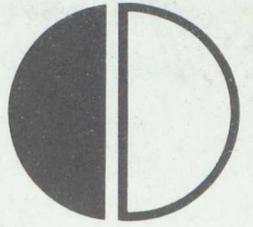
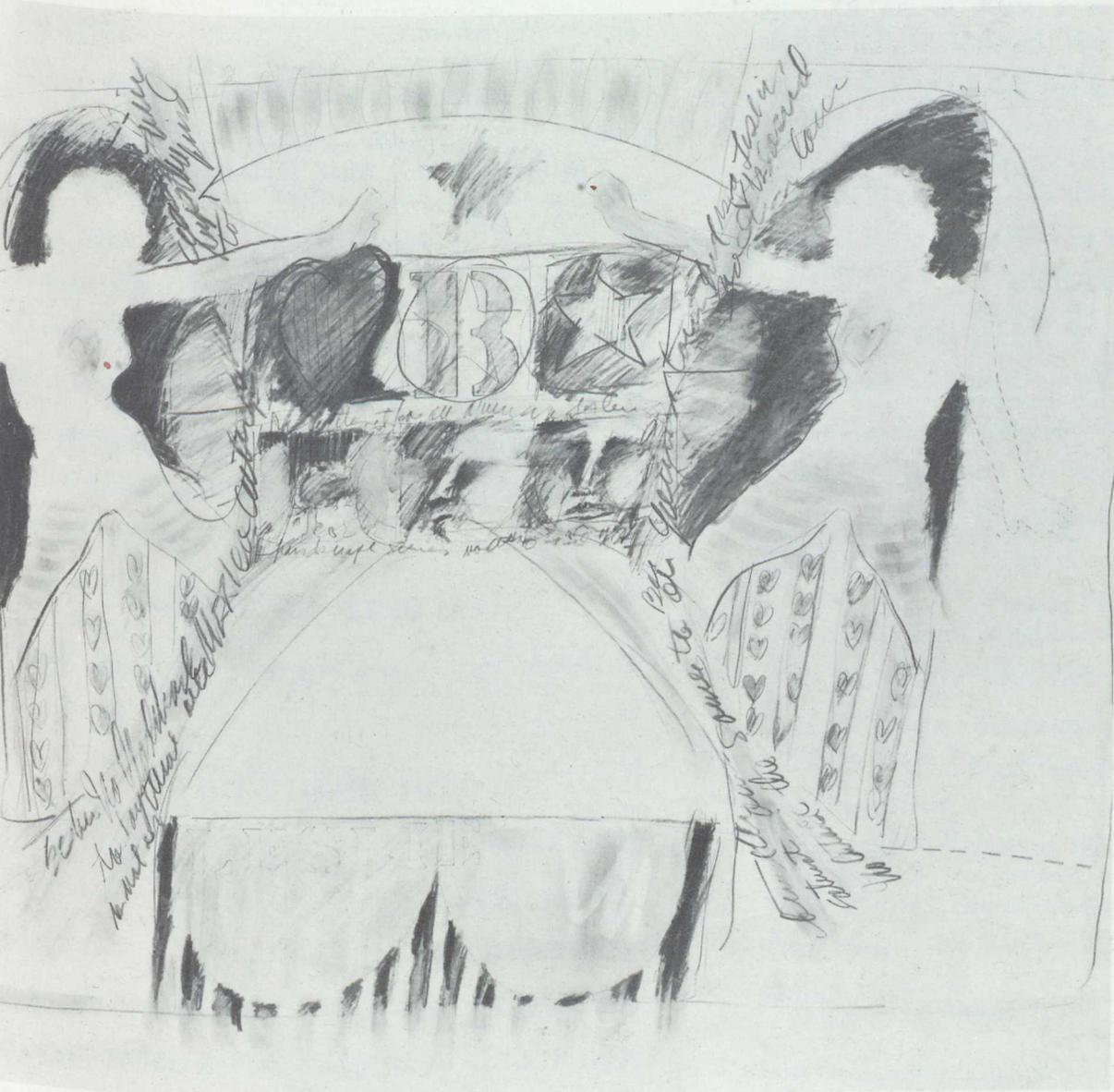


TOWERS * 32





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Volume XXXII

May, 1969

AWARDS

Towers Award for Poetry

Marianne Boruch • To Benedict:
Julia Anne Cannell • omage t' joemotha

Judges

Robert Dana, Poet • Cornell College — Charles
Schroeck

J. Hal Connor Award for Creative Prose

Leonard Hoffnung • Ploy Meets Girl

Judges

Arra Garab — Timothy Doyle

E. Ruth Taylor Award for Critical Writing

Bruce E. Burg • An Analysis of "Knights and
Squires" (Moby-Dick, Chapter 26)

Judges

Donald Murray — Stuart Marder

Maude Umland Award for Freshman Writing

Robert Wayne McGowen • Three Different Places

Judges

William P. Williams — Kermit Lambert

Towers Art Award

Robert Sanderson • Instant Friend

Judge

William Struve • Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago

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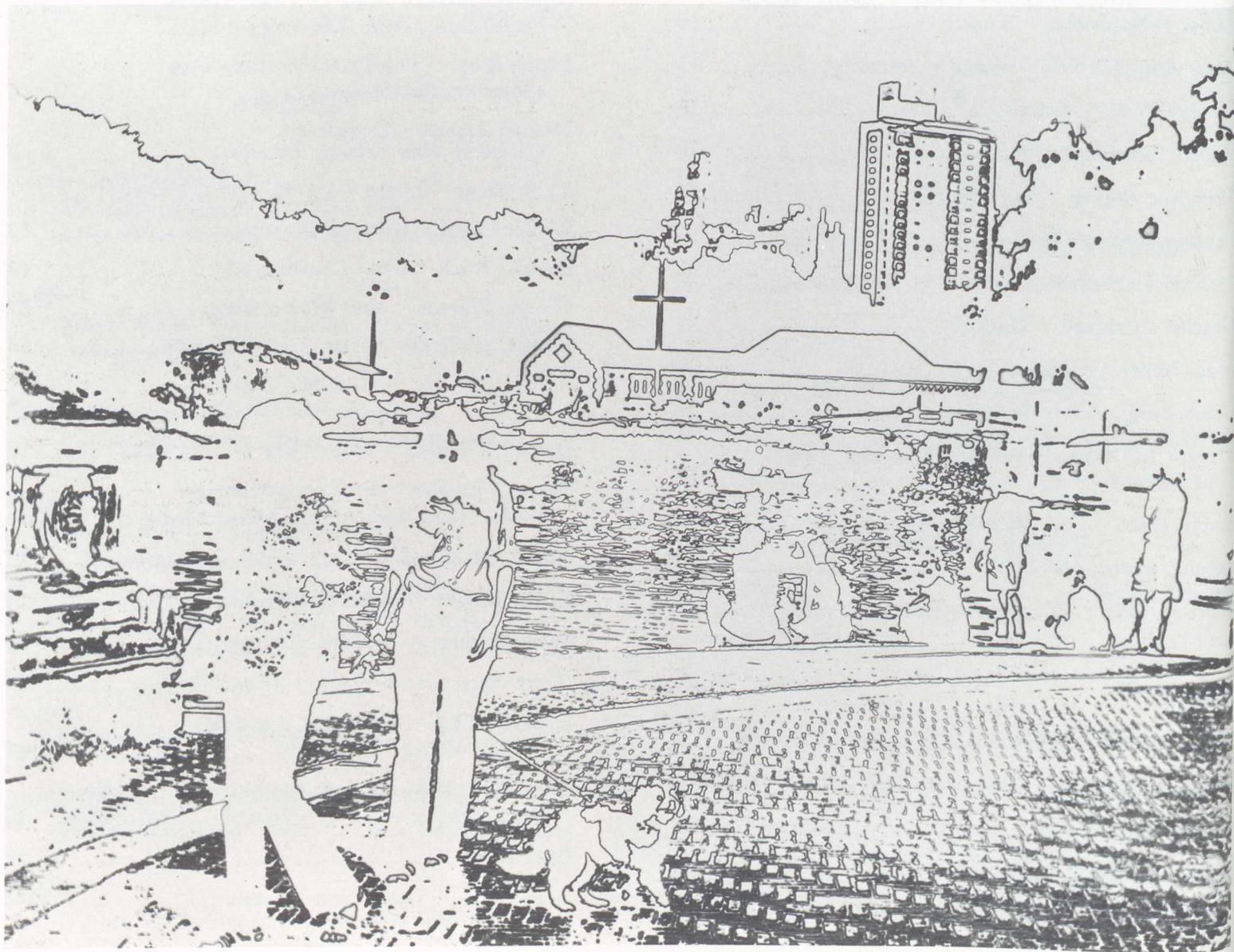
Pauline Ford • Epiphany to Pleasant Street	5
Olivia Diamond • Latter-Day Narcissus	8
James Fehrenbacher • Turkey	10
Julia Anne Cannell • omage t' joemotha	13
Pauline Ford • Portrait	19
Robert Gundelach • Sanctuary	20
Marianne Boruch • To Benedict	21
Pauline Ford • Thought	23
Richard L. Steele • Galatea	26
Donald Latchford • Untitled	27
Joan Miller • Untitled	29
Bruce Burg • Lothario	35
Firdaus Bin Haji Abdullah • The Gambling of Emotions	37
Robin Heim • Fall, then Spring	38
John Uranicar • Potion	43
Martin Addis • Five Frustrations	44

PROSE

Robert Wayne McGowen • Three Different Places ..	6
Leonard Hoffnung • Ploy Meets Girl	14
Bruce Burg • Philo	31
Dennis Dillow • Chalk Eye	40
Bruce Burg • An Analysis of "Knights and Squires" (Moby-Dick, Chap. 26)	46

GRAPHICS

Alton Kaste • Admiral Richard E. Byrd	inside front cover
John G. Balsley • One of a Few American Leslie Heart Series (Drawing)	1
Elaine King • The Great American Dog (Solarized Photograph)	4
Michael Scaccia • Despair #1 (Litho & Wax Crayon Transfer)	9
Terry Speer • In the Cove #1 (Ink Drawing)	11
Robert Clark • Untitled Drawing	12
Donald Rieck • Field Drawing #1	18
George Thiewes • Free Blown Glass	22
Robert Sanderson • Last Time (Intaglio)	24
Instant Friend (Fold-out Drawing)	25
Bruce McDonald • Stuffed Pig (Lithograph)	28
John G. Balsley • Fragmentary Image: I Was There Exploding (Mixed Media)	30
Robert Sanderson • Papal Wedding (Engraving)	33
Elaine King • Untitled Photograph	34
Gary Murphy • Untitled Photograph	36
Terry Speer • Cat Watcher (Engraving)	39
Richard Vaux • Landscape, Landscape (Cliche Verre, Photograph)	42
John G. Balsley • Equestrian Monument to the Pepsi Generation—Fatal Version (Mixed Media) ..	45
Brad Kaste	47
Brad Kaste • Tombstones (Ceramic)	48
Flash Gordon • 1938 Series	inside rear cover



EPIPHANY TO PLEASANT STREET

The crying sound of
mind pictures
in an
empty mirror

reflect

one wooden
flight up
into December

a shred of
sun shapes
confetti shadows
against hands,
of morning,
sleeping.

reflect

if my eyes
could always find
yours to reply
I would not need
the world

The shaded world
draws a line
across
a window

Midnight strangeness
now
reflects in glass

and I
with the
window wand
polish skeletons
of dreams.

Pauline Ford

THREE DIFFERENT PLACES

By Robert Wayne McGowan

It was a hot day. From his spot he watched the rushing crowd of people file past him as he wiped a film of sweat from his dripping brow. He looked up at the sun. It was bright yellow and not very large and the small sun glowed with heat and moved mechanically through the endless darkness of space, forming tiny beads of perspiration on the people's faces as they pushed their way through the crowded streets in front of him. Inside a thin strip of shade along the buildings he crouched on the sidewalk and leaned against the gray wall behind him and watched as a stream of shoes flowed past. Reaching into the pocket of his stained and faded red shirt that hung loosely over his thin frame, he took a cigarette and placed it between his lips. His long thin hands fumbled through the pockets of his baggy trousers, searching matches; and then a cloud of smoke rose and formed a gray mist around his lips, curled around his flat nose and screened his glassy eyes.

The stream of shoes flowed past him.

Now pulling a greasy handkerchief from his back pocket he dabbed his sweaty face. He inhaled deeply on his limp cigarette and tossed it into the stream of shoes, waiting for one of the shoes to drown its gray ash. He stood, and clearing his throat he began in a loud voice:

Shine, wanna shine missta?

He kept his eyes about ten feet upstream, spotting possible customers and glancing up when they came near.

Shine! you wanna shine missta?

A scuffed pair of wing-tips broke from the stream. Give them a quick touch up.

Yessuh! jus place yoah foot right upere (and tapped a home-made shoe shine box). He put soapy water over the shoe — the shoe in front of his face. Grabbing a dry rag he caressed the thick leather and soaked up the dirty water. Using the tips of his fingers he rubbed the butter-like wax into the leather with small circular motions. Then, once over lightly with his soft brush, a quick pass with his wool buffer and a snappy rubdown with a cotton cloth. Looking up he said: there ya go missta, that's twenty-five cents. A manicured hand dropped three shiny dimes into his palm and

said thank-you quickly. And ah thank you suh; have a good day!

It was hot.

He slid a grimy handkerchief over his sweat-shiny face and watched the leather stream. His hand fingered the coins inside his pocket; it counted them; the feel of the coins was familiar.

Shine! wanna shine missta?

He jingled the change in his pocket rhythmically. It was a good place in front of the bus depot and in the cold months he worked inside. Shine! wanna shine missta? A voice outside the stream answered:

I wanna shine.

He turned towards the voice, and tapping his box he said jus place ya foot right up heah missta. He stared at the foot in front of him. It had no shoe on. He looked up — hey! you ain't got no shoe! The foot sat on the box calmly and he laughed and tapped the damp dirty foot. Hey! you ain't got no shoe. The foot sat calmly and he looked up. Towering over him was a man with a bushy black beard hiding most of his face. A pair of horn rimmed glasses circled his narrow eyes. The bearded man was reading a tattered paperbound book while he pulled on his blue-jeans; Hey! say, you ain't got no shoe. He was upset.

The leather stream flowed by.

Loudly he said: say. (entreatingly): hey!

The hair drowned face looked down, puzzled. Calmly he said: yes?

He took a deep breath and groped for words: you ain't got no shoe.

The bushy face answered passively: Oh I have some in my suitcase and returned to its battered book. He stared at the dirty foot. It curled its toes. He tapped on it again. Hey. The bearded owner of the foot looked down: yes? Say, he blurted, what you want? you wanna shine, huh? what? Yes, the beard answered assuredly and went back to its book. The dirty foot sat calmly on his box. He studied it, then hesitantly began to slap soapy water over it. The dirty foot tensed; its bearded owner: hey! what are you doing?

He was stunned and his face was blank and staring at the offended bearded face. Then he began to laugh; his whole

body shook. He tried to talk but a raucous laughter choked his voice. He stammered: hey, say, say you're crazy! The bearded face struggled for control. It answered poutingly: I am not crazy. I just wanted to shine! He looked at the bearded face a long time and searched for a hint of humor in his narrow eyes. He smiled inwardly and with a big chuckle said: I'm hip, man you're crazy.

It was cool now and the leather stream became a trickle and he put his box under his arm and started to walk.

He stopped at the liquor store and bought a half-pint, leaving it in the brown bag it came in. He sipped it. It was warm and he walked toward the park. It was cooler in the park and the dark blue shadows shimmered over the deep green grass. He sat under a tree. He was happy; he laughed.

Man wanna shine. •

He tipped the half-pint to his lips and poured the warm brown liquid into his throat; swelling inside of him he laughed.

Man wanna shine.

In the distance the small sun hovered over the urban horizon. He watched it fall. He wanted to weep. He laughed himself softly into a silent sobbing. He emptied the bottle. He laughed.

Man wanted to shine?

Closing his eyes he escaped into a heavy sleep and his soiled handkerchief covered his sleeping hand and a glistening bead of sweat rolled slowly over his crinkled forehead and across his face, reflecting the soft light of the fallen sun.



LATTER-DAY NARCISSUS

They are building buildings aslant
Narrowing upward, aspiring again
Variation on van der Rohe.

Diesel buses belching oxides
Noxious into wrought-white faces.

Never living for bright lights
We die to jump the curb.
He wishes to blacken the blanks
Cipher after cipher with an !
An asterisk, even an apostrophe.

By the buildings a reflectless river
Fled has the new Narcissus at the bank
Faceless river a river of men float by
Rivers of faces, gas-infected faces
Flood bursting blocks of buildings.

An absent image loveless Narcissus
A failure to project is all Narcissus
Wash your face in dirty water.

* * *

He made a ripple of a ?

Ten who missed their train
As that beautiful-bodied boy
Arose from the current
Strode the railing
Embraced that other river —
Effaced.

Ten faces with a momentary *why*.

Olivia Diamond

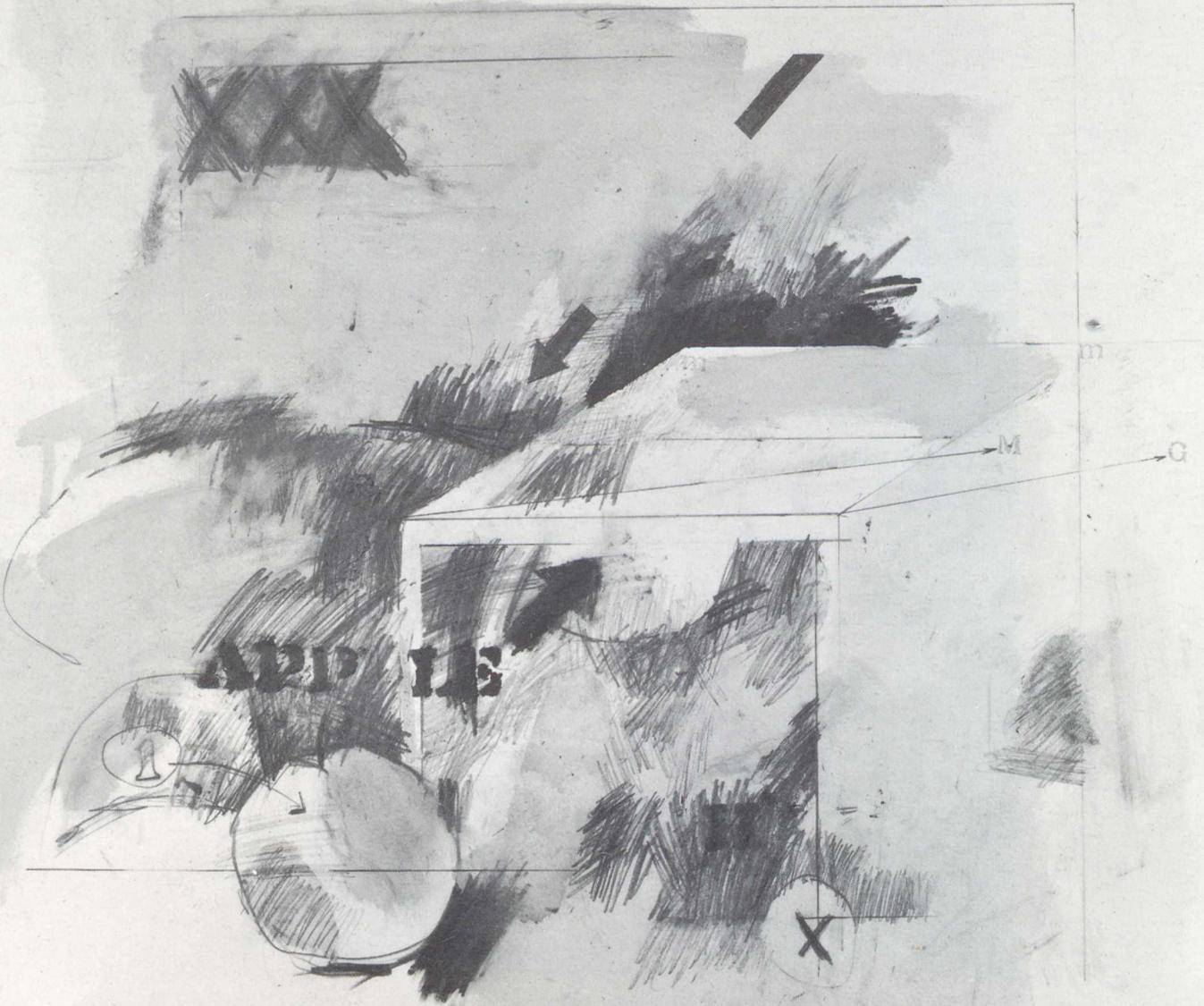


TURKEY

The hash smoker sat
In a yellow tent on a distant roof
And watched the evening cry,
Wrapped in dust,
Settling on
The sighing street
Exhaling bent people
With leather skin, hurrying
On
To escape the sadness
Of being caught still
In the street,
In a shadow.

James Fehrenbacher





OMAGE T' JOEMOTHA

he was so coo
hot dawg i mean t' say
he was jes so coo
why he jes walk right up t' me
and sayed nuthin
wif he coo Camel danglin
from he coo black han
an he reach out an grab
my han
wif all ob he fine ness
an touch de en ob he cigaret
t' mine
an de glowin
ob dem two tabacca sticks
look so coo in de autum win
why anyone who pass us
shure t' think
—dey's coo—
like i sayes he coo
but whut i mean is
in de coonef
dere was mo dan dat
why he jes walk right up t' me
an sayed nuthin
an i sayed de same
an we kep our coo
an de warmnef we gabe off
was jes so coo
dat my poo han shooked
in de sun's heat.

Julia Anne Cannell

PLOY MEETS GIRL

By Leonard Hoffnung

Walter scratched his crotch and lit a cigarette. "If I can only synthesize my thesis and antithesis, man, I've got it made in the shade." He laughed, loudly and inanely.

Barbara, wearing only Walter's bathrobe, walked into the room. "What are you chortling about? Do you know what time it is?" She sat down next to him and took a drag out of his cigarette.

"God damn it, Barbara. I've told you a thousand times, if you want a cigarette smoke your own. I can't stand the way you slop all over mine. God, it makes my flesh crawl whenever I drag on a wet, clammy cigarette."

"OK," she said, "What are you so snippy about?" She sat down, exposing a good seven inches of the inside of her thigh.

"Emasculation is where it's at. Man, it's disgusting."

"What?"

"Emasculation, baby, that's what's happening."

"Come on, Wally. I can't stand this."

"It's true. Here, look at this." He handed her a pile of magazine clippings.

"So you're the one who's been cutting up my magazines. Wally, I haven't even read some of these. My *Cosmopolitan*. Wally—."

"Shut up a minute, I was saying something. Here, look at this. This is my favorite. 'How to be a perennial beauty: The scientific discovery of a tropical moist oil with a consummate influence on the skin surface now makes it possible for every young woman to enjoy a complexion of youthful beauty throughout the years ahead.' They mention youthful six times in this ad. Or catch this: 'Douching . . . what's all the fuss about? Now there's Jeneen, the first and only pre-measured liquid douche.' Oh, and yeah, the titles, that's what gets me; like, 'Why women suffer irregularity, fullness, and intolerance to fats.' Or 'Help Rid Lungs of Excess Phlegm.'"

"Wally . . . !"

"What's fullness anyway, Barb?"

"Well, what's your point? What the hell are you trying to prove?"

"Temper, Barb. You might upset your regularity."

"I'm going to sleep. I can't stand your facetious talk at all."

"Fine. Go ahead."

"Well I am." She stood up and readjusted her robe to cover her legs. But she didn't move.

"Well?"

"Well, goodnight. You oughta come to bed too. It's three o'clock, you know."

"I'm not tired. Besides, I've got some more research to do."

"Walter, quit messing up my magazines. I'll buy you a *Redbook* and *Cosmopolitan* and *McCall's* tomorrow and you can have a field day. OK?"

"Nah. It's not the same thing. I'm striving for authenticity, baby, and it would destroy the aesthetic unity if you were to purchase them for me. How bourgeois. To purchase them. The very thought gives me irregularity and excess phlegm."

"Goodnight." This time she left.

"Shrink Hemorrhoids without Surgery!" he yelled.

Barbara slammed the bedroom door.

He picked up a magazine. "Here's something I didn't see before."

"Hey, Barb," he shouted, "hey Barb, is it OK if I cut out this article about Pearl Buck and the neglected children of Asia?"

He heard a muffled reply.

"What'd you say?"

"I said 'Go to hell.'"

He started cutting a page out of the magazine.

"Walter. Do you have to make so much noise?"

"What?"

"You heard me," she screamed. "Nobody, nobody cuts out ads from women's magazines at three o'clock in the morning. Nobody."

"Well, we gotta be at work at nine. And then when we get home, we got to go out with your stupid friends. So when else do I have a chance to do it?"

No answer.

"At last. Matriarchy retreats." With a look of delight he

started clipping away. But, he didn't get too far before Barbara started in again.

"Wally?"

"What?" he said.

"Wally?"

"I said what. What do you want? Whaaaat?"

"Just a minute."

"Typical."

Barbara reappeared. She was wearing Wally's shirt this time. She fastened the bottom four buttons, leaving the top two open. Then she sat on his lap.

"What'd you say, Wally dear?"

"Nothing. I didn't say anything. You were the one that said something."

"Oh."

"Would you mind getting off me a minute. You're in the way of my scissors."

"Put it down a minute, will you?" He put it down.

"Look, Wally, I want to talk to you. We haven't had a real conversation, I mean a real conversation in a long time."

"That's true," he said neutrally.

"Well what I want to know is . . ."

"Yeah?"

"When are we going to get married?"

"Man, not again." He pushed her off and stood up. "Look, we're having a great time. Let's enjoy it. Let's not ruin the ephemeral pleasure by—"

"It's not ephemeral, and you know it. Why don't you cut the bullshit. I'm the most real thing in your life and you're too scared to admit it."

He laughed. "You're right of course. But I just can't see it."

"See what?"

"Getting married."

"But Wally, you promised me."

"I changed my mind. I mean, you can change your mind, can't you?"

"But you love me. Don't you?"

"Sure I love you. More than anything else in the world. I really mean it."

"Then let's get married. Let's get married right now." She put her arm around him. "Oh Wally, we can find a Justice of the Peace or something and then we can just take off somewhere. We could go to Florida or California or wherever you want to go. We could—"

"Nah."

"Why not?"

"Well, we got to go to work tomorrow."

"We could take a vacation. I'm sure your boss would let you have a week off if you told him you're getting married."

"Nah."

"Why not?"

"You want to know why not? You really want to know why not?"

"Yes."

"Because it wouldn't work out. I'm not ready to be chained to a universal woman."

"A what?"

"A universal woman. That's how man becomes totally emasculated. By women. They start by being nice and giving him favors. Then, as soon as they're married they become the insatiable Greeds they've been trying to stifle all along. They have a hundred different ploys to get everything they want. And they succeed."

"But Wall, you know I won't be like that. I've never asked you for anything—"

"See, there it is. The injustice ploy! You plant a feeling of injustice in me. You make me feel that I'm a roaring, flaming, ass-hole if I don't give in. Only you women do it in such a subtle fashion that we don't even realize that we're being fished out—not until it's too late. Well, I'm not going to be fished out."

"Oh, Wally," Barbara kissed him. "I'm sorry."

"For what?"

"For bringing this whole thing up. I should be happy just the way we are. It's just—"

"Just what?"

"It's just I don't know. I know it would work out. And I wouldn't be that kind of girl. I think you know me better than that. It's been four years now, you know."

"Yeah, I know. But we're not getting married."

"OK."

She was quiet. Walter lit a cigarette. They didn't say anything for a couple of minutes.

"What'd you call it? Ploys? Do I use ploys on you?" she asked.

"Are you kidding? Are you kidding? You sure as hell do!"

"Like what?"

"Well, like making me see your inane friends."

"What's wrong with my friends?"

"Nothing. Except that they are all, every one of them, greedy, filthy, scrofulous, dissipated animals."

"They are not."

"They are too. But yet—but yet—I love them—I love every one of them . . . Every STINKING one of them."

"Wally!!"

"You're surprised?"

"No, of course not. You've been telling me this for a long time."

"Well."

"Well, what's wrong with them?"

"They're shit."

"See, that's what I mean. You never tell me what's the matter with them, you just label them. 'He's a blatant homosexual; he's a borderline paranoid; she's a hunk of shit.' I mean, can't you say something intelligent for a change? I mean, we're intelligent human beings and we speak the same language. Tell me, Walter, what you don't like about them."

"Where should I begin?"

"How about Steve?"

"Liiich! Steve! The emancipated Jew."

"See, there you go again."

"OK. OK. Steve. You want to know why I don't like Steve. Well, in a word it's his personality. I can't think of anything more disgusting, more repulsive, more abhorrent than that Jew. Yeah, and did you ever see him eat? Watch him sometime. Just watch him. He doesn't eat like anybody else. He masticates with his entire head."

"So? So what if his eating habits don't come up to your epicurean standards? Is that why you don't like him? Just

because he doesn't eat like you do? Just because of that you—"

"Whoa. Let me finish, since you brought it up. As you may remember, I said it was his personality I don't dig. The way he talks, the way he acts, his fake interest in people. He collects friends, that's what he does. He's not a sincere person at all. And I'm sure, I swear to God, I'm sure that if you were in trouble, he wouldn't go an inch out of his way to help you. I swear to God he wouldn't—unless he stood to benefit by it."

"OK. I don't care to discuss this anymore."

"Good."

They were quiet again. Barbara sat in a chair watching him. However, he was indifferent to her scrutiny. He picked up his scissors and went back to work.

"Walter?"

"What?"

"What if I were to leave, I mean what if I were to leave?"

"So?"

"Wouldn't you miss me?"

"Of course I would."

"Well, how long can we go on like this?"

"I don't see anything wrong with this. Doesn't bother me."

". . . I'm leaving."

He cut out another ad.

"I said I'm leaving."

"I heard you."

"Well, I am."

"Hey, Barb, dig up on this: 'Tiny Norforms, the new answer for the intimate embarrassing problems married women face.' Do you use them?"

"No. You know I don't . . . Anyway, I'm not married. Remember?"

"Well, maybe that's your problem. Maybe you should use them. I mean, here, look. See how happy this guy is." He showed her the advertisement. The picture above the ad depicted a groom carrying his bride across the threshold.

Walter continued. "He's happy because she uses tiny Norforms which gives the germicidal protection that married women trust. It protects them from those embarrassing feminine odors. You dig?"

"I'm leaving."

"You ought to wait at least for a couple of hours. I mean, where can you go at four in the morning?"

"I don't care. Anywhere. Just as long as I'm away from you."

"Goodby," he said.

"Uh . . ." she hesitated.

"What?"

"Is that the only one?"

"Is what the only one?"

"Ploy. Is that my only ploy?"

"Oh, you mean subjecting me to Steve?"

"Yes."

"No! There's Anna and Frank, Veronica, Sandy, Craig and, and that, what's his name? That foreign Persian guy?"

"Oh! You can't mean Mehrdodd. What could you dislike about that charming man?"

"You mean that greasy weasel. That's what he looks like, you know. A God-damn greasy weasel."

"When did this come about? I thought you liked him. I mean the last time he came over and you and he were talking up a storm. You didn't even say one word to my other friends. And yeah, I was meaning to talk to you about that. The least you could have done was nod your head at them, at least . . . You could have condescended to say hello to them. It wouldn't have killed you."

"How mundane."

"Well, you noticed Dodd was very pleasant to them."

"Yeah. And that's when I realized he's a phony."

"Because of that? Because he's polite to someone he's a phony?"

"Right."

"You're nuts."

"Maybe."

"Sometimes I don't know why I love you."

Walter crumpled up one of his clippings and threw it on the floor.

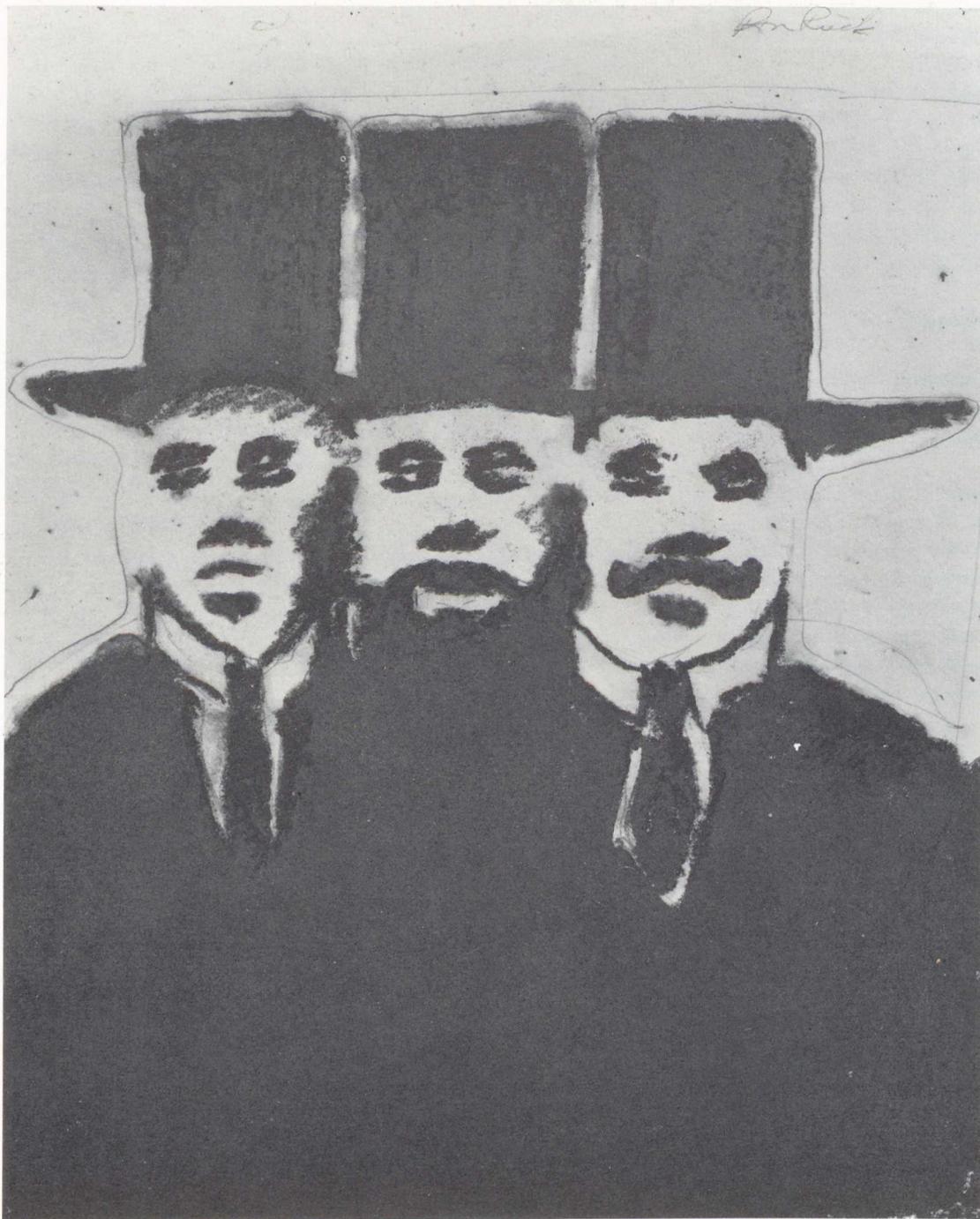
"What'd you do that for?"

"I have it already. 'Those Horrid Age Spots.'"

She apparently didn't understand him at first, but then she laughed. Then they both laughed.

The Night slid into second base.





PORTRAIT

A brass lamp
reflects a
polished white girl
listening
to strains of
Chopin
rising amidst chintz
and faded flowers.

A note bends
sharply against
ivory sterility,
echoing beyond
subdued white;
ending in
polished brass

Pauline Ford

SANCTUARY

Running lost
out of the storm,
paper-house sanctuary
finds me crouched
in a corner,

Trying
to poem my way
out of confusion's
linguistic
maze:

Beating
through metaphors,
simile shavings
sliced
raw at my feet,
jungles
of bamboo rhymes
sawdusted,
collapsing
into poetic dust
of crossed lines;
I finally
find myself
alone,
kneeling on pages
of thin river-ice,
scratching truisms,
and praying a shadow
from the sun.

Robert Gundelach

TO BENEDICT:

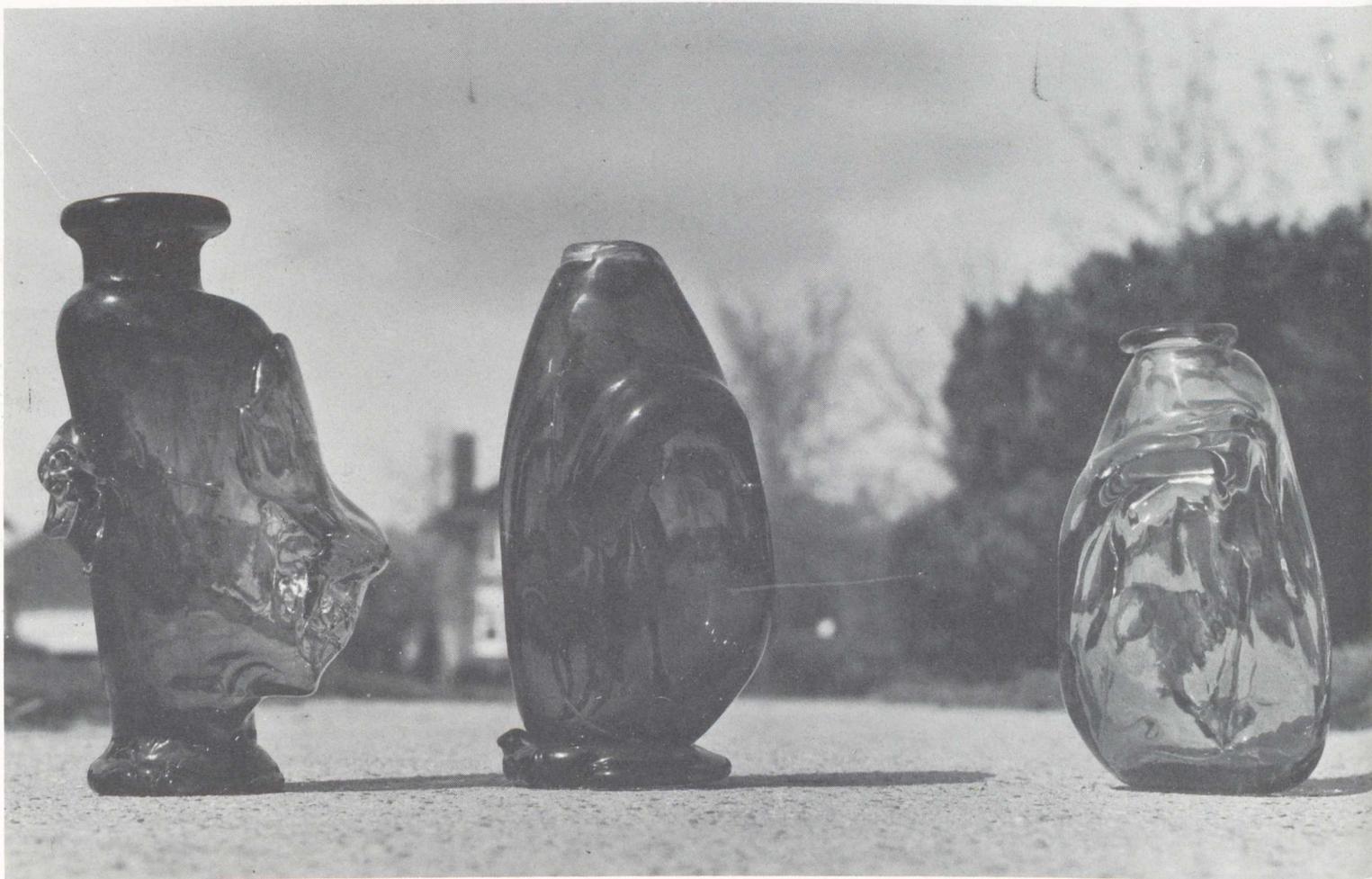
(Who was shunned yesterday
in kindergarten for wearing
suspenders and refusing to
sleep on his rug at naptime.)

ah Benedict
you will LIVE
wandering inside
enormous balloons
above the
belted world
of
kindergarten man.
BE GLAD.
for they are trapped.
nodding to their rugs
beyond naptime even.
unchallenged by the
worldly tensions
of
striped suspensions.
ah Benedict!
do you see what you hold?
YOURSELF.

you have discovered.

3 years before columbus
hits your third grade mind.

Marianne Boruch



THOUGHT

traveling today
on my way away
from
pressed patterned pages.
hours
sending senselessness
to the sound
of the wind's
free-born railroad.
content in a
stroboscopic rest
to reflect
conversations
of mind and pen.

Pauline Ford





GALATEA

I fancy that I almost see
The moving forces underneath
The pale skin of marble
Drawn across firm muscles
Epidermal over the porcelain blue
Of vein and vessel

She runs, smooth legs cover
The distance easily
Her bow hung loosely
Over a powdered shoulder
Tangent to the even breasts
Rise and fall but slightly

And were those breasts to heave
Those lips to part and gasp
Those running legs to break in stride
So the marble shell
Transparent shell
Might crack and separate
Permit a birth from rock
A swelling smile

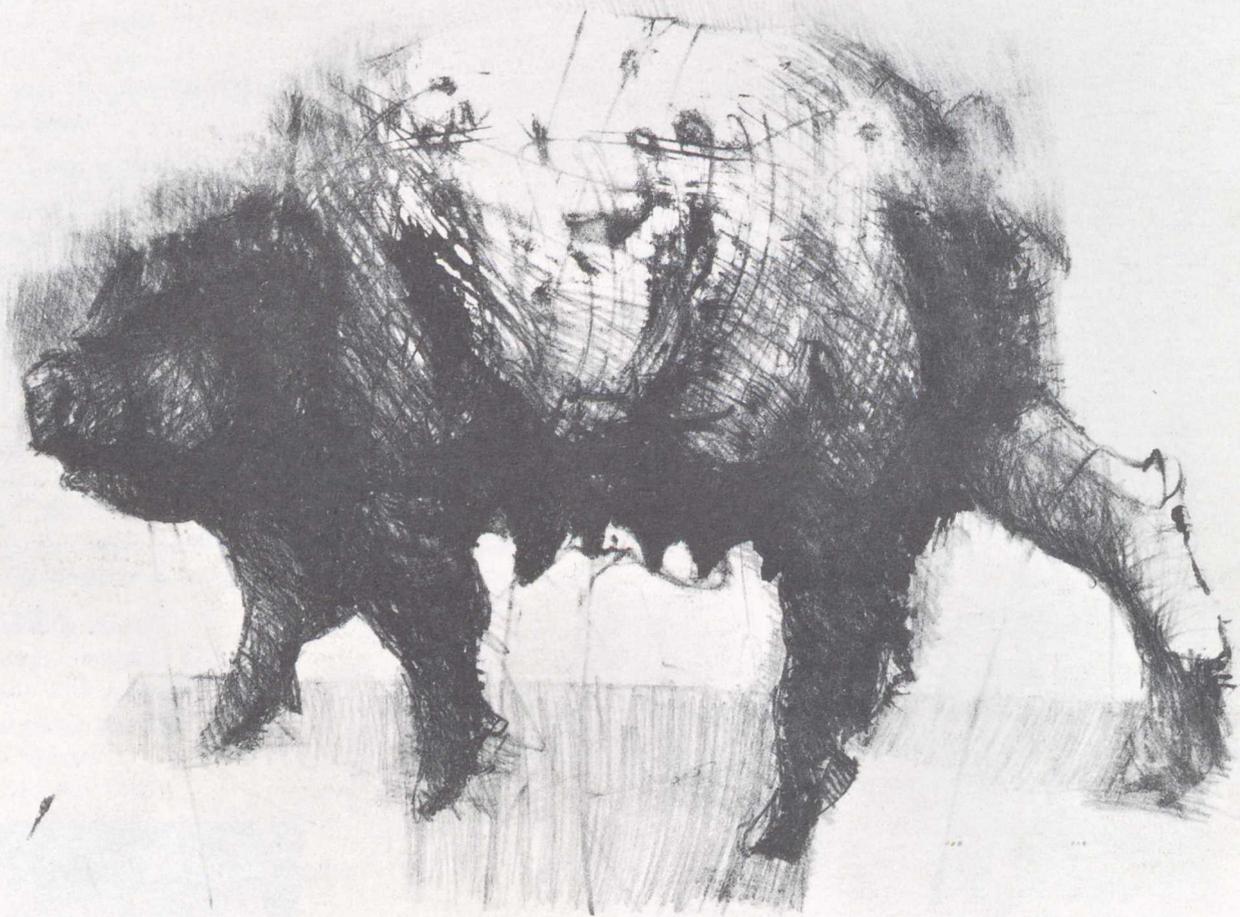
But she is fashioned with a chisel
And softened with a hand
That moved along the line
Of her taut breasts
And smoothed her thighs
And I must content to fancy
That I see her smile
In spite of stone
And feel her hand touch mine.

Richard L. Steele

The sun is bright on "zero" snow
as Athabaskan winds sweep low
over winter-rabbit bluffs into my valley home
and ruff the feathers of the gliding hawk.
The stalks are cut and fields are keen to comb.

Donald Latchford





Proud old woman,
like a shoehorn
she censured me.
(I had come to dinner
five minutes late)
She conversed steadily
over me
and around me
while I punctiliously
cleaned my plate
and judiciously
studied the flower pattern
under remnants of potatoes.
I was leaving in the morning
and could not understand:
whether affection
or love
it was there. But
etiquette
kept our parting
free of tears.

Joan Miller



PHILO

By Bruce Burg

Philo was perhaps the only ten year old veteran in all of Italy. He didn't even bother to lie about his age, since it was common knowledge that by the end of the war, the Italian army was issuing a gun to anyone who was not blind or dead. Philo was the most virtuous soldier alive—he machinegunned everyone entering the village, regardless of race, creed, religion, or political affiliation. He was the self-appointed, divine Protector of his home, Melysia. The tiny village had a total population of thirty-seven, which included one lame dog and a syphilitic raccoon.

Just three years before, Melysia had had a prosperous olive oil factory which added two hundred and four people to the village, of which forty-nine had worked in the factory. Through their combined efforts, they produced a fantastic thirty-two and a half barrels of oil per year. Thirty-two barrels was indeed a remarkable figure because everyone knew that an upstanding Melysian citizen didn't stand up that is. In fact, no less than twenty hours of sleep and day-dreaming between sunrises were appropriated. But after the Allied bombers had reduced the factory to twenty tons of rock and olive pits, the two hundred and four had no choice but to move out, or join the army, or get killed, or all three, thus reducing the village to its present size.

Philo was a fighter, and the only one within miles. There was no one else who could physically aid him in the defense of the village, which was a rather curious venture anyway, because no one wanted to attack the village in the first place. Indeed, the warring armies avoided Melysia at all costs, since the tiny village was world famous as the most poverty-stricken, diseased, and hexed location in the entire European theater. It had been rumored among the soldiers that there were more diseases in Melysia than in the brothels of Paris, and the geography of the village consisted of five calcimine houses and a public limestone urinal. There was also a deep, strange hole which was guarded by fiery bushes.

Although most people were deterred because of these gruesome sights and terrible conditions, there were, of course, some soldiers who had ventured inside seeking only to satisfy their own doubts about Melysia's reputation. These men had

all mysteriously vanished, because in addition to being a skilled olive picker and an artful beggar, Philo was also a dead shot, and accounted for the absence of seventy-six English, American, Italian, German, and French soldiers. Philo's method was foolproof: When an unsuspecting visitor entered the village, Philo would approach him and ask for food; while the kindhearted warrior searched his knapsack for some delicacy, Philo would shoot him neatly through the back of his head.

Philo stood over his latest victim, his gun still smoking.

"You shouldn't do that," Motu told him.

"Why not?" asked Philo.

"What did he ever do to you?"

"What did he ever do *for* me?" Philo demanded.

Motu, of course, couldn't answer his question; in fact, Motu *never* could answer his questions, and he was always struck dumb by Philo's curious logic. Motu was slow, and getting old; he was fifty years older than Philo, but he was also the closest one to Philo's age in the whole village. Motu was convinced that killing was wrong, but he didn't know why, and too, he envied Philo's courage; Motu's fear of other men was exceeded only by his fear of himself.

"I still don't think you should do it," Motu continued. "Killing isn't right. Those men might have wanted to help you."

"Killing isn't right," Philo reflected. "I think that before I kill the next one I'll see if he can help me."

"That would be much better," Motu said.

"It would be much better," Philo agreed.

Motu said goodbye and walked back to his hole to set his hedges on fire.

Three days later, an American chaplain came walking through the village, and Philo, true to his word, did not touch his gun.

"I'm an American chaplain," the American chaplain said, "and I have come to try to help you villagers. The other men say that this is the most wretched place in the world. But it doesn't look so bad."

"It's worse!" Philo snapped.

"Look!" said the chaplain excitedly. "Those bushes are

on fire.”

“I know.”

They walked over and looked into Motu’s foxhole, which was encircled by burning hedges. He was sitting in an awkward position at the bottom of the hole. His legs were crossed and pulled up so tight to his body that his feet touched his kidneys. His hands were cupped together, and his head was bowed. Motu was a surrealist prophet, and he thought that burning hedges looked extremely symbolic.

Philo and the chaplain walked away from the foxhole and sat down on the ground. The chaplain looked like a chaplain; he was thin and pale, and smiled weakly. He had a high voice, and he had thin black hair. His uniform was very neat, and although he was a soldier, he wore no firearm.

“Why don’t you wear a gun?” Philo asked suspiciously.

“I’m a man of God, and have no use for such things,” replied the chaplain, satisfied with giving an appropriate answer.

“You’re crazy!” said Philo with conviction.

“Ah, some day you will understand,” the chaplain said, looking up at the sky. “But tell me, where are all the children and parents? All I have seen are old people and that little man.”

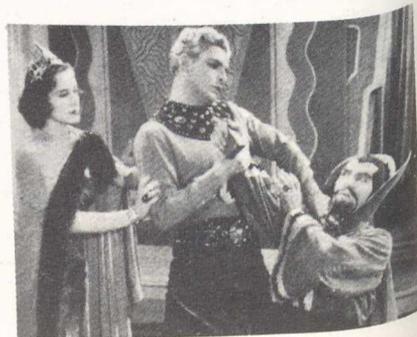
“They’re dead. All dead, like the rest of the world.”

“Don’t say that!” said the chaplain, with a worried, shocked look on his face.

“You said you came to help,” said Philo, looking away. “How are you going to help?”

“Oh!” said the chaplain, suddenly remembering. “I’ll do all I can. Here’s some money, and I left my pack where I came into the village. There’s some food inside, and tomorrow I can bring some more, much more, and medicine, and I’ll bring a platoon of men. They’ll clean up the dirt in the town and help the sick people. We’ll start a rebuilding program, too. Yes, we can really . . .”

The chaplain rambled on and on while getting up and walking for his knapsack, and at the same time, Philo slowly pulled his gun out and shot him in the back of his head. And Motu, who had been standing unobserved beside them all the while, turned toward his hole to set his hedges on fire.







LOTHARIO

A vacant street
in the shade before dawn
The night-wind creases the darkness—
The warmth behind
your unkind door
A small ways down
the ancient stair.

Bruce Burg



THE GAMBLING OF EMOTIONS

what could be more deceiving
than to say that i no longer love you
if in-fact i still do

what could be more humiliating
than to say i still love you
if i know that you no longer care

to be deceived and to be humiliated
is to be deluded
to love and to be loved
is the gambling of emotions.

Firdaus Bin Haji Abdullah

FALL, THEN SPRING

Five white
pekings on a purple dusk

Then ten red
wings rising from a pond

No death
Just drift from a cold land

No winter
Snow sail made of moon dust

And five white
pekings riding in the white
sun's belly

Robin Heim



CHALK EYE

By Dennis Dillow

They called him Chalk Eye because his right eye was bad—gray and cloudy looking all over and didn't move in the socket like the other one. He'd been pretty damn wild in his better days. Out drinking white mule and gamblin in box cars all night, sometimes not coming home for three or four days. But he let himself get rundown and he picked up a bad case of the jaundice and although he recovered, it had made him strange in the head, and he'd always been an old man from then on. He'd just sit rockin on his porch for hours on end, not talkin much to anybody except himself.

I don't remember him as anything else but an old man.

There was a bunch of real crazy wild cats that skulked around in the weeds and under Chalk Eye's porch huntin for them rats that lived in holes and in the barn. Sometimes Chalk Eye'd stand up and wave his arms and cuss alot at them cats but they'd just ignore him more or less till he started throwin hickory nuts or potatoes at them. But when he *did* hit them, you should've seen those cats. They'd just freeze-like and stare at him like they's countin to ten like my mama used to do when she got mad. Then if he kept on peltin them with those hickory nuts or potatoes, they'd charge right at him, just a spittin and bristlin and mad as all hell. Chalk Eye'd just keep on throwin and kickin and cussin even while those cats was a scratchin and bitin away at his legs. But he never run, Chalk Eye didn't. He always got the best of them, cause pretty soon they'd get fed up and go dashin off into the weeds. Then old Chalk Eye'd dare 'em to

come out again, standin there with the pants legs of his bibbed overalls torn and a little bloody.

"Grandpa," Lester'd say, "you been fighting with those cats again haven't you." Lester was about my dad's age then and he'd come down from his dry goods store every evening and fix Chalk Eye some supper in the old man's shack. And usually about twice a week I guess Lester'd have to paint iodine on the fresh cat scratches on his grandpa's legs. "You leave those old cats alone, Grandpa, they aren't bothering anybody."

I remember how me and Jimmy Bill Edrington and a few other kids from my fifth grade class used to climb that big elm tree in Spencer's pasture on Saturdays and look out over the gravel road to Chalk Eye's shack and hope to see him have a good scrap with the cats.

"Betcha if he got enough of them crazy old cats riled, they'd scratch him to death," Jimmy Bill Edrington would say.

"Naw, old Chalk'd grab 'em and turn 'em inside out and every which way but loose."

We used to get into long, silly arguments about who'd come out best if more than a couple cats got involved.

"My maw said Lester should have Chalk Eye locked away in the home at Olive Branch," Corwyn Weir said.

"Hell's fire," Jimmy Bill Edrington told him, "don't you remember what Chalk did that time Lester tried makin' him move into his house down by the store?"

"Yeah, I know, but he couldn't come runnin off back to his shack if they strapped him into his rockin chair up at Olive Branch. That's over twenty miles away."

"My old man says Chalk Eye could do most anything if he got drunk," I said.

"Oh, yeah? You mean like the time he got his hands on that bottle he found out in the barn and got all drunk up and went wanderin around in the fields and—"

"—climbed up on that wooden fence around Spencer's hogs—"

"—and fell in on that sow and her litter."

"And if Gabe Spencer hadn't seem him fall in, that sow would've et 'im alive."

We all got a big laugh out of that one. Wasn't a soul in Alexander County that hadn't heard that story.

I remember it was on a Sunday in May—cause we only had a week or two of school left—when my dad got a phone call right as we were saying Grace over supper.

"It's Sheriff Hileman," my dad says. "He says Chalk Eye MacDaniel's gone, and wants to know if we've seen him."

We went out and checked around the barn, in our pig pen, and out by the shed where dad kept the tractor and plows but we didn't find Chalk Eye, and I said, "Dad, maybe the cats got him," but he didn't hear me I guess, just went back in the house and told the sheriff on the phone he wasn't around here.

When he hung up the phone and sat down to supper my dad said to my mama, "Probably got into some booze again. No tellin where he'll end up this time."

After I ate my supper, I ran down the road and told Jimmy Bill Edrington who was throwin the softball with Corwyn Weir that Lester had come over just like always to fix old Chalk supper and couldn't find hide nor hair of him. The

three of us cut through the soybean field to Spencer's pasture and could see from way off that the sheriff's black and white car was parked out front of Chalk Eye's shack.

When we got to the gravel road, we saw the sheriff and Lester and a few other men from town standing around by the squad car talkin.

"You boys haven't see old Mr. MacDaniel anywhere, have you?"

We said no, we hadn't, but we thought maybe the cats had got him.

When we said that I noticed one of the men from town crack a smile as if it was a dumb thing to say, but then Lester started looking around the yard from where he was standin, with his face all pale and scarey looking.

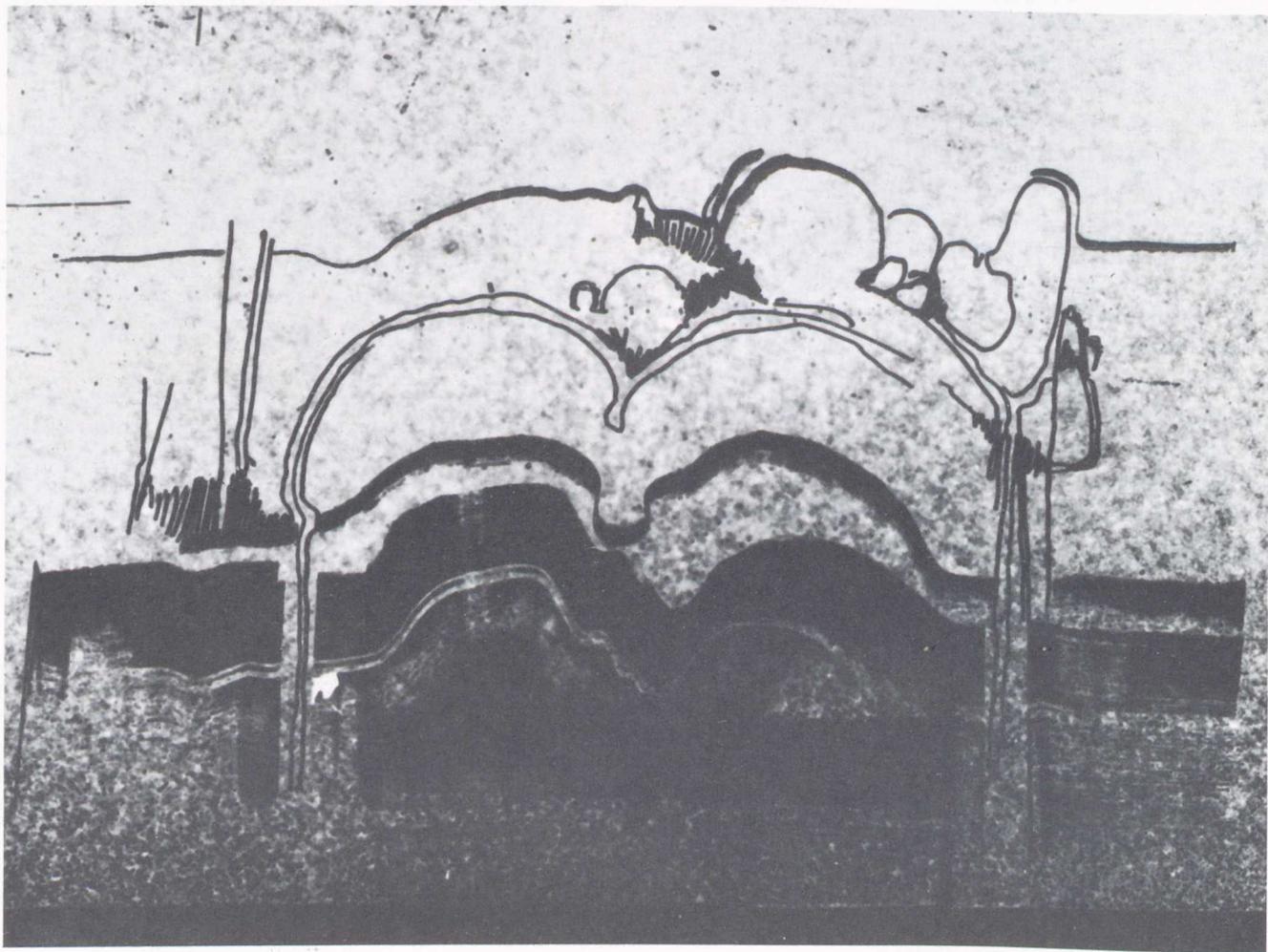
"You don't actually think . . ." the sheriff said, and then he too was looking, and in a minute the men from town were all hunched over searchin real close in the weeds almost like they'd lost a watch or a billfold or something.

And though it was really no surprise to me or Jimmy Bill Edrington or Corwyn Weir when they found old Chalk underneath the porch, we *were* a little shocked by the way the cats had torn him up.

The sheriff dragged the old man out from under the porch face-down and then turned him over. His bibbed overalls were in rags and you could hardly tell they were blue from all the blood. I couldn't bring myself to look at Chalk Eye's face, but I did notice his hand. His right hand—his throwin hand. It was holdin on to a little brown potato.

Us kids talked about that for a long time.





POTION

Quaff this vial
and all the rest is done
save the chanting
of the words.
They must be learned
by heart, and
whispered
in damp, secret places.
Under vines and crumbling moss.
The vigil lasts a night
in fasting and in thought
with darkened hearth.
At the appointed hour
rise to greet the sun,
with downcast eyes
and stately step.
Listen for the slightest
sound. If it is still,
then all is well.
Bend your soul
in courtly murmurs.
She is won.

John Vranicar

FIVE FRUSTRATIONS

The day is after dawn
I have to be naked to dance on glass
the way the wind
rattles pane and pane.

Many years ago a prophet lost his vision
when he thought beauty
where the sassafras grew wild
was a moment.

The women in the village of New England
have let their husbands and rabbits
out of their gardens
before the sun catches them blind
in October.

I have always wanted to plant
with tin weeds in a good season
and the air of May
swarming with human confusion
and heat
my heart in a broken stone.

Let good men
unhandled by the virtues of women
steal with feet over quiet
music of silence
agony and hope.

Martin Addis



AN ANALYSIS OF "KNIGHTS AND SQUIRES"

(*Moby-Dick*, Chap. 26)

By Bruce E. Burg

After directing the first twenty-five chapters towards establishing a suitable background on which to build his novel, Melville turns to the description of the ruling class of the ship: the knights, the squires, and the king. The twenty-sixth chapter deals exclusively with Starbuck, the first mate, and this chapter in a sense is the beginning of the story.

Starbuck himself is a beginning, the chief among the 'knights and squires,' and he represents an element of unity which is critical in developing the tension of the novel. He stands alone from the rest of the ship's complement (with the exception of Ishmael), who are collectively a kind of whole which is set against the position of Starbuck. This unique posture that is sustained by Starbuck must be set structurally as well as thematically from that of the others, and this is at least one reason for Melville's separating the discussion of the 'knights and squires' into two chapters having the same title.

Moby-Dick is essentially a book of conflict; not only is there the overt battle of men fighting the whales (and *The* whale), but also of the intense warring of man against man, and of the more subtle outrage: man against himself. Starbuck becomes the force which opposes all the others together; he himself is one side, one half of the conflict. Starbuck is a true knight—a Lancelot; he is a romantic, a gentleman, a fighter. He is loyal not to another man, or even to himself, but rather to Rightness, Courage, and Reason.

Starbuck is emblematical of sanity and rationality. Ahab, Stubb, and Flask combine to form a trinity of evil, though this evil is of an unconscious, perhaps intellectual, nature, and not that brutish malevolence wrought by the whale. Starbuck, then, becomes a rationally functional character when all of these evils that he opposes are recognized.

"Knights and Squires" (Chap. 26) serves to illuminate the character of Starbuck, and indirectly, to contrast his traits with those of the other leaders. Starbuck is courageous but prudent: "Starbuck was no crusader after perils . . . he had no fancy for lowering for whales after sun-down; nor for

persisting in fighting a fish that too much persisted in fighting him (104)."¹ Yet if he was to be subject to a confrontation, he would not flee from it: "Looking into his eyes, you seemed to see there the yet lingering images of those thousand-fold perils he had calmly confronted through life (103)."

This attitude, of course, is in direct opposition to that of Ahab, Stubb, and Flask. These three may be treated with a kind of allegorical criticism, invoking the biblical influences that so strongly affect the matter of *Moby-Dick*: Ahab is the cruel, unfeeling tyrant; he is guilty of malice, greed, and vengeance, and he shows no compassion when involved with his crusade against *Moby-Dick*. Stubb is guilty of pride, arrogance, and vanity, and presumably it is his capitulation to the control of these sins which comprise his evilness. Flask is an indifferent, gullible, blindly obedient servant, a man who is ignorant to even the notion of reverence.

Implicit in this struggle of man with man is also one of a philosophical and psychological nature. It is concerned with the role of captain, and that position must be considered in a metaphorical as well as a practical sense. For contradictory to Ahab's vehement attack ("There is one God that is Lord over the earth, and one Captain that is lord over the Pequod [363]."), there are two captains of the ship: Starbuck is the executor, the manager, the navigator; in short, the man of reason. Ahab is the authoritarian, the symbol of blind militancy, a calculating fanatic. These roles are of course mutually exclusive, but paradoxically, they cannot be divorced within the context of the novel.

So in the same sense that Starbuck is a beginning, his moral and rational disposition place him in a middle ground; although having a great talent for looking to the past for a lesson, he is equally adept at recognizing a sign in the present to understand an event of the future. This quality makes Starbuck Ahab's equal, even though Starbuck's more rudimentary feelings of personal subservience to his maritime commander eventually tip the situation to Ahab's favor.

It is worth noting that this is Starbuck's own dilemma in the problem of 'man against himself.' Starbuck is endowed with more than 'good sense.' He is capable, if not of *conjuring*, at least in *recognizing* prophetic vision, but his flaw is perhaps only in the upholding of a human virtue—that of

duty. Starbuck's problems with his own conscience and with Ahab are paralleled by a few lines¹ from W. B. Yeats' "The Second Coming:"

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity (11. 2-7).

This theme and warning are applicable not only to Starbuck's dilemma, but also to the overall situation of conflicts inherent with the construction of *Moby-Dick*. And just as was noted that Starbuck is a beginning and a middle, likewise is he a conclusion, but not in the sense that that word intimates a terminus. On the contrary, as Melville writes in "Knights and Squires," "... This Starbuck seemed prepared to endure for long ages to come, and endure always, as now (103)." Thus, Starbuck is only a conclusion unto his own beginning (acting as his own restatement), asserting his creation and those applicable forces of right for which he stands, as cyclical and conjunctive, twisting eternally with those forces of evil.



¹ All page references in parentheses or brackets refer to the following edition of the text:
Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick or, The Whale*. Boston:
The Riverside Press, 1956.





