

1908



Lorne W. Bidak

# Haiku

Dorothy Kampf

Below my window  
The pond reflects a deep blue—  
The sky is paler . . .

# Beaches

Christopher D. Guerin

The hard wheels of the blue Pontiac wagon began to rumble as they left blacktop for gravel, then quieted as they ran upon sand. The colonel was surprised to find he could drive straight into the sea if he wished, that there was no barriered lot for parking. He stopped the car just beyond a jagged line of palms bitten by the high winds of the recent typhoon. His daughter and three sons were loud and excited, eager to hit the beach.

"Don't wander too far from the car," he said needlessly and got out, the signal they could do the same.

He walked straight to the water, not stopping till a thin remnant of wave slid up and circled the bottoms of his shoes. The eye-level sea came at him in long green plateaus that fell like cliffs in an earthquake and boiled out white on the edges of the sand which was perfectly smooth, a smoothness that grew to transparency in his imagination. As though an x-ray revealed a shallow vast detritus of lead nuggets, grotesque twists of steel and iron, and hundreds upon hundreds of brass buttons. He saw scatterings of bone chips, shocked loose from arms and chests years ago, that loomed in the x-ray with hardly the clarity of metal, but all the more real for that—if they hadn't been dissolved by nearly twenty years of rot and wet.

The beach's cream-colored arms extended in a seaward curve a quarter mile both directions and disappeared as it must have curved inland again. He thought of his usual curiosity about what lie beyond diminishing points of land like those, and how it was totally absent now.

With a smirk he turned an about-face and was shocked, as by a deathnote, at the closeness of the line of brown-green palms, motionless in the storm's aftermath. The time of day, even the month was right, and there had been twice the hundred yards he saw now to those first machinegun and mortar nests. The tide would be right, which meant the sea had to have displaced a great chunk of sand since then. He saw the debris of metal and calcium out upon the vast ocean, washing up on all the other shores of the world.

The beach itself had grown beautiful, motionless, colorful. It didn't, as he had feared, reinforce, but helped erase a few more of the dim marks of fear and revulsion that had grown dimmer by themselves in time, but which were still potential black slashes of desperate action in his dreams. He accepted his need both for a remembrancer and for total forgetfulness, a need the aspects of nature involved seemingly did not have.

A black line of horizon parted the sea from a gray sky and the sun was just a moderate concentration of glow directly overhead. In the cool air that forbade bathing he saw his children content to run down the beach fully clothed, happy to investigate the close reaches of shallow water and collect seashells for their shell game at home.

He wished his wife had come along, and that they had not. But she had refused to share the mood she insured him, *the romantic*, would command him—and had as yet not—and the children had by now become eager for any new experience of the island. Their first estrangement and homesickness had passed. He wished that for this moment it had not.

He thought of the book he'd read in which the same thing had happened that was happening to him now. And how the man returning with his children to a site of war had thought only of the disparity between their first experience of the beach and his. *Maybe if I hadn't read that*, he thought, *I would be thinking the same thing right now.*

And he thought how it was not the same place, and how their comic books had shown them just what it was like—with a laughable accuracy. *At least as far as I remember it*, he thought. But this wasn't really the same place at all. The real, outside thing had not happened here. *Not to me.*

With the smell of rotting canvas and used bandages, the tent breathes nausea into those not concentrating on pain. In a corner is a rich mass of black, blood-soaked gauze. The flies hover like squadrons of tiny planes above each cot. The moans have died away in sleep and anaesthetic, but a random curse splits the thick air like a scalpel, flesh. Under each bed lies a pistol or carbine on a piece of green shirt or pantleg. Inverted bottles of blood hang above patients like balloons. The lieutenant sits, half-dozing, by a head-wound patient he knows won't make it till the next trucks arrive. The forty-five he's never fired at anything but black and white paper remains strapped about his waist. As though much later, he half-dreams of a rush of water into his eyes, again swash, and opens them, head shaking, to a dull red blade and a tiny black-clothed man without a face, doing what the Huks did to his own kind, slitting the throats of *every other* man sleeping in his bed. He blanches at two gurgling open wounds in men he knew would have easily survived, and thinks, *He's so intense he doesn't realize me.* It takes *too long* to unbutton the holster, heft out the warm metal, switch off the safety with a deafening click, aim and fire. Like in movies, a bottle of blood bursts, painting the Jap's chest red, who flings his arm back to throw not fast enough for the lieutenant to aim correctly and kill him, firing into his heart. A yellow face jerks up, bloated, and flings far backward fast like in a huge wind. A flurry of movements and voices. "Good shot," says one of the startled patients, as the lieutenant picks up a shard of glass with the blood type on white paper glued to it.

But he had landed here. The beginning was here and had not been the same at all. The sea, the smooth sand meant more than did the movements and hesitations of men advancing, standing dull and stooped with fear, and falling in one of the two ways. Those seven hours amidst sent-metal were now as vague as his children's grown memories of this day. The wild swarm on the beach of bodies silent and flashing, deafening and smoke-suffused, was something apart, and had been even then. What had taken place for him was not alike to their bodies and minds, was totally within, a lucidity not affected by his personal fears. And had had no more immediacy to physical experience than an x-ray had to a doctor's eye. A film only, the landing, a bleary image he was totally excluded from. He'd tended wounded, himself untouched, and that was all. But it changed him in a way more complete than his having killed changed him. What had happened was his own, a realization deep inside, and no fellow-soldier's tale over beer twenty years later. The physical happening—facts, numbers—just a jumble of variables that worked its power in him only because of its skeletal form as war. *Men could do such things.* Battle. But it had changed him like a potion, a permanent alcohol.

His thoughts were disrupted by the sound of his oldest son's yelling, "Hey, come look! I found a graveyard!"

Incredulous, he ran to his son who was still yelling and waving to the others some several hundred yards down the beach.

"It's all overgrown, but I saw something like a picket fence," said his son, Dan, "See, there. Just a little bit."

He kicked aside the white rotted wood, pulled away some dead branches, and found a square of green and bushy open ground. On a black pole in the middle of the clearing hung a Japanese helmet with a mottled patina green as some dug-up bronze goblet. Its crown was cut and jagged.

Remembering, he imagined the metal whistling across the helmet, sucking up a stream of blood. Like what happened when the machete creased the monkey's skull the time he dined with the Thais; the blood running just for a second, leaving the white mush still quivering, ready for the spoon he hadn't been able to use.

The yard looked old enough to have existed from before the war, but the stones and helmet betrayed it as Japanese. There were maybe a hundred stones, some at odd angles, all unmarked. No mounds hinted where grave left off and empty earth

took on. Obviously the captured had been allowed to bury their dead before being shipped off. *That was why we went through the hell of carrying our dead inland to bury.* Though he knew it was of a long dead emotion, he was indignant.

He walked to the pole, and without examining it further, threw the helmet far into the brush.

"Look," Dan yelled again, and they all gathered around him as he yanked from the soil a long cylinder and hefted it in his hand. The girl, Deanne, looked away disinterestedly when she saw what it was.

"That's a fifty caliber machine-gun shell," he said, without his usual interest in instructing them, "There's probably thousands of them around here," and immediately he regretted having said so. In a moment the three boys had deployed, declaring their own territories for hoped-for finds.

"I'm going back to the beach for real shells," said Deanne, and he couldn't help but smile at her.

The graveyard was hemmed in by vines and brushgrowth like by cloister walls. Tall monkey-pods played together, brushing out most of the sunlight. The air was stifling and hotter. The elephant grass, stunted and wet, smelled of old fruit. He soon felt nothing at all about whose graves they were. He was only surprised that the yard was still there, had not been desecrated by the Filipinos. *Maybe that was not their way,* he thought. He knew the Huks had forgotten the Japanese the moment they left. He felt disgusted and stared at the pole, knew he hadn't erased a thing.

"I'm going back to the car," he said to the three boys, "Come back soon and bring Deanne with you. And don't wander any further away," then, after a pause, "We should leave before long."

He demanded of himself to think of nothing but his wife on the way back to the car, how she had been so near to being right about the mood that would grab him. It wasn't depression like she said, or elation over strange times relived, strange because lived through, but something far worse—an emptiness and lack of understanding that came from the persistence of a graveyard and his part in its making.

Settling in behind the steering wheel with a gardening magazine from the back seat, he was soon able to forget where he was. Only the word *spoon* piped through his thoughts now and then amidst the rather overcomplex explanation of the reasons for mulching. Then his youngest son limped up on his brace and said, quietly, "Look, Dad, I found a bullet," holding forth, pinched between his thumb and forefinger and held far out as possible on a thin arm, a pristine hunk of steel-encased lead, "What kind is it?"

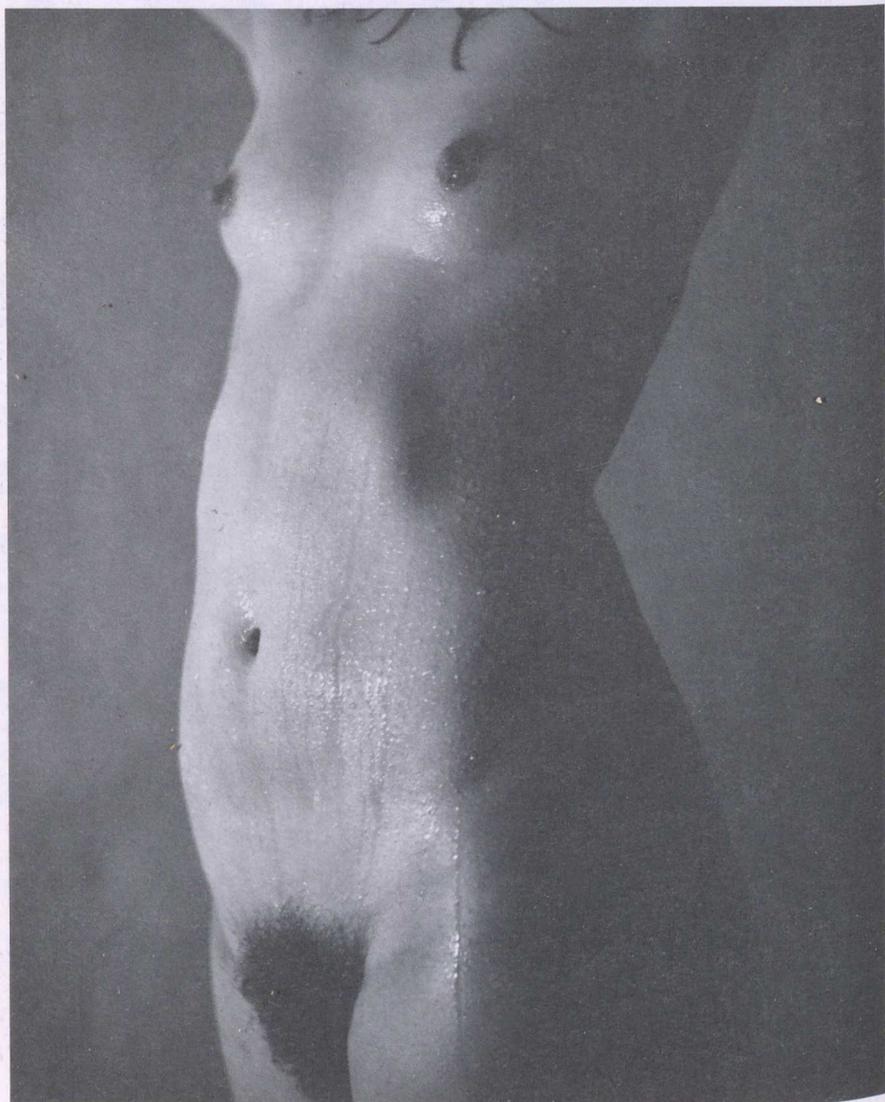
"That's also a fifty caliber, Collin."

"You mean it'll fit into what Dan found?" he asked, without excitement, still keeping the slug at arm's length.

The colonel said nothing, returned to the crumpled pages, uncaring of his son's reaction, but disgusted with himself for bringing him here, thinking, *I don't care if it isn't his fault,* while Collin jogged-limped, yelling to and back to Dan.



Lin Cleghorn



Sam J. Ciulla

# Flesh Tones

David Antos

Out of the faucet gently dripping, bones and stars  
finally stream, settle to a compact paste, plug.

My mirror reflects bones after years of honoring  
broad strokes. I smudge on freeways with my palm.

Lilacs, orchids, parrots full of green tongues  
so bright they can hardly speak.

My hand dips into a pool of warm sludge, sprouts mushrooms,  
tasty robust warts. Heavenbound pilei flutter my lips.

The earth dries. I lie on a slow-cracking plain, sleep  
as air widens, wake in the pit of a crevasse.

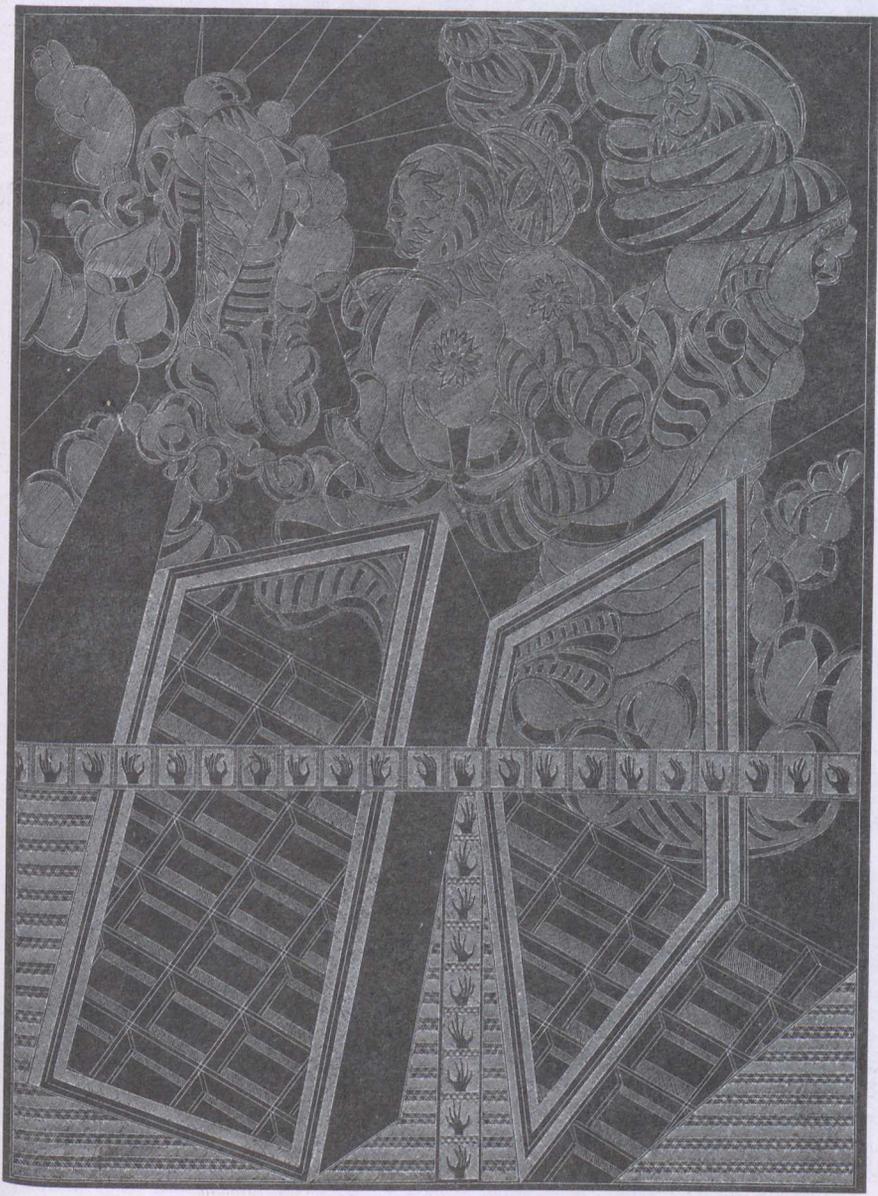
Brittle dark lines the soft. One fingertap can rip  
the cloth, sunlight and dust screwing in like burns.

# The Great Sigmund

Gloria Warden

Freud would have made a great magician,  
For, as we know, an unreleased illusion  
Becomes a delusion. If anatomy is destiny,  
You can always slice up a woman,  
And not have to worry about what she wants.  
Rabbits and doves, fires and explosions;  
Primeval fertility and fear join harmlessly.  
Magic has only two drawbacks:  
It fosters escapism,  
And levitation lacks all means of support.

PERFORMING ARTS



Richard Wolfryd

# The Sill: A Montage

Christine Okon

Mona swore she could climb into his eyes, they were so large. Right over the sill of the iris, she'd step one foot first into that black window, opening wider. He—she had never seen him before until this party—awaited her entry. The two of them pretended to discuss art, the cinema as art. But the words evaporated into the sweet haze that filled the room crowded with people immobile from the hard music. Mona could only stare into his eyes, her thoughts drying like streaked blood yet his eyes reached into her.

She did not mean to flirt, not really. She did not mean to intrude upon the couple next to her on the couch. She was only looking into his eyes for some reason—no reason, perhaps—and when his girlfriend pulled his shoulder to make him face her, she glared at Mona: stay away. And Mona sank back into the worn cushion and glanced slowly around the room to find Tom, sitting on the floor near the controls of the stereo.

She had come to this party because Tom had invited her. Now and then she would see him on campus; she knew him by his walk—shoulders down and lumbering, as if he had something stuffed in his pants. And when she quietly greeted him, he would grin, stretching his mouth to reveal the teeth; it was more of a grimace. Looking past her at the people streaming by, he had eagerly mentioned something about the party, why doncha drop by, it should be fun, please come. OK, Marilyn, maybe we'll see you. . . . Mona nodded, sure, and pushed her glasses back; they always slipped down her nose.

And now she was in a room full of people, everyone numb in the haze and the music, with Tom sitting crosslegged on the floor across from her. He picked up a record, held it for all to see, insisted that everyone look. "Take the record—put into sleeve—put sleeve into jacket. Right?" Over and over he repeated this, each time more slowly; a quickening gel trapped all movement in the room, voices became garbled. "Tom—shut up." Someone lying on the floor near Tom spoke this, staring at the ceiling. Tom forced himself to laugh, raise his voice. "Is the music all right? All right! This is a party, right? Why don't you go out and pick up some chicks?" Tom covered his mouth and looked quickly around the room, passing his gaze over Mona. "Oops. I mean—go out and get some women."

Mona sat still in her position, her arms folded over her chest. Tom's words were caught in the noise of the music. She shrank away from the person next to her, holding herself as if for warmth as his girlfriend caressed his hair. Mona's eyes fixed on Tom, his mouth stretching and closing—was he saying something? He was holding a record up for all to see, and began to slip it into the paper sleeve. And she watched as the people around Tom crawled toward him, slowly enveloping him in a web of flesh and denim. A black vapor streaked across the room; Mona heard the plastic smash. "Yeah, Tom, go out and get some!" They were all upon him now, rocking him to the floor, pinning him down. Tom kicked, as if he were being teased. "C'mon, you guys." A lamp with a red bulb toppled to the floor; its glow thickened the air. Mona did not move.

She watched as one of them put his mouth to a ceramic cylinder. Suddenly Tom's head was shrouded in smoke; choking and gasping sounds flowed into the music, Tom writhed—like an insect probed with a needle, and the investigators all laughing at the reaction. Mona watched all of this, feeling no sensation in her body; only her eyes moved, as if filming the scene.

Tom lay on the floor, his heavy body molten, and they grasped his legs, pulled him across the floor. Mona's eyes followed the movement; a slow bubble of nausea swelled in her chest. They pulled the body into a dark room and emerged, tossing Tom's jeans, T-shirt, underwear into a rippling blur that fell unnoticed all over the room full of people. "The asshole," someone said.

Mona shivered, covering herself more tightly. The noise drilled her brain;

everywhere there was slow writhing to the music. The couple next to her twisted around each other into a strange new form. Mona breathed the air pouring thick into her from the red bulb on the floor. She held herself closely, hoping no one would notice her nakedness.

A girl moved to dance; she had long black hair and waved glimmering snakes through the air; her body was part of the air. Mona watched, terrified. She heard only the blood lapping her ears. The snakes circled, luminous in the red glow, and slid around the neck of someone leaning on a pillow, and tightened their embrace.

Slowly, a soft thumping sound arose, apart from Mona's pulse. It startled her; was it the music? She brushed her blond hair quickly, and glanced around. But she could not move from the couch. The quiet pounding did not stop. Mona covered her ears; still it continued. The room, the people rippled in orange, shadowy water. She searched for the pounding, and, as if something had suddenly released her, she rose, drawn to the locked door across the room.

She found herself kneeling by the locked door, pressing her palms to it. A tiny whimper escaped from the bubble in her chest. "Why did you allow it?" Her lips did not move. She could feel Tom's weight against the door; the pounding became sobbing. "Hey, let me out. C'mon you guys." Mona stared at the cracks in the grey paint as if they were openings to the other side. The pounding stopped. Mona groped with her palms over the wood. A tiny grey sliver pierced her finger, and she watched the bubble of blood grow and break into a fine line down her hand. Quickly she shut her fist. Once again she heard sobbing; she pressed her body against the door, her back burning from the orange glow and noise behind her.

Suddenly, cold touched her shoulder; someone had just come in from outside. "I heard there was a party here," he said to Mona. "They won't let him out," she said, and looked into the newcomer's eyes; they scorched her instantly, and she turned away, crouching to conceal herself. She crawled into a dark room where a mass of coats lay on the bed. She stumbled on bodies; something clawed her legs, brushed her thighs, and she searched blindly for covering. Holding a coat around herself tightly, she stepped carefully through the red haze and passed over people on the floor; no one was looking at her.

And she saw Tom, sitting crosslegged on the floor by the stereo, grinning and swaying his head. He gazed through Mona as she stumbled past. "Drop by again—always nice to see girls at my parties." He held a back disc in Mona's face. "Record in the sleeve—right?"

Mona found herself on a street packed with ice, the snow falling in heavy chips, shocking her skin. Into a snowdrift—her legs disappearing, then emerging, then again disappearing—as if she were being pulled into the earth. Looking up, she felt the streetlight pierce her, driving her to run. Something was following her, snapping just behind her heels. She ran, her breath bursting into the air, her throat icing the pounding in her. The street, the snow, the light flowed through her eyes and mouth like sharp liquid, blinding her from looking back.

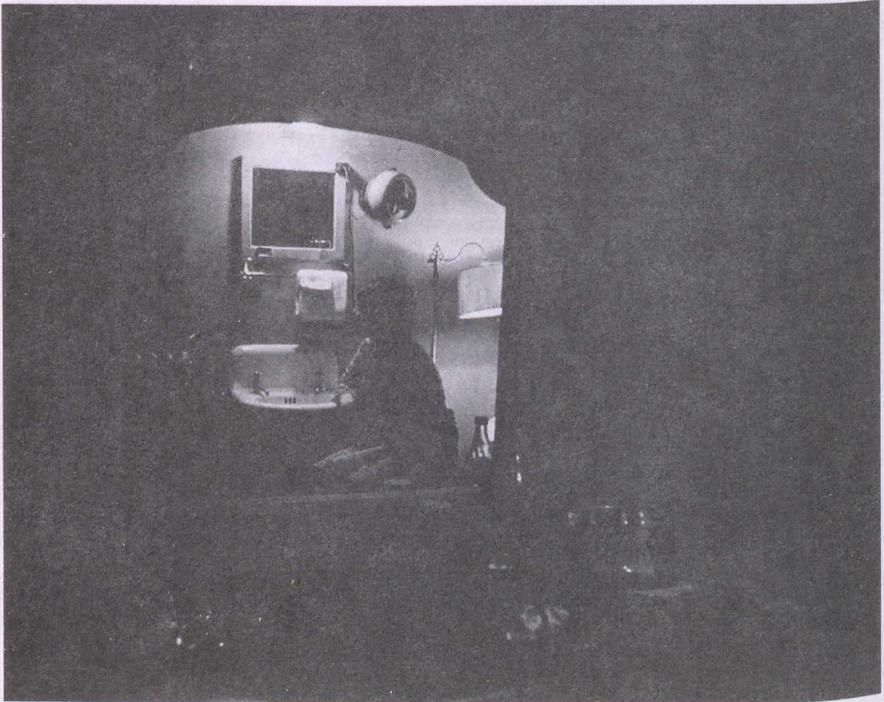
She reached the door of the house—a boarding house in which she had a room alone—and thrust herself against the cold wood until it opened to the darkness inside.

In her room the pounding quieted to a pulse; her shuddering, too, slowed. Her hand found a switch. Suddenly a figure appeared in the mirror before her. Mona stared into the glass and did not move. The framed image of a face—knotted blonde hair, open mouth—moved towards her until it touched her, eye to eye. Slowly, Mona pressed her palms to the glass, and watched the black holes, rimmed with luminous blue, grow wider and wider until they allowed her to enter.

# Prayer

John Manderino

Birds whistle and mean it  
as much as feather and bone, as  
grip of the branch. But I am  
a man and wonder what is my sound  
and murmur among other men, cough,  
conclude, I sip, sigh, qualify, wait. . . .  
A man and bother the air, make little rooms  
of it, stale with me. Oh I may dance  
brazen, dance naked but You know I'm only  
flaunting my gaudy sores. God,  
grant me the good anger to break things  
and praise, take me and make of me  
now a fiercely single thing. God gather  
me gather me!



Sue Wedow

# To Vicki, In England

Marylou Pierce

September sun patches my dry dying garden  
this afternoon. I sit with your letter.  
Your backyard, you tell me, is sodden, a moat;  
all of your cabbages sponges: sea mist.

On days like this, we used to ride,  
splashing through fallen leaves, jumping the fences.  
Your horse, the stubborn one, yellow as wheat;  
mine, rusted autumn trees, bright as your hair.  
We'd race the sunset with rodeo tricks, then,  
rocking-chair-gaited, laze home after dark.

Late nights, games of chess, until  
we'd hear the birds start  
like shivering aspens below your cool window;  
look to the barn where the horses were waking,  
ride til the light came  
and not say a word.

You're in Bournemouth. I hold the letter:  
airmail blue paper, a whisper away.  
I never wished for such stillness.

When the barn burned, you called me,  
and I came, too late. Your horses, once out,  
circled back into flames.  
Next day, smoke clearing,  
nudging at ashes,  
we found Raindrop's hoof  
in a mound of black cinder.

Now you write of rain, your garden, your husband;  
tell me of castles, and rock cliffs, and cold.  
I can still see you, afloat over fence rails,  
caught up in flight, all silent grace.  
Your face a banner of slow-motion smiles.

# The Blue Glass Jar

Gay Davidson

"So much depends . . ." the poem begins. I read it later with much the same feeling as I had when I viewed my first wheelbarrow. It came in the form of deep blue sin. Placed within my reach, the blue glass jar the color of morning glories in the middle of January was an infinite temptation. It rang like bells there on the windowsill of Mrs. Simms' kitchen. I could see that the grease had been rinsed out by the way the light of the sun going down just barely caught.

When she asked I said that I had come for matches. "And a thimble," I lied just in time. It was a good choice, the kind of thing my mother might have sent me to borrow. And it took her out of the kitchen.

I waited until I heard her scratching around in the dining room. Then I snatched, secured, and jammed the fat jar into my pants front. It was cold from contact with the window, but it buried like a live thing against my belly. I had expected it to be warm. Vera Simms re-entered, flapping her gums as usual. Delivering the usual litany, she did not even glance at the windowsill. She had the house of a townperson, packed with good things. Probably lots of jars.

I had the feeling Vera Simms did not like me. I shrank back into the doorway as she spoke: "You take the back-way home, girl. You do and you'll be stuck in a drift 'til Spring. You take the highway, you'll get picked up sure as the dickens. Don't take no rides from the boys at the tavern. Don't take no rides."

Wondering vaguely what a dickens was and how in the world she expected me to get home except by the backway or the road, I nodded and replied in order: "Yes. Yes. O.K. Thank you. Yes. No. Don't bother with the porch light. Goodbye, Mrs. Simms."

Then I was in over my head. When my eyes came in, the way a T.V. does when it finally focuses, I could see one big-eye moon overhead. I had turned over. There was a very little pain and I only remembered then and when I stood up one blue glass piece fell out my pants leg. It was very pretty on the white. This is the order I thought of things in:

It was pretty. It was better the other way. I broke it. It was not mine.

I shook them all loose and there they stood like a small village on the glare ice. There was no fixing the jar. The piece that cut me fell out last. And here I was no further than twenty yards from the house. There was no burying it; the snow-drifts were crusted. No place to put it. There the thing would lie when Mrs. Simms came out to go to work in the morning. Worse than hating to break it, I could not stand the thought of her seeing. It was the only thing to see on the white lawn. I imagined her cocking her head to one side like a fat jay, clicking to herself, figuring out loud.

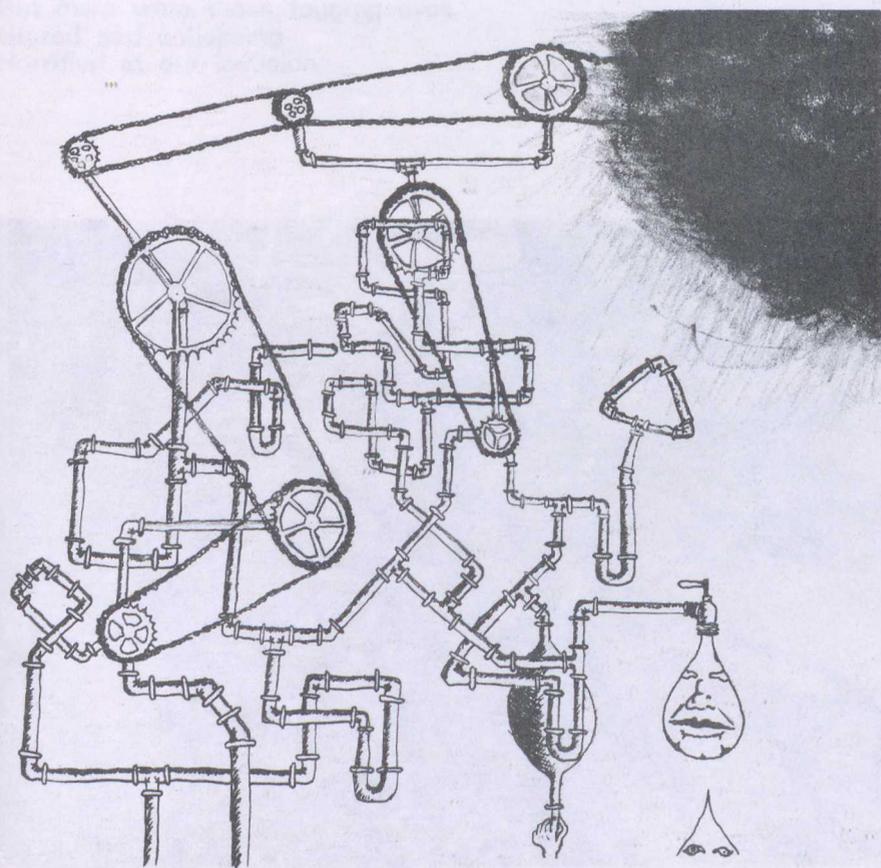
Then I was home and discovered I had forgotten the matches. I handed my mother the thimble, saying, "I thought you said a thimble." My mother looked at me straightly and told me to stop standing so funny and not to be a scatterbrain. There was no heat that night.

Three days later my mother pulled me aside after supper and told me to run down to the Simms's with a loaf of bread and the thimble. I stared her down for the moment, but as I left the house I heard her call, "And while you're at it, you'd better take back Mrs. Simms' Vicks jar."

I was outraged. I was accused unjustly. Nobody asked me if I took it. It was cruel. They knew I had no jar. That the pretty thing lay busted and would never trap the sun again. That I could not help it. The gross injustice of the universe rained on my head.

The snow was falling. It had warmed up considerably in three days and the snow fell. "Too late," said my shoes on the road, "Too late. It don't matter. Too late." Why the snow had not obscured my crime that night was tangled up in my head with my punishment. Either Mrs. Simms or my mother made it snow or not snow. It didn't matter. I'd take the road.

The car-lights coming from town took a long time getting near. They seemed to weave and dance between the slow-falling flakes. They distracted me from thinking what a fit punishment might be for a person like myself. But I was not quite surprised when the car finally slowed and stopped. I only thought once more of the jar. Then I let myself in. So much depends.



# The Star Glass Jar

MARGE ROMINE

It was a long time ago, in a small town in the West, that I first saw the star glass jar. It was in a shop that had been there since the town was founded. The shop was old and the owner was old, but his eyes were sharp and his hands were steady. He showed me the jar and I was struck by its beauty. It was a simple jar, but the star on the lid was perfect. I bought it and took it home.

I kept the jar in a place of honor in my home. It was a reminder of a time when things were made with care and attention. I would look at it often and think of the man who made it. I would think of the town where it was made and the people who lived there. I would think of the life I had lived and the life I was living. The jar was a part of me and I was a part of it.

Years passed and the jar remained in my home. It was a constant reminder of the past and the future. It was a reminder of the things that we have and the things that we want. It was a reminder of the life that we live and the life that we hope to live. The jar was a part of me and I was a part of it.



Marge Romine

# Anatomy

Debbie Miles

Centerpieced  
In the middle of the table  
The carcass with arms draped  
Comfortably to one side  
And we three  
Lamplighted like surgeons and  
Smelling of anatomy  
Working  
Only one small tear in the coat so far  
A slight slip  
I had to marvel at almost human hands  
Brown pads so touchable  
But there were those fogging eyes  
Glazed and collapsing  
Horrified at our invasion

# A Sense of Life

Lawrence Rundgren

Let me tell you about myself. I am thirty-two years old, six feet two in my stocking feet (a height I had reached without difficulty by my seventeenth birthday) and in reasonably good health. My only real problem is that I am prematurely bald. After graduating from college at the wise old age of twenty-two, I took a job with a large insurance company based in downtown Chicago. I will not say which one, although I take pride in the fact it is one you would recognize immediately. They treat me well and I am reasonably content with my work, though this has not always been the case. During my first year with the company, I was a salesman with my territory in the suburbs northwest of Chicago. I am not good at dealing directly with the public and thus, I failed miserably at this work. I was not as disconsolate about this as you might expect, for I always felt somewhat odd making a life and death bet with someone in the quiet of his living room (I was always more comfortable when the television was on).

After my first year, instead of being fired as I had expected (for I had sold less insurance than any salesman with the company) I was promoted to a job in the main office. I became part of the cost accounting department where I have been ever since and where I have been much happier. This job brought with it a raise, which allowed me to move out of my rather squalid studio apartment into a recently built condominium. It is larger than I need, having a spare bedroom, but this is reassuring as it reminds me of the large house in which I grew up. I was raised in a small town in southern Wisconsin. My father had been a farmer, and having failed at this, moved into town and took a job at the local grain mill (he is due to retire next year). Looking back on it now, it seems that my childhood experiences were quite beneficial to my present life as I learned to hate both nature and small towns at an early age. I've always felt uncomfortable around nature. Wildness and unreasonableness have always scared the hell out of me. None of my early memories seem as lonely as those of walking along the banks of the Wisconsin River which ran just outside of town and staring up at the steep bluffs which ran along the other side. I felt an insufferable desolation at the hardness and coldness of the rock. Thus, I always preferred being around men, although only around large groups of men, which is why I hate small towns. It seems that in any situation in which everyone knows you, such as a small isolated town, people place higher expectations on you than they would otherwise. I often found myself driven half crazy attempting to live up to the differing expectations of a hundred people, each of whom feels he knows you intimately.

The city is much better. When I'm in Chicago I can walk down State Street at any time of the day and pass thousands of people, none of whom knows me or cares a bit about my business or personal life. This is not as lonely as it might seem, but is, in fact, very liberating. The release found in complete anonymity is not to be underrated. The feeling I get when moving through the crowd is something like that of a certain kind of winter's night when just after sunset, the sky takes on an unbelievably deep and rich shade of blue, as if the remaining light were being filtered through a thick, blue gel. On evenings like this, when walking outside my apartment, I feel as if I could totally forget myself and step directly into the blueness and become a part of the ether. It is, as I have said, a quite satisfactory feeling.

I am not married, and to tell the truth, marriage has never really interested me. For many years I was never sure why I disliked it, having seen very few marriages, but I finally realized that what disturbed me most was simply the *closeness* of marriage. It isn't sex I mean, for I've always found sex to be a wonderfully impersonal thing. For example, when I was twenty-five I met a girl who had recently come to work in the office and after the usual formalities I began to date her. Although our relationship lasted for only a brief period, we went to bed many times. While making love I found myself able to think about subjects wholly unrelated to what I was doing or the girl I was with. In fact, when I became conscious of what was going on, I began to play a sort of mental game with myself from the situation. I found the favorite subject of these reveries to be my car (of which I will have more to say later). It's a 1971 Ford and my prize

possession. I always imagined myself working on it as I was having sex, carefully adjusting the carburetor or cleaning the windshield with a rag I have for that specific purpose. At the height of my fantasizing, I imagined myself having intercourse with the car, passionately fondling the headlight (which blinked off and on to the pressure of my fingers) and running my hands tenderly along the delicately crafted crankshafts. The climax of this particular fantasy came when I accidentally touched the two wires of the battery together and received a shock which seemed much better than my actual orgasm. It was to my credit and perhaps hers too, that my poor girl never realized what I was thinking as we made love. Lust, she would have understood, but I think this would have been beyond her, although perhaps she did realize something as the relationship ended after only three months. There is little to say of our break up except that neither of us were really hurt and that she left the office soon after to take a job with another firm.

But what I started out to say was that it isn't sex itself that scares me, but it is rather, afterwards lying in bed together. It always seems that I am expected to say something at that moment. Something profound and something that is just *right*, if you know what I mean. And all I can ever think of is something like "The sky is blue," or "Two dollars regular, please." I usually solve this problem by excusing myself and escaping to the bathroom.

I guess I lead what might be called an isolated life (my psychiatrist called it that) although I do not feel at all alone. It's true I have few friends in the city but I do have my sister, Alice. She lives in a fairly exclusive suburb just north of the city (although it is not as exclusive as it used to be) and comes to visit me on evenings when her husband works. She is older than me, having turned thirty-six last July. Her husband is a college professor (she completed only high school) who teaches night classes in business at a local university. She has three children, two of whom hate me utterly, although I rarely see them, and another who is too young to know me. When she visits, it is the oldest, a girl, who babysits.

It is interesting to note that whenever she addresses any sort of correspondence to me, such as Christmas cards, she uses our family name, much to my embarrassment. I changed my name several years ago as it was ethnic sounding and thus detrimental in my business. I've never mentioned my embarrassment to her for fear of hurting her feelings, so she continues to address my mail in this way.

She drives a Chevrolet, a 1972 Nova, and we often argue about the merits of our respective automobiles. I usually win these arguments as I have superior technical knowledge. I also kid her about a long, deep dent, the result of a recent accident, which runs along her rear passenger door. My car has no dents and I am proud of this fact. It is a standard joke with us that when we die, we will find ourselves together in heaven, or wherever, her in her celestial Chevrolet and me in my celestial Ford, arguing for an eternity on the superiority of our cars. Although this is an old joke, we still manage to laugh about it. This is even more remarkable seeing how neither of us really believes in a heaven or afterlife anymore, although I did at one time. Losing faith wasn't an overly traumatic thing for me (as it was for my sister). For my part, it was more like the man who stops buying lottery tickets because he finds himself consistently losing. It was a realization that my faith was getting me nowhere.

The last time my sister visited, she read me the latest letter from mother and asked if I had any news to send home. My parents quit writing me a few years back when I stopped answering their letters. I didn't do this out of spite or hatred, or even sheer laziness. It was rather that I had little to say to them beyond a friendly greeting and an inquiry about their health. I would often sit for hours staring at the few lines I had written and finally give up and throw the letter into the trash. Now my sister just asks me what I have to tell them and inserts it in her letter. This new system works out much better for all concerned.

When we're together, we usually go to the movies, which I much prefer to television. Television is too close to real life as the characters and situations are like those I see all around me (I especially hate programs set in Chicago). The movies don't demand the same believability, as the lives I see on the screen are so different from mine that I do not fully think the director expects me to take them seriously. This is perhaps why I like European films the best. Last week, however, we went to see an American musical. It was a fairly recent one and not half as good as the classic musicals I see on the late show.

After this we went to a late meal. We used to dine only at the "better" and more expensive restaurants, but now we prefer, or at least I prefer, the more numerous fast food eateries. This started because I had come to develop an appreciation for the tastelessness of the food at these places, but it has now become a matter of pride as I have developed a rating scale that I use to determine the exact degree of tastlessness of food, which, I think, may be of use to professional gourmets. It rates restaurants on a scale of one to ten with ten being the most tasteless. Besides these divisions, each number is further broken down into quarters for greater accuracy (accuracy is the greatest virtue of this scale). Thus, a restaurant that rates a 7.5 would be much better on this scale than one which rates a 4.25. I have yet to find a restaurant that rates a nine, though I am constantly looking. I ask my sister to rate these restaurants also, but not being scientifically minded she thinks it's just a stupid game.

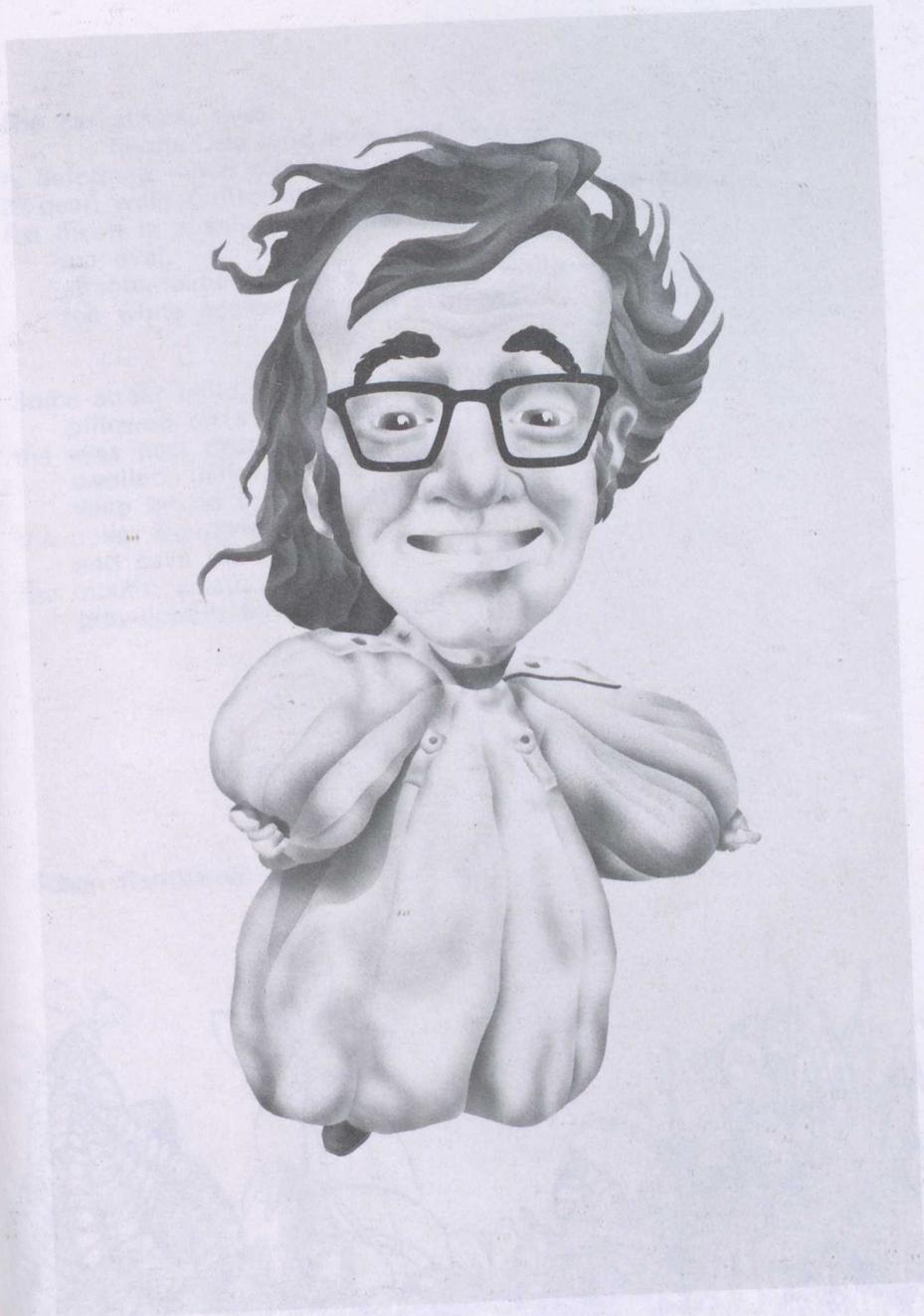
Last week, while we were eating (I had a double hamburger with the works, my sister a cheeseburger), I told her that I had stopped seeing a psychiatrist. I have never really cared for psychiatrists in the first place (I went mainly out of curiosity) as I have always thought they used the wrong approach. Instead of trying to "cure" people by adjusting them to everyday society again, they should rather adjust them to their neuroses. They should teach them to accept and even come to love their sicknesses and, thus, stop them from wanting to get well. By reducing the tension to get well (which just makes them crazier to begin with) they can help the person to accept himself as he is and thus start him on the road to happiness. To me, this seems like much more rewarding, and probably, much easier work.

However, the reason I stopped analysis was much less philosophical. It was simply that I had little to say to the doctor anymore and I had, in fact, come to resent his intrusions into my personal life (the only person whose intrusions I do not resent anymore are my sister's, and only because she is careful not to intrude). Not being needed is a good thing as it frees you from having to worry about the fates of other people, and likewise, frees them from caring about you. My psychiatrist's constantly wanting to know my problems filled me with a great anxiety as it linked our lives in ways I did not care to have them linked, and thus, encroached on my happy freedom. My sister seemed a bit disappointed when I told her my decision but she said little.

This was the big event of the evening, otherwise we quietly ate our hamburgers while the muzak played in the background. I remember that for a short while after college I listened only to classical music as I felt that it best fit my new station in life, but I soon gave it up as I didn't really understand it and was bored. (I soon found that no one really cared what I listened to, anyway.) I went back to the music of restaurants and waiting rooms, which is more satisfying as I can do other things while I listen. This has always been the main function of music for me in the first place, and to hell with the critics.

After we paid our bill, Alice drove me home. It was about eleven. There was no moon in the sky and the street was dark. I am always afraid in the city at night when the crowds are gone but I made it to my apartment safely (a distance of about twenty-five feet) and went in to bed. The neighbor's dog (a small but patently malicious cocker spaniel) was barking especially loud that night. I think the little man-eater heard me come in and was trying to wake up his master.

Let me tell you about my neighbors. . . .



Dick Oberg



# Edge

Karla Rindal

The car struck, then  
    hooded its wild eyes and flew —  
A deformed moon rises like a violent ghost.  
Its dead weight tilted on the dark city's concrete edge,  
the moon is a squashed head:  
    too oval,  
    strange-featured with a terror of white —  
    too white against its own shadows.

Some street child, too oval-faced, lies  
    pillowed on a curb's horizon —  
the eyes nest deeper in the pallor:  
    swollen, half-lidded,  
    deep bruise in color dark and blue;  
the nose: smudged  
    and cave pit shallow;  
the mouth: small,  
    gray-lipped, formed a vowel —

Susan Randstrom



# Vital Deadness Setting

Bruce Ormsby Adam

As night alone enacts the vital deadness  
Pressing in, its bite blows  
The snowflakes far away,  
Its black makes every light  
A pressing point, a pressing aim.  
Black and cold, it is  
The setting of the silence of my pain  
For one most loved  
Who left me blackening and ache.

The blackening's no void, but vital dead.  
She pressed its dark in me.  
The ache is snowless, every light  
A pressing point, a pressing aim.  
And I believe  
The setting of the silence of my pain.



Kathy Forsythe

# Some Village Outside Fulda

Debbie Miles

My evening walk  
Disturbed the birds  
Feeding hidden among hay stubs  
They rose like bats, darkened pieces of sky  
And circled  
Testing my arms

And still, living quietly yet  
Just past the golden barley fields  
Black and peaceful a god tower  
Beckoning in its religious roundness.  
Unalive, the red roofs sit below  
Such a small patch amid the colors of earth

My approach seems a distant shade  
My shadow a clean slice between rows

Until finally, as if an appearance of some spirit  
It rose, touching the space above my head —  
The clouds  
A tottering majestic,  
A ghost

Amid the graveyard death of this town  
No one breathes

I kick up the gravel dust  
My fingernails on the chalkboard  
but I leave no scars

# June July and August 1975

Bruce Ormsby Adam

The house is uniquely quiet  
When inhabited by thought  
And like the house is cleaned  
Of dust and dusty trophies,  
Thought, when there is love,  
Renews itself to peace whatever scars

Sun in the day scorches the lawn  
Tans arms warmly as we talk  
And while the puppy lounges by the fence in shade  
And cardinals skip a labyrinth of branches  
In the elm, we feel our labyrinths are branches  
To be skipped with ease

But higher purpose crushed in a vise  
Is a low and hurting state of life  
And at such a time, we might  
Wish for life in a green ball of branches,  
To chirp from a dappled shade  
Then a one-legged wing-wrecked sparrow  
Hobbles through the back yard to the bushes —  
And at least the complex life,  
Even in a vise, distinctively  
Renews itself to peace whatever scars

Our thoughts these moments  
Are uniquely quiet, and as we talk  
A certain touch stops any thinking  
Of another life by making  
All inexpressibles agree with the mind  
And paves for two distinctly different people,  
One a mother, one her son,  
A way of knowing understanding  
Has been captured happy  
In its one lonely and real degree

# Alley

Julia Hoskins

1.

Dark tangle of the alley,  
broken glass, hollyhocks,  
tin cans, berry brush,  
we came with dirty doll dishes  
or battle plans  
and snapped off rhubarb,  
ate the yellow blossoms of sourgrass,  
ran in packs along the vines and garbage.

2.

Early one June, we found  
a patch of snow under a dirty plank.  
And we buried a broken eyecup,  
a mangled chain,  
pennies,  
marbles,  
a one-armed balding doll.  
And we learned the pull of secrets under our feet.

3.

The briefcase we found  
full of magazines with centerfolds  
was burned by my mother.

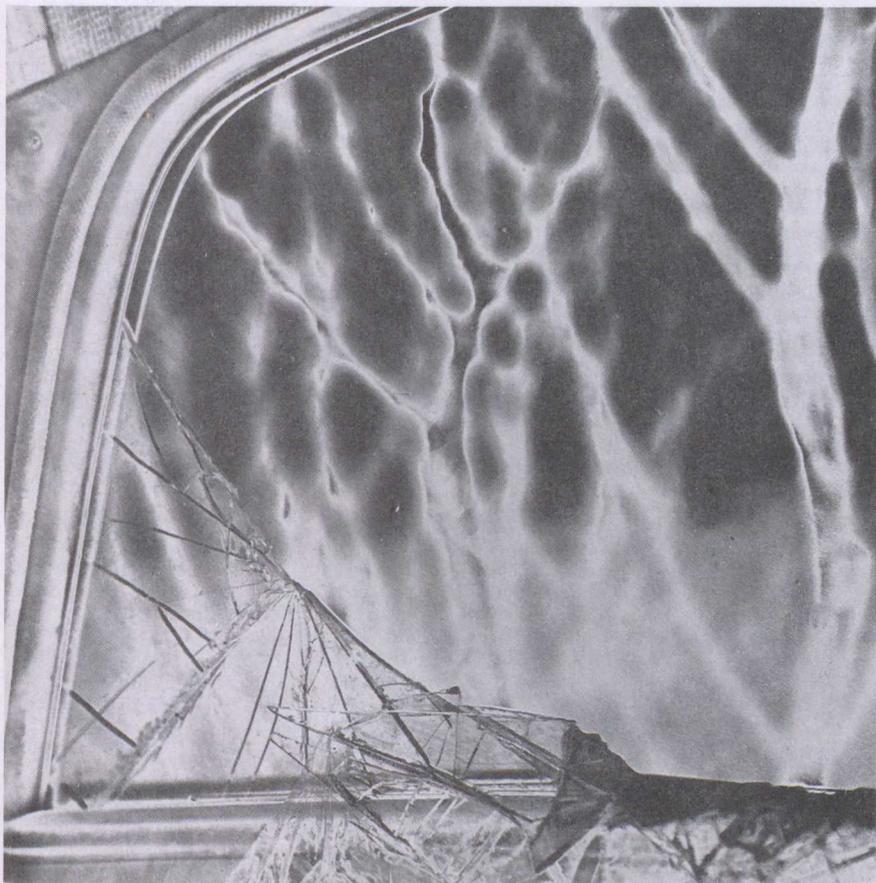
We watched  
as boys urinated at the backs of garages,  
cheering for the underdog,  
one who couldn't aim as high.

4.

At night, I dreamed  
of dolls without eyes,  
vines trailing from empty sockets.  
They sailed down the alley  
in burning boats,  
and I, whimpering,  
woke to the rustle of cottonwoods:  
flames rushing against our garages.

5.

Alone, I raced to the alley's  
open, dusk-lit end.  
Thin-winged gypsy moths  
brushed my sweaty legs,  
darted into the alley's dark.  
Trembling, knee-high in quack grass,  
I was suddenly aware of the world's edge,  
as starlings fanned out to cottonwoods.



Michael Price

# Literary Criticism

## Richard Eberhart

John Moriarty

Richard Eberhart belongs to that generation of poets (of which he, Kunitz and Roethke are the elders) which followed the modernist revolution of Eliot, Stevens and Pound. The shadow of genius is long, and these new poets did not receive the attention and encouragement the earlier generation received. So attentive were the critics to the poetic upheaval of the modernists that they seldom heard these newer writers." Eberhart himself did not receive widespread attention until the late Fifties, though he was at work in the Thirties.<sup>1</sup>

Also, Eberhart's generation did not have a shared body of poetic principles, artistic goals or a collective vision that would facilitate criticism. Theirs is not "a poetry of symmetry, irony and wit," nor is it committed to "a systematic framework of ideas."<sup>2</sup> The poets of the new generation went their own individualistic ways drawing from the modernists as well as the older tradition. Eberhart cannot even be compared fruitfully with members of his own generation. He is a very independent individual poet.<sup>3</sup>

Eberhart is a romantic in the sense that his creative process depends on that enigmatic state of quality called inspiration.<sup>4</sup> Rather than confronting the experience with preconceived ideas, a mode of ordering reality, Eberhart meets it nakedly with his eyes open and his emotions bared. The spirit or mood of the experience dictates his very personal response, and his best poems are the record of that encounter and the revelation or vision this is engendered by it. But these poems are not the result of emotion recollected in tranquillity.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, they have the rawness, spontaneity and immediacy of the living experience. It is as if Eberhart creates the poem while he is still under the sway of the experience, a moment or two afterward. The experience is "related with the breathless fury of an immediate sensation."<sup>6</sup>

Eberhart pays close attention to physical reality, but he is not interested in the perception of objects per se, nor does he go to the opposite extreme and employ them solely as the concrete symbols of an abstract reality, though elements of both are contained in his work." His perceptions are intense and accurate, and he does connect the fact or object with some larger truth. But he seems to make an expressionistic use of physical reality; he becomes emotionally involved with what he sees and the meanings they suggest to him. Perhaps Eberhart himself catches the essence of his poetic method best. Poetry "is spiritual and it is sensuous and in its sensuous meshes the spirit is caught as in a thicket; it tries to release the spirit out of the thicket of our flesh and blood, but it is happily caught there."<sup>8</sup>

Because Eberhart's poetry relies so heavily on the truth of the experience, the relative intuition grasped from the fleeting moment, his insights do not lend themselves to systematization or maintain consistency. Often they conflict.<sup>9</sup> Yet they exhibit a richness and variety of response to existence that more than compensates for any disparity. Life defies categorization at any rate. Eberhart can take a basic fact of existence, such as death, and see it in several lights, all of which are valid. "The contrary attitudes so noticeable from poem to poem illustrate his basic contention that our experience of reality is an experience of opposites, and that of them is life composed."<sup>10</sup> The tension of opposites, life and death, reason and emotion, spirit and flesh, organize and charge all of Eberhart's poetry. They breed a conflict which gives the poetry force, ambiguity and complexity.

Death is a theme Eberhart returns to again and again. Possibly his mother's agonizing death when the poet was eighteen predisposed him. But his handling of the subject is not morbid or obsessive,<sup>11</sup> although it is strong and emotional. In "The Son Longs To Return Whence It Came,"<sup>12</sup> the poet returns to the grave of his mother. Early in the poem Eberhart sets the mood and prefigures what is to occur. It is an autumn day "With brisk intoxicating air, a little wind that frisked." Spirits are lurking in the breeze and they will intoxicate the poet. The

"atmosphere" is heavy with a sense of mortality and "nostalgia." "The subtle heaviness of the Fall" refers both to the season of the fruition and death and the Fall of Man.

The graveyard used to "frighten me as a boy," and though he is a man now, the poet leaves his car running for a quick exit, and his "eyes hurried" to find the familiar, reassuring oak tree that dominates the graveyard. He touches the tree, whose "friendliness" is "good." The tree is the archetypal tree of life, an ancient symbol for the life force. But its roots have "pierced" her seven years, the roots of the living tree mixing with the dust of his mother's grave. Death and life are in close dialectic. Indeed, this complex image suggests that life somehow (pierced) death. Also, the connecting of the roots, which are the beginnings of life, with the graves, the end of life, suggests a reciprocal relationship. Both, too, are of the earth, the matrix of being. The sexual connotation of "pierced," along with its destructive meaning, further reinforces the life-death duality.

"O all peoples! O mighty shadows!" Incantatory, the poet makes contact with not just his dead mother, but all the dead. "Humiliation of all loves lost/That might have had full meaning in any Plot of ground, come, hear the silence./ See the quivering light." The poet invites the dead, who have already risen, to join him in his own enlightenment. The humiliation of death and loss, which produces in the poet a humility before the mysterious forces of life and death,<sup>13</sup> is now giving way to a transcendent vision of victory over mortality.

The poet characterizes himself as "in the command, I, the willful ponderer," all too clearly indicating that this ego control of which he boasts will soon be lost. The ego will crumble into the id; the "mind" will give way to the "blood."<sup>14</sup> The leaves blown by the "little wind" that has now gained force commence a "rustling, rattling." The spirits are stirring, and the moment of illumination is at hand as the sun stands "motionless." The poet feels the "blood darken" in his cheeks and is "out of command." A "pagan urge" sweeps him. Again the incantation, "Multitudes, O multitudes in one." Here the poet touches upon a mystic paradox of the universe, that being in all its variety comes from one source. The "urge of earth," which is the pagan, feminine source of all being, "Wild and primitive lust," dionysiac, causes him to fling himself on his mother's grave, which is the "great earth" too. He is a "being of feeling alone" and weeps "out the dark load of human love."

Weeping out the dark load of love implies a release; apparently the poet transcends the mortality of human love, and meets with the supernatural, ever-dying, ever-living source of being which is the earth. "In pagan adoration I adored her" ostensibly refers to his mother, but the "I felt the earth of her" makes it clear that he is worshipping the life force in the earth into which his mother has merged. The "earth of her" juxtaposes personality and impersonality, the many and the one. "Victor and victim of humility," the poet lives and dies in awe of the life principle, nurtured and destroyed by it. "I closed in the wordless ecstasy/ Of mystery: where there is no thought/But feeling lost in itself forever,/Profound, remote, immediate, and calm." This is the climax of the poem, the mystical merging of the self with the life principle. The ego is submerged; "thought" gives way to "feeling." The promise intimated in the title of the poem is fulfilled, and transcendence is achieved.

But the spell is broken as soon as its work is completed. A "rustling," which signaled the arrival of the spirits, now indicates their departure.<sup>15</sup> The poet returns to the state he was in at the poem's start. "Frightened, I stood up . . . hurriedly . . . /As if the sun, the air, the trees/Were human, might not understand." The supra-human reality shrinks back to the human, and ironically, the sun, air and trees, the live symbols of the supernatural, are anthropomorphized. "Mind" returns also, torturing the poet. "The mind will not accept the blood." The ego

and the id deny each other's claims. But the mystical experience will not be erased. "I went away,/Slowly, tingling, elated, saying, saying/Mother, Great Being, O Source of Life/To whom in wisdom we return./Accept this humble servant evermore." "Wisdom" is presumably a compromise between mind and blood. The ending is a prayer to and naming of the force which the whole poem has hinted at and been a journey to. The religious implication is profound and obvious.

Eberhart explores a pre-Christian religious consciousness in this poem. The earth as mother-destroyer and the tree of life rooted in that earth are ancient symbols. Carl Jung would call them archetypal symbols, always present in the unconscious mind. The religious idea of the many in one is likewise very old. The poem exhibits Eberhart's creative processes at its most intense; the poet is literally "seized" by the visionary experience. Typical is the uncanny balancing of opposites, life and death, mind and blood, wind and earth, one and many.

In "The Groundhog,"<sup>16</sup> again death is the subject, but Eberhart's experience of it and the conclusions drawn are far different. The poet confronts a dead groundhog "amid the golden fields" of June. As in "Soul," death and life are in close proximity; fertility and decay coexist, fueled by the energy of the sun. "Dead lay he." The inversion emphasizes the emotional impact the realization of death has on the poet.<sup>17</sup> "My senses shook,/And mind outshot our naked frailty." Mind, here intellectual distance and perspective, surrenders to the intuitive insight which identifies the poet with the fate of the groundhog. Both man and beast are mortal, defenseless against the forces of death. Implied, too, is the naturalistic idea that a man is nothing more than a "lowly" animal, subject to the laws of nature. Death is a "senseless change" to the poet, not the meaningful transformation it was in "Soul,"<sup>18</sup> and it makes his "senses waver dim" to see "nature ferocious" in the groundhog. "Inspecting close," he is struck to the point of faintness by the spectacle of the "maggots might" destroying the carcass. Defensive, he pokes the body with an "angry stick." The process of decomposition angers, horrifies and fascinates him but he cannot accept it.<sup>19</sup>

The poking stirs the maggots up, and "The fever arose became a flame/And Vigour circumscribed the skies,/Immense energy in the sun." "Fever" suggests the perturbation of the poet, the sun, and the "seething cauldron" of the maggot ridden corpse;<sup>20</sup> all are images of burning<sup>21</sup> which suggest consumption rather than purification. The specter of this "Vigour" surrounding and trapping him arouses in the poet a "sunless trembling." The presence of the sun usually lifts the spirits, but this sun terrifies. The word vigour denotes animal force, which the poet relates to the power of the sun. This "Vigour," in capitals, connotes blind, implacable force, a god, indiscriminately vivifying and killing; life feeds off death, and vice versa. How different from the benign "Mother" of *Soul*, which does likewise, but allows for transcendence, some life beyond life. "Vigour" does not, as will be seen.

The poet, depressed, realizes his gesture is futile. "My stick had done nor good nor harm." Man is impotent in the grip of nature.<sup>22</sup> Then he takes a different tack, trying to calm and escape his troubled emotions. The poet tries "for control, to be still, to quell the passion of the blood." It is an attempt to alter the terrifying experience by intellectualizing it; his "reverence for knowledge" in an intellectual pose, a desperate move to deny the shattering force of what he has seen and felt.<sup>23</sup> The control he desires is that of the mind, which was blown away by the experience earlier. The poet succeeds in this rationalizing, and, as if out of relief, he gets down on his knees, "Praying for joy in the sight of decay," a ridiculous and self-deceptive response in the light of what he has experienced. "Why should one experience joy in the sight of decay?"<sup>24</sup> This ends it for the present.

The poet returns in the fall, to see if his evasion will hold. He is "strict of eye," maintaining intellectual control, but he sees the "bony sodden hulk" with the "sap gone out." Despite himself, he has an insight. "The year had lost its

meaning./And in intellectual chains/I lost both love and loathing/Mured up in the wall of wisdom." "The price he pays is that in Autumn, which should be the season of fruition, the experience he has withdrawn from has gone dead for him, and "the year had lost its meaning."'<sup>25</sup> The poet returns the next year, when "Another summer took the fields again." This summer is "full of life," not death; presumably he has forgotten the experience of last year although when he says he "chanced" upon the spot an unconscious self-deception is suggested.<sup>26</sup> The bones are as "Beautiful as architecture," and he watches them like "a geometer." The poet is now totally the observer, with the abstract detachment of a mathematician. He cuts a "walking stick" now and will walk away from the groundhog forever.

But "It has been three years, now." The "now" is timeless.<sup>27</sup> The poet finally admits that the experience of three years is still alive in him. "There is no sign of the groundhog." The process of decomposition (and the image pattern) is complete, and the full force of it hits him; he can no longer protect himself. The summer is "whirling," suggesting the return of powerful emotions and relentless-ness of nature's revolving cycle.<sup>28</sup> "My hand capped a withered heart." The realized knowledge of death destroys human feeling; it does not lead to a mystic feeling of unity with the source of life as in "Soul." "No sign of the groundhog" indicates there is nothing after physical death. The groundhog is no sign or symbol of anything beyond; even the physical signs of life are completely gone. The poet thinks "of China and of Greece,/Of Alexander in his tent;/Of Montaigne in his tower,/Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament." The great civilizations and the famous people who represent the full range of human activity "action, thought, feeling or body, mind and spirit," have disappeared. St. Theresa's "wild lament" is the poet's own that nothing endures.<sup>29</sup>

One cannot imagine a greater contrast than the negative, naturalistic determinism of "The Groundhog" and the affirmative, transcendent vision of "The Soul Longs To Return Whence It Came." It is tribute to Eberhart that his sensibility is broad and honest enough to encompass both. In "Groundhog," the flesh and its inevitable dissolution deny the claims of the spirit; in "Soul," the spirit transcends and outlives the flesh. In both the knowledge of the "blood" is dominant over that of the "mind." Mystic, intuitive knowledge overpowers the superficiality of the intellect, which depends on distance and objectivity rather than involvement and subjectivity. Both poems are powerful and convincing.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Ralph Mills, *Contemporary American Poetry* (New York: Random House, 1965) p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ralph Mills, *Richard Eberhart* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966) p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Mills, *Poetry*, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Bernard Engel, *The Achievement Of Richard Eberhart* (Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968) p. 7.

<sup>8</sup>Richard Eberhart, *Selected Poems 1930-1965* (New York: New Directions 1953).

<sup>9</sup>Mills, *Eberhart*, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup>Mills, *Poetry*, p. 10.

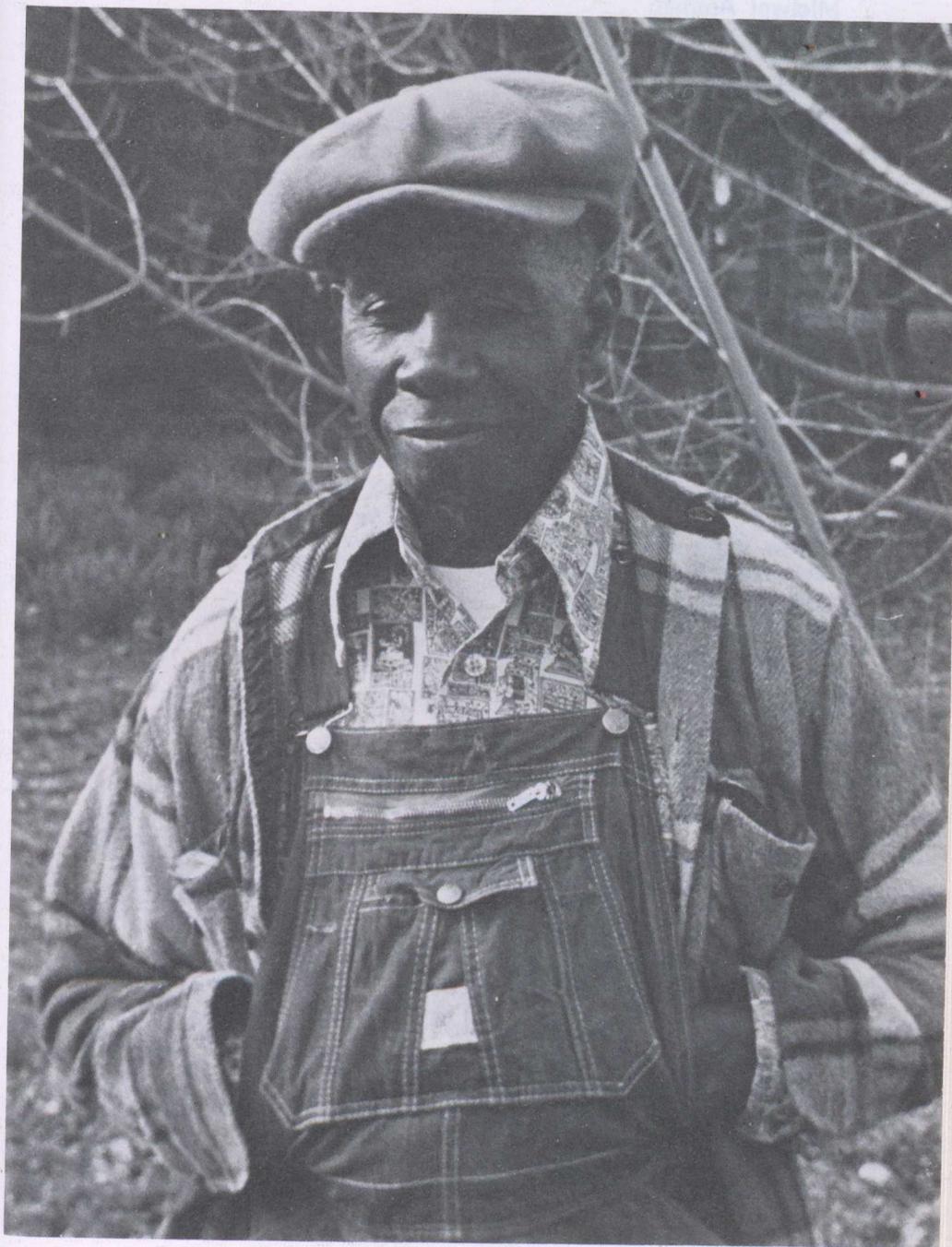
<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup>Eberhart, pp. 21-2.

- <sup>13</sup>Engel, p. 10.  
<sup>14</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 9-10.  
<sup>15</sup>*ibid.*, p. 10.  
<sup>16</sup>Eberhart, pp. 5-6.  
<sup>17</sup>Engel, p. 20.  
<sup>18</sup>*ibid.*, p. 7.  
<sup>19</sup>Aerol Arnold, "Eberhart's The Groundhog," *The Explicator*, XV, (Oct. 1956) Item 3.  
<sup>20</sup>*ibid.*, Item 3.  
<sup>21</sup>Alice Coleman "Amid The Golden Fields," *English Journal*, LII, (April, 1963) pp. 300-2.  
<sup>22</sup>Engel, p. 7.  
<sup>23</sup>Sydney Mendel, "Eberhart's The Groundhog," *The Explicator*, XVII, (May,) 1959) Item 64.  
<sup>24</sup>*ibid.*, Item 64.  
<sup>25</sup>*ibid.*, Item 64.  
<sup>26</sup>*ibid.*, Item 64.  
<sup>27</sup>Mills, *Poetry*, p. 10.  
<sup>28</sup>Arnold, Item 3.  
<sup>29</sup>Mendel, Item 64.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, Aerol. "Eberhart's The Groundhog," *The Explicator*, XV (Oct. 1956), Item 3.  
 Coleman, Alice. "Amid The Golden Fields," *English Journal*, LII (April 1963), 300-2.  
 Eberhart, Richard. *Selected Poems 1930-1965*. New York: New Directions, 1953.  
 Engel, Bernard. *The Achievement of Richard Eberhart*. Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968.  
 Mendel, Sydney. "Eberhart's The Groundhog," *The Explicator*, XVII (May 1959), Item 64.  
 Mills, Ralph. *Contemporary American Poetry*. New York: Random House, 1965.  
 Mills, Ralph. *Richard Eberhart*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966.



Bruce Ormsby Adam

# The Divorce

Michael Antman

"Today, ten years after the real divorce,  
ten years of silence  
only broken by the thin, continual slap  
of paint — you tell me the papers have come.  
Father, this brings to mind  
how you'd steal off at dawn to the river  
just blocks from the busy street,  
how you'd stand all day before your easel  
in a brittle wilderness of crows,  
picturing, with your liverish, trembling  
hand, those overblown trees.  
It brings to mind Mother, too,  
sleeping painfully late on those days, waking  
to blank bitterness, and wild hair.  
One afternoon, when you returned,  
she ripped your paintings from our walls,  
threw them down the stairs where they tumbled —  
the trees, the houseboats,  
the portrait of the Mexican girl, remnant  
of your last, careless trip to Mexico,  
the year before the marriage —  
like babies to your feet.

Last year, hearing of the plans,  
I sent you this poem, written at nineteen:

He squinted mightily, as though to mold  
Within his eyes the stream that whirled and spun  
Beneath his brush's quaking strokes. The sun  
Sank low beneath the weeds, and loosed its hold  
On leaf and twig. And so the river died  
In dusk, and so the painting, lost from light.

The river washes through the weeds of night  
As the muddy pigments, barely dried,  
Framed and hung, resume their whirling course  
On the living room wall. All in a row,  
A dozen sections of the river flow  
Down to the workshop, and back to the source.

This meant something, I know, to you,  
you with your permanent squint,  
you with no workshop she'd ever allow,  
you with a trunk full, a basement full  
of green canvases, rotted, uncared for,  
as though dredged from river's bottom, not the sky.

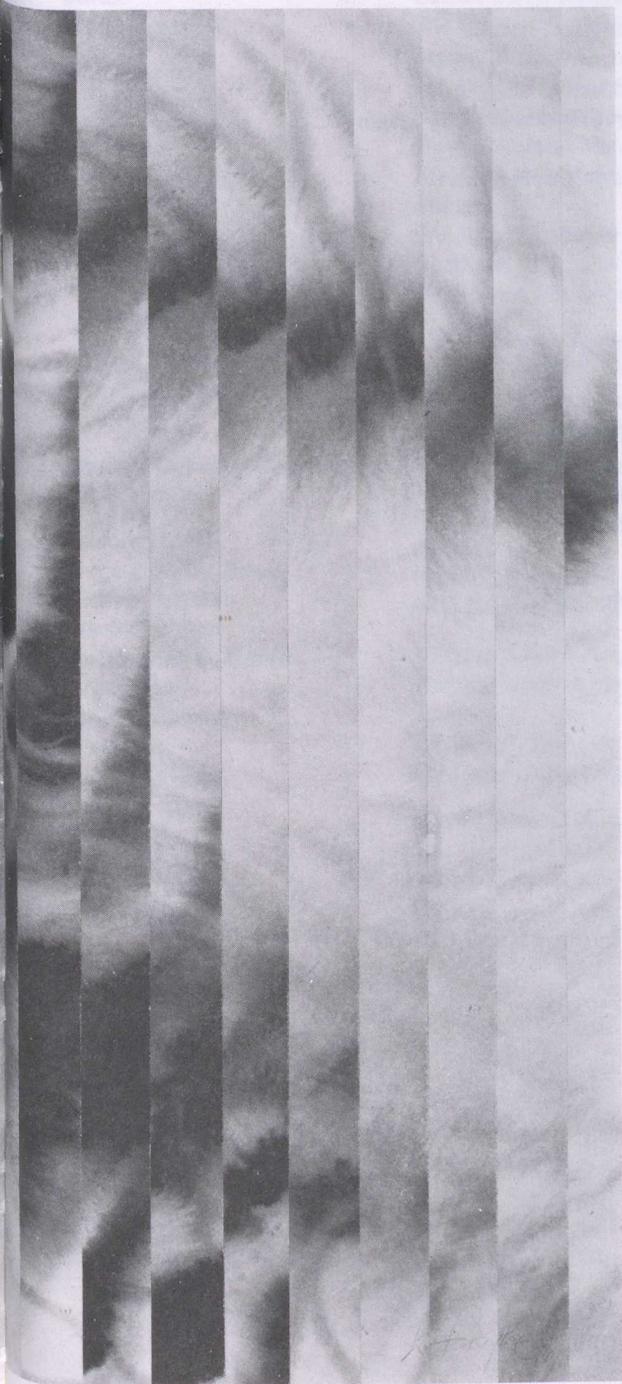
Fault, like inspiration, lies muddied at the source.  
But last year, visiting home,  
I took a walk along that bridge once again,  
the bridge above the sunken woods around the river,  
saw those great trees boiling in the trembling wind,  
grander, more dismal than a Ruisdael,  
saw the continual splitting of the leaves, their wild  
millioned fragmentation, like unkempt hair,  
in that mild twilight wind, darkening out of all art:  
and saw this image as her, father, the one she must live with,  
not you."



Susan Randstrom



Kathy Forsythe



*[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

**Poetry**

- 15/To Vicki, In England/Marylou Pierce
- 38/The Divorce/Michael Antman
- 26/Vital Deadness Setting/Bruce Ormsby Adam
- 29/June July and August 1975/Bruce Ormsby Adam
- 19/Anatomy/Debbie Miles
- 28/Some Village Outside Fulda/Debbie Miles
- 9/Flesh Tones
- 30/Alley/Julia Hoskins
- 14/Prayer/John Manderino
- 25/Edge/Karla Rindal
- 3/Haiku/Dorothy Kampf
- 10/The Great Sigmund/Gloria Warden

**Fiction**

- 16/The Blue Glass Jar/Gay Davidson
- 12/The Sill: A Montage/Christine Okon
- 20/A Sense of Life/Lawrence Rundgren
- 4/Beaches/Christopher D. Guerin

**Literary Criticism**

- 32/Richard Eberhart/John Moriarty

**Photography**

- 2/Lorne W. Bidak
- 7/Lin Cleghorn
- 8/Sam J. Ciulla
- 14/Sue Wedow
- 27/Kathy Forsythe
- 31/Michael Price
- 37/Bruce Ormsby Adam
- C/Kay Eshelman

**Drawing**

- 24/Susan Randstrom
- 39/Susan Randstrom

**Painting**

- 18/Marge Romine
- 23/Dick Oberg
- 40/Kathy Forsythe

**Printmaking**

- 11/Richard Wolfryd
- 17/Lee D. Wunderlee

**Editor**

Mark Guerin

**Art Director**

Kay Eshelman

**Advisors**

E. Nelson James

William D. Wolf

**Poetry Coordinators**

Bruce Ormsby Adam

Linda Metrick

**Fiction Coordinators**

Warren Johnson

Tom Purdy

**Literary Criticism Coordinator**

Sue Kisiel

**Editorial Staff**

Bruce Ormsby Adam

Michael Antman

Diane Deweerd

Christopher D. Guerin

Tim Harwig

Warren Johnson

Sue Kisiel

Linda Metrick

Christine Okon

Tom Purdy

Gloria Wardin

**Lucien Stryk Award for Poetry**

The Divorce by Michael Antman

**Second Place**

To Vickie, In England by Marylou Pierce

**Honorable Mentions**

Prayer by John Manderino

Alley by Julia Hoskins

**Judges**

Craig Abbot and Ara Garab

Northern Illinois University

Department of English

**J. Hal Connor Award for Fiction Writing****Tie for First**

The Blue Glass Jar by Gay Davidson

A Sense of Life by Lawrence Rundgren

**Tie for Second**

Beaches by Christopher D. Guerin

The Sill: A Montage by Christine Okon

**Judges**

Harold Mosher and Don Murray

NIU Department of English

**E. Ruth Taylor Award for Critical Writing**

Richard Eberhart by John Moriarty

**Judge**

William R. Seat, III

Chairman, NIU Department of English

**Maude Umland Award for Freshman Writing**

The Great Sigmund by Gloria Wardin

**Judge**

Sue Schriber

NIU Department of English

