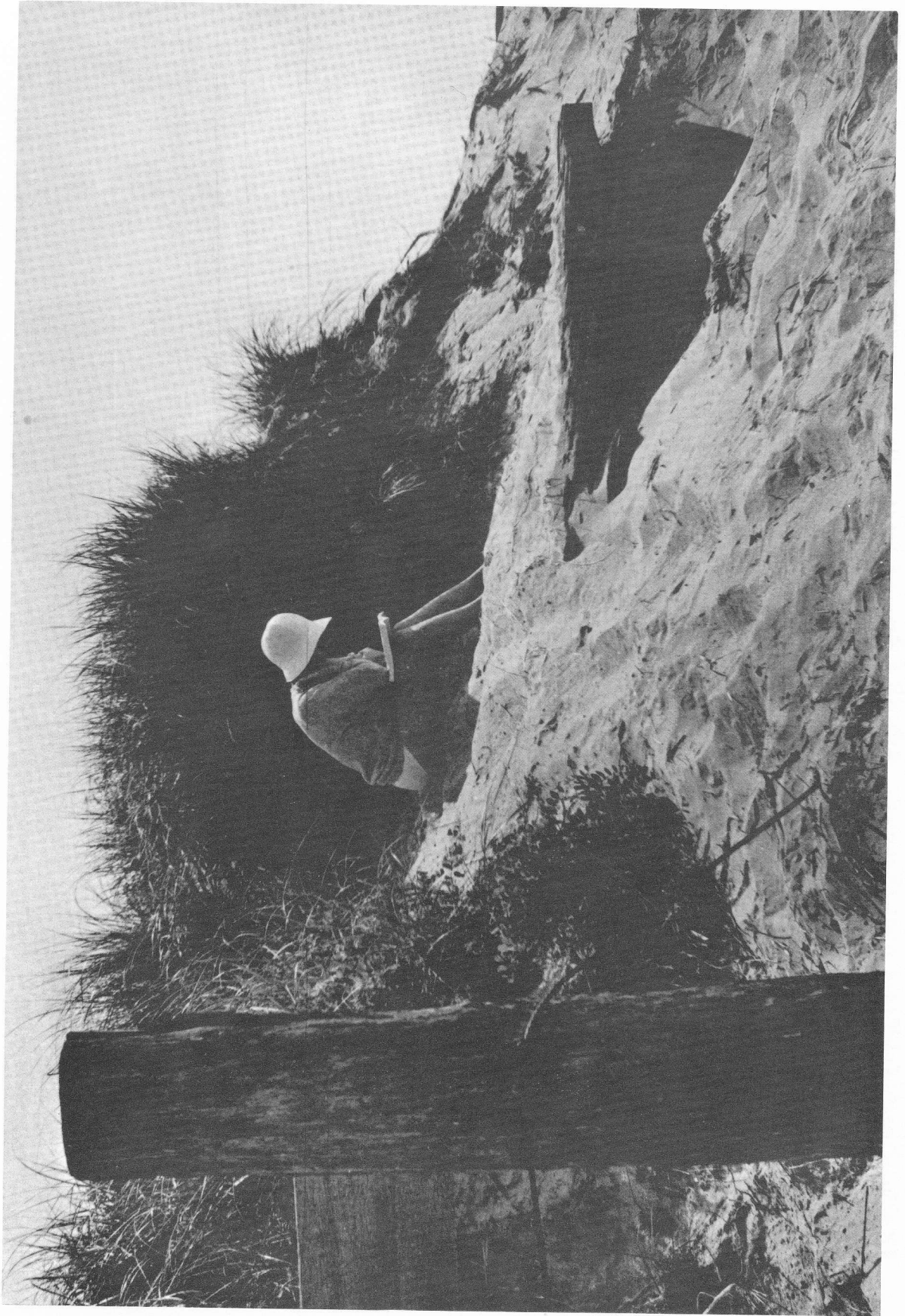




Gary Brown



Dan Younger



Margaret Lanoue

Packard's Grove
(for D. H.)

No one not from Kansas could have believed
that it existed there the idea
of all those trees
a regular Eastern Woodland
although cottonwood instead of maple
held the ground

so close and dark that even the
ruby eyes of wood rats
were flames among the leaves
and the barred owls laughter
called up maniacs
and murderers who stood
outside our tent all night
barely breathing.

That was years ago.

Right about here should be
a line that says
--I wish I had it all again--
but I can not make it come.
The darkness between that time and this
has been too deep

the terror in the owls voice
would be the same but now
grown older
we may turn quietly without fright
and recognize too well
the phantoms
that appear outside our tent.

Packard's Grove
(for D. H.)

No one not from Kansas could have believed
that it existed there the idea
of all those trees
a regular Eastern Woodland
although cottonwood instead of maple
held the ground

so close and dark that even the
ruby eyes of wood rats
were flames among the leaves
and the barred owls laughter
called up maniacs
and murderers who stood
outside our tent all night
barely breathing.

That was years ago.

Right about here should be
a line that says
--I wish I had it all again--
but I can not make it come.
The darkness between that time and this
has been too deep

the terror in the owls voice
would be the same but now
grown older
we may turn quietly without fright
and recognize too well
the phantoms
that appear outside our tent.

Stories from Florence: No. 1.

She was the wife of a very famous Japanese pianist who had died at the peak of his fame. She chose then to live in Florence on the top floor of a Palazzo with a view of the Duomo, a garden, and the objects of his life. The sitting room and the library next to it were arranged as though she were trying to keep alive that electric unexpectedness which accompanies a famous life, rather than the unchanging deadness of memories: these were not mementoes of his life, but necessary objects placed here that he would use tomorrow. It was her great sadness that they remained glued to the spots where she placed them.

But what mementoes! The picture taken with the Emperor was on a corner table, not conspicuous, small enough so that you were at first drawn to it as you might be to any family photograph, small enough so that you had to bend forward to examine it and so that after you saw that it was a photo of Yakamura with the Emperor, you straightened again with a new respect--prepared now to meet the great Yakamura.

But of course he was dead, and that was what the face of Mrs. Yakamura seemed to say.

Mrs. Yakamura did not like me before she saw me; our meeting confirmed it. Not only was I not Japanese nor a musician, I was obviously and irrevocably an American. Dressed in a red pant suit she seemed as glued to her place in the arm chair as the other objects in the room, waiting for an unbelieved-in return to usage. Her knees were held tightly together, her hands folded in her lap, her back rigid, leaning slightly forward as though tucked in a bit at the stomach, ready to vomit at the sight of me, but bravely covering it with a smile while she talked with my fiancée.

Haruko was also Japanese and received many interpreting jobs. Mrs. Yakamura had been telephoned by the Embassy in Rome and asked if she knew of someone who could serve as interpreter for two Japanese industrialists. She had many young Japanese friends studying at the conservatory and she asked one of them, Kiedo, who in turn asked Haruko. So we were here to receive the assignment. That is, Haruko was here; I was obviously foreign-made excess baggage.

Kiedo had also come with us and was staying for a dinner to which we, not being musicians, were not invited. She helps a lot of young musicians, Haruko told me. The present young talent deserving of that help was Kiedo. He was studying cello, very thin, and when he bobbed a smile, you could see a lot of gold in the sides of his teeth. After a year's study at the conservatory he was relatively sure he would be famous. If there is anything worse than fame to make you forget you are a human being, it is the belief that you will soon be famous and the subsequent pity felt for the poor mortals who are your peers. But Kiedo wasn't all that positive of his future fame, and this left him a little nervous at times. Maybe Mrs. Yakamura was able to reassure him. He brought his cello

and kept fingering the case while she talked to Haruko.

From the time Mrs. Yakamura and I had met and she had given me a smile as if she had just heard the supreme sour note, we had engaged in small verbal battles when she would switch from Italian to English.

First it was: "You speak Italian very well for an American."

"You are too kind."

"Italian is very difficult for we Japanese."

"Also for us Americans."

Later it was: "I'm very sorry we speak Japanese. We could speak English, but she," she said batting the supposed slam with her head towards Haruko, "does not understand it."

"Please," I replied, "speak Japanese. It is so beautiful for me to simply hear the rhythm."

That was when she started looking at me as if she hadn't seen me before.

Before we left she asked what I did.

"I write."

"Oh really, what?"

"What is necessary."

When we left Kiedo remained seated, still anxiously fingering his cello case. Mrs. Yakamura gave me another of those please-be-so-kind-as-to-stop-living smiles and I said to her from the landing, "Mrs. Yakamura, you have a most beautiful smile," and turned to walk down the stairs.

I did not expect to see or hear from her again so I was surprised when Haruko told me that Mrs. Yakamura wanted to see me.

"What for?"

"I don't know, but she's just invited you and not me."

"Should I go?"

"She's really very important."

"We don't need her."

"I know. But it won't hurt to go and see what she wants."

I called her to thank her for the invitation.

"I will expect you at 9 o'clock Friday evening," and she hung up.

It ruined my whole week waiting for Friday. I was neither Japanese, a musician, nor published. And she obviously didn't like me.

On Wednesday I saw Kiedo having tea at a bar and I joined him at his table. He seemed slightly embarrassed.

"What can you tell me about Mrs. Yakamura?"

"Mrs. Yakamura?"

"Yes."

"She's a very nice lady." He seemed to want to drop it at that.

"Yes, of course, but what does she do with her time?"

"She listens to her husbands records. She doesn't go to concerts anymore, only an occasional small private quartet or a solo performance. She has helped a great many young Japanese musicians. She has great

influence everywhere." That seemed to calm him and he raised the cup to his lips.

"She's invited me to dinner Friday."

The cup stumbled, tea spilling over the sides. "You?"

"Yes. I don't know why. Do you?"

"No," he said too quickly and started looking at me like he hadn't seen me before.

* * * * *

The kimono she wore was a beautiful light burnt orange of a shade that was perfect for the patterns woven in silver thread.

"I hope you'll excuse me for wearing a kimono, it's much more comfortable for me."

He hair was done in much the same manner as before: combed straight back, puffed up, and accenting a very pronounced widow's peak, only it seemed more alive now. In fact her whole body no longer seemed to stand as though she were a snake frozen into some sort of cane, but now softened a bit.

"Though I am Japanese, I have a weakness for the food of China. I hope you will excuse me while I see how the cook is proceeding."

She showed me into the sitting room where I had been before and indicated a small bar that had been laid out on the coffee table.

"Please help yourself."

"Mrs. Yakamura, why am I here? What do you want of me?"

"I'm going to offer to give you money to write." And she left me staring at the back of her kimono, listening to the rustle of silk.

Money to write? She did say money to write, I kept telling myself as I walked around the room looking at pieces of carved jade, wooden lacquer bowls, and hanging scrolls of Japanese ideographs. Then I remembered the bottle of scotch I had seen. Scotch on the rocks, I hadn't had one for almost a year. But money to write! I thought again as I picked up the ice cubes with the wooden tongs and dropped them in the glass. What a rich sound as they clinked and money to write! Not work or do this and I'll pay you, but I'll pay you and you write. Ah, but write what? It must be an honest grant, because what could I write that could possibly be of use to her? Maybe she wasn't so bad after all. The exterior I had seen the first time was simply that---an exterior. But why should she choose to give me money to write without seeing anything that I had done? I quickly thought of what stories I could show her, what false starts on so many false novels. No, I had nothing I could show her, nothing that was perfect. But she wasn't paying me money for perfected stories, but to write! It was only necessary to lay before her a promise of talent and what young writer does not believe he at least has a paragraph that abounds in the promise of talent? One of those paragraphs that he keeps hidden, returns to in order to say and convince himself, "see, I wrote that. I can write that, and it's really good." If he were to show it to someone else, he

would add, "of course you have to imagine it in the context of the story it would be placed in." Ah, I had plenty of such paragraphs; in fact, whole stories made up of beautiful paragraphs that when put together were somehow only a jumble of mush. But separated---what talent they showed!

I hoped the cook needed a lot of watching for I finished my first drink, added fresh ice, and more scotch. Money to write. Maybe I wouldn't have to take a job as one of those tour guides after all: walking around the city with a rolled up newspaper thrust upward in my hand with a bunch of gabby old American women following it like it was the holy grail. I really can't imagine myself doing that, I realized. But if I had money to write, I mean, didn't have to worry about money like now, maybe I could calm down and start a new novel. No, I could never be a tour guide.

Oh, money to write! I guess I always knew, really knew, that someone somewhere would come along to help me out. It's only right. There are some rich people in the world who can afford (thank God) to gamble, no, invest in the future of art. What's a thousand dollars to her, or two thousand for that matter? I started calculating how much she would give me. What if she asked how much I needed? Enough for a year? Two? A year is not very long, maybe only just long enough to get started on a good novel, but it would need two to show maturity. Two years would be necessary.

She looked radiant when she returned. The heat from the kitchen had brought a flush to her cheeks and I could hardly believe it was the same woman who had given me the please-drop-dead smile a week ago. In fact, all through dinner she seemed to gain warmth, become more human. I tried to ask her about my coming grant (such a delicious phrase, it would fit into all sorts of situations: I'm living on my grant, my grant allows me, thanks to my grant), but she brushed that aside by saying, "Let's talk about it after dinner," as if it were nothing more than some unpleasant point of business that was to be disposed of as quickly as possible. She filled the air with anecdotes about her husband, their travels, and performances. Obviously, it was very painful for her when he died. If it is tragic for a great artist to die at the peak of his fame, how much more so for the wife: used to concert nights, performances in foreign places, before royalty, standing ovations, receptions---all cut off at once, not the gradual reduction that old age would have brought. No, the husband went from fame to death, but the wife moved from fame to oblivion.

"As you probably know," she finally said when we were drinking a last cup of tea, "I help several young Japanese musicians of exceptional talent. Last week when you told me you wrote, I began asking myself why I shouldn't extend that help to other fields in the arts. I have decided you will be the first such recipient."

It was all true! "But you haven't seen anything that I have done," I said.

"The kind of assistance I offer is a monthly payment to live on, to free you to work at your writing. You will come here once a month to

collect it and bring with you something you have written. I will be very honest. If I am disappointed, I will simply tell you and stop your stipend. I have done that before for musicians who performed badly. Is that clear?

I was positive I could flood her for years with beautiful paragraphs, "Quite."

"And now come into the other room. I'm sure you're able to remember something you have written in the past that you like. You can write a copy for me now and I'll give you your first payment tonight."

Enchanted.

In fact, during dinner I had been judging her character and deciding what paragraphs to show her. Of course I knew them by memory. It was like playing music: you chose the piece that you thought your audience would like, no, appreciate, and played it from memory.

She showed me to a desk that had been placed next to the piano. The desk was open on both sides, more like a table, and after giving me paper and ink and a very ancient quill pen, she sat down opposite me to watch me perform.

"You must excuse me," I said. "This is all very awkward for me. I've never had anyone watch me write before."

"I'll put on some music."

She got up and as she walked away I started writing from memory the fluid sentences that made up the first paragraph. I heard the beginnings of a piano solo, it was probably her husband's. She sat down opposite me again and when I looked up at her, her face had softened even more, but in the softening the muscles relaxed, loosing all tension and showing her for the aging sad woman she was.

"Don't stop." She said and it was a command as she looked at my hands. I dipped the pen into the ink and began a second paragraph.

The table was quite narrow and I felt her knees touch mine. I didn't move away, acting as if I were absorbed in my work. When I felt her hands on my knees, though, it was like a sudden shock.

"I told you to keep writing." Her voice was flat, almost bored.

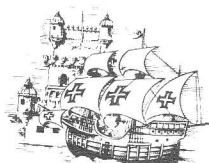
I took a fresh piece of paper to write a different paragraph, for the one I had been working on had disintegrated in the flow of ink as only stupid and false. As I was scratching the words on the paper, hearing them mix with the music of the great Yakamura, I felt her palms and fingers begin to stroke my inner thighs. Finally, she left the chair to kneel on the other side of the desk and I could feel her breasts lightly pushing down on my knees as she slowly leaned forward, her hands creeping along my jeans. Her strokings were in time with the slow rhythm of the piano melody. When she reached for my zipper I looked down to see two slender hands knowingly draw it downward, that sound now mixing with the music. I felt her cheek sliding along my thigh. So this was what the grant was all about, what the helping of so much talent amounted to---paid gigoloes. I wondered how she managed it with Kiedo and his cello. As she drew my penis out, my mind saw lurid scenes with pianists (did it start with her

husband?), swaying violinists reaching a climactic high C, and an absurd tubist or two. But what the hell if that was her weakness? What the hell was it to me to come here once a month and scratch nonsense on paper while she listened to her husband's music, maybe imagining it was he playing above her ministrations. Nothing but a strange perversion. Who did it hurt?

My hand started refusing to write words. I could only make scratches, but I was sure the sounds were quite enough. I looked down at her black hair and saw her tongue come out of her mouth and draw a slow wet line on the underside of my penis from the base to the top. My penis was responding, but as she repeated the action again and her face tilted up so that I could see her pink tongue and closed eyes, my hand stopped scratching marks on the paper.

I was sure it wasn't me. I kept saying, 'money to write,' but my hand . . . it had written those paragraphs again. It had worked, and knew better than I what rubbish they were. While I watched horrified, it completed its rebellion against me by picking up the bottle of ink then tipping it, the drops falling in heavy blue blobs, drops that were to have been the words for my grant. Her eyes opened for a moment in surprise and fear then closed again in anger as the drops splashed into them. I tried to explain to her that I didn't know what I was doing, but she was screaming at me and my hand pushed me away from the table, put my penis back where it belonged, zipped me up, and opened the door to lead me out as though it were some sort of stern father.

Outside, I put my hand in front of my face and looked at it. It was as if I were seeing it for the first time and I spent the rest of the night walking through the dark stone streets of Florence, feeling my hand at the end of my wrist, and wondering what it would write in the morning.



PALIMPSEST

Evametheus
and Padamndora
at the fatal trunk.
Promejeseus hung.

Ill

fall

all

ills

with impyr cures:
pain-strung-out
divinities,
techknowledgy.

TWO-TOAD SLOTH

I can't think
of one good reason
why we ought
to move
from under
this fine leaf.
Can you?

Nope.

The Patroness

"Finished." Miles stood before the easel, head cocked, and wiped his hands with a turpentine dampened rag. But was this canvas the same as all the others? Maybe Geraldine had been right. Though he had his suspicions, he was too tired to know; nearly too tired to care: his back ached as if he had been cracked across the spine with a hockey stick; the forms on the canvas seemed to fuzz: he let the rag drop to the floor and rubbed his eyes with the back of one thick wrist.

Stripping off his smock, Miles balled it up and tossed it beneath the table that held his model still life: a piece of red corduroy; on top of that a cracked, white plate; next to the plate a Bordeaux bottle: empty, no cork, no label. He turned to the window, closed it, pulled the blind; then walked to the far end of the room: his living area.

His living area was basic: a table with a hot plate on top, two chairs, a sink mounded with dirty dishes, a cot, and a refrigerator that barely cooled and would thump wildly on the wood floor when its motor was running. Miles took a bottle of California Rhine wine and a glass from the refrigerator. Sitting at the table, he absently wiped out the glass with his shirttail; then set it down and poured it brimful. He leaned over, putting his lips to the rim, and noisily pulled a sip off the top. Still hunched over, he lifted his eyes to the studio area: the easel: the canvas. In the morning he would be rested. In the morning he would look at it, really look at it. Then he would know. Behind him the refrigerator began to thump, like someone pounding on a solid door.

A slant of sunlight from the window above the sink cut across the blanket that covered Miles. He stirred beneath the cover: stretched his legs; picked a bit of lint from his navel; scratched his groin. A toilet flushed above him. A neighbor tried to clear his throat. Bacon fried somewhere. He swung his feet to the floor and stood up: nude; stocky. Winding himself into the blanket, he padded out into the hallway and down to the bathroom.

When he returned, Miles set a pan of water to boil on the hot plate and slipped into khaki pants and a sweatshirt. Water steaming, he shook in some Darjeeling tea from a square can and pulled the pan off the glowing coil. He rummaged in the sink for a cup, dishes clattering: found none: peered into the refrigerator where he kept his few clean dishes: found a green mug with a broken handle. Pouring it full, he stirred in three teaspoons of sugar and blew ripples across the tea's surface as he carried it gingerly down toward the studio: it was time to look.

Miles approached the easel cautiously, almost as if slipping up on an enemy. He stepped on something: the rag, he nudged it aside with his bare foot. Stepping around to the window, he tugged at the pulled blind and let it fly up out of his hand: it flapped around the roller several

times: the window flared with light. Miles took a swallow of tea, set his cup on the sill, turned and stared hopefully at the still life: four months of work.

It was . . . photographic: the ribbed corduroy and the plate with its jagged crack were there; the bottle with its dusty shoulders and inverted bottom was there; the colors and lusters and shadows were there; but one thing was missing, still that One Thing: vigor? vitality? life? talent? . . . whatever, once more he had been incapable of getting It into a painting. Once more.

So Geraldine had been right that evening in her office: she had stood with bare arms draped over his shoulders and said, "Okay, okay. If you really want my opinion, I think you're a third-rate painter and you've gone as far as you can. Someday, maybe, you'll quit making excuses and wake up to that fact before our chances for a decent life together are over. Now, are you satisfied?" And he had not been satisfied, not one damned bit, but before he could say so the bell at the front of the gallery had tinkled and she had said, "Oops, time out," and legged it through the swinging doors.

And later, trailing her around as she had bolted the door and closed the shutters, he had asked, "Just who in hell do you think you are to tell me I'm a third-rater?" Challenged, she had paused with her finger on the light switch, looked up toward God, and said, "I happen to be the one who discovered Svensen in Salt Lake and Rajillo in Montego Bay, which shows that I know talent when I see it." And she had snapped out the light.

Still later, back in the office, the argument blazing nicely, he had grabbed one of her dark braids and slapped her, leaving red marks on the white cheek; and she had gone straight for his eyes with her long, pink nails. Then they had stood, hands on hips, noses nearly touching, and swapped insults that quickly turned sexual; ending with her tears and his apologies and . . . love making on the oriental carpet.

After all this, the agreement had been reached: Miles to do one more painting, no time limit; Geraldine to pay all expenses, or be his "patroness" as she called it, at the same time saying how exciting it would be. No excuses this time: plenty of paint, time, and food. No reasons for not doing his best. And here, now, Miles stared at his best and it was like all the others. No more successful. He had reached his peak, such as it was; he woke to the fact.

It was a short walk to Geraldine's gallery, but Miles stretched it into a long one: trudging through the Quarter with hands thrust deep into pockets; stepping over a hose as a shopkeeper washed the slime of evening fog off the slate and brick sidewalk; pausing at a doorway as a white jacketed Negro porter came out and flung a bucket of soapy mop water into the street; passing garbage cans spilling over with oyster shells; stopping, finally, not at Geraldine's, but a block away on the opposite

side of the street: at Leo's.

The door to Leo's stood ajar; its lower hinge squealed as Miles stepped inside: his image leaped at him off the bar mirror; chairs were still upside down on tables. A grunt came from behind the bar and a fat man, wiping his hands on his white apron, stood up. Looking at Miles, a grin gushing to his face, he extended his hands, palms up, as if offering a sword, and said, "So, look who is here. You are still among the living, eh, Artist?"

"Still among them, Leo," Miles said, moving to the teakwood bar: they shook hands firmly over it.

"You've been missed, Miles," said the fat man, serious.

"It's good to see you, Leo."

Leo's face brightened again; he reached over and slapped Miles' shoulder. "But come, let's drink and talk of your work." Miles smiled thinly and nodded.

They moved to a corner table: Miles set the chairs down; Leo worked the cork from a half-empty bottle of Mavrodaphne and splashed wine into two glasses. They drank. Leo drew the back of one big hand across his mouth, refilled his glass, and shoved the bottle toward Miles. Both stared down into the red wine. From outside came the hollow clop clop of a horse's hoofs and the rattle of carriage wheels: the tourists were out.

Dipping a finger into his glass and sucking the wine off it with a kissing sound, Leo said, "You've finished the painting then."

"Last night."

"And . . . ?"

"And it's no different. Like Geraldine said, I've gone as far as I can."

"Are you sure?" Leo said, leaning forward.

Miles nodded his head yes; Leo leaned back.

"Have you told her yet?"

"That's where I'm headed."

"So, what now?"

"Go with her on the Brazil buying trip," Miles said. "After that . . ." he shrugged.

"After that," Leo said, picking at a broken fingernail, "maybe you can mat drawings in the gallery and go sailing on Ponchertrain Sunday afternoons, huh? It will be a good life."

Miles looked up, eyes dull. "Knock it off, Leo. Not now. Not between us."

With a wave of the hand Leo apologized.

"Anyway," continued Miles, "what's wrong with that life? It's better than scrounging down at the Square, like Kilkenny and Cohn: doing charcoals and pastels of the tourists; always talking about one man shows that never come off."

"Is it?"

"Hell yes it is," Miles said, filling his glass carelessly. "Look, I'm thirty-three and have sixty bucks in my pocket, a month's rent paid, and a

mouthful of cavities. I've been awake half the night, every night, for the past six years worrying about painting. And for what? So I can stretch and gesso and paint one more mediocre canvas? This has to be better."

"Maybe it is, Miles. Maybe it is. Do what you feel is right."

"Well, I just wanted you to know."

Leo nodded.

Miles shoved back from the table and stood up. "Leo," he said, offering his hand.

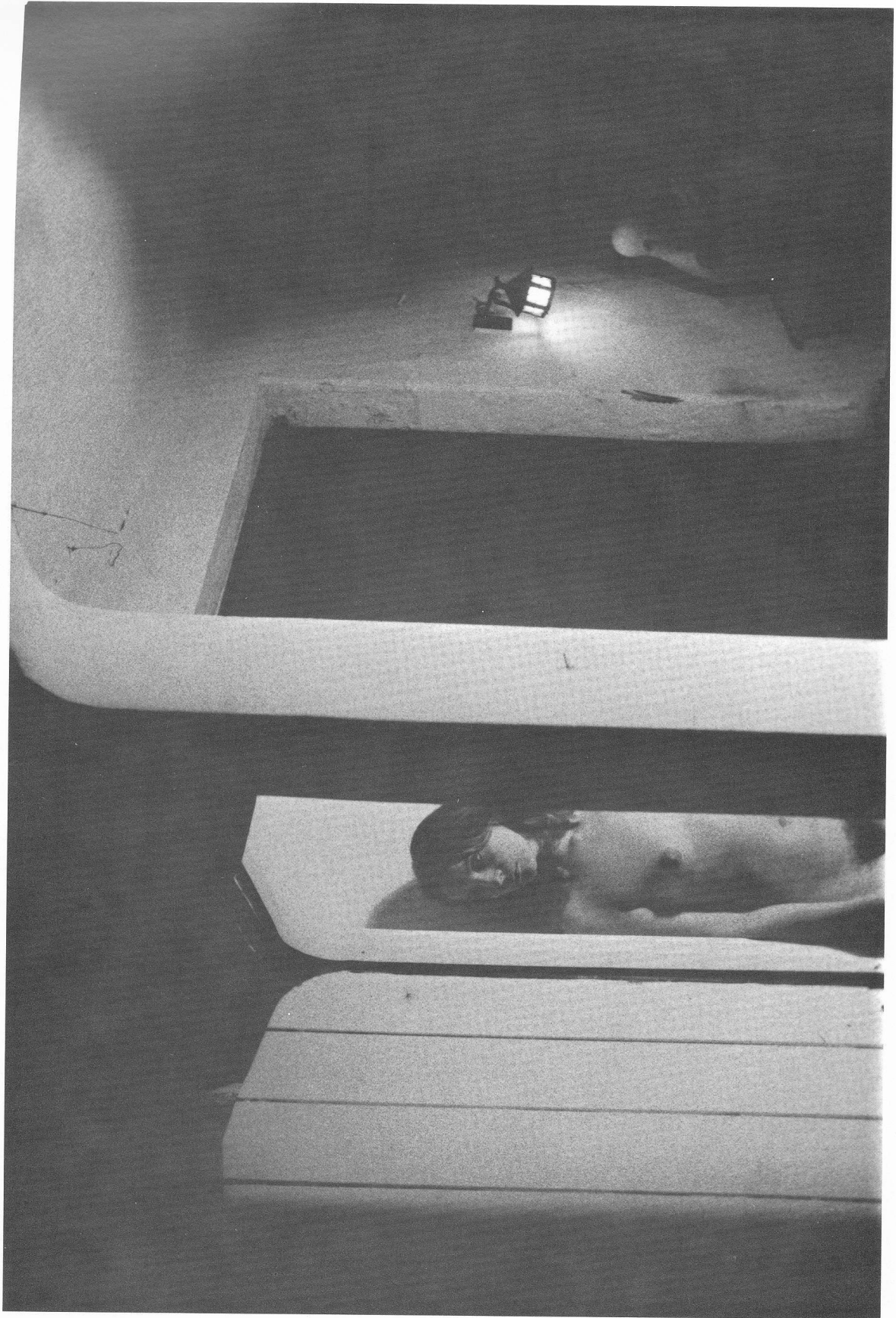
"Miles," Leo said, taking it.

The lower hinge squealed again as Miles went outside. The fat man began taking chairs off tables.

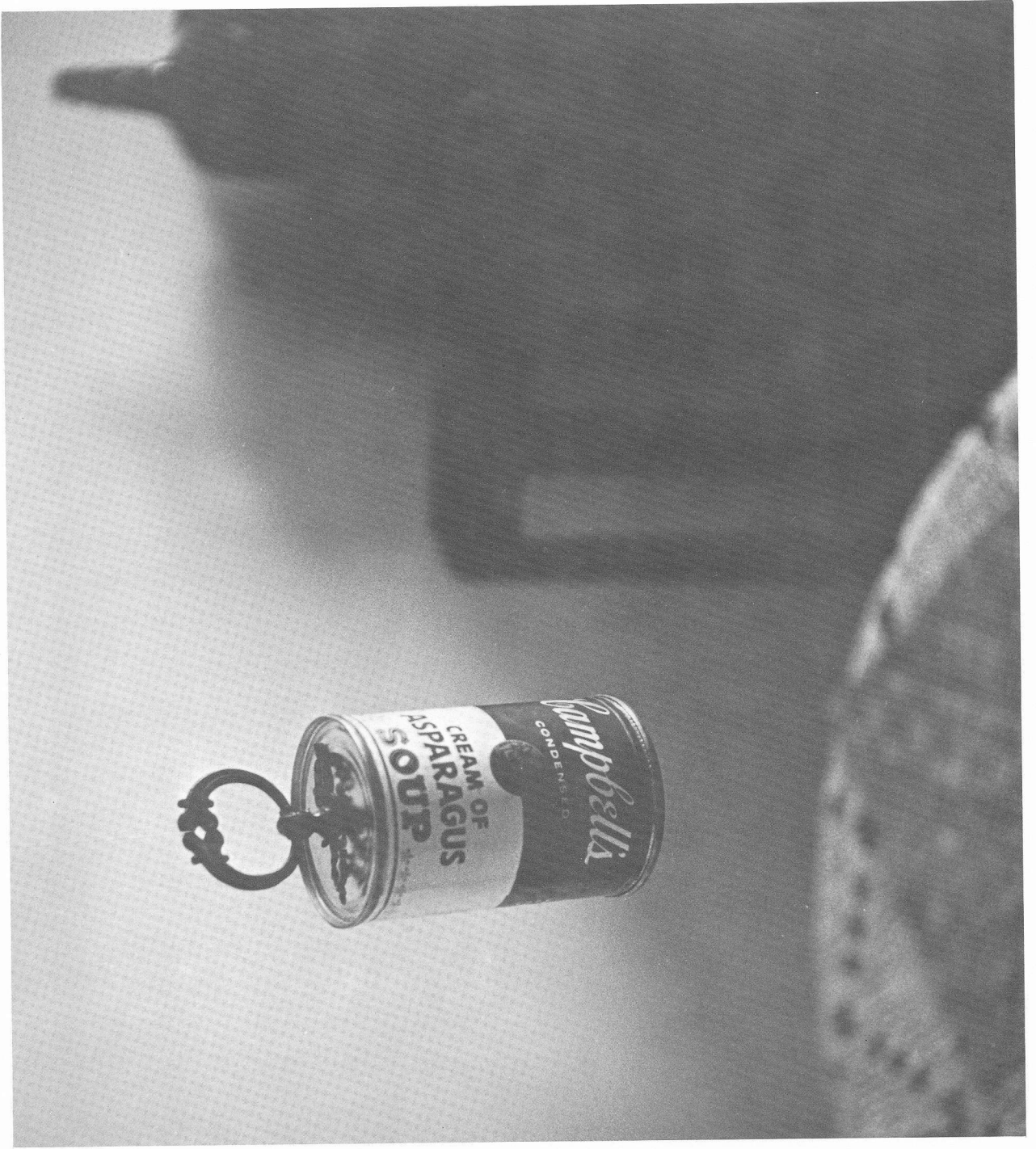
The morning sun slashed down at Miles as he came out the door: he shaded his eyes with one hand and leaned back against the building. Across the street, up on a wrought iron balcony, an old woman lowered her cat in a basket: it scrambled out and dived beneath a parked car. The basket swung at the end of the rope. Miles glanced down the street to his right: the spires of the cathedral jabbed above the buildings: beyond was the Square. The tourists would be there by now; so would Kilkenny and Cohn.

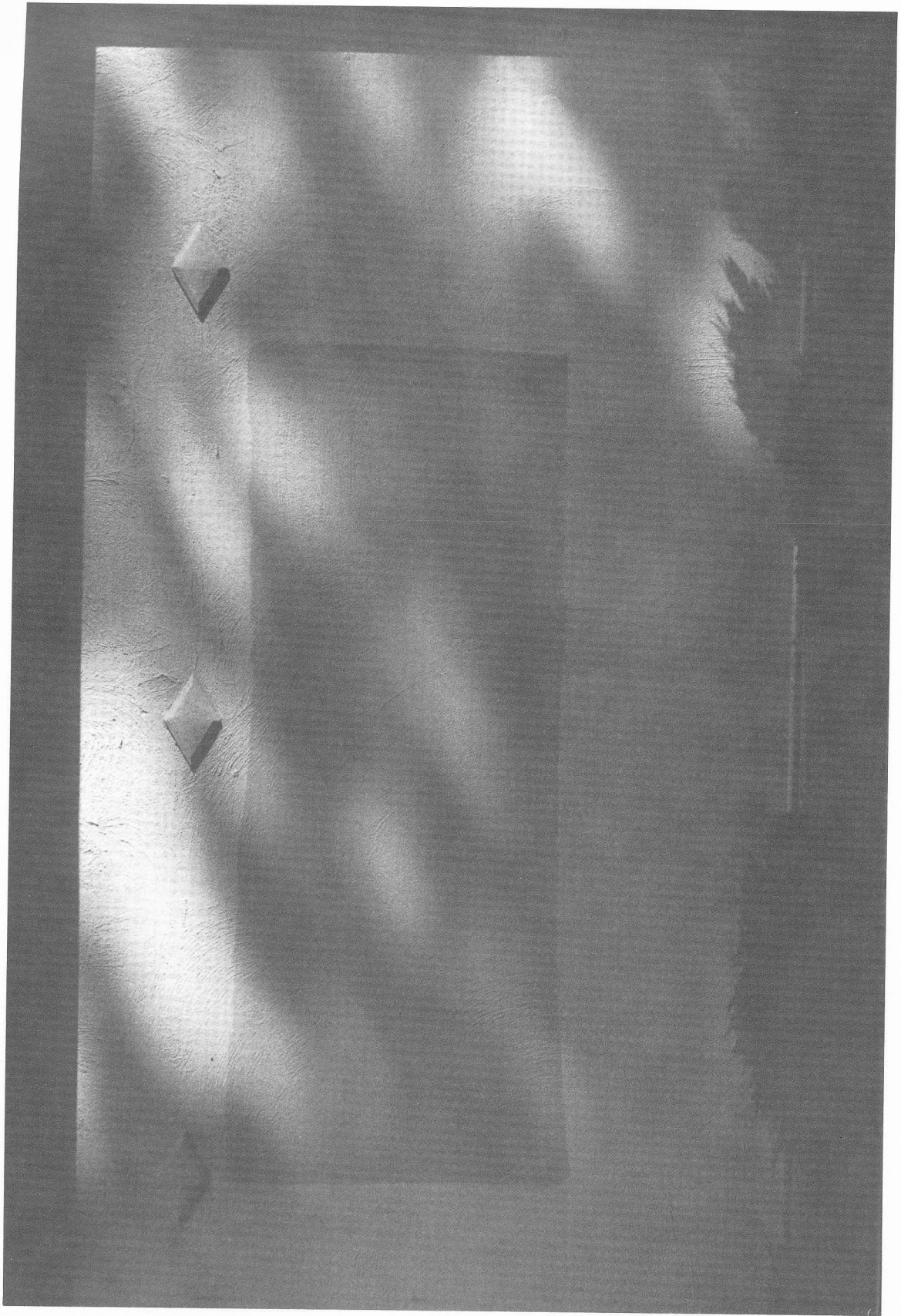
Miles pushed away from the building and walked up the street: cathedral spires to his back. Time to get it over with. His head throbbed: too much wine; not enough food. He brushed against a tourist taking a picture, drawing an angry glare. Angling across the street, he reached the gallery. The green shutters were closed: she was still around back, in her apartment. Miles went to the iron gate that stood between Geraldine's building and the next one. Behind it a narrow sidewalk ran back between the two buildings, back to a courtyard where water was splashing. The gate was locked. An intercom was set into the building beside the gate, just above the mailbox. Miles pushed the button three times. Geraldine's metallic voice spoke: "Yes, who is it?" He leaned over and started to speak, but her voice again snapped out of the speaker: "Well, who is it?" Miles straightened up; pushed the button again. And again. Geraldine's voice: "Miles? Is that you, Miles?" He pushed the button once more. The metallic voice snapped, "Whoever this is, will you please go bother someone else!" Miles turned his back to the speaker. He stood with his face raised to the sunlight, eyes shut, for several moments; then turned and walked on up the street.





Steven J. Cromwell





Fifteen Ways to Skin a Cat

I. With a pointed and sharp knife, serrated edges are useless here, slit the cat backwards from nape to chops, then forward from nape to neck, stem to stern so to speak, peeling outward as you go. The way they used to do it in the olden days. You have to get the skin away from the flesh, this is difficult but masterable, and also be sure to slash from the inside of the paws along the legs for a superb pelt.

&&&

II. Me, I find it more sporting to use scissors. It is easier for me to lunge forward with scissors, I have to make certain on the first slash. With the incisor blade prominent, I bring it down hard on the receiver blade. But I must do it right the first time. There is never a second chance. Do it properly, and with style. What else is there?

&&&

III. How do you skin a cat? With love. Love it, it will love you.

&&&

IV. Now Felix insists he would boil the cat first. With a bucket of hot water, anything is possible. Water, says Felix, has a tendency to separate the dermis from the meat. He takes pride in his work. No one can teach him anything. When it comes to cats, he is the master. And there are many ways to dispose of the carcass.

&&&

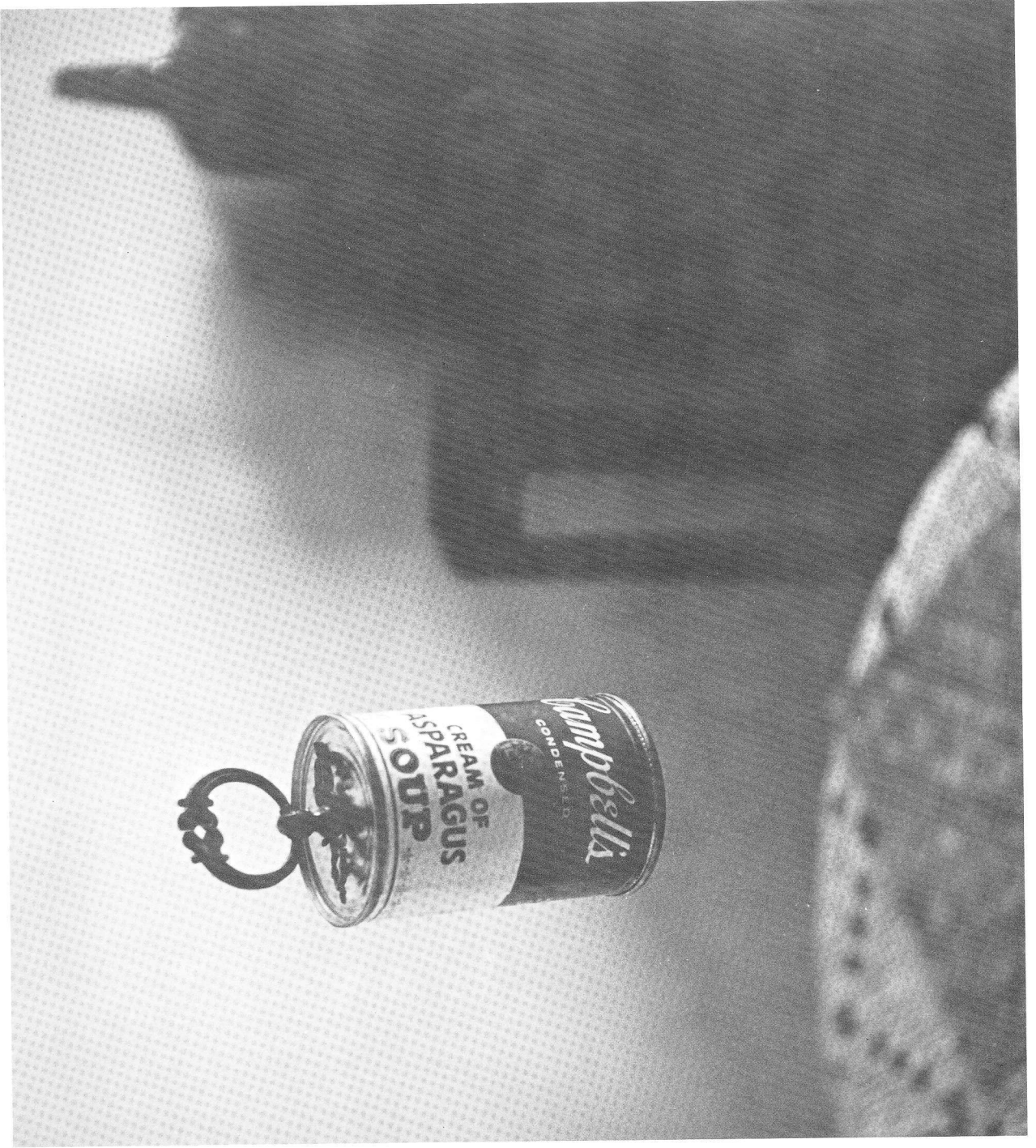
V. You don't understand the first principle involved in so delicate an operation. Not one of you. You are a tedious group. You would do it without previous experience. Your inability to skin a cat has become a national disaster. You will have to be retrained and retaught. In the meantime, what will happen to the cat population?

&&&

VI. In Salem we have a saying and we live by it: First we have to catch the cat . . .

&&&

VII. They say nothing works so well as sprinkling a little salt on its tail.



This is the traditional manner. So they crawl up behind, as if stalking a condor or a cormorat, and shake a shakerful of salt on it. Of course they admit this is a new day and age. They concede something else may work better, even if it isn't legal.

&&&

VIII. Felis catus, the domesticated variety of Felidae to which I am today giving my undivided attention, must of course be caught before he can be brought to justice. And nothing behooves the catching of a cat so well as an understanding of The Cat. Tout comprendre, c'est tout captiver, if I've said it once I've said it a hundred times. Hence:

DESCRIPTION--

Cats have five toes on the hindfeet, four on the forefeet, or the other way around, depending on the cat.

Most cats have long tails.

Incidental characteristics: short faces; large eyes; pointed ears, short wide jaws; very sensitive whiskers.

SHORT HISTORY--

Prehistorically domesticated. Worshipped by Egyptians, Norsemen. A superstitious animal. In Darkest Ages, burned for being a witch. (Descended from/Cross between) the following species:

a. tame African; b. wild European; c. long-haired Asian.

CLASSIFICATION--

Long- and short-haired (as per previous allusion).

COLOR--

Brown, black, white, blue, silver, chinchilla, smoke, cream, red, and tortoise shell. (See also Carl van Vechten, The Tiger in the House, 1936).

Now, what more can I say? My parents didn't call me Felix for nothing, let me tell you. I am steeped in the tradition. If there's anything to be known, I will know it.

&&&

IX. In France the gendarmes skin the peau from the chat; in Paraguay they peel the something-or-other from the gato. Which isn't quite fair because in Paraguay the cats are so hideously small the poor gato can't put up a decent defense.

&&&

X. In principle we are opposed to the skinning of cats. In our last but one encyclical we spoke indirectly of this issue, so pertinent to our times. Of course we realize the cat may harbor in his soul voices that speak to him, rudimentary evil spirits stunted in him as he grows to the age of reason. These without question must be exorcised, the very kernel of

residual fiendishness must be cleansed from our reasonable era. Naturally we understand the difficulty of hunting down the devil in his own land, but we must return to his ancient dwelling place. Of course we will find nothing there. Still we must try. Naturally we cannot give our consent to the skinning of cats. Perhaps if it were done at night, in dark alleys where teenagers fornicate, we could condone it.

&&&

XI. He is a good man. If they gave him a chance, he would do it gently, without hurting the cat. He has developed an anesthetic catnip. He would drug the cat, then peel off the pelt. He would sell the wool. He identifies with the sheepshearer, the painless dentist, all artists. But he must have the chance. Otherwise, there's no telling what he would do.

&&&

XII. You people can't just go out and skin a cat. What about the S. P. C. A. ? Where have you been all this time, S. P. C. A. ? It's all your fault. You can't blame anyone else.

&&&

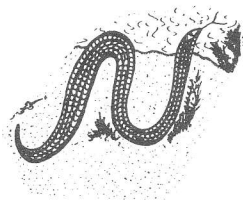
XIII. I grew up wanting to be a cat skinner. My daddy and my granddaddy and his daddy before him were all cat skinners. They were all apprentices to their own daddies, but my daddy figured since I was living in modern times, not back in history the way he and his daddy and all the rest of them were, he figured I should go to school. So he sent me off to Chattanooga where they have this beautiful place for people who want to learn anything at all about animals, and I majored in the Felidae branch and I wrote an honors thesis on the history of cat skinning and I took a lot of practical courses too and I graduated cum laude. But now with this new rule, what am I going to do? Has my whole education been wasted? Is a grand tradition dying out? Do I have to start something new? Shit.

&&&

XIV. He dreamed of pasting rubies on its flank with ground diamond glue. Its tail he adorned with peacock feathers. He gave it eyelashes of the softest fur of mink. Each toe he enameled with warmed gold, the paws themselves he covered with unborn duckling down. On the neck he poured frankincense, and on the back the balsam balm of Gilead. He cut the whiskers. He awoke, sweating.

&&&

XV. With paper or a blackboard, with pencil or some chalk. With logarithms. With intelligence. With a will. With thrift. Never with complacency. With purity of heart and cleanliness of soul. With a vengeance.



Judson Crews

Tonked, these sparce

Small, barren, trees
 though the grass
or weeds have vouchsafed
a place among rough terrain
some birds nest there too

Some monstrous
 four-legged creature
it could not be called a cow
nor a horse
 fierce
as it superficially seems at first sight
a bird has lit upon
its back
 near the shoulders

It is not that the beast
is unaware
 but it is not as if
it were his concern that the bird
should fly away

Ezekiel 37

As a small demonstration of omnipotence,
Arrangements are made for a valley of bones.
Having seen the place, I am asked my thoughts.
"Nothing's to be done,
Our loss is irretrievable."
And yet he assures me it is not,
That each thin flake in a field of snow
Can be lifted carefully from the crowd,
Individual and intact,
If only we have patience and a steady hand.
Then, with a rustling sound everywhere at once,
He fits together bones,
Ankle-bone to shin-bone,
The sewing of sinew to dry bone.
The details of his work--
The gathering of parts of shattered bones,
The imperfections carefully
Retained, the painstaking replacement
Of follicles and capillaries,
Each in its place--
Is of concern only to the specialist,
But even an amateur can understand
The immensity of the task, so soon done,
As men resigned to death
Looked on themselves, and sighed;
As snowflakes lifted from the crowd
Began again to drop.

Richard Cunningham

Fragments from THE YEAR OF THE TIGER
1/7 of a chapter

* * * * *

In those days the bars were not off limits to Vietnamese servicemen, and when you ordered a drink the girl who brought it would sit down in front of you to talk. Many of the girls were of high school age, although most of them had ceased to be students. If you wanted to monopolize the girl's time, she would ask: "You buy me a drink?" If you declined, she would move down the bar to talk with someone else, saying something like: "You number ten GI." If you said yes, she ordered a glass of green tea that cost you one hundred piastres: a dollar and a quarter at the legal rate.

Doc was a short, heavysset Negro from St. Louis. The girls called him beaucoup kilo because of his enormous stomach. He was thirty-seven years old, and his hair and full mustache were partly gray. He made the girls laugh with his large, expressive eyes; but he did not believe in the system of buying tea.

"Lipton," he told one girl, "ain't ever done anything for my people. I'd buy you some pancakes if you wanted them. Aunt Jemima's done a lot for us. You want some pancakes?"

"What is pancake?" the girl asked.

Doc told her.

"Food!" she cried. "You crazy, beaucoup kilo GI. Number ten sow!"

"Not crazy enough to give you a hundred P's for a glass of tea, moon-beam."

One evening at Minh's Bar in Khan Huoi I was drinking with Doc at a table near the bar when a Vietnamese sergeant came in and took a stool in front of Mai, a plump young girl who drove Doc to distraction. From the man's insignia and the color of his beret we knew he belonged to one of the Ranger outfits stationed near Can Tho, where there was a real war on. Mai brought him a beer and they began talking. A few moments later an old mama-san padded up with a glass of green tea and set it next to Mai. We could hear them talking, the man drinking from the bottle, his eyes following the movement of Mai's body under the thin dress as she turned to sip the tea, giving him the benefit of her profile.

The man shook his head several times and then finished his beer. He stood up and reached into his pocket. As he did so, Mai pointed to the tea and said something. I saw the man's hand stop. What happened then came all at once. There was no time to stop it.

He reached across the bar and grabbed Mai by the hair with one hand, picked up the glass of tea in the other, and then slammed the glass into her face twice. When he released her she staggered back, the blood streaming from where her cheek had been laid open. Turning, the man walked to our table.

"You Americans," he began, his voice low and constricted, his face twisted with hate. "You make whore of mother, make whore of sister, make all people whore. You think I buy your green tea?" He spat on our table and stood there, coiled, trembling.

I looked at Doc.

"Easy, baby," he said to me.

Suddenly, the sergeant whirled and left the bar. We stood up, staring at each other. Behind the bar the mama-san was trying to wash Mai's face. On the counter a small pool of green liquid was slowly spilling over onto the floor.

* * * * *

For three weeks during the rainy season a swarm of large, roach-like beetles appeared. They were brown, and they had small, almost useless wings. The Vietnamese considered them a delicacy, and all over Saigon you saw children making a game out of collecting them in plastic bags. Ton, our laundry boy, carried a huge beetle around with him all one afternoon, taking it out of his shirt pocket from time to time to play with it. I gave him a ride home at dark, and his mother invited me in for a cup of tea. While I was drinking the tea she brought in a platter of freshly roasted beetles. Not wanting to offend her, I tried to eat one. It was brittle, faintly sweet, very dry, and I washed it down quickly with the tea.

Later that evening I stopped by the California Bar to sell some scotch. Hai was behind the bar, talking to an American who had been chasing her for over a month. She was a tall, lovely, half-Chinese, half-Vietnamese girl who enjoyed teasing the men who panted after her. The young Negro she lived with was a good friend of mine.

I followed the owner, a small, morose Frenchman named Claude, into the back room. He always complained about business. He had two other bars, a hotel, a jewelry shop on the Rue Catinat, and a villa out on Cong Le Street; but whenever I dealt with him he spoke as though the market were about to collapse, staring at me with the condemned look of an imminent bankrupt. He paid me three hundred and fifty piastres apiece for the six bottles of whiskey, counting out the notes slowly and handing them to me with the expression of a man discharging a debt to a mortician. He went back into the bar with me, brought me a beer, then walked into the back room to brood.

A few minutes later Hai walked over to say hello. "I see your friend is here again," I said.

"Who, that one?" she said, making a face. "He crazy. I tell him I sleep with black man. He don't care. Look." She held out her hand, displaying a large jade ring. The pale-green, oblong stone was mounted in a band of spun gold.

"Maybe he's in love with you," I said.

She made another face and went back to where the man was sitting.

"Come on," the man said, "what are you doing tonight?"

Hai thought about it. "Tonight I fly Hong Kong." She nodded her head. "Got big date in Hong Kong. Rich officer. Plenty money."

He took her hand. "What about tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow visit my mother. Tell her all about Hong Kong," she told him, laughing.

While they were talking a beetle landed on the bar near me. I watched it crawl slowly up the counter in a zig-zag line, inspecting various pools of liquid on the way. It came to a bumping half against the other American's bottle of beer. He picked up the bottle and started to brush it away, but before he could get his arm around Hai snatched it off the counter and held it wriggling in her hand. Then very quickly she bit it in two. The other half squirmed in her fingers while she chewed. The American suddenly bolted for the door. I turned away when she put the other half in her mouth.

I finished the beer in one drink and left. Outside, in the bright light from the street lamps, the sidewalk was black with them.

* * * * *

I spent my last week in Saigon saying goodbye. Walking up the Rue Catinat, so thoroughly Americanized now, it seemed strange to remember a time when the shop signs had been in Vietnamese and very few shopkeepers had spoken English; when the bookstore owned by Mme. Nhu had only three novels (Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Capote) in the window; when the man who sold watercolors on Sunday mornings along the river would open his portfolio and there would be delicate paintings instead of cheap photographs of cunnilingus and the lot.

On one of those afternoons I walked to the California Bar to say goodbye to Claude. He looked up from a magazine as I came through the door, fixing me with a bleak stare.

"No more business, eh?" he said.

"No more."

Looking at me as though I had come to repossess his furniture, he said, "Bon chance, David. Bon chance."

He gave me Hai's address before I left. She lived several streets off Tran Hung Dao in a large apartment building set back from the street at the end of a cobbled walkway. I knocked twice before she came to the door.

Claude had told me she had quit work because she was ill. He did not tell me she was dying. She seemed to have aged thirty years since the last time I had seen her. The skin on her face was drawn tight, revealing much of the skull, and the area under her eyes was a deep brown. The arm she held the door open with was shockingly thin. I looked at her, speechless.

"What you want?" she said sharply. Even her voice had changed.

"I came to say goodbye," I said.

"You go back states, huh?"

"Yes."

"Good. Don't come back."

I looked past her into the room. It was partitioned into two rooms by a large, white sheet. From experience I knew that she was sharing the room with another girl who needed the privacy for her lover. Hai, of course, would be sleeping in the rear, in a space just big enough for her bed. Unable to think of anything to say, I left.

She leaned over the stairway as I went down. "Don't come back! Ever!" she shouted after me.

* * * * *

Herb Williams

#203 Long Branch Shoot-Out

two men face down
dusty street
a desert flower
cactus
blooming
noon-day sun straight
as a scout's arrow
piercing
as through a heart
lies Levi Richardson
gone to his reward
in the Long Branch
Frank Loving said in passing
it was all regretable

Kansas Summer - 1873

news
spread like head fire
before high wind
by sundown
70 men had gathered
to watch
Arthur McCluskey
meet
Hugh Anderson
Anderson had killed McCluskey's brother

both shot
Anderson's leg broke
fell to the floor
McCluskey took one in the mouth
through his skull
yet
he ran towards Anderson
shot again
now both are crawling
and with knives
blood spurting
from eye sockets
ears
closer
clutching
McCluskey's neck slashed
as Anderson's side opens
both
with blood on the barroom floor
die

no bets were paid

Late Summer Poem

1

The mulberry tree outside the kitchen
window grows thicker each
year. The light through the window
on your face
is green, deeper

The sun stencils leaves on the river's
surface; the river slides
under shadows,
moving.

We watch flocks of black
birds, thousands,
clouds
of blackbirds fly overhead,
heading South

2

The barn glows
white in the afternoon. Its windows
are black. White chickens
dot the barnyard and sunlight
leaks through the barn's roof.
Darkness lies inside
its latched doors
like sleeping animals

Dried cornstalks
behind rusting fence-
wire rattle
in the wind;

beyond the barn, sunlight shimmers
in a field of weeds: chickory, jimson, thistle,
white queen anne's
lace, and a nameless under-
brush that seems to grow
everywhere at the end of Summer

We crawl under the wire and
fuck in the cornfield like Indians or
cows. Looking up through sun-
bleached tops of stalks, the sky
is glazed a thick
blue; the light on your face
is yellow. Sweat and dust stick
to our skin, and I am covered
with you.

On the way back, we flush
one blackbird out
of the cornfield;
he circles
slowly
until we leave.

In a few days, machines
will be hauled in to cut
this field to stubble, and the wind
will blow the dust from empty furrows

Rain

Everything is water
if you look long enough.
-- Robert Creeley

1

Slate-gray clouds
at the other end of the lake float in
on a rain-wind. Trees
at the water's edge
bend in the rain. Water pours down bark
stained brown by rain,
and dead sticks rattle
wet in the trees.

When it rains in flat country
everything gets wet,
a uniform gray and green: a wet road,
wet grass feeding the live-
stock, the rain swelling
the lake; wet clothes steam
from your body and strands of hair
stick to your forehead.

2

Starlings pick worms
out of the mud
in pieces. That afternoon
we find fossils
in layers of wet limestone
and I talk to you about love
in muddy boots. Later,
we sit in the car in a cloudburst
and touch each other for hours

2.

Decomposition
Recomposition
Perpetual living & dying
all wrapped up
to say the word

existence

Constant revivification
resurgence
binds us
 in birth/death

But that we can conceive
of escape from that cycle
to some other kind of life
wrenching ourselves
away from what is earth
dreaming vast biologies
of the spirit
& spirit a word
made by a creature
out of earth
 expendable

Theology?
Divinity?

The sight of a maggot sickens us
But we are pleased
when a flower blooms.

3.

Stood in a Kansas prairie
wind everywhere
& no escape stood there
making decisions I thought
effected the gods
there in the brightness
of Kansas sun
unrelenting but afraid
filled with spirits
I took from the graves
of the dead of America
& the lands beyond America
back in the darker regions
where it all began
& again pushed forth
into this land we know
this mood ephemeral we
call America
& the United States of America

Stood in a Kansas prairie
cursing outward signs
the enumeration of everything
who work at escaping death
with deeds & garish markers
cursing backward glances
that become stares
& the stares obsessions,
obsessions of those
blinded by what they wanted to see
made the same mistakes
& called them the lessons of history

A Kansas prairie
somewhere near the geographical center
of the United States
marked by a sign
a motel & a restaurant
where a hamburger is a dollar
& the waitress
a bright toothed country girl
symbol of peasant retaliation
smiles nicer the second day
if you tip her well on the first
but pays you no mind if her lover
a tall boy in tight levis
comes ambling in
his eyes on fire with her
& the eventual night of blankets
& a low full moon
to touch each other
in the light of.

Your histories pass this point
ignore it
as something that happens
dandelion seeds in the wind.

Stood on a Kansas prairie
those years long gone
& drew patterns
which have turned into failures
at making a business of life.
A business of Life!
As though dollars & cents
& a deed to this earth
could answer the cries of birds
sweeping over the hills at the edge of town
or the hills themselves
once the bottom of the sea
As though an idea
& a few pieces of paper
could compare with the wonder
we blind ourselves to
the earth
the living

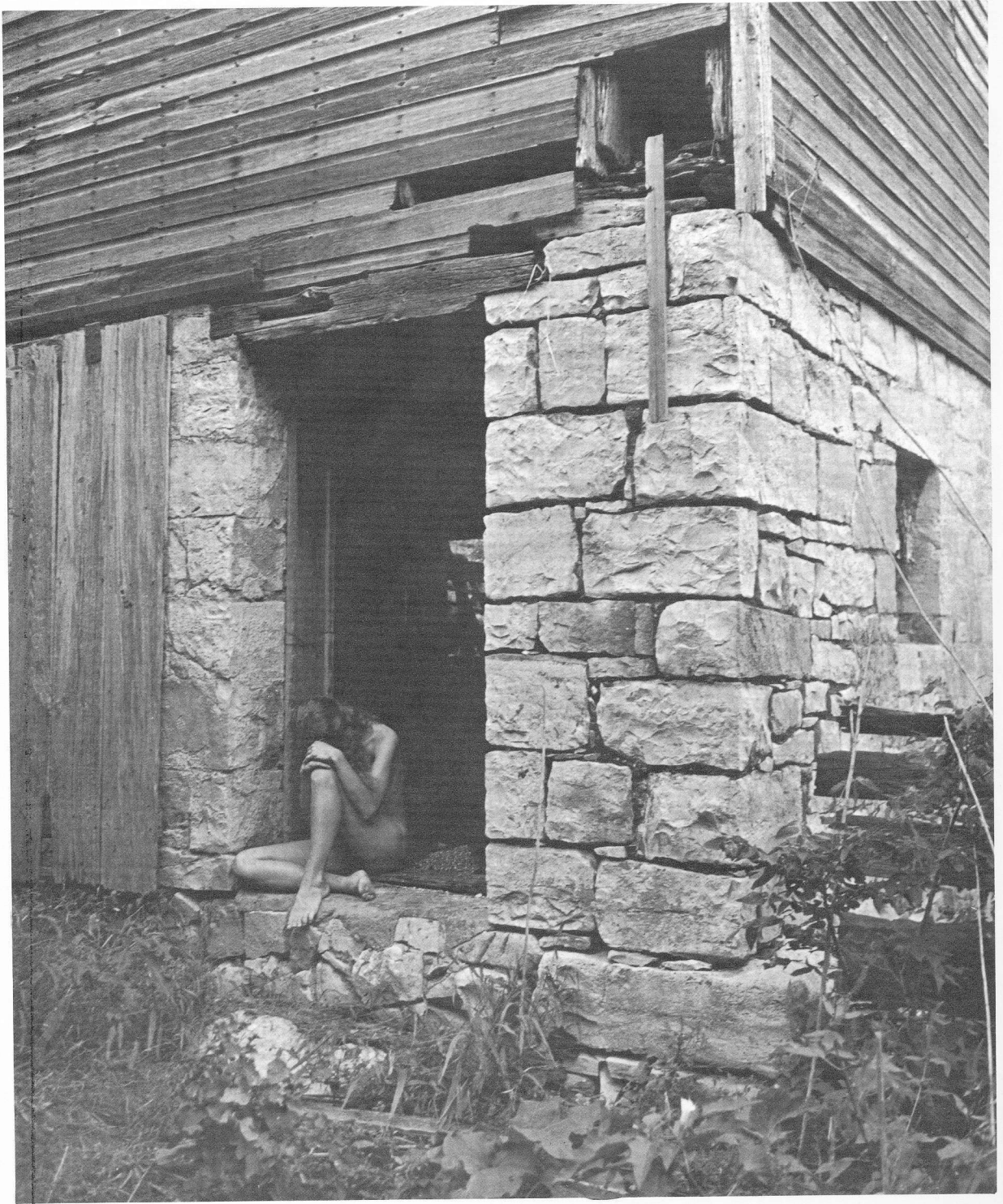
always changing always the same
moving in the wind
on a Kansas prairie
anywhere.

4.

Circle completed
repeated
again again

& a girl in lemon yellow pants
walks through our conversation
& whatever we built
with words, ideas
just fell away
as our eyes
follow her tight ass
into the kitchen.

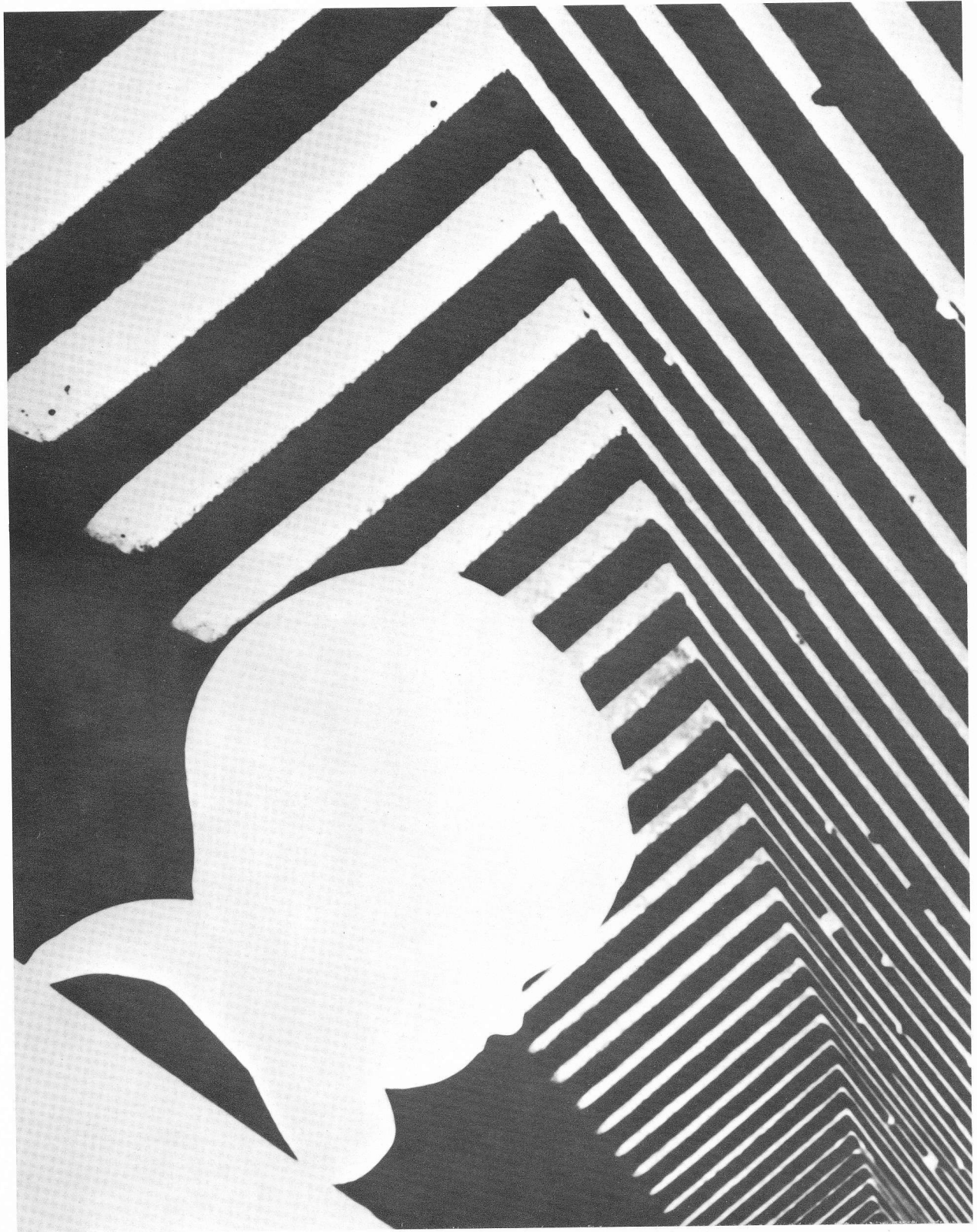
Dandelion seed in the wind
answer the cries of birds.



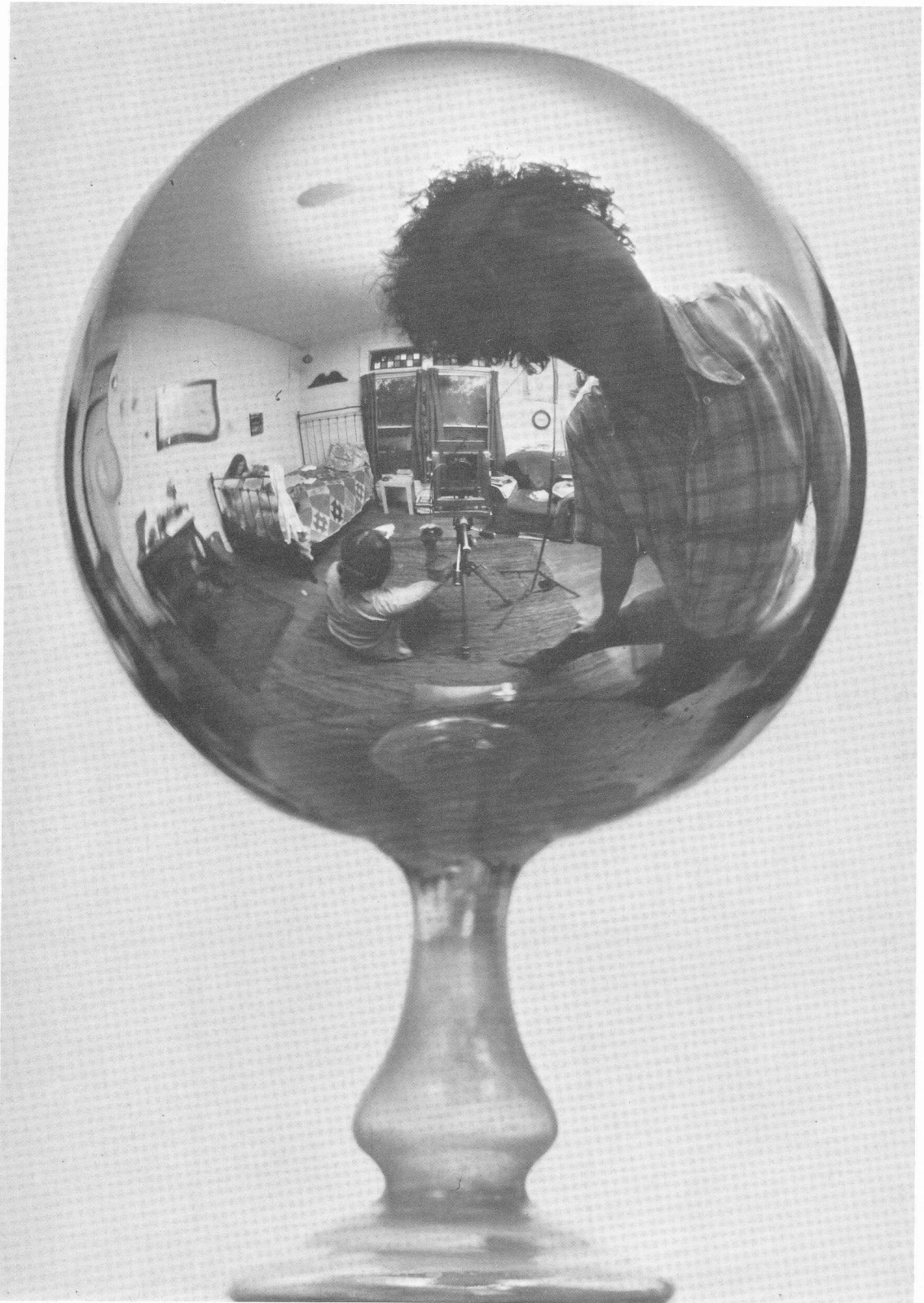
Larry Schwarm



Dan Younger



Steven J. Cromwell



Paul Greenbaum

The Cock Roberta Plot

It was raining. It was grey. The day was a grey day. There were shadows, etc., and walls. Sidewalks, streetlights, silvery streaks on the cement. What else? Lizards on the fences, magpies in the beautiful uppers. Shit. Some windows were open. Some doors were closed. I woke up troubled, in a sweat, out of a small dream, wondering if a door had been left open somewhere in the city. It was a bright day, a quiet day, almost noiseless. I woke up after sleeping. I walked. On one corner I saw a nun and a newspaper hawk. She opened the paper and pointed a long nail at something in blue, bordered in black. She was a nun. It was a clear day. They were burying Cock Roberta. It was a sad day, a day of soup, of sitting in a window seat stoned on light. It was a dark day. I saw mosquito hawks landing on my clothesline, dragonflies, darning needles, bulshit, with a single el. Then the window suddenly closed on my thumb. Later there was a bruised nail on my dresser top. Where? Where were they burying Cock Roberta? It began to snow. It snowed on through the evening and left my livestock standing in lines along the fences, asses facing North. Yesterday I went fishing and caught one perch with an old barb still hung up in his eye. But that reminded me of Brautigan, so I threw him back and went home. I thought I might build an ice cruiser and sail down the frozen K-- all the way to the warm, turgid M-----, and there to look for a temporary sand bar. They wouldn't bury Cock Roberta on a day like this. They wouldn't. And if they did it would rain and spoil it. The raindrops would drip down the trunks of the sorrels, deep in the wood, in the odd, fairyland forest darkness, and wet up everyone's, every mourner's, foots. Yet they might. They might. I've known blindingly sunny days darken up for a funeral. They might do it today after all. Am I imagining you, or is it the other way? Something reminiscent of B-----? No. Not that. You're in the wrong alley. This morning I found a fish head in my coat pocket. An old fish head, with an old rusty barb hanging in the eye hole. Get to the phone and call B-----. Ask him if this is possible. No one would call me a fisherman. They'll be burying her on a sand bar. Which one? Which river? I stepped barefoot. On a catfish. A dead catfish. The fin went in. I spent the day in Agony, Mississippi. Zero population. I never use tobacco. Caution in the wood is a very good policy. There was a dust storm. It filled up my tennis shoes and duned in my arches. A good day for games. I closed the curtains and listened to the howl. Is it Fernberg looking in my window like a moon? She's small enough to bury in a shoebox. In a small, shoebox hole. A plot. Her plot. Crossing the bar, crossing the river, crossing the road, crossing the hills, crossing. Such truck. Someone told me that St. Andrew kept fiddlers in his beard, his red beard. Fiddler crabs. He stayed near the ocean and fished with Peter and Brautigan. She passed away in the sun room, in a moonbeam, without a flutter. In the morning

Incest Fancy: Africa, 186?

I felt that irresistable urge
like Burton to plumb black
Africa's depths to find the
source of this or that,
Nile, Zambezi, Congo, Dr. Living
ston's hemorrhoidal tissues. Okay.
I took a boat (leatherbound stern
wheeler upriver from Khartoum
(where Gordon affixed his
signature to the myth of indomitable
malehood, to X-? where
I disembarked and proceeded (w/
guide, bearers, the lot
on foot. (To hoof from
hyer to Santa Fe is one thing, Vachel,
at least you speak the
language.) My guide faith
fully translated each powwow
with the local chiefs
till I finally understood, GO BACK!
(repeat) GO BACK! Ex

they tied ropes around her ankles and dragged her down the hallway. It was in a hospital, a French hospital, L'hotel Dieu. No shit. Some shit. A turd so hard it could be rolled across a stiff bedsheet and not leave a trail. Constipation never lasts. Constipation killed her dead, and it was over. It didn't last. Her wheelchair rolled and bumped into the railing and if she hadn't been dead she might have fallen 50 stories. Fifty stories my fungalo. One story. One story with a Cock Roberta Plot. One Sinatra with Chinese music. I heard an annoying ring and found an alarm clock in my kitty box, in the pocket of my overcoat rather. That's enough.

Part II

Glycerine Sypp, Lemon Head, Jazzlip Richards, Telephone Francis, Pinkie Bluey, Side Porch, Janet Douche, Peaches Rine, Type Write, Lima Bean, Lararus Pea, Lightfoot Hotsy, Dearmusk Feast, Noon Jones, Assie Wrightout, Tie Ginn, Virginia Mary Smith, Dolly Roddy, Cy Bones, William Blowell, Tanya Hyde, Ophelia Balls, America Harris, Ada Broome, Gatlin Bang, Roosevelt Teaset, Mae Bea, Virginia Modessa, and Halloween Buggage.

These are the people that came.

Part III

This is what happened: Coughing, shuffling, blowing of noses, etcetera. The normal things. Several people came on boats, the rest in bumper cars, and many more on feet. Law and order was the rule of the day, and a tranquil rope of hoozit curled among them. Birds chirped in the trees. Wind occasionally whiffled the sumac. Palmettos were fanning everywhere. The sand was hot underfoot. Here and there a snake or two. Cacti now and then. Golden eagles banging and clattering above us, dropping ball bearings out of their beaks, or their cloacas?, and making us twitter and move about. The fellow behind me breathed his future on my neck. It smelled of cantaloup rinds. I reached forward and pressed the nipple of the tit of the woman to my left like a doorbell. A few people vomited. Someone said they had seen someone eating a sandwich behind a tomb, or a vault. Only a few were allowed into the mausoleum proper. The rest of us birds was left to sing in the branches. A little girl suggested swimming. We had hot dogs with yellow mustard. Poor Cock Roberta. The end.

dig the ditch
dig it deeper than hell
dig it for about five minutes
then sit down

and think about it

the men leer whooeee
there she goes
got two pigs
in a gunnysack
wearin cheaters, too
 coffeetime, yet?

dig the ditch
ride the truck
build the wall
 coffeetime?

sit it down

and think about it

silence and August
the ditch and the truck
break

as his eyes come up

leaning back
in the peeling room
David says

I don't know
it's all the same now
anywhere I go

It's just a bunch of people eating.

Incest Fancy: Africa, 186?

I felt that irresistable urge
like Burton to plumb black
Africa's depths to find the
source of this or that,
Nile, Zambezi, Congo, Dr. Living
ston's hemorrhoidal tissues. Okay.
I took a boat (leatherbound stern
wheeler upriver from Khartoum
(where Gordon affixed his
signature to the myth of indomitable
malehood, to X-? where
I disembarked and proceeded (w/
guide, bearers, the lot
on foot. (To hoof from
hyer to Santa Fe is one thing, Vachel,
at least you speak the
language.) My guide faith
fully translated each powwow
with the local chiefs
till I finally understood, GO BACK!
(repeat) GO BACK! Ex

hausting my Bond St. supply of
1) safari jackets, 2) plumed hats, 3) leather brogans
I was forced to chip buttons
off my tunic to cultivate the right
impression. Finally
(on or around noon, May twentythree
186-
I arrived on the shores of Lake
Heechiwalikachaka
where (chagrin! chagrin!) my mother
greeted me w/
thighs flung beseechingly apart.
Brrrr!?! was my 1st reaction;
this aint England, honey, she purred,
touring Africa you taste more'n you'd ever bite off
back home....

