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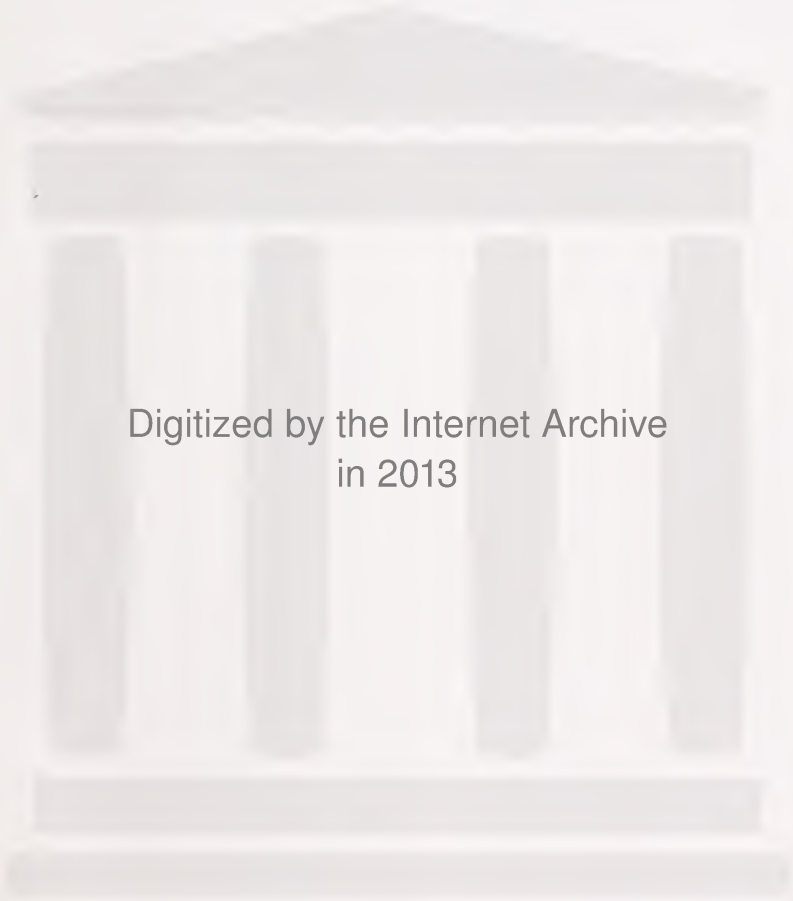

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Fall 1980

Chronicle

EDITORIAL

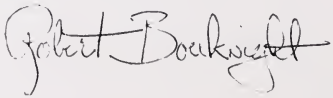
This year, several Christian groups have become interested in politics. These groups are attempting to force the various levels of government to adopt moralistic ideas supposedly held by the majority of Christians, and therefore, citizens in the population. These groups hope to accomplish their goals by holding the "voting majority" over elected officials' heads and by attempting to get their own candidates elected or appointed to offices. Groups like these pose a threat to freedom, governmental impartiality, and the Christian religion in the United States.

Separation of state and religion, as well as religious freedom and protection of minority and individual rights, is guaranteed by the Constitution. If these groups are allowed to impose too much influence on government, some of these freedoms may be lost. Furthermore, precidents may be set paving the way for any "majority group" to influence government at the expense of minority groups. Any group advocating rules and moral laws imposed by a so called "majority" poses a threat to minority rights, religious freedom, and individual freedom.

Are politicians selected by and representing Christian groups the best people to hold governmental offices? This capability, of course, depends on the individual, not his background or support. An official totally backed by only a Christian group would, more than likely, hold a narrow view, not the broad horizon needed by a governmental official. A narrow viewpoint impairs anyone's ability to fairly represent and govern his constituents.

Mass Christianity, if improperly led, may infringe upon each person's right to a personal religion. The idea that all Christians think alike is dangerous to christianity itself. Individual members of every sect and all of society should be free to choose their beliefs, without having one set of political and religious ideas as an ony choice.

Government should be responsible to all citizens and should reflect the moral attitude of the population without impeding individual freedom. Christians and all other sects have the duty in a democracy to see that a responsible government rules the land. No religion, however, should try to legislate its definition of sin for society. A religion should be concerned with its members and all of society, not government. When all members of society reflect a healthy moral attitude toward life, governmental legislation on moral issues will not be necessary.



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The *Chronicle* is the official variety magazine of Clemson University. Address all correspondence to the *Chronicle*, Box 2066, Clemson University, Clemson, S.C. 29632. Offices are located on the ninth level of the University Union. Student subscriptions are paid for through student activity fees.

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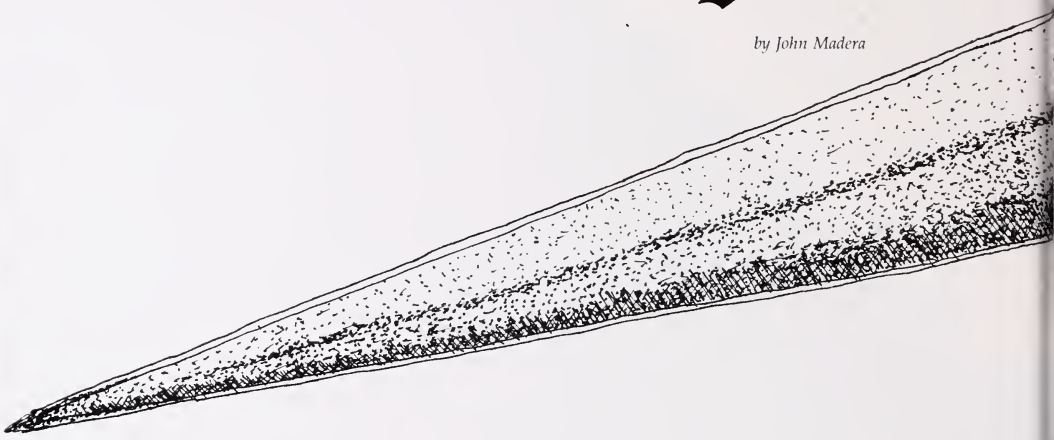
The *Chronicle* staff is open to all students interested in writing, photography, art, graphics, business, or other aspects of magazines. All interested students are invited to drop by the *Chronicle* office, ninth level above the loggia of the student union building. Meetings are held Mondays at 7:00 p.m.

Features

The Current Middle Ages

by John Madera



anach·ro·nism: a person or thing that is chronologically out of place.

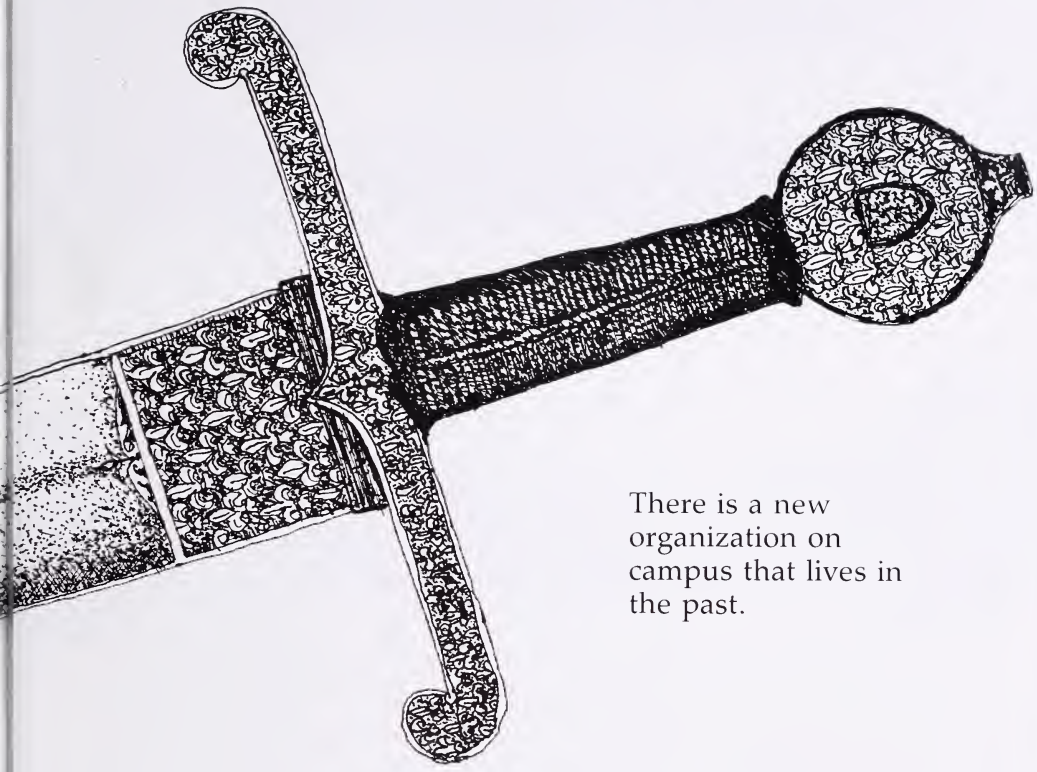
Cold, damp, dark dwellings. Pain: the pain of chivalry, jousting, broadswords, uncured disease. The constant pain of the stomach without food. Rough, binding, overburdening clothes. Cruel, stifling religion/superstition. The paying of homage to a feudal lord to earn sustenance. As people today long for a simpler time, the Middle Ages would not be the most likely of times to return to. There is an organization starting a chapter in Clemson whose purpose, it is heard, is the study of medieval culture by its reconstruction. It's called the Society for Creative Anachronism.

It was confirmed that the SCA is involved in many of these activities: broadsword fights, wearing medieval fashions (expected at all "events") and even the appertinances of royalty and fealty. It is difficult for one to escape the feeling that these people might be *weird*. One weekend in late summer, at a place only to be reached after travelling miles of lonely, isolated gravel road through the pine woods of central Georgia, an event was held.

Dawn comes in the form of an overcast sky.

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! My lords, my ladies, it is now seven-thirty! Breakfast will be served in half an hour!" The herald's voice echoed through the camp at Hard Labor State Park, south of Athens. In their cabins, the medieval townspeople were awakened to the day. The accomodations were modest, as close an approximation to the medieval "period" as could be found in Georgia: log cabins with screen windows, a concrete floor, and bunk beds, lit by a single bulb. Electricity would not have been missed, however, as many people use candles.

The dining hall is a grand version of the cabin architecture. And the breakfast is equally out of period:



There is a new organization on campus that lives in the past.

scrambled eggs, cinnamon toast, and coffee. The diners, however, are attired in fashions that are pre-17th Century — mainly, the simple dress or tunic of the peasant.

Not long after breakfast, lords and ladies begin to assemble at a large open field. Automobiles — those symbols of the twentieth century —, their trunks when opened revealing an assortment of heavy armor, sport stickers with such slogans as "Better living through alchemy" and "I brake for peasants." At ten o'clock the Red Tower "list" is to begin. For many of the lords and ladies alike, the list is the meat and gravy of membership with the SCA.

The "list" is essentially an elimination "broadsword" tournament. But here the term "broadsword" is used loosely; it is usually a stick of rattan about three feet long, wrapped in duct tape and weighing from 1½ to seven pounds. They are weighed, as well as balanced to simulate the real thing. One young spectator, about thirteen years old, did have the real thing: a finely crafted, very heavy steel broadsword, complete with hilt and handle, which he had made. "I use it to keep sister in line" he replies when asked of its use.

"The eighth annual Red Tower Tournament is about to begin!" yells the herald. But first must come the drawing of the ticket for the Celtic Sweepstakes. Each contestant's ticket drawn from a barrel assigns that contestant to a fighter; if the fighter wins the fight, that contestant wins a prize. The first ticket drawn is that of "Shawn the Thief", a member notorious for living up to his name. The second, and yet a third ticket is drawn, belonging to the pilferer. "It has appeared that these tickets are clever forgeries by Shawn the Thief!" The crowd starts to rumble. "I propose one lash for each forged ticket!" roars the herald. "With what shall we lash him?" "Chainsaw!" retorts a spectator, to a round of laughter.

William the Finn, Sir Savog Heraldson, Lord Roderick Levellance — the "names" of the combatants are read. In fact every member of the SCA must choose a "persona"; a personality, along with a name, from a particular period of history, with whom he/she is expected to act and dress as that person might have done. The persona must be totally fictitious — it cannot be an actual person from history. Rules of medieval etiquette and courtly love are followed, such as the kissing of a lady's hand by a gentleman.

Many people choose personas that relate to their "mundane" — that is, real-life; for instance, Lord John the Gray, an "advocate", is in real life an attorney from Atlanta. Thus, many people who are mundanely chemists and doctors are likely to become alchemists and "leeches" respectively at events. The only way to achieve nobility, however, is to win it on the field of battle.

The King and Queen arrive, robes, crown and all, and take their seats. A flurry of violence takes place on the field; bangs and crashes of wood against heavy metal shatter the air as two combantants flail at each other. The list has commenced. One fighter drops to one knee — he has just lost a leg! — and a forceful blow knocks him to the ground, dead.

Not really. Battles are fought to the death, but only in imagination — if a fighter is struck with a blow that, if using real weapons, would have cost him a limb, he simply fights without the use of that limb; fighting one knee, or with one hand behind his back. The injuries may not be real, but the exhaustion brought on from fighting in the hot sun inside full metal armor, a helmet made of eighteen-guage steel, from 30 to 45 pounds of laminated steel "chain maille" (a shirt made of steel "chain") and bruises are very real. Many combatants run as much as three miles per day in full battle dress in order to build endurance. The homemade armor and shields are surprisingly well crafted, many of them sporting "devices" — but they have a tendency to rust by the end of the day.

The spectators seem to take the events on the field in stride. Some hawk various medieval handcrafts, such as scrolls written in Gothic calligraphy, wooden toys, and jewelry. Still others play delicate tunes on handmade flutes and recorders.

Two onlookers, Lady Megaera di Allesandra, and Farthingsworth the Pardoner — their mundane identities not to be known — reveal some of the inner workings of the society. Farthingsworth (actually the same man who was previously mentioned as Sir John the Gray; there is nothing to prevent one from adopting several personas) makes his living by selling documents which pardon the bearer of his sins — a legitimate practice in the Middle Ages.

The Society, it is said, began sixteen years ago in California (where else?!) by science-fiction writer Poul Anderson. Many friends with an interest in medieval times, marched through Berkeley in full medieval costume, "in protest of the Twentieth Century." This became an annual event, as well as the medieval feast afterward. From California it has spread to the east and south. For members of the Society, the "known world" consists of seven "kingdoms" in the U.S. and Canada, which are further subdivided into principalities, baronies, shires and cantons. Principalities are also located at military bases in Europe, Hawaii and Alaska. And then there is the Debatable Lands, over which the kingdoms fight over the possession of each year. It consists of the city of Pittsburgh.

So far, no blood, no hunger, no religious persecutions, no black plague. "Basically, we live the middle ages as it *should* have been" states Sir John. Who are those most likely to return to the "current middle ages"? Mainly young people in college or the military. Some have attributed its initial popularity to the movie "Camelot". Members of the SCA are by no means limited to medieval Europe — any culture prior to 1600 can be practiced. It is expected that the popular television mini-series "Shogun" will breed a large army of samurai swordsmen, introducing new weapons into the list. Innovations in weaponry can come from other sources as well. A fellow by the name of "Orlando", Sir John says, was the inventor of the "stump" — a wooden appendage to an "amputated" arm. "He used it to elicit sympathy from the crowd."

"Winner of bout and fight — Lord Roderick Levellance!" booms the herald's voice from the field. Lady Megaera and Sir John discuss political concerns. Any large organization has its problems, and the SCA is no exception. Some people, they say, sometimes get too involved in politics — they forget the main purpose of the Society: to learn, experience, and have fun.

Some take their Middle Ages seriously; once, some warriors called the fighters of a neighboring barony at midnight — challenging them to a "Sleep War." A member in Kentucky is recreating a medieval castle; the land is cleared and the moat is dug at a cost of $250,000. An assortment of authentic medieval furniture and armor, and a "unicorn skeleton" are waiting to be moved in.

It is now evening. The new defender of the Red Tower (the tower is actually a candle), Abaris of Largalon, and his lady is to be honored in the Royal Court following the feast. Lords and Ladies are converging on the dining hall, attired in some of the most intriguing and exquisite costumes imaginable: capes, frills and dresses from various parts of the medieval world such as baroque England, Moorish Spain, and Scotland. One lady is confined to a painfully authentic baroque dress; her bust simultaneously being flattened and accentuated, her waist bound tightly. The overall visual effect is an experience many in the mundane world will never see.

A feast of unusual dishes is served by candlelight by a jovial "wrench" yelling in a sloppy Cockney accent. A lighthearted Royal Court proceeds as planned (one knight is bestowed with a piece of New York); Shawn the Thief is caught and tied, and the revel commences. There is singing, dancing, magic, and drinking of "mead", a medieval intoxicant made of fermented honey. And two lords perform a comedy routine — "The Medieval (K)nightly News". A combination of authenticity and a sense of humor. The room is filled with people recreating history, having fun. They're not so "weird" after all. They're just living in the Current Middle Ages — the past the way it should have been.

John Madera is Features Editor and former Editor-in-Chief. After five and a half years of college and the Chronicle, *he retires in December.*

the new wave -- pinstripes, punks, and the media of electric guitars

Law: If you want a better media,
go make it. There are no
art talent scouts. Face it,
no one will seek you out. No
one gives a shit.
--Gary Panter
"THE ROZZ-TOX MANIFESTO"

There are no rules. No instrument, subject, element, or sensory possibility is stunted by preconceived roles. Everything involved can be interpreted in any manner, all things are possible, anything can happen. Glitter on the hips and neon lips; sunglasses and sleek hair are a functional sort of vanity crown. Extremes are legal because they make the eyes and ears work. Misspelled graffiti in the subways, pierced ears and jewelry found in sewing boxes: inexpensive decorations. Pawn shop guitars and the television screen, heroes in a day for the chord's laser sound, this stage, that dance, movement/friction/energy waves of music have taken the contemporary ear, a music of impacted curiosities and compressed energies demonstrating a willful barbarism and devotion to the crude raw essentials of rock and roll. The sound is loud and coarse, occasionally bizarre, intimidating or obnoxious, always noticable, sometimes mesmerizing, the frenzied beat of a frantic blood. Its presence is hated and loved. It is all energy.

The radiating energy of the new music began almost ten years ago in the streets and slogans and political snarlings of England's adolescent street groups and garage practice sessions, and that its pretentious pulse took that long to cross the Atlantic is no mystery to anyone cognizant of historical progressions. Things take time, so the initial outbursts faded into the easily-bypassed bins of cutouts and musical oddities; duped fingers changed channels in a lazy search for innocuous entertainment and aloof critics pasted derogatory labels on all unfamiliar melodies while applauding gigantic displays of technical virtuosity muttering platitudes of romantic fantasy. Living rooms were clean, quiet, and cool; the potted plants and the radio smiled calmly from separate corners.

The maintenance costs for garage bands are very low, however, and in time the rude boys had saved enough money to buy bigger amplifiers and pump their preoccupations through an extensive network of media which sneaks into everyone's living room. Suddenly small slices of this unpolished threat reared ugly heads behind every channel and the duped fingers, tired of changing the selector and discovering the same questionable aesthetic on every station, curled over the ends of La-Z-Boy and began to watch. And listen. The symphonic bands and mushy ballads that were the critic's delight began to self-destruct due to a scurvy of inflated egos and overdrawn bank accounts. The critics lost their comfortable toys. Living rooms began to shift precariously and unknown neighbors began to appear, unannounced, ruffling the leaves of the potted plants and lacing conversation with tensed heats. The radio has moved into the center of the room and now wears an excessively animated grin. It wasn't about playing the proper chord.

The abrasive chord that created the gritty edge of unswerving social/political drive which geared England's "punk" breed has been muted, refined, and refashioned in America as the new wave of music. Intruding without inhibitions from every available media receptacle, this wave of personalized energy is inheriting the stages and concert halls of the effete and decaying "seventies" music era. It is an unreserved body of artisans (and their necessary business associates) who have adopted a precisely-scaled minimalism and high-technology entrepreneurship which produces an excitingly unavoidable array of colors, textures, and entertainment devices. The groups compose music which displays an authentic, intimate, and consistent vision, a vision created by an acute awareness of competence levels, motivations, and capitalisms which avoid the dishonesty of monumental grandeur. The result is a non-ignorable phenomenon of a personal scale.

This reduced scale of the new wave accounts for its conception and its present vitality. Expensive productions and the cluttered trappings of concert showmanship made the musical aspirations of the seventies rocker a lame and non-profitable dinosaur. From this extinction came the idea that bare and vital instruments (voices/contagious handclaps/pawn shop finds/toy pianos/tape recorders/barking dogs), if given the proper attention and imagination, could create a music as interesting and more flexible than the unfunctional extravagance of the past. This gave birth to another idea: musicians need not possess certified degrees of instrumental proficiency and technical virtuosity. The same interest devoted to the battered, four-stringed Sears Special guitar discovered in the attic can be transfered to the potential player. Combinations are limitless. Intrigue and excitement are possibilities.

The excitement amplified as garage practice sessions (the garage is an incubator of enterprise on both sides of the Atlantic) expelled this energy of economy in the direction of small nightclubs and music halls starved for sellout crowds and investment-trimmed bands. Audiences enjoyed the prospect of heated riffs expanding/contracting within a pulsating intimacy. Chairs are now obsolete. Beers are left on tables, vibrating fluidly to the rhythmic curve of straining dance floor boards. The stage is only six inches high and demonstrates a similar flexing curve. The audience likes the band. The sponsors like the band. It is a mutual relationship.

This relationship of concentrated economy and energetic participation produces an array of distributed fascinations. Performers can actually escape the red ledger while touring. These savings can be converted to the release of 45's and extra play records, a practice which is an increasingly familiar inflation remedy and excellent promotion. The lower cost of these objects possibly inspires more buyers, who are increasingly puzzled or flushed or enthusiastic or energized, and these victims/recipients/benefactors focus their attentions on an inescabable music invented by blatantly obvious and illustriously common personae. The stage is only six inches high. The heroes don't live on the other side of the clouds. The dichotomy of performer and audience has dissipated. Leopard skin accessories and plastic sapphire jewelries and silver crinkle belts and patent leather boots and fishnet hose for legs or wrists can be found by everyone in the closets of nostalgia or the two-dollar bin of the Salvation Army outlet or neighborhood garage (there it is again) sales. Anyone can dance. Or play an instrument.

Contemporary media and the technologies of a scientific culture have created a limitless availability of knowledge. This knowledge or display of ignorance manifests itself in a multiple bombardment of images, and the technology of image-making is well understood by the new wave of musicians and entrepreneurs. Recording studios allow an unfathomable variety of controllable auditory possibilities, and this allows potential projects which can be imagined, conceived, performed, and designed by a solitary man! Digital recordings and the advent of laser sound bring the live band closer to home, and videocassettes provide an undeniable visual sense. Musicians have begun experimenting with film as a musical accessory, and image production economy now provides staged lightning flash impressions which require only fragments of the cost involved in the displays of dinosaur splendor. Recording artists are able to produce their own package and product designs, an honesty which clarifies the image and the sound and the purchase. We become comfortable with what we see and can know. Art assumes the timbre of an accessible do-it-yourself age of science.

The predominance of available images in package design, advertising, video, radio, television, cinema, magazines, books,... produces a confusing barrage of mediums. The music of the new wave is an extremely animated vehicle which thrives on and creates media. If you want a better media, go make it. Implementing insight, economy, variable fashion, and the imaginative redirection of foreign sounds/essential-nonessential rhythms/ isolated elements in a blast of amplified desire, contemporary musicians have created a viable product which is the result of and a hope for historical necessity. It is a music of dance, persons, and energy. Chairs are missing. This is because the inventors don't want you to sit down. Sitting leads to rest, and rest occasionally leads to sleep. Sometimes there are dreams of falling. Focus your attention (s). Surrender apathy. Don action. Recycled energy creates recyclable energy.

Literatur

In Byron

In Byron, where the ground is white,
a small boy sits looking up at a tree:
the branches are strong and the roots
are firm.
The sky is grey, hiding the sun, from
an approaching storm; and the wind
now breaks the once strong tree and
scatters its leaves and pulls up its roots.
The boy stands up and walks away.

In Byron, where the ground is grey,
two men walk: one fast, one slow; one tall,
one short; one east, one west.
They call themselves poets, or inventors,
or friends; and sometimes they call themselves nothing at all.
But on this day a blueish-grey pervades
the scene, and they both walk quickly on.

In Byron, where the ground is blue,
a man stands among other men and talks:
of his business, his sport, his affairs —
playing their word-games.
They all talk quickly, for night is coming,
and they must get home before dark.
The night comes and the man is still standing
(alone, save his martini). He puts down
his glass and heads for the door.
The night is cold, the streets lonely, the man tired.

In Byron, where the ground is black,
no man walks. The other men look,
filing past in endless self-pity —
"What could I do?" "What could we have done?"
Justifying themselves.
The man stares up at the ceiling — never blinking.
"How long can this go on?"
He finally blinks, and the sun shows itself again.
He walks into its white light, sits down,
and looks at a tree.

by Robert C. Hudson

Gas
space heater
crackles, each syntax
a dry sore
in sleeping throats.

Ticking clock
projected upon the ceiling.
Leaking faucet
projected upon dreams,
the accelerated pulse linking moments of fate.

by Tim Belshaw

The Cherry-Flowers

Just a glint of breeze —

And now, so many cherry —

Flowers sweeping by!

by Rodney Stevens

My grandfather died while I was in Florida.
But I didn't understand.
It had been a good year.
We bought a speed boat
85 horse — big time back then.
We built an upstairs on our summer home that May.
Ontario's never warm.
I guess that's why Miami's salt never bothered me.

Grandma died that same year.
I thought she liked Florida,
maybe it was the heat.
I let her have my room while she stayed,
and taught her how to play cards.
She laughed sometimes —
but mama would cry
and I didn't know why.
At night I'd hear them
But the words fell off too soon.
And that wall in my sister's room,
hung so crooked against their picture.

by Karen Hubbard

Summer Night

Chopin's Opus 31
Intrudes on summer night,
Competes with cricket's insistent rub
And heat presses through the screens.
Outside garden grass
Keeps growing,
Heeds not the waterfall of melody.
The last note vibrates,
Night's noise invades again,
Permeates all space:
Cricket's wings brush back and forth,
Back and forth,
Over the drum skin of the dark.

by Sarah Holschneider

Late Fall

Leaves clog the rake,
Stick to the rusted fanned prongs.
Grass resists the rake's sweep
Like knotted hair fights a comb.
Grass roots hook fast to earth
As the rake combs back and forth
Across the lawn.
Swollen apples, leaking juice
Refuse decay.
Coils of brown wild grape vine
Brittle as wicker on the turned-up garden chairs
Clamp around a nail.
Columbine still flaunts one green leaf,
Resists the mounting frost.
Night bags the garden in fog.
Under the hanged man's hood
The urge to green
And pull of winter death
Tug of war in the dark.

by Sarah Holschneider

"Oh Well" Ken

Today I lay it on the line
Because all I have is a poet's mind
My lover says she's not married yet
And my cigarettes smoke even when wet

My head distracts
All it tries to attract
In this paradox I live
With an aggressed passive

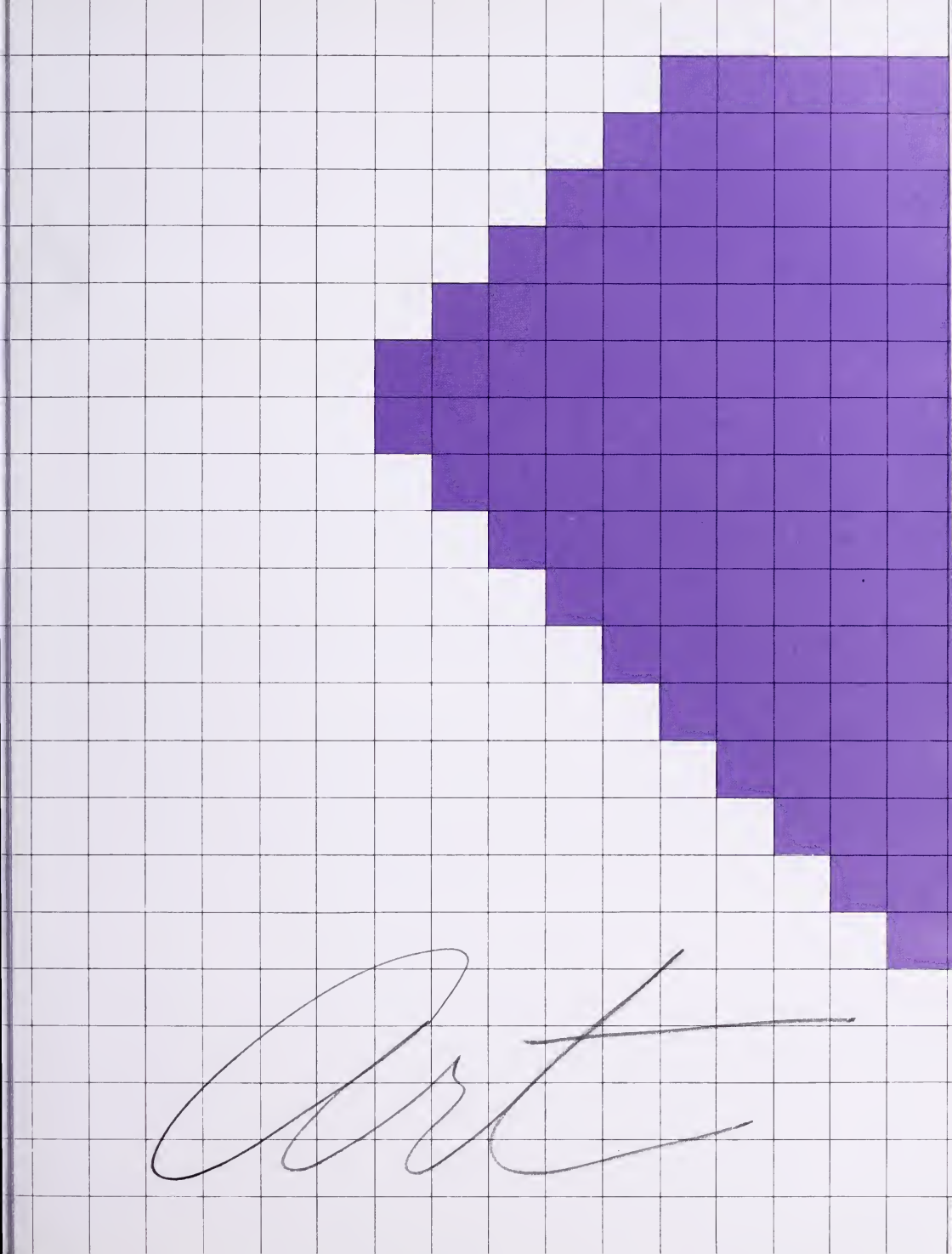
Laid back
I can't seem to find my way out of the sack
More to say
I wish she'd go away

One more time
I have my emergency dime
I call Hello Santa Clause
You have great cause

You are a merry man
Who plays slow hand
And your lady Santa Sue
Never gets the flu

So you can do it always

by Brad Spear



Jerry Ballinger

Speed Bouknight

(oil on paper)

José Suarez

(ink)

Kevin Martin

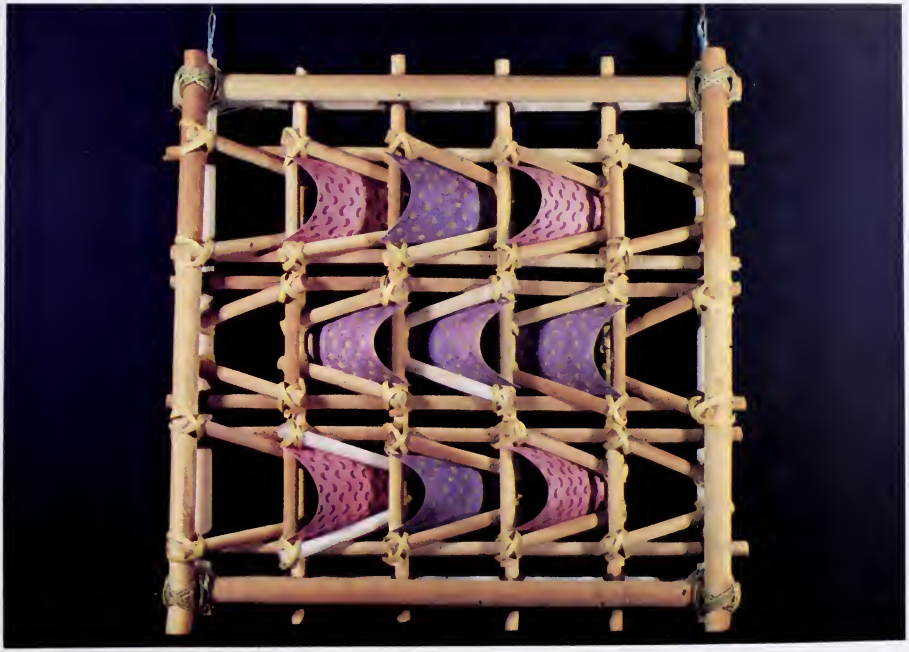
Jerome T. Mussman

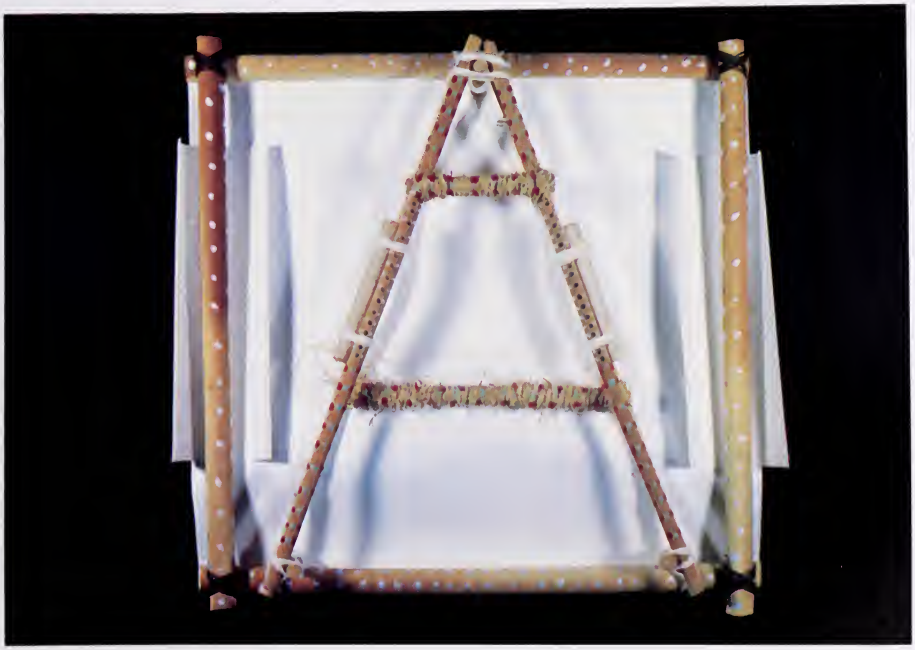
Maria Steigler

(hand colored photograph)

Eliska M. Greenspoon

Eliska M. Greenspoon





(clay and mixed media)

Maggie McMahon

Bob Lorig

Maria Steigler

Harris Welles

Tim Belshaw

Vannessa Sturr

Variety of Expression

The creative impulse in every human originates from a need for self-expression. The urge is universal — creativity being a means of transfering innermost ideas and emotions into external expression. People choose many forms of expression which are combined with individual style, talent, inventiveness, and originality. Whether it be art, drama, music, dance, or writing, a person must be free to explore his capacities and discover for himself meanings and values that will enable him to create an identity. The creativity of others is not always easily understood. Only if we are willing to temporarily get involved in another individual's experiences, however different, strange, or unordinary they may seem, can we attempt to understand. For example, an artist looks at the same things everyone else does, but he does not always see the same things. His sight is endowed with a heightened perception of texture, light, line, color, and spatial relationships, as well as emotional sensitivity, which reveal unsuspected patterns in the most familiar objects. Consequently, anyone not actively involved in these qualities will find abstract art difficult to understand, naturally. Individual creativity should be observed with an open mind, and an attempt should be made to relate to the creator's essence of experience rather than the creator's meaning. One should not think he has done complete justice to a creative expression by judging it after his own opinion. The creative process is as highly personal and individualistic as the individual who does the creating. How can we be expected to express ourselves as others feel we should?

During the past summer, the final assignment for a Clemson drawing class was to study the techniques and styles of different artists and then use the media, styles, and techniques peculiar to the chosen artists to render the same subject matter. The assignment brought about a better appreciation and understanding of individual expression among the students. This article was conceived with the idea of showing a cross section of styles, techniques, and media used by Clemson students rendering a simple subject, one which everyone can relate to: hands.

Maria Steigler

(oil on paper) *José Suarez*

(oil pastel) *Kevin Martin*

(watercolor) *Sheri Hyatt*

Cerisse Camille

(pencil)

Ron Geyer

(pencil)

Karou Seo

(pencil) *Bobby Brock*

(pencil) *Claude Davis*

(hand colored photograph)

Maria Steigler

(charcoal)

Heather Hill

Tuna Have No Knuckles

Car door slams. Child
Runs to door of big white house,
Violin in fist.
Winding through shadowed hallway,
Spelling book and 5th-grade reader stop
Along the way.
Cold white bread and lobbed-on peanut butter make
A thick bite.
Trekking — dining room, living room — to den,
Child pulls knob for instant picture:
    The Price is Right.
Upstairs creaks. Mom comes down.
"Empty the trash."
Heart grinds — who gets the showcase? Trash is icky:
Tuna oil from recession dinner.
Child washes tuna from hands — it stays anyway.
Brothers enter, change the channel:
    Price is Right is Match Game now.
"Piano in thirty minutes."
Brothers fill in blanks with Hefner;

Child bores through time with Bach and
Scales are hard to learn — he must not crack his knuckles.
Ride is late. Child heaves at door, sits until home,
Cracking knuckles.
Child
Runs to door of big white house,
Walking round through dark hallway.
Family eats recession tuna. Then
Later (McGarrett solves crimes;
Kitty, Orson, Peg and Jim tell the truth)
Sleep.
Tomorrow: school, then home again:
Child gets Price is Right — and the showcase.

by Jonathan Taylor

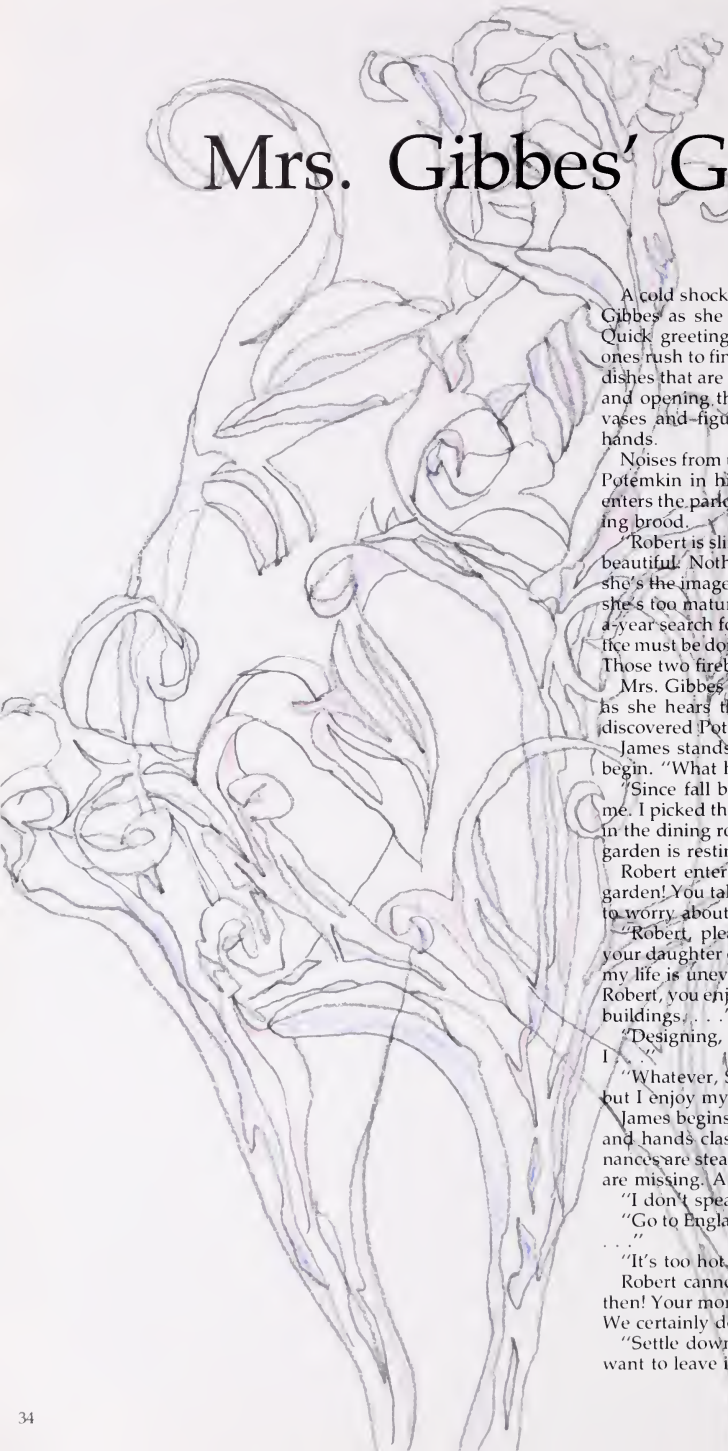
Marcia

No matter how much she protests,
a second's shutter outside Belks
    caught her:
  a glossy three by five,
  before there was time to compose
  that blurred look away,
    too busy
    for my finger
    to still.
She never will focus clearly.
    even on film,
  she mustn't.
There's more surprise
    behind her eyes
  than most have speed to see.

by Robin Hunt

Mrs. Gibbes' Garden

by Betsy Shoolbred



A cold shock of air and seven smiling faces greet Mrs. Gibbes as she opens her home to her visiting family. Quick greetings and frosty kisses follow while young ones rush to find the hiding cat, or the sweets in delicate dishes that are set in familiar places. Coats are gathered, and opening the closet door reveals a bust of Bismarck vases and figurines safely stashed from careless little hands.

Noises from upstairs, the two children have not found Potemkin in his new secret hiding place. Mrs. Gibbes enters the parlor and takes a quick survey of the remaining brood.

"Robert is slim . . . always jogging. And Jeniffer is still beautiful. Nothing has changed. Oh, but Rebeccca . . . she's the image of her mother. Sitting there so lady-like, she's too mature and feminine now to join in the twice-a-year search for Potemkin. James is plumper. His practice must be doing well . . . Martha looks a little tired . . . Those two fireballs of hers must be keeping her busy."

Mrs. Gibbes sits down. Her face winces for an instant as she hears the squeals of the youngsters who have discovered Potemkin.

James stands up. His twice-a-year interrogation is to begin. "What have you been doing lately, Mother?"

"Since fall began, Son, it's only been Potemkin and me. I picked the last of the camellias this morning to put in the dining room. I shop sometimes, but now that the garden is resting, Potemkin and I are resting, too."

Robert enters the conversation. "That damn cat and garden! You talk as if they're people. Is that all you have to worry about? That damn cat and garden!"

"Robert, please do not use that language in front of your daughter or me. Now . . . both of you may feel that my life is uneventful, but I am happy. I love my home. Robert, you enjoy flying all over the country constructing buildings . . ."

"Designing, Mother, I am an engineer, not a contrctor. I . . ."

"Whatever, Son. And James enjoys divorcing people, but I enjoy my home."

James begins his courtroom stroll with a puffed chest and hands clasped behind his back. "Mother, your finances are steady and climbing. You must realize all you are missing. A trip to Europe perhaps."

"I don't speak French well anymore."

"Go to England . . . A cruise to the Bahamas. You can . . ."

"It's too hot."

Robert cannot keep out of an agrument. "To Iceland then! Your money is accumulating with no where to go. We certainly don't need it."

"Settle down, Son . . . I have a nice home. I do not want to leave it. And there's Potemkin to care for."

Mrs. Gibbes looks at the scene around her. James paces to show his concern. Robert is alert, ready to pounce into the argument. Jennifer is staying politely out of participation, and there is Martha who knows not to jump into the feud between a mother and her sons. Absorbing all this adult conversation is Rebecca, pink cheeked with excitement.

James' pacing stops in front of his mother's chair. His mind never ceasing, he changes the subject. "All right, Mother, forget it. But there is a very serious matter that we are all concerned about. We live two hours away from here. We never know how you are. You're so independent that you must live alone. What if you fall and hurt yourself and are not able to reach the phone. On the way up here, we discussed the possibility of your moving into a condominium that is near us with other . . . umm . . . older citizens.

"Delicately stated, Son, But . . ."

"Let me finish, Mother. You can still live alone, but you'd have neighbors to help if needed. And you would be near your family. If you ask my colleague, George, he can . . ."

They are interrupted by two small children. One is proudly carrying a long, black body hanging from two firmly clasped arms. His owl-like eyes are wide with fear. Mrs. Gibbes reaches to rescue the helpless feline.

"Children, Potemkin looks as if he needs to go outside. Why don't you get a bon-bon from the den. But only one each, dinner will be served in a few minutes."

Potemkin is safely carried to the garden. As Mrs. Gibbes puts him down, he makes a dash to the protection of the bushes lest any monster children are following.

Mrs. Gibbes smiles, and from the chilled air of the garden, she steps into a busy, hot kitchen. Martha stands in the heat-wave of the open oven door. Jennifer and Rebecca are removing the familiar rose china. The women hurry to get the dinner on the table while it's still steaming.

The family settles down in their seats. While grace is said, Mrs. Gibbes steals a look at the large mahogany-framed mirror opposite her. Reflected are the bowed heads of her family, luminated by many candles. The large silver bowl of fresh, unblemished camellias dominate the middle of the table.

She thinks to herself: "What a lovely family. I have much thanks to give on this Thanksgiving Day. But from where did my sons' stubbornness come. It couldn't be my side of the family."

The dinner is eaten with the usual jokes from the children about the claws at the end of the table legs. A few reprimands are given from Martha. The sons talk of the many problems in keeping a business healthy. It's the same every visit, but comforting in its familiarity.

The after-dinner brandy and sherry are served as Rebecca herds the children into the den for a quiet time of coloring books, interrupted only by the munching of a few bon-bons.

The late afternoon is darkening while the women clean, and the men talk. Mrs. Gibbes keeps busy so no more disagreements can disturb her.

With the kitchen clean, good-byes and kisses are passed around by Mrs. Gibbes. James slips a business card into her hand. "A reputable realtor, Mother. It's the sensible thing to do." As Robert kisses her cheek, he whispers, "We worry about you Mother. Moving is the logical solution."

The family rushes into the warm awaiting car. Mrs. Gibbes closes the door on another family visit. The grandfather clock chimes six times as she goes to the garden to fetch forgotten, cold Potemkin.

"The sensible thing to do! That's a lawyer for you. Logical solution! That's my engineer. This Thanksgiving I'm only giving thanks that I didn't give-in this time. But what will I do when they come for Christmas dinner?"

She opens the creaky back door. Potemkin is standing by the stone wall. His wise eyes beckon her into the garden. The old coat on the hook next to the door is hastily wrapped around her. Mrs. Gibbes hurries to catch the last moments of the sunlight in her garden.

Potemkin and Mrs. Gibbes walk slowly and survey their silent garden. Even in winter, with every plant sleeping, the garden is beautiful and peaceful. She cares for the garden while it's awake and growing, but the garden cares for her and Potemkin all year.

Mrs. Gibbes bundles Potemkin in her arms. She feels the warm, soft fur against her cheek. His peaceful purr sends a calm throughout her body. She carries her friend into their home while she tries not to think of the future and her son's advice.

• • •

Mrs. Gibbes walks by the FOR SALE sign as she goes toward the mailbox. Potemkin is gone, poisoned by a careless neighbor two days after her family's visit. Her loss and the cold, dark winter has made her vulnerable to her sons' wishes.

She reaches in the mailbox to find one strange letter. No stamp or return address, it has "Mrs. Gibbes" hand-written on the envelope.

For comfort, Mrs. Gibbes walks to the garden to read. Well bundled from the pre-Christmas chill, she sits on her garden bench. She searches for the little black cat. Shaking her head at her forgetfulness, Mrs. Gibbes opens the letter to read:

Dear Mrs. Gibbes,

You don't know me, but my mother and I rode by your house every day this past year. We went to the hospital every day for her treatments, but we knew it was hopeless. You don't know it, but you helped her in her last year.

Every day when we drove by your house, we would slow down to look in your garden. Sometimes we'd stop across the road to watch you and your cat.

Mama said that Heaven would look like your garden, and she would find peace in a Heaven like that.

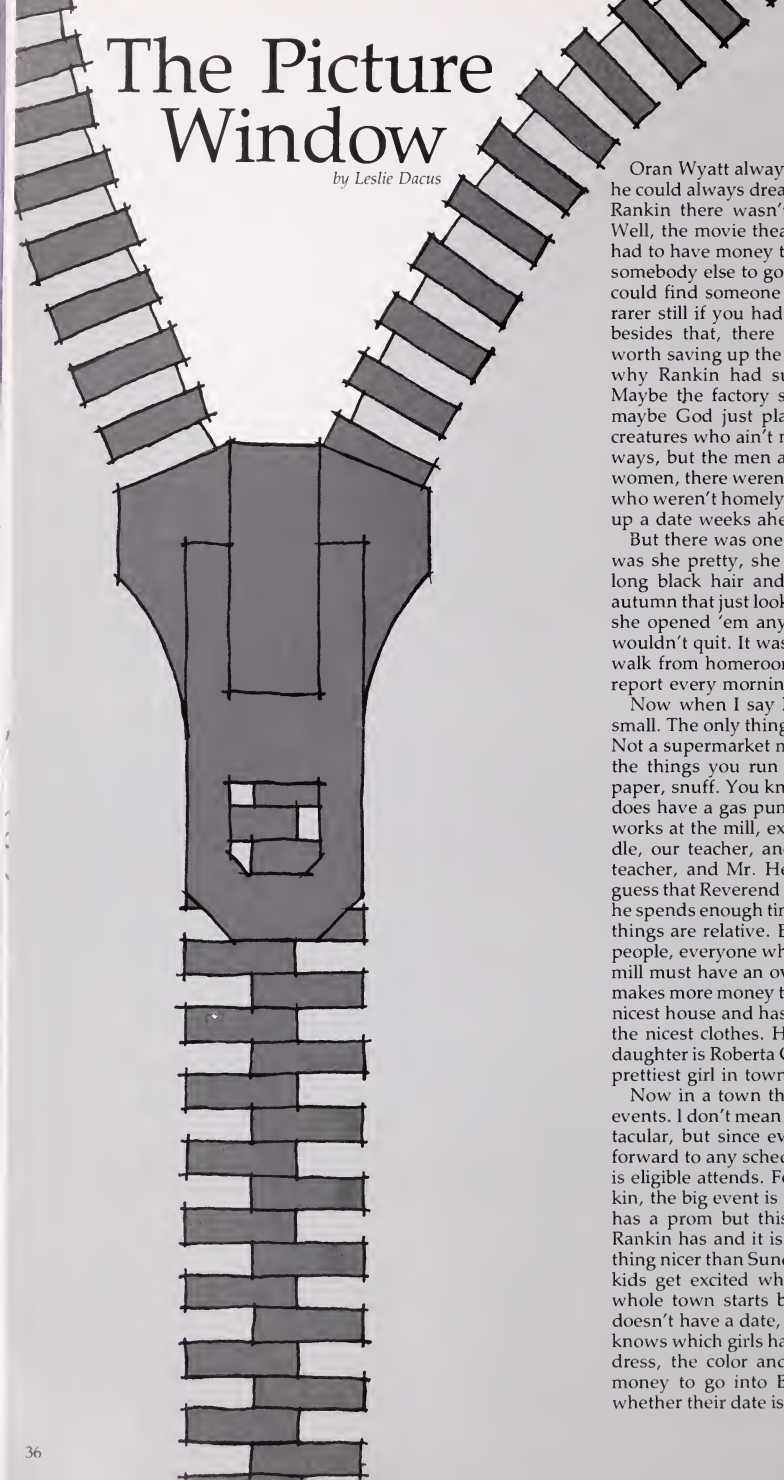
I saw your FOR SALE sign, and had to tell you this myself because Mama died two days after Thanksgiving. I wanted to . . .

Tears blur the remainder of the letter, but it is not necessary to finish. Mrs. Gibbes is rushing to the house to call her realtor and go to a neighbor's house whose cat, Catherine, has mysteriously had a litter of black kittens.

A member of the literary staff, Betsy Shoolbred is a junior majoring in English.

The Picture Window

by Leslie Dacus



Oran Wyatt always did have high ambitions. I reckon he could always dream and stuck in a little mill town like Rankin there wasn't much else to do besides dream. Well, the movie theater did open once a week, but you had to have money to go and generally you had to have somebody else to go with, and it was rare indeed if you could find someone else with money for the show and rarer still if you had enough money to take a girl. And besides that, there weren't too many girls in Rankin worth saving up the money for. I could never figure out why Rankin had such a shortage of pretty women. Maybe the factory smoke or maybe the hard work or maybe God just plain decided not to waste looks on creatures who ain't never gonna amount to nothing noways, but the men always looked o.k. to me. But them women, there weren't too many decent ones and the few who weren't homely were so popular that you had to set up a date weeks ahead of time.

But there was one girl who was pretty. Why not only was she pretty, she was downright beautiful. She had long black hair and dark skin and eyes as brown as autumn that just looked like they'd pop out of her head if she opened 'em any wider. And she had a figure that wouldn't quit. It was poetry in motion just to watch her walk from homeroom to the office with the attendance report every morning.

Now when I say Rankin is a small town, I do mean small. The only thing in Rankin is the mill and one store. Not a supermarket mind you, just a little store that sells the things you run out of most like milk, eggs, toilet paper, snuff. You know the kind of items I mean. And it does have a gas pump out front. But everyone in town works at the mill, except the storekeeper and Mrs. Riddle, our teacher, and Mrs. Snow, the grammar school teacher, and Mr. Herrington, the principal. Oh, and I guess that Reverend Cothran doesn't work at the mill but he spends enough time preaching about it — he thinks all things are relative. But with the exception of these five people, everyone who works works at the mill. Now the mill must have an overseer, and of course, the overseer makes more money than anyone else. He also lives in the nicest house and has the nicest car and his family wears the nicest clothes. His name is Robert C. Peabody. His daughter is Roberta C. Peabody and, you got it, she's the prettiest girl in town.

Now in a town the size of Rankin, all events are big events. I don't mean they're particularly exciting or spectacular, but since events are so scarce, everyone looks forward to any scheduled happening and anybody who is eligible attends. For the high school students in Rankin, the big event is the prom. Nearly every high school has a prom but this is practically the only event that Rankin has and it is the only event that calls for something nicer than Sunday clothes. Not just the high school kids get excited when prom time rolls around — the whole town starts buzzing ahead of time. If a person doesn't have a date, then everybody knows. Everybody knows which girls have been asked, where they got their dress, the color and the cost, if they're spending the money to go into Bruton to the beauty shop or not, whether their date is taking them out to dinner or if they

have to eat cornbread and beans, how many pounds the girls are determined to lose before the big day, and on and on. Marcia McFeely burned her face with acid the week before the prom last year. She told Frank (her date) that she had the 168 hour flue and couldn't go. Of course he knew she was lying and he asked Vivi Roe instead. Marcia McFeely cried for two weeks and everyone learned the truth anyway. That's something else. If you have a bad time with your date, everyone finds out, including your date.

It was prom time again and the girls were going to deperate means — wearing tighter sweaters, more lipstick, and they seemed to stand around giggling more. And this was the big year, the year that Roberta C. Peabody was prom age. Roberta dated some fellow over in Bruton but you had to be a student at the Rankin School in order to go to the prom. So Roberta C. Peabody was dateless. And Oran Wyatt was the best-looking guy in school and we were all from mill families so none of us could impress her on that point. Oran figured he stood to lose nothing so he asked Roberta C. Peabody to the prom. She rolled those big browns at Oran and sorta studied him up and down. She gave a sigh, then a smile, and said, "Why, certainly. I have a green dress. I bought it in Atlanta last week-end." Oran about spit. If Roberta C. Peabody had gone all the way to Atlanta to buy a dress before she even had a date then she was certainly going to expect better than his Sunday suit and a shine on his shoes. Why, she was going to expect to be picked up in something better than his dad's 1963 Chevy II station wagon. But living acoss the tracks had never stopped Oran. And it wasn't about to start now.

Oran worked in the mill every afternoon after school but somehow that trifling amount wasn't going to buy what it would take to impress Roberta C. Peabody. He could borrow the money if there was anybody to borrow it from. But there wasn't. Of course, it didn't really matter because he would have no way to pay it back. There wasn't any money circulating in Rankin except at the grocery. So Oran, ambitious fellow that he is, finagled with Mr. Quigley, the grocer, into a delivery and odd-ends job on Saturdays. Mr. Quigley never regreted it for one minute, though. His Saturday business increased and his store wasn't nearly as crowded. And he always made Oran work the Snow-Cone machine. That way Oran had the sticky fingers and not Mr. Quigley. Oran made a list of things he'd like to do before the prom and budgeted his money accordingly — he saved every cent.

With all this prom fever, it was really strange to see Roberta at school. She wasn't standing in corners with the other girls, chattering excitedly, or dieting (she had nothing to lose), or bleaching her hair, or padding her bra, or practicing her posture and dance steps. She just walked sedately to classes, lolling those big browns and smiling at everyone. And even though she treated Oran just the same after he asked her as before he asked her, now his heart quivered with excitement when she spoke to him. Just to think that she was going with him and seemed happy enough, well at least satisfied, with the way things were.

But Oran was preparing. He went to Bruton one week-end and rented a tux, not one of those dinner jackets either. He got one with green rim to match Roberta's dress and he ordered her a corsage, not carnation but three red roses. He rented a Lincoln Continental from the Rent-A-Car in Bruton the next week-end and the Wednesday before the prom, he got off work and went to Bruton to get a haircut. He didn't want to look too scalped or meticulous when he made his debut. He took the last of his money and put it in his wallet for a restaurant supper in Bruton. The only thing left to do was wait.

Saturday came and Oran had a mighty mean time of keeping his mind on his work. He gave Amy Lou Perkins a cola snow cone when she asked for cherry and cola gives Amy Lou indigestion. An irate mother informed Mr. Quigley of the mistake. But the day was finally over and Oran ran every step of the way home.

"This could be your chance," clacked Mrs. Wyatt as she straightened her son's tie and adjusted his cummerbund. "Going out with the daughter of the most prominent man in town. And to such an important social event as the prom."

"Honestly, Mama, I do wish you wouldn't make such a fuss. It's just a date with a nice girl."

"Pretty, too," Mr. Wyatt injected from behind the newspaper.

"Yeh, ain't she a beauty, Dad?" asked Oran, his eyes glazing.

"Goodness, sounds as if you were talking about a fish you'd caught," said Mrs. Wyatt.

"Well, she is some catch for sure," snorted Mr. Wyatt.

"Have fun, mind your manners, and for heaven's sake, don't wreck," shouted Mrs. Wyatt from the stoop.

"Yes, Mama." Oran was aware of several pairs of eyes intent on his movements down the steps and into the car. Not only his parents, but the Rivers across the street, the Cornings next door, even the kids playing street ball stopped to stare. He grinned. "At least kids have the decency to let you know you're being stared at. I guess I'd want to look at the fellow who was lucky enough to date Roberta C. Peabody myself."

He pulled into Roberta's driveway and sat a moment staring at his hands. They weren't shaking. He opened the door, nearly fell out of the car, but regained his composure and tenderly reached for the corsage. He stood on the front porch, swallowed and rang the doorbell. It was answered by none other than Robert C. Peabody himself.

"Come in, Oran. Nice to see you. Sorry to say Roberta isn't ready yet. You know how women are. They're man's best excuse for running late themselves. Of course this gives me a chance to get to know you. The only time I see you is at the mill."

"Yes, sir," Oran said. What to say next, he wondered. "Oh, I hope you haven't had supper. I'm taking Roberta to supper at The Palace."

"Well, that's real nice, son but the rest of us had to eat, too, so we have a little dinner on the stove," replied Mr. Peabody.

What an asinine statement I made, thought Oran. It's not so hard to talk to someone when you're not trying to impress them.

"That's a pretty nice car you're driving there," said Mr. Peabody. "I didn't know your dad got a new one."

"Oh, no sir. I, well, I rented it for tonight."

"That's nice. I thought I would have heard. What are you doing after graduation?"

Oran glanced down at his hands folded in his lap. He hated to say "Bruton Tech" when he knew perfectly well that Roberta was going to the state university. The his eyes widened. He closed them in disbelief. "No, it couldn't be," he thought to himself. He opened his eyes. But it was. His fly was open, unzipped, exposed to the world and Robert C. Peabody. And any minute the most beautiful girl in Rankin, perhaps the state, would descend that staircase and see her date, Oran Wyatt, with his fly open. But he couldn't just zip it up, or could he. No, he couldn't. Mrs. Robert C. Peabody entered the room.

"How do you do, ma'am?" he asked politely.

"Just fine, Oran. How are you?" she smiled. But he could see her waiting for him to stand. He smiled apologetically. "Fine," he murmured. "God help," he thought.

Robert, Jr., and Lorna, his sister, cruised into the room. They stood looking Oran up and down. They they punched each other and snickered.

The rest of the conversation was mechanical. He answered the questions to the best of his ability, but his mind was racing ahead to what he would do when Roberta descended those stairs. He would have to get his fly closed by then. He could not stick his head down and zip it up in front of everyone. He must distract their attention, and the huge picture window in front of him was the answer. And so Oran started staring. He glared and he frowned. He squinted. He twisted in his seat. He strained to get a better view. Still, only questions. He responded absentmindedly and concentrated on staring. But to no avail. They simply stared at him.

A door closed in the upstairs hall and Roberta C. Peabody was standing at the top of the stairs. Oran was so taken aback at her beauty that he nearly remembered his manners and stood. He caught himself just in time though.

"Roberta, you look gorgeous!"

And he turned his head back toward the window.

"Didn't think you would ever get ready," her father laughed.

"Now dear, y'all have fun. Be sure and have your picture made," her mother inserted.

They turned to Oran. They were waiting on him. Roberta paused, sighed, and said, "Ready, Oran? We're going to be late."

Oran continued to stare. He'd have to direct their attention with words.

"My goodness, would you look out there on the front lawn. The prettiest sight."

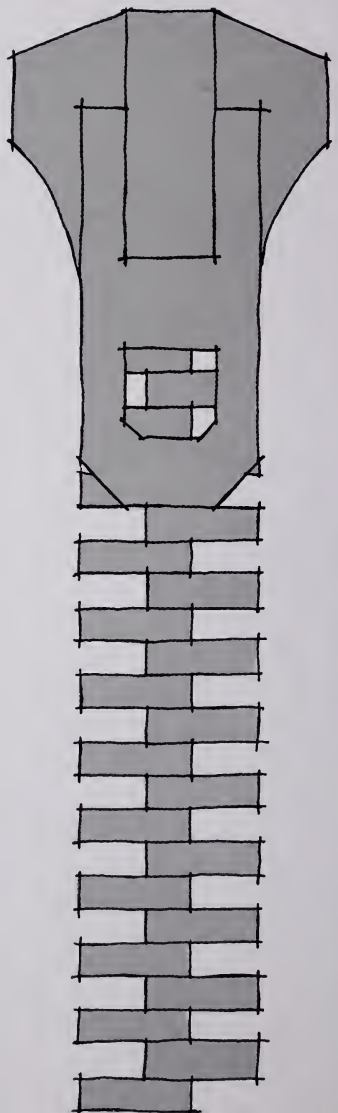
And it worked. Not only did they lookout the window, they walked over to it to get a better view.

Oran breathed a sign of relief and zipped his pants up quickly.

"Well, Roberta, ready to go?" he asked, looking up.

But there were looking at him, staring in disbelief, Robert, Jr., in astonishment, Lorna in confusion, Mrs. Peabody in embarrassment, Roberta in horror, and Mr. Peabody in anger.

Timidly Oran got up and walked over to the picture window. He groaned. He moaned. He had just instructed the most beautiful girl in Rankin, perhaps the state, and her family, the most important one in town to observe the mating of two dogs on the front lawn of the nicest house in town.



Jogging

We run the length of a long pond
In the park.
Beech trees skirt the water's edge,
Lean down,
Longing towards their own image.
Wind ruffles the surface
Into rippling, liquid trunks, leaves,
Chips of light.
I follow along the pond
And see myself mirrored
Among the undulating water trees.
You run this day
And find yourself
By gazing at the beeches
Growing on the bank,
Rooted fast in earth,
Certain of seasons,
Immune to shifting wind and light.
We jog along one path together,
Your head tilts back, mine droops.
Our eyes perceive different trees.

by Sarah Holschneider

Tom

You had been around so long
You belonged to the jig-saw puzzle
Of house, garden, and lawn.
We stretched ourselves awake
Each morning.
Hungry, both of us ate.
Every day you went your way,
I went mine,
A dusk we met
Before the gate,
Shared food.
Night filtered
Through the open door
Into corners of the living room.
You glowed in a pool of light,
Lounging on the sprawled armchair.
My fingers combed through your hair.
You felt my touch.
This didn't mean very much.
Last night you ran away.
In cats there's always a bit of stray.

by Sarah Holschneider

TIM'S FRIEND

by Frank Archibald

Roll it up, stuff it in the seabag. One full. Dating game idiots on the TV discussing heartburn. Pack it up just like bagging groceries in high school. Car lights come through the windows. Jack's coming up the hill to the house.

"In here, Jack."

"Hey, Rick, what you say? You really going, huh?"

"Yeah, got to, Jack. It's time for a change." Me and all the out of work politicians in the world thought so anyway.

"What kind of job is it again?"

"Lecturer. Lecturer in philosophy."

"That's almost like a teacher, huh?"

"Yeah, except you don't have to grade papers called 'The Meaning of Life' by Joe College. I think it's a way for them to get a chance to look at me without having to pay me a teacher's salary."

"Damn, man, I'm gonna miss you."

"Yeah, well I'll miss you guys, too."

"Just can't see you fitting in out there, man."

"Yeah, I know. I can't see it myself, but you know how it is. Besides, the coast is the most. Can you believe that?"

I pointed to a hand bill on the wall. It said: "May Day celebration! Join up for the march against genocide!"

"Shit, join up for the march against tooth decay, the march for democracy, the march through Havana." Funny how people who never did any marching always wanted you to do some. People whose feet and hands were never swollen from the blood rushing to them on forced marches. People who never laid back on their packs with their legs up against a tree trying to get the blood out of their feet, guzzling hot canteen water with its plastic taste. To hell with them. I'd done my marching. The "Burning Spear Coalition for Racial Justice in America and South Africa" would have to do without me. What's wrong with a little genocide anyway? No doubt my colleagues to be at the University of California at Berkley favored abortions. Just look at genocide as a federally funded program of mass retroactive abortions, guys.

"You still want to sell that stuff, Rick?"

"Yeah, Jack, take it all. What you don't want I'll give to my sister."

"O.K., here's the hundred. I'll take the TV."

In the morning I would drive the car to my parents' house in Charleston and then get on a plane to Berkeley, California, land of the radical left. Bezerkly, Loonyville, as my drill instructor as Parris Island had called it. Land of the Commie dog, dope smokers, he had said.

I had seen a lot of Marines smoke dope in Vietnam. That was before some N.V.A. soldier who probably knew a lot about how dogs tasted and not too much about communism shot me. Six months after my arrival, I was getting an all expense paid tour of the hospital trail left by America's manifest destiny. Right back to square one in good old Charleston, South Carolina, USA.

Before then I had been a "Bad Motha." It said so in Magic Marker on my helmet cover, so it must have been true. Just like Thomas Aquinas, the very idea of God included the idea of necessary existence. So if the idea of a "Bad Motha" existed then there had to be "Bad Motha." If it was on my helmet then there was no doubt about it. I had to be one super-fine "Bad Motha." It was a shame that the N.V.A. soldier who shot me wasn't up on his Aquinas.

"Rick, You take it easy. I'm gonna go. Write sometime, O.K.?"

"O.K. Bubba. You, too, ya hear."

Jack had come to Hawkins State in my junior year. Hawkins State, Nostalgia U., land of football weekends, beer, and blonde co-eds who major in psychology and getting married. We were Lowcountry boys, Jack and I, and had been drawn together by the common denominators of the same high school and drinking spots. I

was a good bit older when I started school. I had joined the Marines at eighteen and gotten shot and discharged at nineteen. I had worked for my food for three years and had gotten tired of that so I went to college.

Now I was a college graduate. "To get a good job get a good education." My good job was running the same college beer joint that I had run as a student. Like everything else I had done, I didn't need a college degree to pour beer.

Going to Berkeley to lecture. I can't believe it myself. Tim had shown them a few of my papers, and they had invited me out to lecture for a year. I had not bothered with graduate school. Grad school, hey, let's get systemic. What's Ayer saying these days? The all time bar question: "Well, what are you going to do with a philosophy degree?" Open up a philosophy shop with a drive-in window. Specialize in hot logic to go. Care to dine in the Plato Room, sir? Only philosopher kings allowed. How about a Tao-burger? Just sit next to it, and if your karma is right, it will bring your stomach to Nirvana. Hell, yes, make a grad school out of it, market it, merchandise it, sell franchises. Make the Burger King a Philosopher King.

Run a bar. Go to Berkeley to be a lecturer. I had been a lecturer once back when I was working my way up to the exalted rank of altar boy.

"Father, when I grow up, can I be a priest?"

"If God has a calling for you, my son."

Years later I asked, "But, Father, how do I know there is a God?"

"Ah, my son, faith is the rock we must cling to."

I didn't have it. I believed in God; I just didn't think that he believed in me. Like my lieutenant had Magic Markered on the side of his helmet, "God exists, but he don't give a damn 'cause he sent my black ass to Vietnam." How true, how true. There are no free-will types in the infantry. God dropped you down the tube and Buddha pulled your chain when your time was up. It was that simple.

Lt. Middleton was the last thing I saw as the morphine kicked the doors of my brain open and closed at the same time. His black face grinning as they loaded me on the chopper.

"Kiss my ass, Sarge, you got yourself a million dollar wound. You won't be back. Take care, white boy. I'm gonna miss your ole dog ass."

Then the chopper lifted off, and it was somebody else's war. It was Lt. Middleton's or Peterson's who took over my squad, but it wasn't mine any more.

In a way it was Tim's most of all. Tim was short and thin with bright red hair. He had a scar on his nose courtesy of the Chicago Police Department. They had broken it for him at the convention in sixty-eight. Tim was not your average campus radical. He was a brilliant student in political science, but he always seemed more interested in people and concrete things than in issues and policies. The impersonal rhetoric of the campus radicals infuriated him. What attracted people to him was his ability to care deeply and honestly. He had spent six years with the Peace Corps before getting his master's and doctorate.

I had met him while he was a visiting professor at Hawkins. We were quite a site walking hurriedly across the campus. Tim would be arguing the issues of the day animatedly, with great feeling, and I, not taking them seriously, would give the ambivalent answer which I knew would infuriate him even more. I never took our arguments seriously, but I always took Tim seriously. I admired him for being able to care about a world that I had checked out of. I was no longer a part of those passions and issues. Instead, I locked myself behind the walls of academia and stayed there. I spent my time with medieval philosophy and closed the door on the people and issues of the present.

He had gone back to Berkeley, and our only contact had been a few infrequent letters. They usually contained one of those handbills and an assessment of it. Tim was "very pleased to note that there would be no more genocide in the world after the fine folks from Burning Spear finished their march on Saturday."

Pack it up. Shit, where did I get so much stuff? Two seabags and the rest of it goes into the metal trash can in the middle of the room. A picture lay on the floor. A small girl with short, frizzy blonde hair wearing glasses and overalls was looking out over a small valley called Witch's Cut.

"You don't think it looks affected, do you?" she had asked after she had moved in.

"No, it looks like an English grad student trying to commune with nature and doing a damn poor job of it, but I wouldn't say affected," I had said, laughing and ducking, knowing what was coming next. The egg hit me in the back of the head.

"Well, I guess you showed me."

"You bet, Mr. Struggling-Young-Vet. I don't want to go to law school 'cause it's not pure enough for me. Now," she smiled, "get in the shower and let me wash that off. We won't be that late for class."

She had begun the second semester of my freshman year as my English teacher. She finished as my lover. We argued about Joyce in class. She scratched and yelled in bed. I iced-out. At first she had seen that as a calmness and a maturity of sorts. Later on as our relationship fell apart she called it a "cold, passionless cynicism which was destroying me and 'us'." I called it "a desire for simplicity."

"Well, pardon me, Ernest Hemingway," she said as she slammed the door. She was always one for a good exit.

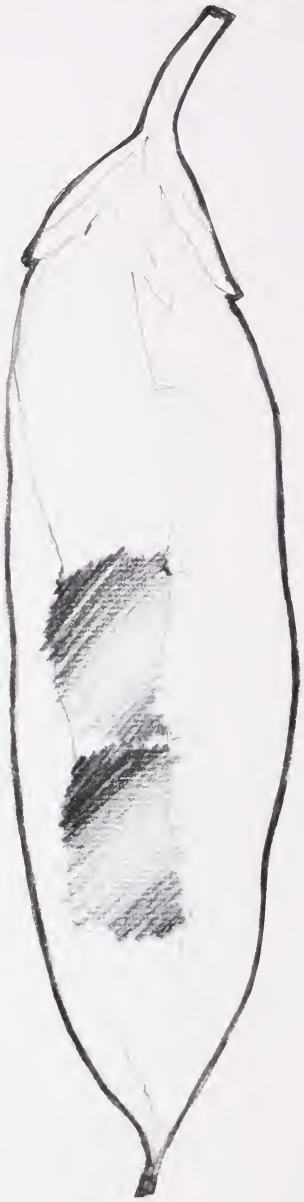
She came back only once to pick up her stuff. I was at the bar. She left a note by her picture. It said.

Darling Rick,
I still have hope for you.
All my love always –
Steffie

I threw the note away and kept the picture. Steffie had thought that the world had gone insane after World War I. To her, the date of the diagnosis was the day Eliot wrote *The Wasteland.*

To me the world had always been insane. I had made my peace with it. Hope was for those who needed to believe. I was past that. Tomorrow I am going west. I had come to terms with an irrational world. Hope was for Tim and Steffie who still needed to shape the world in their own rational image. The world was their movie now, and perhaps it always would be. I didn't want a part; all I wanted was to stand off the set and laugh.

Frank Archibald, a sophomore History and Philosophy major, is from Hanahan, S.C.



Two Peas in a Pod

by Mindy Starns

"I don't want mine back," David groaned softly. "I don't need to know how bad I did."

I just smiled and kept my hands folded in my lap, waiting. For once, I didn't feel the same way he did about it. And as I observed the familiar pained expressions that graced the faces around me, I realized that I was one of the only ones looking forward to this. For once, I was actually excited about getting back an essay. Because, for once, I was almost sure — no, really positive — that I had an "A". Well, almost positive.

I watched Dr. Shuppler's hazy eyes as he was passing out the papers. He would mumble each name as he came to it and then stretch and bend across the steel white desks to hand each composition to its respective owner.

While he was still in the "G's" — I'm an "R", so I had a while to wait — I began to imagine exactly how it would happen.

Dr. Shuppler would get to my name and suddenly freeze in his tracks. A hush would fall over the room and his dull eyes would light up in excitement.

"Class," he would begin, "I want to say that I received one paper from a student which by far exceeded the highest standard of quality I've ever seen. The work is a masterpiece — the product of an unsuspected genius! This paper was written by none other than . . ."

"Patterson, Pringle, . . ."

My vision was interrupted by the closeness of Dr. Shuppler. He was almost to the "R's"!

I tried my hardest to look humble. I forced my mouth into a simple, straight line; but I still couldn't prevent the excitement from overflowing into my eyes. I knew that even though he obviously wouldn't make an announcement about the paper to the class, at least the "mirrors of our souls" would meet as he handed it to me and, for an instant, we would share a communication — a contact between artist and audience, in which total comprehension flows like an electric current — that we would both understand and respect. Ha ha.

"Rant, Redmond, . . ."

Here it comes!

"Richardson, . . ."

No speech, well that's okay . . .

"Rummel."

My moment of glory. Did I glimpse the electric current? How about a little flicker?

The paper was in my hands and he was on the "S's". David was whispering with the guys who sat behind us. Mary Ann Hannock, two rows down and one row over,

was trying nonchalantly to pull her pantyhose up out of the wrinkles at her ankles. The clock at the front of the room was ticking loudly. Life wasn't standing still for my moment of glory.

I held my breath and slowly unfolded the paper. Then I gasped at what I saw. Written across the top of the page in his ugly red chicken-scratch was a huge, angry "C minus." Talk about electricity — I had the sudden, overwhelming urge to short his circuits.

The rest of the hour passed in a blur to me; the only words that really registered were the ones written by his mean little red pen across my below-average paper.

He had circled my opening paragraph and boldly written "Cliché! Cliché!" alongside it in the margin. There were several small errors, but then again on the last page he had underlined my closing sentence and scribbled "Trite!". A small note read diagonally across the bottom corner of the page, telling me how the clichés only gave more emphasis to my equally-trite ideas.

I wanted to slap his own comments back at him when he made his obligatory class-overall-you-didn't-do-very-well speech; he said the main problem seemed to be the careless errors that result from "rush jobs."

"Remember," he wagged his finger at us just before the hour was up. "Haste makes waste!"

As soon as the bell sounded, I darted out of the door, away from both Dr. Shuppler and David; and I walked quickly down the hall and outside, gritting my teeth in anger and dissappointment all the way to the parking lot.

I heard David calling my name from behind, but I ignored him until he finally caught up with me at my car and grabbed my arm.

"Casey! What's—"

I spun around to face him and he took a step back in surprise. I guess my eyes were — true to Scarlet O'Hara form — "blazing." Margaret Mitchell would have been proud.

"Leave me alone," I whispered. I turned back and unlocked the door, tossing my purse into the empty passenger seat.

What is wrong with you?" David asked. He was squinting his eyes at me, his head tilted slightly forward. I whipped out my essay and stuck it in his face, squinting back at him.

"This is what's wrong. Art imitates life!" I exclaimed, but before he could take it from my hand, I stuck it back in my book and then threw the book into the car. It fell sprawled across the back seat, like a dead cat on the road. I clenched my teeth.

"I don't want to see you anymore," I said. He just stared at me, his face one big question mark.

"Run that by me again," he replied slowly.

I tossed the rest of the my books into the back seat one-by-one, kind of savoring the melodrama of the moment. My Abstract Art teacher should have appeared then. "Draw this," I would tell her. "Lable it 'Dead Cats in a Back Seat'."

I turned to face David. He was chewing on a blade of grass — David was always chewing grass or weeds; you'd think he kept spares in his pocket or simething — standing with one arm propped on the open car door and the other hand on his hip. The autumn wind was whipping his brown hair into his eyes.

"I said I don't want to see you anymore. Zilcho. This is break up time."

He continued to stare at me, hurt slowly replacing the surprise in his eyes.

"Why?" he finally asked.

I was anxious to leave; I played with the rubber trim that lined the chrome of the car window.

"Because you live next door." I didn't want to explain my logic to him; I just wanted to go.

"I always thought that was pretty handy," he answered, a half smile coming to his lips.

"Not handy, David," I said. "Typical. Ordinary. I date, literally, 'the boy next door.' It's too cliché!" I sat down into the car and slid the key into the ignition. The buzzer came on.

"Casey. You're not making sense."

I pulled the door shut and the buzzer stopped. "I don't care, David. It's the way I feel. My life is a cliché. It's even overflowing into my studies. I can't handle that."

I started the car and looked at him. The hurt was barely visible in his face now; it has been replaced by anger. He stood with both hands on his hips, glaring at me. He leaned foreward till our eyes met.

"Yeah, well, you know you've been acting real funny lately. I was about ready to 'throw in the towel' on us anyway."

"Trite, David," was all I could answer. I slowly pulled out of the parking space.

"You know, we should've split up a long time ago!" he yelled. I shifted into first gear and put down the parking break. He yelled even louder, "But I guess it's better late than never, right?"

I drove away, wishing that my Toyota had enought pick-up to make the tires screech. He was a dot of faded blue Levis in my rear view mirror; I was glad when I turned the corner a minute later and he disappeared. I sped through the gates and past the "Lincoln Commuter College" sign, slowing just a few block over to turn onto my street. When I pulled into the driveway, I forced myself to calm down and then aimed my mind toward the best source of solace I knew of. I went inside to the kitchen.

"Cookies and milk?" my mother asked. "Alright, what's the matter this time?"

I frowned and bit into a Keebler special, raining oatmeal-flavored crumbs down onto my blouse. "You know me too well," I said.

She winked and then turned her attention back to the garbage disposal. Well, really to the spoon that had somehow worked its way into the garbage disposal. She stood in front of the sink, staring down into the black mouth of the drain, the afternoon sun painting light streaks in her hair.

"I got a C minus on my English theme," I said between chews. "A C minus!"

"Now, Casey, calm down," she replied absentmindedly; she unplugged the machine and then gingerly slid her arm down into its throat.

"But I tried so hard!" I moaned. I propped my feet up on the formica counter and leaned back in my chair, taking a big gulp of the cold milk.

"I know, Dear," she said. You get an 'A' for effort from me!"

I grunted at her and then gazed out of the kitchen window at the back yard. My little brother, Toby, was collecting stones from the driveway and putting them in his shirt. When he bent over, I saw his new slingshot

poking out of his pocket.

"I do think you've learned — ah! Oh . . . I almost had it!" She was reaching farther into the drain. "You've learned an important lesson from this. About building your hopes up so much. You do that a lot."

I bit into another cookie. "What do you mean?"

"Well . . . I've got it!" She pulled her arm back out of the disposal, and clutched in her lettuce-and-grated-carrot-covered fist was a slightly mangled spoon. She rinsed off both the spoon and her arm and continued. "What I mean is, you shouldn't have counted your chickens before they hatched!"

I had to smile at *her* advice on *my* clichés. I managed a "Right, Mom," respectfully enough and then settled back in my chair as she dried her hands and bustled out of the kitchen.

I looked back out at Toby, who by now had enough rocks in his shirt to build a small Gothic cathedral. From the side, he looked pregnant, the rocky-baby buldge ending where his shirt was tucked into his little green army pants. He was totally absorbed in his mission, unconciously ignoring even the squirrel that observed him from the base of the nearby pecan tree.

I was thinking of David and how well he and Toby got along when I heard a knock on the back door.

I started to get up and answer it, but the chair I was sitting in had a different idea; and before I realized what was happening, I found myself lying on the floor, flat on my acheing back, totally drenched in milk!

"Casey?" I heard my neighbor Arvina call through the door. "Are you okay?"

"I think so," I answered, only half-sure myself.

I was struggling to a sitting position when she opened the door and came into the kitchen.

"You ready to jog — oh my gosh, Casey!" She started to laugh but then stopped and stepped closer. "Hey, Case. You okay?"

I suddenly realized that there were tears brimming from my eyes. I couldn't hold them in and I began to cry. I sat on the floor, in the middle of the kitchen, next to a broken chair, drenched in milk, and cried because my English theme was trite and I didn't want to like the boy next door. When the full absurdity of the situation finally hit me, it was enough to curb the flow of tears and even bring a smile to my lips. Arvina squatted down in front of me.

"Hey, Case," she said with a laugh, obviously attempting to make my smile a little bigger. "Do you know what it is you're doing?"

I wiped my nose on the back of my sleeve and shook my head.

"*You* my friend, are crying over *spilled milk*!"

I don't think she'll ever understand why that only made my cry harder.

One thorough floor mopping and a quick shower later, I was dressed in my shorts, ready to go jogging. I felt better, and I was glad that it was Arvina who was waiting for me and not someone else. She was good to have around when I was upset; she talked about herself so much that she never even thought to pry into *my* problems. And that's exactly how I wanted it. The screen door banged shut behind me and I jumped down the two steps to the ground; I was greeted with two firm "Shhh!"s from Arvina and Toby.

"Ready to go?" she whispered. She was kneeling beside him, helping him master his slingshot technique.

"Yeah", I said; and she got up, brushing the dirt from her knobby knees. Although she was in good physical condition, Arvina — at seventeen — still had the body of a gangly adolescent. Her arms and legs were way too long — kind of like the marshmallow men I used to make, the ones with a miniature marshmallow head and body, and toothpicks for the arms and legs and neck. The frog eyes that bulged out from her face were constantly blinking; and she always chewed gum, smacking like her cat did whenever it had a hairball.

"I'm gonna kill me a bird," Toby whispered.

"Barbarian," I answered, frowning. "Why do you want to kill birds?"

"I'm gonna get me those two blue ones in the azalea bush," he said.

"No Toby," whispered Arvina. "You'll miss'em. I said go for the robin in the pecan tree."

I frowned at her, too, and slowly began walking around to the side of the house. She followed me, walking backwards.

"Remember what I told you, Toby," she said. "'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'. Go for the robin."

I started jogging before I even reached the sidewalk, muttering until Arvina caught up with me; she began her typical nonstop monologue almost immediately.

"You know, we can't jog as long as usual today," she said between smacks.

"I'm sorry we got a late start," I answered. Our shadows stretched twice our lengths in front of us; I could see the night clouds gathering in the eastern sky.

"Well, no, it's not that," she said. "I got a date. A date with Harmel Parkins. You know, the one I've been liking for a long time now? He —"

"Arvina, that's great," I puffed. "I thought you said he wouldn't even give you the time of day."

"Well, that's how it was. But I mean I really like Harmel, and when I really like somebody, I just don't give up. You know what I mean? I mean, I have a theory about guys, and you know what it is? It's like if I like a guy and he don't like me, I just say 'if at first I don't succeed —'"

"Okay, Arvina," I said, a little too loudly. I forced my concentration to the pounding rhythm of my feet on the pavement. I wanted to apologize for snapping at her, but she just babbled on, undaunted.

We ran several blocks and then turned down Martin Drive. We jogged there everyday, and everyday I couldn't help thinking how the neighborhood was changing. Martin had once been a nice street, but now it was lined with rows of very-close-together houses that all looked exactly alike. Arvina's family had moved into the next-to-the-last one several months before. It's only distinguishing features were the fake brick contact paper that covered the storage room door and the bright orange curtains that hung in the living room window.

"Hi, Mom!" Arvina called out as we ran past. She got a vague wave in return from the heavy woman that was watering the shrubs.

We turned onto Zion road, and I thought about how David had never liked Arvina. Her family had moved into the neighborhood a few weeks after his did, and I think he was slightly jealous of the time I spent with her.

"What do you want with a seventeen-year-old kid, Casey?" he once asked me.

I just smiled and replied, "She's funny, David. I get a kick out of her."

"Yeah, like you must get a kick out of brooks."

I tilted my head. "Huh?"

"Brooks, Casey," he said, punctuating my name with his pointed finger. "Babbling. Constantly babbling."

". . . and so if you had any shoes that might go with it, I sure would appreciate it if I could borrow them for my date with Harmel, 'cause I wanna look really good since . . ."

Arvina droned on, but suddenly stopped when, midway down Zion road, we both slowed to look behind us for the source of an awful roar. It was a gold muffler-less Mustang That I recognized even before it reached us and stopped.

"Howdy, Casey," drawled the driver. "Who's your pretty friend?"

We continued jogging and he inched alongside us, his read hair curling around his face. I hadn't seen him for a while, but he still looked the same, not exactly ugly, but too many dumb remarks and tobacco-stained teeth to be cute. I smiled.

"She's too young for you, Rusty," I said. He lit a cigarette and coughed.

"That's okay, Darlin'. I like 'em young."

"Who are you?" Arvina asked.

"Someone I've known too long," I replied, laughing. "We went to high school together. He didn't stick with the rest of us and go on to Lincoln."

"That's right," Rusty affirmed, tilting his tan cowboy hat back off his forehead. "Got me a job at Harper Industrials. And doing right fine, I might add." He leaned out of the window. "What's your name, Darlin'?"

"Arvina."

He continued to inch alongside us, grinning. "Well, Arveena. How's about a date?"

We rounded the corner and I frowned at him. "Leave her alone, Rusty, "I said. "She doesn't even know you."

"Hey . . ." his cigarette hung from the corner of his mouth. "To know me is to love me. Ya know?"

She giggled, but I told him to go away. He pulled his hat back down low over his eyes to make his final pitch.

"Well, look. If you want to get together, Arveena," he drawled, "you can usually find me at The Red Barn. You know where that is? It's a bar, over in Fettlow Parish —"

"She knows," I laughed. "Go on."

He dropped his cigarette onto the road and settled back in his seat. "Well, bye ladies," he said, and then his tires screeched as he pulled away, leaving us in a cloud of exhaust.

"Gross," was Arvina's first comment. "Well, anyway. about Harmel, I think he is just about the dreamyist guy, and . . ."

We jogged the rest of the way and reached my house just as the street lights came on. I ran upstairs, grabbed my black dress sandals and ran back down to where Arvina was waiting for me.

"Here are the shoes," I said, handing them to her. "I want you to look just right for Harmel. By all means, if the shoes fit, you can wear them."

She thanked me and then laughed. "Hey — ya know what you just said? You said 'if the shoe fits wear it'!"

I gritted my teeth, forced a smile, and escorted her to the door.

Back upstairs in my room after supper, I realized just how tense and confused I was. I had left my meal unfinished when my father was admonishing Toby about Little League. "Remember. Son," he had said. "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game."

I knew my parents were probably down there talking about me, but I didn't care. My head was hurting, and what I really wanted was to go to sleep. I slipped into my nightgown and between the covers just before my mother knocked and came in.

"Aren't we in bed early!" She crooned. "Well, you know what they say. Early to bed, early to rise —"

"Yeah, Mom. Goodnight."

She softly shut the door. My head was really hurting, I guess from crying earlier. Crying always made my head hurt.

A few minutes later, my door opened again; Toby, clad in his Star Wars pajamas, walked over to the bed. The mud had been washed from his hands and face, and he smelled like a tiny baby — very sweet and huggable.

"Goodnight. Sleeptight. Don't let the bed bugs bite!" he sang, and then he ran from the room, leaving the door ajar.

Slowly, the noises in the house stopped as each family member apparently drifted to their beds and off to sleep. I couldn't fall asleep, however, and I just stared at the soft glow of my digital clock until my older brother Charlie poked his head into my room.

"I think y'all are all making an early night of it," he whispered. "You ought to get up early, too. You know how it is; the early bird gets the worm, and all that." He pull my door shut and went back downstairs. I sat up in bed and clenched my teeth to keep from screaming. Then I got up and quickly re-dressed.

"I can't even go to bed without clichés!" I said as I jerked on my boots. I grabbed my jacket and car keys and then went downstairs.

Charlie was sprawled across the couch watching Johnny Carson, and he looked up at me in surprise when I walked past him to the foyer.

"Be back later." I said; and I stepped outside, slamming the door behind me. If everything in my life was a cliché, I couldn't see any other way to break out of it, except to react drastically — to become the opposite of my usual self.

I'm not sure how long I had been just driving around aimlessly — trying to determine my exact course of action — before I finally pulled into the parking lot of The Red Barn Lounge and got out of my car. I felt like I was moving in a daze. I'm not even sure how I got inside or into the seat sandwiched between Rusty and his friends. It's just that suddenly there was a beer in front of me and an arm around me, and lots of noise and laughter on all sides. As the beers kept coming, I felt my face growing slowly warm and relaxed; I smilled at my private rebellion.

"What's gotten into you, Baby?" Rusty asked, his face looming closely in front of mine. "You look fantastic, but I ain't never seen you like this. I thought I wasn't your type. 'least that's what you used to tell me in high school."

"Variety is the spice of life!" I said, gulping the beer. I hate beer.

The cowboy on the other side of me took off his hat and "whooped" — I can't think of a better word — and then

put it on my head. Rusty ordered me another beer.

"How's it that you get all the luck, man?" the cowboy asked. My red-headed companion started rubbing my shoulder with his fingers.

"She's pretty as a picture, ain't she Clyde?" he answered. I relaxed into the crook of his arm, sure that this was all a dream and sooner or later I'd wake up and laugh. But it wasn't a dream, and I was letting my act go too far.

Too many beers kept appearing and the smoke in the rural bar kept thickening and the music kept pounding until I felt very dizzy. Finally, I sat straight and asked Rusty to take me outside. He grinned and quickly helped me up; I returned the hat to Clyde and then held on to Rusty's arm as he led me through the crowd, to his car.

I fell back against the seat and concentrated on stopping my head from spinning. Slowly, the burning heat left my face and my breathing returned to normal; I relaxed and opened my eyes. I was surprised to find that the car was moving.

"Rusty," I said as I set up and smoothed my hair. His hand was on my knee and I suddenly realized what his mind was on.

"Rusty, what are you doing?" I asked. Inside, I was kicking myself for getting into such a mess. He tried to kiss my neck but I pulled away.

"We going to have us a little fun," he answered. His fingers started inching up the inside of my leg.

"I don't feel so good," I said as I grabbed his hand and set it on the steering wheel. He put it back on my knee.

"I'll make you feel *real* good, Darlin'," he whispered. My stomach began to churn.

"I think you'd better take me back to my car."

He continued to caress my knee. I looked out at the dark unfamiliar road and felt the beer oozing up into my throat. I swallowed hard. "Where are we?" I asked. He inhaled deep on his cigarette and then blew the smoke towards the window. His hand started back up my leg.

"Cherry Street, Darlin'" he whispered.

I could just hear my friends back at school. "And where did *you* lose it, Casey?'" they'd ask me.

I stopped his hand and set it back on the steering wheel. "Rusty, please take me back to my car. I —"

"Now, don't worry," he urged, reaching across me. He patted the glove compartment and then put his arm around my shoulders. "I got protection," he whispered. "You don't have to worry."

"No!" I exclaimed. "We aren't —"

"I know it's not as fun that way, Darlin', but we gotta be careful, you know. As they say, 'A stitch in time saves nine.'"

I swallowed back dow the bile that had risen in my throat and told myself remain calm. I look over at him.

"Where are we going?" I asked. He pointed ahead with his cigarette and answered, "Fettlow bridge."

And then I wanted to laugh. The big cosmic joke was being played on me; I was a victim of the ultimate cliché! Because right at the notorious Fettlow bridge the road forks. Left takes you into town; right takes you over the bridge and into the woods where it dead ends at the hottest make-out spot in town. Go left and you get back home. Go right and you "get it on" — but only if you *cross that bridge when you come to it*!

I sat up straight and turned to him. "Take me back to my car," I said firmly. He slid his hand under my shirt collar, onto my shoulder.

"I know you're just a little nervous," he whispered. "It'll be okay."

I could see the stone rails up ahead and I knew I had to act quickly. "Rusty, take my to my car!" He ignored my exclamations and continued to caress my shoulder. "I'm sick," I told him. "Stop the car!"

We were almost to the bridge; I finally told him the one way I knew he'd understand. "I'm sick as a dog, Rusty!" I exclaimed.

Amazingly, we screeched to a halt. I stepped out, grateful for the cool, fresh air. "Why didn't you tell me Babe?" he was saying. I just walked to the side of the road and into the dry ditch where he couldn't see me. I sat down on the grass and leaned back against my elbows, waiting for my surroundings to stop spinning. The stars and the black sky and the rustling trees finally came to rest and I inhaled slowly. I felt a dull pull, deep in my stomach,for David. I just wanted him there, holding me against his flannel-shirted chest. Why was I so dumb? And what was I gonna do? Finally, I decided.

"Oh, Rusty," I moaned dramatically. "I must be white as a sheet — pale as a ghost. My head is on fire. I'm really under the weather." I carried on for a minute or two and then finally got up and went back to the car. "Sick as a dog," I whispered as I slipped into the seat. I glanced at Rusty. He was pale.

"I'll take you back to your car." he said.

By the time I pulled into my driveway and turned off the ignition, my drunkenness had faded to a dull ringing in my ears. Rusty had kept his hands off of me all the way back to the bar. Once I was back in my car, I had just driven around alone while my head cleared. And now as I shuffled up to the walk to my home, I felt dirty and tired, but I also felt kind of optimistic. Like things just might start looking better for me.

David didn't even say my name until I was almost to the door. He just whispered, "Casey," from his front porch and then walked over as I turned to him. No one had ever seemed so beautiful.

"David, I —"

"Shhh," he whispered, stepping closer. We faced each other in the cold, wet grass, in my front yard, in the middle of the night. Crickets were singing across the street and in the distance a siren faded. He cleared his throat.

"Casey, I've been waiting for you, 'cause there's something I've just got to say." He was speaking very quickly. "We've known each other for about five or six months or so, and I don't know about you, but for me it's been a pretty terrific five or six months or so. You know? And I just can't understand —"

I put my fingers to his lips and looked up at him. "I made a mistake." I whispered. "David." I smiled. "Forgive me?"

His eyes reflected back my own happy image.

I guess it was when he was kissing me that I realized what I should have known all along. I realized that — trite or not — David and I simply belonged together. Like . . . well . . . like two peas in a pod. And I couldn't have been happier.

A winner in last year's creative writing competition, Mindy Starns is now on the Chronicle *literary staff.*

RATS

"That man in orange is jealous." This observation was the result of an incredibly focused "look" directed towards me the morning of my first Clemson home game. And although I was totally baffled at the time, I now know that on any home football Saturday, any Clemson student on campus can expect the continued projection of this look towards himself by almost every alumnus within range.

Although it can set a student's comfort on edge, it really isn't that an unpleasant a look. It's partially paternal. (We are, after all, the babies of "the Clemson family.") It's somewhat curious. (How are we finding the old homeplace? How has it changed?) And, to some extent, it's envious. This last one can be rather jolting, especially when you realize that, given the chance, almost any one of those orange men would instantaneously turn you out of your room and take up residence himself.

Clemson graduates do keep strong ties with the university. The success of both IPTAY and the Alumni Association can tell you that, if an alumnus himself doesn't. However, most are all to eager to talk about the Clemson they remember — the discipline, the comraderie, the pranks — the "real" Clemson with an all-male enrollment of 3200 and a Western Union telegraph office in Tillman.

One of the initial steps of the registration process back when Clemson was a military school was for the new freshmen to get his head shaved, usually by upperclassmen. He then would spend a good deal of time worrying about whether it would be long enough to part by the morning of the State Fair holiday, which highlighted with the Thursday game against USC.

It was all important that the freshman get his half inch hair to lie along a straight line, for if not, an upperclassman would help him with it. "Octogon soap was a great help in keeping the part in your hair," explained one graduate of 1954. If, however, against all his efforts his hair refused to lie flat, the upperclassmen got a try, and they usually used a little stronger adhesives, such as syrup, gravy, or whatever else didn't seem edible. Sometimes, the upperclassmen would decide to give the poor freshman another chance to prove himself, and would shave his head again.

The common term for freshman was "rat," and, as the name implies, it was not a role bedecked with dignity. The '55 graduate's definition of a rat is "lower than whale s _ _ _ (manure) on the bottom of the ocean but higher than the president of the student body at USC." Transfer students were termed "bo-rats" and were not viewed at all favorably by regular freshmen.

Each rat was assigned an upperclassman to serve — rats for two semesters, bo-rats for one. As a '48 graduate described it, "Sophs and juniors rated one freshman (rat). Certain juniors, 1st sargeants for example, . . . two. Senior officers rated two or three."

The duties of the rat to his particular upperclassman were to clean his room every day but Sunday, make beds, sweep, dust as needed, and mop weekly. Rifles and sabres had to be cleaned, brass buttons polished, shoes shined, laundry delivered, foot lockers arranged. Inspections were held Saturday morning, so by Friday night the rooms must be fixed *perfectly*.

For two to four hours a week rats were on "half detail." This means they ran errands for any upperclassman in their company, or any senior in any company. The '54 graduate said this usually entailed "going after drinks, food, etc. . . ., (and) Ice cream better not be melted when you get back with it (generally cones)."

As told by one graduate of '51, "On a certain day during the year an announcement would be made at the noon meal that the cold storage room at the College Dairy Department had lost all refrigeration and the upperclassmen would send all 'Rats' with containers over to get ice cream for them. What a mad rush. Of course, the unit never did break down. All freshmen would be in line waiting for ice cream."

Aside from either sending or being sent on errands, depending on class rank, had other regular activities to keep them busy. Reveille was at 6:30 every morning. Then at 7:00 came breakfast formation. (According to Walter Cox, dean of student life and graduate of '35, the halls of Johnstone are a throwback to this time, designed wide enough to walk through in formation.)

Three days a week, from noon until 1:00, there was drill; on the remaining two days, there was chapel. Later came evening retreat, when everyone marched across Bowman Field to the dining hall. At 9:00 p.m. came long roll (call), after which all freshmen were restricted to their rooms, sophomores to their barracks, juniors to the campus, and seniors to downtown. Eleven o'clock was marked by Taps.

Other normal events were short-sheeting beds, placing water-filled trashcans over doors, taking freshmen out to see "wild women" to laugh at their reaction, and playing "coo-coo" and "spin-the-bottle." Coo-coo was game where-by one rat would hop on a table with a rolled-up newspaper, and another rat would get underneath. The one below would stick his head out on any of the four sides while yelling "coo-coo." If the one on top managed to swat him with the newspaper, they changed placed.

For "Spin-the-bottle," as enjoyed by the graduate of '48, a rat "bent over, touched a coke bottle to the floor as a pivot point, ran around it 10 times while holding it to the floor, straighted up, and ran down the hall. He would run in a curve, same direction he went around the bottle — until he ran into the wall."

There are a couple of other, what seem to be commonly remembered activities, but the alumni keep all explanations to themselves as securely as a secret society password. One deals with the subject of bricks and springs; another is a rhyme concerning the difference between a gun and a rifle. But then, the past always has its mysteries. . . .

Another aspect of Clemson life was paddling. This usually meant getting it with a short handle broom. However, some methods were more elaborate. One of the more painful ways was to stand two rats side by side and swing with a coat hanger, so that the middle hit the inside rat and nothing but the tip hit the outside rat.

A rat could get paddled because his upperclassman was "gigged," (got demerits) on th cleanliness of his room or rifle, because he got caught "beating out." According to graduate '48, "If someone wanted an errand taken care of, he yelled out on the hall, "Freshman, rat, new boy!" Every freshman turned out on the run — last man went. A freshman caught not turning out (beating out) got paddled. If service got poor on the company, a pep meeting was held to energize the rats."

For pep meetings, the company commander set the date, generally once a week around seven o'clock. At that time all upperclassmen would line up along the hall holding their favorite paddle and wait for each rat to stop in front of him, bend over, and grab his ankles. The upperclassman could lean into him for as long as he felt appropriate, considering the rat's service that week, and as long as he did not exceed the maximum number set by the commander.

Some utensils used were paddles, brooms, coathangers, split palmetto leaves, wooden rifles, toothbrushes, sabres, leather straps, belts, etc. — anything the upperclassman wanted to use up to 2" x 4".

Although freshmen were the definitive underdogs on campus, they did have certain "recourses." A freshman could challange an upperclassman to a boxing match, with gloves, in Fike. He could, with the company commander's permission, "'pool' (throw water) any upperclassman thought was abusing. Many an upperclassman 'in his shorts' has been dragged across Bowman field to the Clemson House and thrown in the 'Hotel Pool' when it was 20°F and frozen over. Others were thrown in the shower with clothes on, others pooled behind Riggs Hall, some thrown in YMCA pool," chimed the graduate of '54.

Two of the brightest spots on the Clemson calendar were April Fool's Day, which Dean Cox described as a time of "devilment, jokes, antics," and Lame Duck Week. Seniors took exams a week earlier than the rest, so that they could be processed for graduation. A lot of seniors stuck around after exams and, as Dean Cox remembered, "let their beards grow, wore white 'ducks' (trousers), white shirt, no tie or shoes."

It was during this week that the seniors would make the "name walks", the sidewalks on West Campus imprinted with the roll of each graduating class. it was also during this week that sheep and other livestock turned up in dorms and professors offices, a cow turned up in Tillman's clock tower, and a lot of water went spilling out windows onto the passers-by below. One unruffled professor, finding his classroom filled with chickens, sat his students down in their seats as usual, regardless of all the bird droppings.

An especially active year, as described by one of its graduates, was 1951. "Class night in 1951 was disastrous. A tank ran over a student's car. Fire hoses were taken down and water was everywhere. Farm tractors were driven in the old first barracks down the halls. Chickens turned loose in classrooms. Calves and sheep put in the main building. '1951' was written on the football practice field behind the YMCA with a road machine, etc.

"In order for a Senior to receive a diploma in 1951 a fee of two dollars plus had to be paid (by each graduate) in order for the student to replace his car."

The last week of school was exciting for the freshman also, because it marked the end of his initiation. Each freshman would get a document called a "rat dip" signed by everyone in his company, with a maximum exception of three names. After the rat dip was approved by the "Rat Sargeant," it enabled the rising sophomore to begin receiving the services he had been dispensing all year.

As the '48 graduate put it, "It all went on for the full freshman year and it was miserable from time to time. Those who couldn't take it got out. It sure made a man out of you — you learned how to assess character and evaluate a person. And it was worth it in the sense that you traded one year for three. It was the best thing that ever happened to me."

(Author's note – much appreciation to graduates '48, '51, and '54, Dean Walter Cox, and Jack Brown, who's been here 48 years and knows a lot more than he's telling).

Sha Sifford, a sophomore from Charlotte, is active with The Tiger *and the Union Cultural Committee. This is her first appearance in the* Chronicle.

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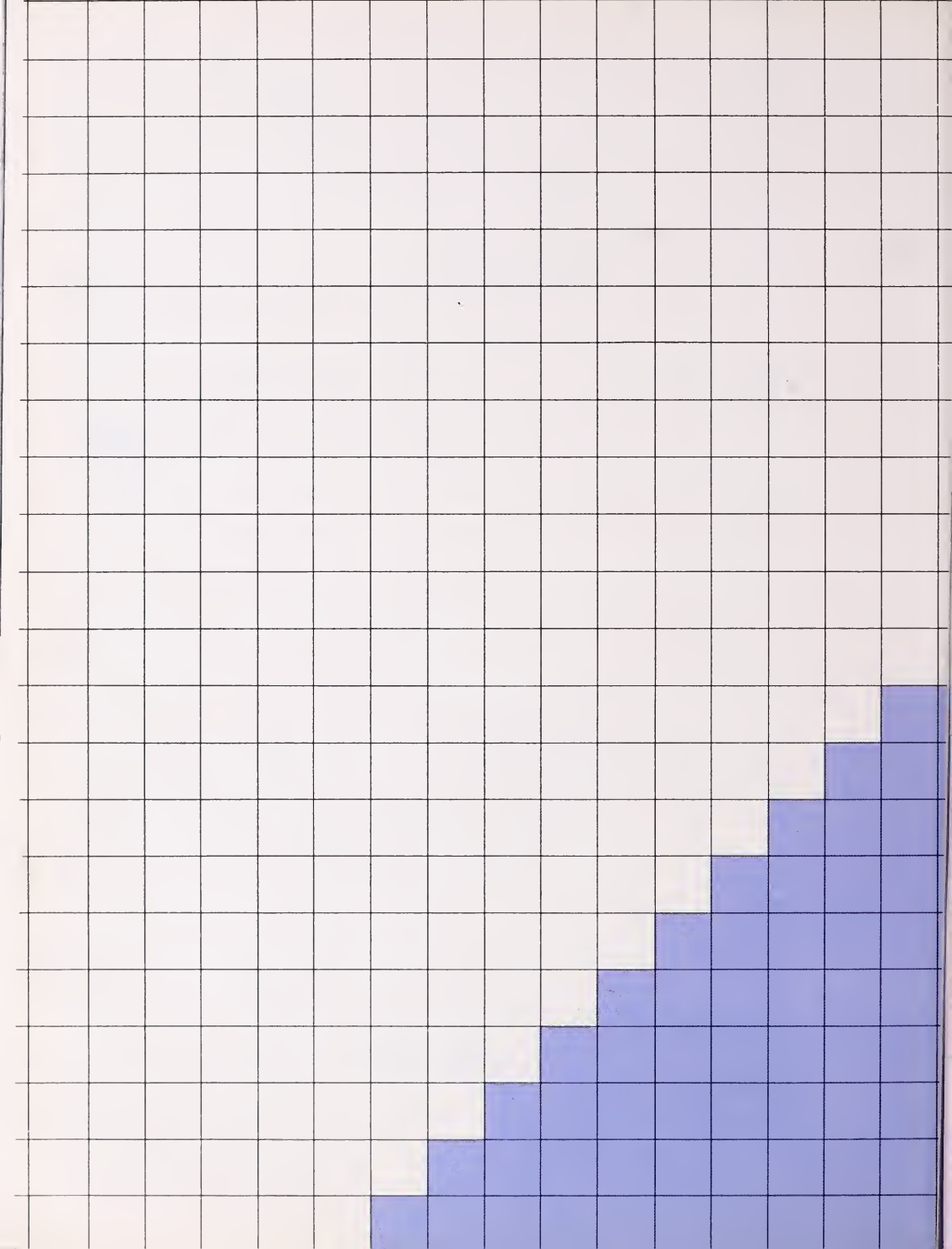

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CHRONICLE

EDITORIAL

The Administrators *Speed Bouknight*

While taking a vacation from the University big top, I happened upon these administrators. They were playing their usual game, follow the leader, but they seemed to be getting nowhere.

I was pleased to see their arms free of usual duties. Absent was the usual load of paperwork. But wherever one sees them, they always extend a friendly hand.

Children play upon these administrators for extra support for their extracurricular fun. But the administrators always say they can't swing it now.

The administration, with a solid, rock-hard foundation, has its roots in the soil. They are upholders of a grand educational tradition, resisting the tides of change and the shifting sands of time.

The Chronicle *Administrators*

[Spring/1981]

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On the cover: "Boot Outlet" by Jeaneé Redmond, watercolor. Watercolor, page 13, "Boot Factory" by Jeanee Redmond.

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The Skull

by William Seabrook

"Why do you like to come to this old fort?"

"Because of the darkness. There's something weird about total darkness — it pulls a special fear out of me. I like the sensation of knowing there's something in front of me, but not being able to see it."

"You mean like being blind?"

"No. Blind people are used to it. They don't really get scared. People who can see get scared because they strain so hard to see something they can't. I'm talking about places like this where you don't know what, or who, is in front of you. It's different from walking through your house in the dark. You don't know what's in those tunnels. Could be rats, coons . . . some axe murderer. It creates a sensation like . . . like flirting with death."

"Well, I'm not flirting with no axe murderer, If there *is* someone in there, you're going first so he splits your head."

"Come on."

They continued along the path through the dense bamboo groves. Sunlight filtered through the swaying canopy, throwing shifting patterns on the soft tan leaves of the path. He smiled to himself, knowing he had induced a degree of fear in his friend.

The rusty iron door creaked loudly, echoing through the concrete battery. They walked noiselessly on the sand floor to a dim patch of sunlight shining through a hole in the ceiling.

"How about a brain curari?" he asked, pulling a joint from his coat pocket.

"Sounds good."

His friend examined the small room in the glow from the lighter. Spray painted initials and peace signs covered the walls, and beer cans littered the floor. He watched the fire grow and fade with his friend's inhalations. The smoke rose toward the ceiling then was quickly sucked out the hole.

"So, you like this place because it scares you."

"Yes, especially those shoulder-width tunnels. That's where it's scarey."

"What else are you scared of?"

"Dolls."

"No, I'm serious."

"So am I. Old dolls scare me. The kind with the paint chipped off part of their face. Their eyes are what scares me, staring off into space all the time. I keep expecting them to blink."

"That's weird. What about God — aren't you scared of him?"

"I don't believe in God. I think all that shit is pure mythology."

"How can you not believe something so many people believe?"

"Everybody used to believe the world was flat, too." He threw the butt into the sand and covered it with his foot. "Come on, let's go in the tunnels," he said, trying to change the subject.

They squeezed through the crack in the wall and into the tunnel.

"Watch out in here, there are some ninety-degree turns, and I don't want you to bust your face."

"Don't worry, I'm right behind you."

They stood in silence, listening to the wind howling down the air pipes. The sound of dripping water echoed from deep within the tunnels. They moved along slowly and deliberately, the only sound their coats scraping the walls.

"Light your lighter a minute. I want to see what this place looks like."

Water soaked down through the brick walls, maintaining the mud floor. He held the lighter up to the low ceiling.

"Look at these stalactites; I think they're made of salt." He pulled one of the delicate structures from the cement, turning it in his fingers as they examined it.

He snuffed the lighter, turned, and moved quickly down the tunnel, away from his friend.

"Hey! Wait up," said his friend stumbling after the swishing sound of the coat disappearing down the tunnel. "Come back you son-of-a-bitch! I knew you were going to pull something like this."

He laughed to himself, hearing the pleas of his friend far back in the tunnel. He knew a turn was coming, so he held out a hand in the darkness. It met the cool, damp bricks, signaling the

turn. He ducked into the new corridor but was pulled back sharply by the epaulet of his army coat. He jerked the coat free, frantically backing down the tunnel, trying to light the lighter. With the lighter in one hand and his pocket knife in the other, he inched forward to investigate. A rusty bracket cast a strange shadow on the wall in the flickering light.

"Axe murderer," he said in relief as he bumped the bracket with the butt of his knife. He sensed a presence behind him and spun around, illuminating his friend's face.

"I ought to beat your ass. You know I'm going to get you back for running from me, you asshole."

"You just did."

"Let's get out of here."

"All right. Let's go outside and smoke another joint."

They leaned against the concrete wall, smoking quietly. A cool ocean breeze rustled through the bamboo and chainy briars. It was a perfect winter afternoon. The sun and the moon were in the same sky.

"I wish people wouldn't mess this place up so bad," he said, commenting on the beer cans and empty half-pints." What's that? Here, hold this." He handed the dwindling joint to his friend as he snaked his way through the dense bamboo thicket. It was the skeleton of a large goat. Most of the bones had been carried off by animals or covered by debris, but the skull, pelvis, and a few scattered ribs and vertabrae still remained. He cleared away some of the dried leaves with his foot then bent over to pick up the skull, fascinated with the curving horns.

"Don't pick it up!" shouted his friend. "Didn't you ever read *The Gold Bug*? Look where it's facing first. This is Sullivan's Island, you know."

"That was a human skull, dumb ass. And it was up in a tree. I'm going to clean it up and hang it on my wall."

"You into necromancy or something? What do you want that nasty thing in your house for?"

"I don't know. I guess it's kind of interesting. Necromancy? What the hell is that?"

"Conjuring the dead, college boy. Goats are demonic symbols."

As they walked along the path through the bamboo, he kept examining his prize. The side that had been exposed to the elements was cracked and peeling in places. The protected side was caked with black dirt and supported patches of a greenish-black fungus. When they got back to the car, he put the skull in the trunk and drove home.

He opened the trunk to get the skull and noticed fire ants running around on the mat. Thousands of ants boiled out of the skull as he lifted it from the trunk and threw it into the grass. He sprayed with poison and sat back to watch the ants pour from every opening, escaping the burning torture inside the brain cavity. Two frantic streams of red ants came from each eye socket like tears of blood.

When all was quiet, he lowered his head to peer into the cavity. The broken network of tunnels looked like convolutions in an earthen cerebrum. As he poked the cavity with a stick to loosen the dirt, a black widow, whitened by the poison, crawled out of the hole and bit him on the hand.

Icy spray hitting his face caused him to stir. His eyes fluttered, scraping the lash on the concrete. He lifted his raw cheek from the cement and studied his surroundings in bewilderment. Waves swelled into the cracks of the broken slabs, slapping up spray, then descended, exposing glistening white barnacles and green kelp. A long dark shadow extended across the water toward a desolate beach. He turned and saw the black and white striped lighthouse casting the shadow. Time and erosion had stranded the lighthouse from the island so that it now stood on broken slabs of concrete several hundred yards from shore. The keepers house was gone. All that remained was the lone tower surrounded by water.

He climbed up the slabs and entered the broken-in doorway. The floor was slimy and white from roosting gulls and curious otters. An iron staircase spiraled to the top. Unsure of the stairs' age and sturdiness, he hugged the wall as he began to climb. Flakes of rust rained on the stairs below making tinkling noises that echoed through the tower. Spider webs drifted in the breeze that sifted through cracks in the bricks. He stepped out on the balcony below the lamp room. On one side, open ocean. The other, mostly wild barrier islands. The wind was cold and cutting, so he went back inside. The lamp was gone, and the surrounding windows were broken and full of bullet holes. He went back downstairs and leaned in the doorway, wondering what to do.

He turned and saw a small circular fence in the center of the floor. The gate was rusted shut, but small enough to step over. The floor sounded hollow under his boot. Closer examination revealed a hatch, which he lifted by an inset handle. He could see the first few rungs of a ladder, but all else was black.

He left the hatch open for some light and climbed down the ladder. His feet hit an iron platform that rang with strength and lack of rust. He climbed down the iron stairs, feeling the wall as he went. He looked up and saw the light from the hatch far above, breaking up through the iron stairs. The stairs ended, and he hit another platform. He felt the platform with his hands and found another handle. Light of intense candlepower blinded him as he lifted the hatch. His hands shot to his eyes trying to rub away the afterimage. He could go no farther, so he went back up the stairs.

Something black drew his attention to the doorway, andshe ran to see what it was. Nothing was in sight. But he knew he had seen something.

"I told you not to mess with that skull," said his friend sarcastically.

He looked up from his bed deleriously and managed to croak out, "Go to hell."

"While you were sick the past few days, I finished cleaning that skull and put it on the roof outside your window to dry in the sun."

"Thanks. I want to keep it to remind me of this bullshit. Did you kill that damn spider?"

"No, it was already dead. I found you in the yard after it bit you. You were a babbling idiot. I don't think you knew where the hell you were."

He awoke with a start. The stiff wind coming off the marsh chilled his feverish body as he got up to close the window. He thought of the skull and leaned out to take a look. The light from the moon and stars shimmered on the sand in the shingles, but the skull was not on the roof. He shut the window deciding it had blown off and turned to go back to bed.

A large black goat with blazing red eyes was standing on the bed.

"Holy Shit." He shook his head and rubbed his eyes with his thumb and forefinger, then looked up just as the goat lunged off the bed. He caught the horns with his hands, but was slammed against the window, shattering it out onto the roof. The goat wrenched free and lunged again, this time sinking a horn in each cheek, just below the eyes. He pulled the goat away by the neck, struggling to get a better hold. It bit and kicked furiously (determined to kill his opponent). He grabbed the goat by a horn and a handful of black fur and forced it out the broken window. It rolled off the roof and hit the ground below.

He leaned out the window, craning to see the goat. His blood dripped on the roof, blotting out the sparkling pieces of glass. All he could see below was something white in the grass. It was the skull, one vacant socket staring up at the window.

He looked into the mirror. Two streams of blood ran down his face from below each eye. Unable to draw the line between hallucination and reality, he decided the best alternative was to get rid of the skull. He dressed quickly and went outside. The skull looked so innocent, lying in the grass, but there was an air

of evil about it. He put it in the trunk and drove to the old fort.

He stumbled along the path through the bamboo, carrying the skull by a horn. During the day, the bamboo grove was cool, green, and peaceful; now it was ominous — black on black. He slid along the wall of the fort. It seemed colder than the night air. Chainy briars snagged his pants' legs, as he made his way to the spot where he had found the skull. He saw the pelvis, slightly illuminated in the moonlight filtering through the bamboo and laid the skull down by it.

The fort was a huge black presence. He noticed the sand in the concrete shimmered in the moonlight like the sand on his roof. He took the path along the front of the fort. The cold wind whipped the tops of the bamboo. The iron door stood slighty ajar with a flickering light coming from inside. He crept up to the door and peeked in.

Below the hole in the ceiling, black robed figures knelt in a circle around a fire built in the center of the sand floor. Large candles burned in all four corners of the room. Two naked women stood inside the circle. One was an old woman wearing a papiĕr-mâché mask of a goat with horns. Her fat body sagged revoltingly. The other woman was young, thirteen or fourteen.

"Let me see your phalli," said the old woman. The girl handed her two pieces of wood connected by a rope.

"We shall return them to the earth." She threw the phalli into the fire.

In order to get a better look, he pushed the iron door a hair at a time to keep it from creaking. Suddenly, he was jerked back by the hair. He saw a knife blade flash in the moonlight.

"You shouldn't have come here," said the man holding the knife to his throat. The lookout backed him into the room. The ceremony stopped, and everyone looked toward the door.

"I found him outside," said the lookout. "I think he will make a good sacrifice to show our appreciation for this woman coming to fertile age."

"He already seems to have been reddened with blood," said the woman pointing to his blood caked face. "He has surely been sent by Satan. Prepare him for sacrifice."

The lookout put him against the wall, holding the arthame's point against his throat. A robed man left the fort and the ceremony resumed.

"Your ankh." The girl obeyed, handing a wooden, crosslike structure to the old woman.

"Fine craftsmanship; this has been made with care. Now, the arthame." She offered the knife to the priestess.

"These are your symbols engraved on the blade; do you know what they stand for?"

The robed man came back in and walked over to the wall where the lookout was holding him. He was carrying a mallet and spikes. The two men held his hand in the center of a peace sign and prepared to spike it to the concrete wall.

"Wait!" He yelled out. The ceremony stopped again and all turned toward him. "High Priestess," he began, guessing at her title, "you are right, I was sent by Satan. But not as a sacrifice, as a messenger."

"What is your message?"

"I have had a vision. I have visited heaven and hell and found heaven abandoned and in ruins while hell was powerful and thriving."

"Why would Satan send you to us with such a vision?" How do you explain your wounds?"

"One must pay for such a powerful vision. I have also brought a gift — an aid to worship, you might say."

"Where is this gift now?"

"I left it outside."

"You are lying — trying to escape." She turned back to the young girl. "Now what do these symbols stand for?"

"I am not lying. Let these men go with me. The gift is just outside the door."

"Go with him. If he is lying, bring him back in here and spike him to the wall."

The two men followed him out the iron door, holding their knives against his back. He led the men to the place where he had left the skull. The men kept the knives in his ribs as he bent to pick up the skull.

"The priestess will be impressed with this," said one of the men as they started back to the door.

He held the skull up by the horn when they entered the fort.

"This is the gift that was sent with me, a sacred symbol of worship — a suppliment to your ceremonial mask."

"I am grateful for the gift. Now you must return to your master. Spike him to the wall for sacrifice."

He knocked one man down with his shoulder, shattered the skull on the other man's head, then ducked through the crack in the wall and into the tunnel. He could hear the echoing shouts of his pursuers as he raced down the pitch-black tunnel with his outstretched hands skimming the walls. He made his way to the far side of the fort. A faint light shone through another opening into the tunnel. Pocket knife in hand, he slowly moved through the opening and into the main fort. The pursuers in the tunnel were not far behind, and he could see a torch light coming through the main fort. He ran up the concrete stairs and onto the roof. Hanging from the back edge of the fort, he dropped into the bamboo.

From the edge of the thicket, he saw two robed figures standing by his car. He moved through the bamboo quickly and quietly, then down the road to a phone booth where called his friend.

"Who the hell is trying to kill you?"

"Devil worshippers were trying to sacrifice me in there."

"Devil worshippers? You're bullshitting me. Let's go get your car."

They drove down the road and stopped beside his car.

"There's nobody guarding your car. I don't believe you made me come out here in the middle of the night for nothing. Is this another one of your goddamn jokes?"

"No, I swear there were two guys with knives and black robes, standing by the car. They were trying to catch me to take me back in there and nail my hands to the wall."

"Well, let's go in there and check it out."

"Shit no! I'm not going back in there. I've had enough of being Joe Badass for one night."

"Don't worry. "He opened his coat, revealing the .357 stuck in the waist of his pants. He pulled a flashlight from the glove compartment and checked the batteries.

"What happened to your face?"

"There's no way you would believe that part."

"O.K., let's go."

They moved silently through the bamboo with the flashlight off. He strained his eyes at every shadow along the path until they reached the iron door.

"Shine the light around here. This is where one of them jumped me."

His friend shined the flashlight into the bamboo and along the edge of the roof. The iron door creaked loudly as he pushed it open and shined the light into the fort. They walked to the center of the room, listening to the wind howling through the hole in the ceiling.

"So, where's all the devil worshippers?"

"They were here. There was a fire right here where we're standing, and they were all kneeling around it."

"There was no fire in here — there aren't any ashes."

"Let me hold that flashlight." He walked around the room, shining the light on the floor and walls. The light fell on the shattered skull in the sand.

"See, I busted this on one of their heads before I escaped."

"I think you ought to go home and get some rest."

Set in his hometown of Charleston, William Seabrook's story is based on a true experience. Seabrook, a junior English major, favors the work of Edgar Allen Poe, and hopes to become a professional writer.

The Jockey Lot: A Country Mall

by Wade Steadman

jock·ey: to deal shrewdly or fraudulently with

There's a sucker born every minute – P. T. Barnum

The crowd mills by the tables slowly, giving each a once over to see if anything catches their eye. Past the jewelry man, past the hubcap collection, past the hats stacked high and knives displayed neatly. Right past the arcade and the Potato Chip Habit Restaurant, past the produce stands on either side of the aisle (with the vendors screaming "Get up here right now and grab a bag! Anything you want, get four pounds for a dollar! Mix 'em all together! That's right . . ."), past the rows of dog-eared Harlequin romances (twenty-five cents apiece) and the new furniture warehouses. Most of the faces are leathery and worn from the sun, lined from worrying how the soybean crop will come out. Faces that belong in a Steinbeck novel, faces of the salt of the earth, peering out from under John Deere caps. They amble by in their blue jean overalls and work boots, their thick hands leaving a trail of peanut shells behind them, with a few axe handle nestled in their arm. These are mixed in with a few gawking city folk. Some of them are in suits and fine dresses, browsing after Sunday service (a form of Sunday driving). Some are college students with beer on their breath. Young kids tear through the crowd chasing each other, thinking they are at a carnival. Whole families move along ponderously as one, lined up in descending order. Huge men walk by, clearing a path. Old, bent men hobble by with canes, greeting each other.

"What is this place?" one might ask. An auction? A yard sale? A circus? How about a combination of all three? It's the Anderson Jockey Lot and Farmer's Market, a sprawling 43-acre indoor-outdoor market place that boasts of being the South's biggest flea market; a claim rather hard to substantiate but easy to accept once you see the place. Founded on November 16th, 1974 by D.C. Brysson and Dick McClennan, the Lot is open only Friday through Sunday (Sunday is the heavy sales day) yet maintains about 2000 dealers with an average weekly attendance of 40,000 people. McClennan has since sold out, and the place is now run by D.C. and his wife Evelyn, plus a small staff. Their policy is first come, first serve, pay in advance only — and they do pretty good trade. Their weekly indoor rates are $6 for space, $7 with table, and $1 for every extra table. Their weekly outdoor rates are $3 for a space, $4 with table, and again, a $1 fee per additional table. Evelyn estimates they run 600 dealers "under shed" and 800-1000 outside, but this estimate was given during the winter, when business is much slower than during the spring and summer. Makes you wonder why McClennan sold out. There are about 500 dealers with permanent displays, and about half of these have been coming ever since there has been a place to come. Some of them travel from other parts of the Southeast, and regular weekly jobs, to live at the Lot over the weekend in utility buildings set up on the outside of the indoor spaces and fixed up to accommodate the merchant as comfortably as any apartment could. And some merchants aren't there just to ply their wares.

Bill Tucker is one of these kind. Tucker is a rotund, redheaded fellow who counts the money coming on for the records he sells with only nine fingers. He told me: "I'm just down here, selling these records for somebody else. All I want is gas to get home (Tucker's an Anderson native) and a little something to help pay the rent." He has been coming to the Lot periodically since its beginning, and explains: "What it is, is I'd come up here shopping every weekend, because up here you can find anything you're looking for. So I figured it would be easier to just come on up here and join in the fun, see? So I came up here and finally got a place. You know, it's not if I make any money, it's just a good place to go, a good place to entertain yourself, 'cause you see so many people here. And you don't see this sitting down in the country. That'll be eight dollars."

A Steely Dan and a Sea Level album disappeared into the crowd under the arm of a young girl as he continued, enjoying the attention.

"This place here, you can come in, and you can offer cheaper, and you can buy cheaper, and you can jew them down, and they can sell you cheaper, because they don't have the overhead expense. And most of the people out here, a lot of them are all retired people (as Tucker is), and they get tired of sitting at home because they don't see anybody when they're sitting at home. And I know a lot of people feel the way I do. That's the only reason they're here."

When I mention that at least *some*, and probably, *most*, of the people are there to make money, he replies, "Oh, now, you can see *those* guys. But there are guys here who've worked all their

lives to get together a cotton-picking knife collection. They want to show this to somebody and brag about it. So you go out there and there they are, oh boy, you're going to get knives today, you think. You slide the lid back and there's the one you just been huntin', see. And then he'll uncork a price on you, that you fixing to buy, you know. Well, you thought this old man was here cause he needed to sell something. But that wasn't the case at all. He wanted to show his collection to somebody, see. Now, of course, you move on over the line there and there are people trying to sell things (an astute observation). But, uh, you get both kind of people."

Tucker's view of things holds up to a degree. There are the old men with knife collections, and bottle collections, and antique plumbing fixtures and obsolete tools: the things that are obviously not profit-making ventures. And there is also a keen sense of rugged individualism, of self-satisfaction. The guy who sells the iron fire dogs and pokers and shovels that appear to be homemade exemplifies this. He keeps a silent vigil behind his lone outside table, shifting his heavy frame from boot to boot. On the trunk of his car, pulled up beside his table like most of the outside dealers do for easy loading and unloading, sits his pump-action 12 gauge shotgun. You'd best believe that he has a bumper sticker on his car advocating the right to bear arms . . . no concealed weapon for this guy. He's going to protect himself, his family, and his fire dogs. And, I think, he is one out there to make money, like most of the people. The thing about it is, they are fairly easy to spot by their elaborate displays and their constant sales pitch banter or their seriousness — although anybody will take your money if you let them.

At one display you can ask how they are doing and get a comeback like, "fair to partly cloudy", while at the next one you're met with silence. At one stand a tool seller attracts attention by hitting a huge, suspended, solid steel train wrench (which is about 4 feet long and weighs God knows how much) with a screwdriver, and then tells you, "I hit it with my hammer afore and I deefened everybody. Make a good dinner bell." But right across from him is "The Gold Man," and his sign proclaims (he also has signs that proclaim him "The Diamond Man" and "The Silver Man," too): "Gold. Sell it to us. You get paid on the spot." Behind the counter is a silver-haired man wearing extremely thick-lensed glasses that have a magnifier in front of one lens. Our conversation is short but tells me much.

"My name is Wade Steadman, and I'm writing a story on the Jockey Lot. Do you mind if I ask you a couple of questions?"

"Yes I do."

It took my by surprise. My first negative response to a direct question. I think most people saw me as free advertising, but not this one.

"What kind of questions?" His entire demeanor reminded me of a weasel. I obviously made him feel threatened. I felt like Mike Wallace.

"Oh, like where you're from and how long you've been here," I replied.

"We don't talk about things like that here." That was it. I sure as hell knew that he wasn't going to let me in on what he had to hide, so I left him. Best look out for the Gold Man.

Or better yet, simply overlook him. It's easy enough, with the amazing variety or merchandise to be found. Variety is the place's strong point. There are the common and bizarre and classic and tacky side by side, all vying for the eye and wallet. Where else will you find 20-pound sledges (John Henry material) next to birdcages on one side and trampolines on the other? A large quartz rock, a piece of rusty chain and a box full of assorted wigs for sale next to a barber shop with a "This week's special" sign in front, or a dentist's "office" (yep, there's even a practicing dentist out there)? This is a huge country mall, open and accessible, a common meeting ground for the common people, as much social as economic. A monument to good old American capitalism and country values. Be a good neighbor, preach what you will, say what you will, and we'll get along just fine.

Of course, no country mall would be complete without an extensive Elvis memorabilia store, complete with Elvis watercolors, Elvis disposable butane lighters (but who could think of throwing something like that away?), little plaster Elvis busts, Elvis lamp covers, and Elvis pennants. There is also the Shriners' exhibit, pushing candy bars and assorted Shriner paraphernalia (knives, chains, etc.), and there is the little 12-year-old Kleenrite cleaning agent demonstration and pitch girl, showing her wares (no doubt her parents' wares) up there on her little platform, "Contains no soap, and 100% guaranteed . . ." She flashes a considerable roll of bills out of her back pocket to make change for a sale. That's a good angle: children salesmen. Innocent faces that will take your money as quickly as any adult would. Here is the free enterprise system at its best. Here is where you can probably find anything and everything indigenous to this part of the country and at least one thing that you've never seen before, such as swamp root.

That's right, Dr. Kilmer's Swamp Root, which is "pleasant to take" (probably because it's 12% alcohol) and contains buchu leaves, rhubarb root, mandrake root, and skullcap leaves, among other roots, leaves, herbs, essences, and oils. For as you

make your way down one of the indoor corridors, a strange, chanting voice is heard over the clamor. It's the voice of the Medicine Man.

"I'm looking for the man who's tired, worn, and worried. The man with rheumatism, backache, headache, fever, cold, flu. Don't listen to Tom, Dick, Harry, or Sue! Take *care* of your health! Pick it up and read it. The store is open."

This delivery is given by a short, stocky, bronze-skinned man wearing a vest over a loose shirt and baggy pants. A huge turquoise eagle and assorted plastic beads hang from his neck, and his fingers are covered with rings. He is situated across from a man who sells any size sneaker for two dollars. And there, lying out in front of him on small, folding tables, are the same wares he has been selling for 51 years: Carbolizer Solve, "The original" Iron Kola and Celery Compound System Tonic and Body Builder, Ward's Liquid Magic Rub, Millerhaus Famous Linimint, Hair Stimulant, Scalp Food, and an endless variety of tea: catnip, cornsilk, dandelion, slippery elm, huckleberry, horsetail, alfalfa leaf, and, specifically for ailments, cold tea, slim tea, love tea, and jogger's tea.

The Medicine Man, whose real name is Anton Mechan, but whom everyone seems to call "Chief," says he is a Mohawk Indian born in the Pendleton area about 1910. He learned from Thunder Cloud and Silver Cloud, "the old Indians who handled the snake oils," about the herbal remedies and liniments he plies today. And he is a firm believer in the power of the herb.

"I got all the old remedies. The best stuff on *both* sides of the River Jordan. *He* made it and *He* blessed it. It's good, too. I know because I use it myself. It is the best teacher. I respond to the medicine and it responds to me."

And he goes nowhere "unless I got my medicine with me. Need my pills." And Pills he has got. "I got a pill that lets you run fast, jump high, step quick, think clearly, too (sounds like it could make an NBA coach's dream-come-true). I got a pill that helps you walk, talk, eat, and answer the calls of nature — everything you need for living. Good help to people's health. And you can't pick it up everyday. No way."

No way is right. The traveling medicine show is a thing of the past and so is the Medicine Man. He knows it, too: "No young man knows the value of the herbs." Most of his customers are middle-aged to elderly, those that were probably exposed to this sort of healing when they were growing up. But most people just walk by the Medicine Man's sign — "Medican Man Will Do Yo Good and Help You To with Real Herbs" — and stare on at him with curiosity. They don't know where he's coming from and they don't spend the time to find out. But the Chief doesn't let that get him down.

"Got it made, now. Go where I want, do what I want, sell what I want, and not worry about getting fired." But, he concedes, "All good things come to an end." But not this one, yet,

for as he spoke those words, a pack of prospective customers approached and the Chief went into action and crowed, "The store is open."

I moved on. It was getting late, the crowd had thinned, and things began to lose their novelty. I hadn't bought anything this trip, which was surprising — to go to a Jockey Lot and not buy *something* — but, I don't know, I guess I was preoccupied. Some of my previous noteworthy purchases were a pair of mismatched boots (that were to be work boots, but they're so damn heavy that they're good for nothing except kicking in doors like they do on all the police shows, or drop-kicking obnoxious toy poodles across the county, or at least the yard), a cast-iron frying pan that rusted no matter how thoroughly I dried it, even heating it on the stove, a few albums, a package of 12 sponges for a dollar, numerous vegetables, and, a prize, an all-wool Navy officer's knee-length overcoat that was in excellent condition, for $20. It's a bit large, but you might see me in it on some cold day.

So, if you need any tools, a knife, a belt, or a backgammon board, head out to the Jockey Lot on a Sunday, or a Saturday if you don't like big crowds; and if you need to get rid of something, just rent an outside space, set up your table, and go to town. It's a country yard sale. You couldn't ask for a larger collection of prospective buyers, and you might just have a good time. The Jockey Lot is located eight miles northeast of Anderson on U.S. 29. Open your mind and enjoy yourself — and maybe you'll walk away with some swamp root.

Changing View

A child sees the world
In brilliant colors . . .
Blue, green, and red,
With limits of thick lines
Like a coloring book.

Death to innocence . . .
Knowledge blurs the lines
Until they fade away,
Leaving vast spaces of
Pastels and gray.

Anonymous

Epitaph For Rabbit

Winter's Frosted spectrum freezes monentarily
Upon an emerald horizon,
Melting endless glass swells —
Suicidal waves,
Rolling rhythmically across tide rippled scars,
Shattering frothingly upon the encrusted breakwater
On which He stands.

In the cool, wet sands amidst jellyfish minefields,
These dates were scrawled (September 16, 1960 — January 24, 1978);
The name was simply Rabbit.
No mourners, save one, witnessed his passage
As Poseidon's jewelled hand turned to erase each trace —
Fine white sands drawn into silted clouds over enigmatic depths
Where Folly's child turns a ruddy cheek to imbibe the last warm rays.

Justin Hare

Dalton's Scare

Silverwater — starry sky,
Moonlight burning in my eye,
Crested moon — With edge of glass,
Cutting through my will of steel,
Visions bloody fill my mind,
A thousand bodies cold and dead,
And each face is my own.

Phillip Gervais

Inspirators

Thank you for Mr. Coffee, Joe.
Simon and Garfunkel were asking
Where you went. You open my eyes.
This Virgin of Saint Regis before me,
Scoreless, shapeless, shadeless.
Did Bach's Fountain pen spray her?

Thank you for Marlboro, Cowboy.
Simon and Garfunkel thought there was
One in the suitcase. You open my eyes.
My prey is so perfect, why even try to
Screw it up? She's a thought in herself.
Was Caulder hanging up his jacket?

Thank you for Budweiser, Ed.
Simon and Garfield somehow said it all
Without you. You open my eyes.
Poor Lady of Saint Regis: Marked by Pentel
Forever! She should scream rape.
Was Dali painting a "For Sale" sign?

Kirk Taylor

Untitled

Within the world of shadows gray
There walked a lady pale and white
Who longed to see a golden ray
Of that warm love now lost to night

While in the world of richer light
There lived a man of darkened heart
Who wished to join, with all his might
The one who was from him apart

Day and night they roamed in grief
Longing for the warm embrace
That offered once the great relief
And would the painful world erase

And so he too was called to die
And quiet now entwined they lie.

Phillip Gervais

Freedom Lane Jazz

Grandpa sang the Coltrane blues,
While Daddy talked of 'em with his shoes.
Slim Sam did the bebop jam,
And Alice fried the country ham.
Saturday night on the Orleans' strip,
Women stepped out with the Lena Horne dip.*
Zoot suits and Conks were in demand,
The cool side of any together Black Man.
Black eyed peas and a little soft shoe,
Oh the good old days didn't seem so blue.

Roxie Lee

* *Hair style*

Original sin, it seems to me
Was simply inconsistency.

Cathy Rigg

Feline Abuse

A skunk was here recently.
It still stinks —
around this forest circus.
The center ring:
Two trees,
Two cats —
Tails tied
like
Longjohns in a hurricane
Snapping.
Suspended in fight.
Bloody jelly eyes bulge.
Chalkboard cries.
Milkweed fur floats up.
The boy toes out his Winston.
"Goddamn."
Wrestling leaves,
Rome went home.

Macen Patten

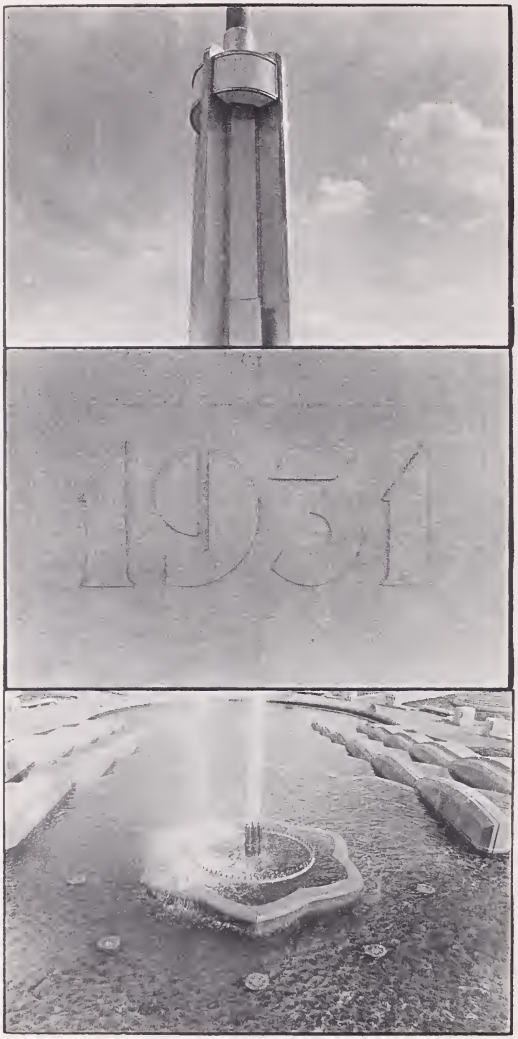
ART

José Suarez

Mark Maresca

Cerisse Camille

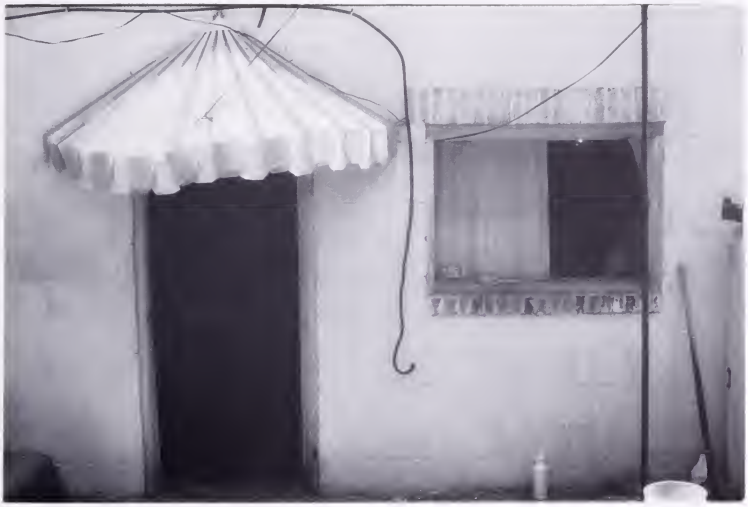
Debbie Wourms



Bob Lorig

Jerome T. Mussman

Speed Bouknight



Maria Steigler

Vickie Lang

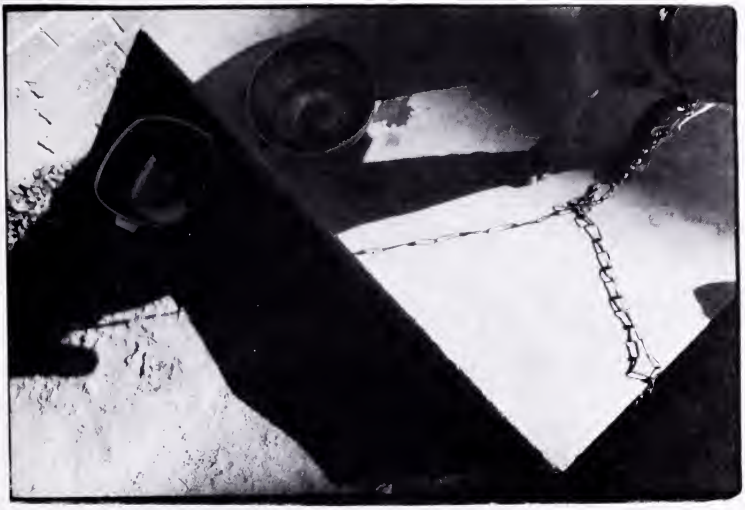
Jacquelyn S. Galphin

Bob Lorig

Sheri Hyatt

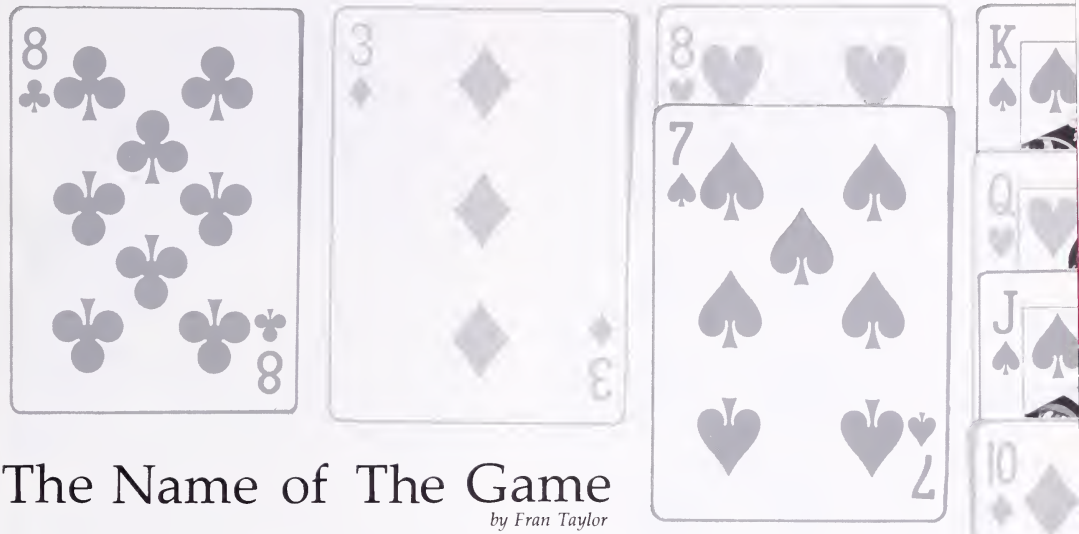
Sheri Hyatt

Harris Wells



Paul Cook

Karou Seo



The Name of The Game

by Fran Taylor

"Oh, no," groaned Sara Henderson inwardly, "not another run of solitaire!"

Sometimes when Harriet, her mother-in-law, began to shuffle and deal the cards, Sara would leave the kitchen to take a walk, to push Adam in his carriage, or to fold diapers — anything to get away. She hated the sight of the dejected body hunched over the seven stacks of cards, adding red to black, black to red, trying to beat the board. To her it was a stupid game, and once, when she couldn't stand it any longer, she had blurted, "Why do you do this, Harriet?"

Running her rough hands through her dyed-red hair, Harriet had shrugged her thin shoulders. "Sometimes I win," she had said simply. "It's a good feeling — winning. Other times, it teaches me patience; that's another name of the game, you know — patience."

Sara had not known; she had decided she really did not care, although she certainly needed patience to deal with all of her anxieties.

But on this hot, humid August day, as Harriet began to smack the cards against the bare wooden top of the table, she did remind herself that this was, after all, Harriet's kitchen. She tried to concentrate on warming jars of baby food to just the right temperature, but occasionally she glanced out the window at the gathering clouds. After feeding Adam, she mixed a cool fruit salad and made thick roast beef sandwiches on whole wheat bread she had baked all by herself. At noon, Harriet swept the cards from the table; Sara moved briskly to set four places.

When David and his father, George, came in from the soybean fields, rain seemed imminent. The only thing anyone could talk about during the meal was how a break in the long drought would save the soybeans. All the other crops has been ruined: corn dried up, beans yellowed on the vines, tomatoes turned red before they got much bigger than cherries. The countryside was parched. Sara thought not a day had passed without having George say, at the first wisp of a cloud in a blue sky, "Well, if it grows a bit, we could have a little rain by evening."

As she washed the dishes, she noticed how the two men kept sitting around the table and looking out at the threatening sky. Finally George said, "Well, David, time's wasting. Might as well get the tractor and go back; it's not gonna rain."

Right after she and David had come to the farm, Sara had spent a lot of time sitting on the grass at the edge of newly turned earth. She had come to like that clean smell, the fresh air, the sun and wind on her face. She found it delightful to hold Adam on her lap and watch David in the distance. But as the months had passed without rain, she had had to stay inside more. The hot rays of the sun made it impossible to have Adam out for very long periods of time.

As the roar of the big red tractor broke into Sara's thoughts, she waved to David and watched his tall frame swing down to move a rake. He was two inches more than six feet, and in the three months they had been with his parents, he had lost weight. "Just firmed up," David had said. "Farming is more strenuous than writing on a chalkboard."

• • •

The last thing Sara and David had wanted was to move in with his parents. "Probably the last thing Harriet and George had wanted, too," thought Sara. But they had seemed cooperative and eager to help when, because of school consolidation, David's teaching contract had not been renewed. He loved being a teacher, and he was a good one. But he was a young one, and there were so many others with seniority.

George had beamed. "You can help with the crop! Maybe I'll make a farmer outta you yet!" And he had slapped David on his back.

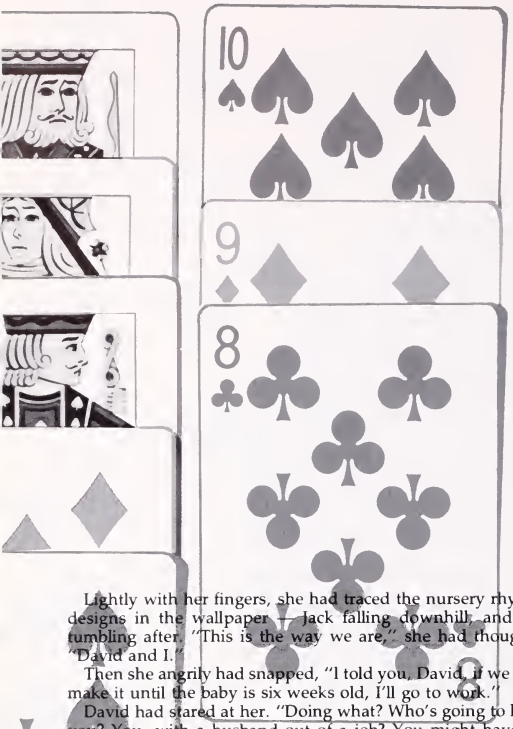
David and Sara had kept hoping he would find another job, but by April, when their first child was due, he had told her to stop decorating the nursery.

"You're wasting your time," he had said, "and our money. We're going to have to leave this apartment — go to the farm with the folks. I wish there could be another way."

Sara had thought him such a forlorn figure, standing by the window and looking at the busy street two stories below. As she walked over to put her arms around him, as much as her full body would allow, he had turned away.

She had sighed. "I had almost finished anyway, some curtains at the windows maybe."

"No," he had said, "No curtains. We'll put up shades. We're moving, Sara," and his voice had become testy.



Lightly with her fingers, she had traced the nursery rhyme designs in the wallpaper — Jack falling downhill, and Jill tumbling after. "This is the way we are," she had thought, "David and I."

Then she angrily had snapped, "I told you, David, if we can make it until the baby is six weeks old, I'll go to work."

David had stared at her. "Doing what? Who's going to hire you? You, with a husband out of a job? You might have to follow me to another town, and employers would know that. No Sara. Besides, I want you home with the baby."

So in May, with little Adam, his diapers, bottles, crib, and carriage, Sara and David had descended upon the elder Hendersons. From the beginning, Sara had been determined that they would not be a burden. She would help Harriet with the cooking and cleaning, she would keep Adam quiet and out of the way as much as possible, she would bathe him and prepare the formula and then quickly erase all signs of baby baths and bottles. At first, Harriet had offered to hold Adam or to give him his current feeding, but Sara was so competent she had brushed Harriet aside.

One morning, as Harriet had watched the baby's bathtime, she had said, "It's been a long time since I toweled a baby."

Nonchalantly, Sara had said, "I guess so; David is twenty-six." And she had continued to breeze efficiently through all of her chores and many of Harriet's.

She had adjusted to cooking breakfast at five-thirty and to having her morning stillness shattered by the grinding noise of a tractor. While David's hands were growing calluses and his face was turning as brown as the earth he plowed, Sara had become adept at making yeast breads and pies with flaky crusts and high meringues. Both of them had stayed busy. Often Sara had feared that all gentleness between them was dissipating into long hours of hard work, marked by a sense of futility. David had followed all leads of teaching jobs but had had no promise of anything.

As June became July and July became August, the heat wave had increased to an almost unbearable intensity. Sara had felt if only the rains would come, all tension would be washed away. Many days the sky had been covered with clouds, only to have wind clear them away, or occasionally a small thunderhead had dropped a shower, but only enough to tease. Then after the clearing, the sun had been as steaming hot as ever.

After standing at the door until David and George were specks on a toy moving smoothly over the rolling fields, Sara went to the bedroom she and David shared with Adam. The baby was fretful, whimpering and squirming. While she changed his diaper and shirt, she took care to sprinkle powder over the soft, tender skin left speckled by a rash from the heat. Although she longed to pick him up, she knew he was better left on the cool crib sheet than held next to her own hot body. She checked the opened windows and flipped the sheer curtains up over the rod to let in the slightest breeze. Sighing as she dropped heavily into the rocking chair, she wondered if ever again they would know what it was like to have rain.

Suddenly, the noisy chirping of birds drew Sara to the windows. She watched sparrows, cardinals, and blue jays hopping excitedly from maple trees, to the ground, to the gardenia bushes, and back to the trees. "If there are baby birds among them," Sara thought, "they have never really known rain." Then quickly, she looked toward Adam and realized they had not experienced a good rainfall during her own baby's lifetime.

By then the birds were chattering more loudly than ever. The air was very still; not a blade of brown grass moved. The room darkened as if a light had been turned off, and Sara wished David and George would come in from the fields.

She jumped at the shrill ring of the telephone, and Adam began to cry. Scooping him up, she ran with him to the kitchen, where she found Harriet with her cards in one hand and the receiver in the other.

"Sara," she said, "I can't understand him — so much crackling interference on the line. Something about Cranston High."

Thrusting Adam into Harriet's arms, Sara took the phone. "Yes? Yes?" she asked. After an ear-shattering pop, the line was dead.

"Well, whatever that was about will have to wait; that's for sure. Did you say Cranston High, Harriet?" Replacing the receiver, she turned around to see Adam smiling and gurgling at his grandmother. She noticed that Harriet was smiling too.

"I think he likes his grandmama," Harriet gushed.

Sara had never seen such a glow on Harriet's face. "Whenever you get tired —"

"Oh, I won't get tired, Sara. If you don't mind, I'd like to hold him awhile. Wouldn't you like to take a walk? Or something?" she added eagerly.

Sara stooped to gather the cards left scattered over the floor. "That would be nice, Harriet, if you would hold him for a while. I'll walk down and see if the fellows are coming in. I think we're really going to have some rain at last."

As she walked across the yard, she was relieved to see the Farmall, bright red against clouds that had turned almost black. Streaks of lightning zigzagged across the sky. As she watched them come nearer, she saw that David was waving his arms, motioning for her to come to them.

She ran through dried weeds, briars snagging at her jeans. Leaping over a narrow ravine, she stumbled and almost fell. The winds were beginning to blow, and the cool air skimmed across her back. It felt good to be out in the open. In fact, she had good feelings about a lot of things.

George stopped the tractor, and David yelled, "Want a ride, lady?"

She began to laugh and jumped up onto the big machine. "Is this why I ran all the way across a soybean field?"

"Well, you have a better view from here," George said.

As Sara lifted her face toward the leaden sky, the first drops splashed against her cheeks.

Fran Taylor is in the fiction workshop class and enjoys writing. This is her first appearance in the Chronicle.

Lizzie

by Betsy Shoolbred

"Lizzie, cover up your bosom, chile."

Lizzie had the flat chest of any seven-year-old, but she blushed from the realization that someone had noticed her exposure. She quickly glanced around, but there was no one to stare at her except Pete, the family dog. Girlene watched from the porch, her chubby hands sunk into her meaty hips.

Lizzie began to button her shirt as she surveyed her grandparents' home. It was cozily into the acres of pines that surrounded it. There were four porches connected to the house. Lizzie would sometimes walk around and count because she'd never seen any other house with so many porches.

Her grandmama said that the house was one hundred fifty years old and that it stood on the brick columns high off the ground because air needed to circulate under there. It used to be a summer home for a wealthy family when they wanted to get away from the city heat, just like she and her mama did every year during the hot summer months. Grandmama said that Lizzie's family had been wealthy too, until they lost the plantation during the Great Depression.

Shirt buttoned, Lizzie motioned Pete to follow her toward the house. She checked the front porch and saw Girlene's large form disappear into the shadows beyond the door. Just before they rounded the corner, Lizzie heard her cousin singing "Jesus loves the little children" above the crunch of the baby doll carriage as it was pushed over the loose stone driveway. Lizzie halted. Pete bumped into her legs and stopped. She ducked under the porch. Pete followed, his tongue hanging from a toothy grin.

Lizzie squatted in the cool darkness and squeezed close to the backside of the steps. She pulled Pete to her tightly and hugged him to keep him quiet.

The baby doll carriage came into view, Lizzie's little cousin, Happy, followed. Lizzie shook her head in disgust. Happy's favorite color was pink. Lizzie's favorite was blue. Happy would rather play Mommy and house. Lizzie like to roam through the woods with Pete and explore and play Daniel Boone. Happy had a collection of beautiful baby dolls. Lizzie had stuffed animals.

Happy and carriage stopped on the front lawn. "Mommy . . . Mommy."

"Yes, Baby," Aunt Darry's voice boomed from the parlor window just above Lizzie.

"Have you seen Lizzie? She hasn't played with me all day."

Lizzie leaned closer into the steps and closed her eyes while she clutched Pete.

"If I see her, I'll tell her to play with you, Sweetie."

Happy pushed her carriage. It bounced over the grass. Lizzie opened her eyes and watched their progress. The suspense mounted as Happy neared the other end of the porch. The Abelia bushes that hid her and Pete from view did not grow at the other end. If Happy got the notion, she could easily see the hiding pair huddled beneath the steps.

But the carriage passed the last Abelia bush. It disappeared behind the brick column for an instant. Happy followed. They appeared in full view; the end of the porch framed them as they walked toward the afternoon sun. Happy looked neither left nor right. Unaware of her observers, she walked to the back yard.

Lizzie freed Pete. He licked her face and watched her for their next move. He knew that an adventure was in the making.

Now was the time for escape. They emerged from their hideaway. Lizzie stretched with her hands on the small of her back like she'd seen her granddaddy do. Then she ran toward the nearest clump of pine trees; Pete trotted behind her, his long hair swayed with the motion.

Aunt Darry's voice boomed from the parlor window. "Lizzie. Where're you headed to?" Caught, she stopped and turned around. "You haven't played with Happy all day long. Come on back, find your cousin, and play with her. And play pretty, you hear?"

Lizzie plodded toward the house. Pete disappeared into the woods. Lizzie's face brightened. "Can I go visit Grandaddy first?"

"Yes, Dear, I think that would be nice. He's awake and feeling fine. Just don't make too much noise or jump on the bed."

Lizzie ran into the house. She was careful not to slam the screen door so Aunt Darry wouldn't fuss. Quietly, she walked through the hall toward her granddaddy's room.

She stepped into the silent sickroom and peeked around the wardrobe. Here granddaddy was sitting, the sheet pulled to his chest. He wore light blue pajamas with navy piping, the ones that Lizzie and her parents had given him for his birthday last

week. A jelly glass of water stood by the bottles of pills and liquid medicine that lined his bedside table. A spoon with a bit of red medicine still clinging to it lay by his clock. Granddaddy was staring out of the large, opened window next to his bed. A warm breeze flowed through the room. The new copy of *Field and Stream* was open on his lap.

"Granddaddy?"

"Boonchie? Come on in here and visit with me."

Boonchie was the special nickname that Granddaddy had given Lizzie, whose real name was Elizabeth. Happy's real name was Frances, named after an old-maid aunt who was called Fanny by the family. Happy and Lizzie called her Aunt Frances because they were embarrassed to say the word *fanny*. But sometimes when Happy made Lizzie angry, Lizzie would call her Fanny.

Happy got jealous one day when she realized that Granddaddy hadn't given her a special nickname. She threw a tantrum. Granddaddy christened her "Little Rabbit."

Granddaddy held his arms out. "Give me a bear hug. Mmmm, that was a good one. Climb on the bed, and we'll read this magazine together. I'll show you pictures of some big fish. They're almost as big as the one you caught the last time we went fishing."

"Really?" Lizzie began to climb onto the bed. "But Aunt Darry said that I shouldn't jump on the bed."

"Don't worry about that; you can't do anything to hurt your old Granddaddy. You're the light of my life." He leaned over and kissed Lizzie on the top of the head, then turned a few pages in the magazine. Lizzie snuggled in the crook of his arm. "See here? This is a big mouth bass just like the one you caught."

They looked at the pictures. Lizzie asked Granddaddy to tell the story about how he caught that ten-pound bass at the pond. She knew the story by heart, but she loved to hear him tell it.

She watched his face as he told his tale and remembered how he used to look when he came in from work. He'd walk in the front door. The sunshine from outside made a silhouette of his large, muscular frame. He would hand her a Frosty rootbeer, and she'd reach into his shirt pocket to find a bag of Tom's roasted peanuts among the pencils and pens. Now he was thin. His ruddy cheeks had become sunken and had lost their color.

". . . I had him mounted and gave it to your Uncle Willie to hang in his hardware store . . . I need to take my nap now, Boonchie. Why don't you go out and play with Happy or see what Girlene's fixing us for dinner."

Lizzie decided on the latter. "Okay, Granddaddy." She kissed him on the cheek and hopped off the bed.

On the way Lizzie spied the tin of fudge that was always on the sideboard. Someone had left the top halfway off. She reached in, grabbed a big hunk, and walked into the kitchen.

"You little devil," Girlene shook her head. "You're going to spoil your dinner." She returned to slicing off chunks of fatback to cook with the butterbeans. "You always a mischievous chile." She'd heard Lizzie's daddy say that. "Happy told me you ain't played with her once today. Why're you so mean to her?"

Lizzie watched Girlene's huge backside and wondered how she ever got the name Girlene. She didn't look like she had ever been a little girl.

"Happy always plays with those doll babies."

"All girls are supposed to like doll babies."

"Why can't I be a boy?"

"Chile, the Lord does what he thinks is best, and he thought it'd be best if you was a girl. Ain't nothing you can do about it."

Aunt Darry and Lizzie's mama walked into the kitchen. Her mama's name was Barbara, nicknamed Beebee by the family.

"I'll take you home now Girlene."

"Thank you Miz Darry." Girlene took off her apron with the red trim, hung it in the butler's pantry, and got her purse and hat. "Everything's cookin'. The roast'll be done by six-thirty. Come hug my neck, Chile."

Girlene sat down in her red chair with the deerskin seat made from a deer that Granddaddy had shot years and years ago. Lizzie climbed into the part of Girlene's lap that her big stomach had left uncovered. She remembered the time she'd been sick. How comforting it had been to rest in Girlene's arms with her head sunk into those large, soft breasts.

Lizzie hugged and kissed Girlene. "That's my sweet little Chile," Girlene whispered as she rose and lowered Lizzie to the floor.

Aunt Darry and Girlene left. Lizzie and her mama remained in the kitchen.

"What did you do today, Honey?"

"I walked down to the creek. Pete and me went crawdad hunting. Then Pete and me played Tarzan and Cheeta."

"I know. I saw you swinging from the wisteria vine."

Happy walked through the door, her baby doll named Ginger in her arms. "Ginger's hungry. Can she have some milk, Aunt Beebee?"

"She can have a little glass. But we don't want to spoil her dinner." She poured the milk into a plastic juice glass and handed it to Happy.

"Lizzie didn't play with me today."

"She didn't?"

"No, and I saw her take a piece of fudge."

"She did?"

Lizzie frowned. Happy was always a tattletale.

Happy finished her milk, stuck her tongue out at Lizzie while Aunt Beebee wasn't looking, and walked out.

"Lizzie, you know I dislike your eating candy when it's not given to you by a grownup. Be good and go play with Happy. Play pretty."

Lizzie found Happy in the parlor with Ginger. She pulled out her Lone Ranger coloring book and crayons from the bookshelf and stuck out her tongue at her cousin.

"Fanny, Fanny, Faanneee."

"Shut up, Lizzie Lizard, Lizzie Lizard."

"I like lizards. You're the fraidy cat. Fraidy Fanny, Fraidy Fanny."

Happy screwed up her mouth and glared. "I'm gonna' tell Aunt Beebee on you."

"So?" Purposely nonchalant, Lizzie placed her coloring book on the floor and searched for an uncolored picture with a horse in it. She knew her mama disliked a tattletale more than a mischievous chile. Lizzie was rarely punished when Happy told on her.

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After dinner, Lizzie and Happy had to take a bath. They always had to take it together. Each had her own soap. Lizzie liked Ivory because it floated and she could pretend that it was boat. She would put a toy cowboy on top, and he'd sail around and shoot down all the Indians that were lined up on the side of the tub. Happy used Camay. She'd make up commercials and tell her audience how pretty she'd become because she used Camay beauty soap.

When bath time was over, the girls went out on the porch to listen to the grownups talk. Lizzie walked on down the long hall. Deer horns hung above each doorway. Granddaddy had shot all those deer. The one over the front door was a twelve-pointer. Granddaddy was real proud of it. He had told Lizzie the story of stalking that deer many times. She never got tired of his stories. Maybe he'd tell it to her tonight while she sat on his lap. Then she realized. He'd be in bed, not in his rocking chair.

She stepped from the lighted hall onto the porch. It was dark. She could see where each grownup sat by the red glow from the cigarettes. Lizzie saw that Happy already sat in the second most coveted place, on the couch next to Grandmama. Granddaddy's lap was the most coveted seat. Lizzie decided to sit with her mama.

"You all clean, Honey?" Lizzie's mama kissed her on the cheek. "Mmmm, you smell good.

"It's Ivory."

Happy chimed in. "She got the water awful dirty."

"Yes, she was a dirty girl tonight." Mama inspected Lizzie's face in the gleam from the hall light. "I guess Tarzan does get dirty."

Lizzie put her arms around her mama, then settled her head on her shoulder.

They all stayed out on the porch and listened to the crickets while the family gossiped. Uncle Willie had bought the town's gas station. They all agreed that he'd lost his mind buying all the businesses in town. They called him the "Eastover Entrepreneur." Aunt Leezy had talked to Grandmama on the phone for an hour today about how she'd been slighted at the D.A.R. meeting. She vowed she'd never go back and that those same women could miss her at the U.D.C.'s too.

When Lizzie's daddy was there on the weekends, he'd tell jokes and they'd all laugh. Happy and Lizzie laughed because the grownups did. They never really knew what was so funny.

"Okay, girls, time to go to bed."

"Aww, do we have to?"

"What about Granddaddy?"

"He's already asleep. Come on, hurry up."

The girls kissed everyone and Aunt Darry led them to the front bedroom. They climbed into the big bed that Grandmama slept in now that Granddaddy was sick. The bed was between the two windows to the porch. Every night they would drift to sleep with the grownups' whispers seeping through the screens.

• • •

The next morning Lizzie woke up in her own little bed in the bedroom she shared with her parents. She often wondered how she got upstairs without remembering.

The squirrels fussed from the tree next to her window. She looked out and saw the problem. Grandmama's black cat sat on the roof and serenely watched the annoyed squirrels.

"Tar Baby!" Girlene had named the cat. "You leave those squirrels alone." Lizzie quickly pulled on her shorts and shirt, then raced down the stairs and into the kitchen. "Girlene, Tar Baby's on the roof. He's gonna kill a squirrel."

"Don't worry, God takes care of his animals. Don't go outside in your bare feet."

Girlene was too late. The screen door slammed behind Lizzie. In the yard the black cat had climbed off the roof and was strolling toward the back porch.

"Here, Tar Baby." Lizzie sat down. The cat climbed into her lap and purred. He let himself become undignified for a moment when Lizzie ruffled his fur. Pete ran out from behind the garage and galloped toward the pair on the ground. Tar Baby took off. Pete knocked Lizzie over in the excitement and tried to lick her face. Giggling, she turned over to get away from his eager onslaught. The sand was still cool and moist from the morning dew. Lizzie rubbed her hands into it.

"Lizzie, you're getting yourself dirty, and you haven't even had breakfast yet. Get yourself in here. You sure are a mischievous chile." The smell of bacon filled the room. Grits bubbled on the stove. "Get yourself up those stairs and put your shoes and socks on."

Lizzie's feet plopped on the smooth wood floor as she walked to her room. Her daddy had told her that she could walk barefooted through the house because he had caught all the splinters when he was a boy.

With her feet enclosed in clean socks and dirty sneakers, Lizzie returned to the kitchen to eat breakfast. Girlene gave her instructions while she gulped her milk and grits and bacon.

"Your mama and Miz Darry went to town. Don't go rambling around in them woods. You hear me?"

"Yes, Girlene."

Since she had to stay close to the house, Lizzie decided to hunt for lizards. Her cousin's namecalling the day before had reminded her that she hadn't caught one of those creatures since last summer. She searched under the back porch for one of the cricket cages. Pete greeted her has she walked behind the garage where the lizards lived in a pile of bricks.

She spotted one sunning himself. Delicate ribs pressed against his thin, brown skin as he breathed. Lizzie creeped up and was about to make a grab for him.

"Lizzie, will you play house with me?" The lizard disappeared. "I'll let you be the daddy."

"I'm hunting. Leave me alone." She watched the crack where the lizard had disappeared.

"You didn't play with me once yesterday, and I'll tell Aunt Beebee and Mommy that you won't play with me today, too."

Lizzie frowned. "Okay, I'll play house, but only if I can be the horse."

"You can be the horse. Come on, I'll show you where we live."

The playhouse was a few squares etched in the sand. The baby doll named Maria was in a doll bed in one square.

"This is the parlor," Happy pointed. "This is the bedroom,

and this is the kitchen."

"The barn should be around back." Lizzie drew a big stall with a few boxes in the corner. "This is the water bucket, this is the hay rack, and this is the feed box."

The family car drove up and parked by the front porch steps. Lizzie's mama went into the house with a package from Uncle Willie's drug store. Aunt Darry came over to inspect the playhouse.

"Isn't this nice? Can I come in?"

"There's the front door, Mommy. Don't slam the screen." Aunt Darry walked in and carefully shut the pretend door. "This is the parlor, and this is the bedroom, and this is the kitchen."

"Look Aunt Darry. I'm the horse, and this is my stall. This is the water bucket, this is the hay rack, and this is the feedbox."

"How nice, I wish you girls would behave like this more often."

Lizzie's mama yelled from the porch. "Darry, can you come in here?"

"Coming. You girls play pretty."

Lizzie galloped around with Maria on her back; she pawed the ground like an anxious horse; she ate and drank in her stall and acted as nice to Happy as she could. She had just decided that she'd had enough and was trying to sneak away when Aunt Darry walked up.

"Come with me, girls. You're going to spend the night at Aunt Fanny's."

"Mommy!"

"Do we have to?"

"Don't fuss. Get in the car. I have your overnight bags packed. Get moving."

The girls slouched to the car. Aunt Frances always made them eat all of their vegetables, even if it was okra and greens. She said that okra was for a good complexion and that greens kept you regular. She didn't have a television, no Roy Rogers or Mickey Mouse Club. She made them listen to the classics on her hi-fi, and she'd read Emily Dickinson or a *Bible* story. Aunt Frances said that this made young ladies refined and cultured.

• • •

The next morning after breakfast, Lizzie was surprised when Daddy came in with Mama and Aunt Darry. Daddy sat in the middle of the Victorian sofa and lifted the girls to sit on either side of him, his arms around them.

"Girls, I have some bad news. Your granddaddy passed away yesterday."

Happy started to cry.

Lizzie watched her feet dangle. "Is he dead?"

"Yes, Sweetheart, I'm afraid he's dead."

They arrived at the house. There were cars parked in the driveways and the back yard. They walked onto the front porch. People sat in the family's chairs, one lady in Granddaddy's chair. They rose and faced them with solemn faces.

"I'm so sorry," she hugged each neck, "Darry . . . Beebee . . . Bob."

"Such a shame . . . he was such a good man." She looked at the girls and patted Lizzie's head.

Grandmama came out. Happy ran crying into her arms.

"How did the girls take it, Beebee?"

"Happy cried all the way home. But Lizzie, she hasn't said a word."

Lizzie walked by them and entered the hall. Old people talked quietly in the parlor. She made her way to her granddaddy's room. She expected him to be lying in his bed like he was asleep. Reverend Haynes in one of his sermons had called death the eternal sleep.

The bed was empty. The room was newly cleaned and the bed made. The white bedspread draped to the bare wood floor. The bottles of medicine were still on the table, but the spoon and glass were gone. The *Field and Stream* they had read together was on the shelf by the dresser. His Big Ben clock loudly interrupted the stillness.

Lizzie ran to the side door, down the stairs, and under the porch. She sat on a box next to the wood stack. There was a pile of fat pine by her feet; next to it, half hidden in the dirt, was a golf ball left from two summers ago when Uncle Willie had decided that he should learn the game. Lizzie retrieved the ball. She examined the small dents and slowly rubbed her fingers over them.

She noticed some doodle bug holes in the corner and placed the ball on top of a large one, then quickly lifted it to watch the fine dust cascade down the sides. Lizzie found a small stick and swirled it around the edges to find the bug that dwelled in the bottom of the little pit. He emerged, an insect that looked like a piece of dirt with two tiny antennas.

A group of Negroes arrived by the path through the woods and interrupted her game. One of them was the old man, Doot, who brought his mule every spring to plow Granddaddy's garden. They hesitated when they neared the house; Doot removed his hat and clutched the brim with his big, leathery hands. His hair was as white as rabbit fur.

Lizzie jumped behind a thick column. She placed her hands on the bricks and rubbed her finger in the cracks and brushed off the cement that had loosened with age.

Girlene called from the back porch. "Come on in, Doot, Cricky, Sophie."

They climbed the stairs and disappeared from view. "We come to pay our respects to Miz Flossie. Missr Benson was good to us."

"Miz Flossie'll be mighty proud that y'all come. I'll bring her back here so you can talk to her."

Lizzie made a dash for the storage house. It had been slaves' quarters back in the days when they had slaves. The whitewash was faded. The tin roof was rusty where it was exposed through the pine needles that had settled on top.

Lizzie mounted the large log that served as a step and pushed open the door. The wingback chair was covered with a sheet. It looked like a ghost ready to fly. Next to the wall was Grandmama's trunk from her days at the Virginia finishing school. It looked like a pirate's treasure chest. Wooden ribs adorned the sides and bulging top. The latch was an anchor. Last summer she had opened it, hoping to find it filled with shining gold coins, but she only found schoolbooks and old *National Geographics*. Lizzie open the trunk and brought out two magazines.

She sat on the chair and examined her surroundings. The fireplace was crudely built of brick with a small hearth. The

wooden walls were aged and grey. The lone window was covered by a piece of wood supported by two wooden trestles at the top and bottom. A rope handle hung from one side. Sunshine flowed from a knothole. Lizzie watched dust dance in the beam of light. The roof was exposed, a dingy, silver color. A breeze swirled.

Lizzie turned her attention to the magazines. She studied an ad for a 1929 Chrysler "75." A woman stood on the running board. She wore a fur-trimmed dress, a long string of pearls, and a hat that looked like a tall red helmet with a brim. Lizzie leafed through the pages filled with spectacular pictures of the ancient ruins of Egypt before she nodded to sleep.

• • •

"Girls, girls, quit your fussing. Lizzie can sit up front with Grandmama on the way to church; Happy can be in front on the way home. Is that agreeable?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"Yes, Ma'am."

They piled in the car, Happy and Aunt Darry in the back, Lizzie, her mama, and Grandmama in the front. Happy wore her favorite pink dress. She had gloves and socks with pink scalloped edges and matching white patent-leather shoes and purse. Lizzie wore her yellow sun dress with white sandals and socks. She refused to bring gloves or a purse.

This was Communion Sunday. Lizzie was not looking forward to all the kneeling she'd have to do. At least she would be able to go up to the altar with her mama and watch all the goings-on when the grownups got to receive Jesus' body and blood. She wasn't old enough to receive his body and blood yet, but Reverend Haynes always laid his hands on her head and said a prayer. That was fun.

Happy stood up in the back seat. "Grandmama, where's Grandaddy?"

Lizzie turned around on her knees and faced Happy. "He's dead and buried." She'd heard that somewhere.

Happy started to cry.

Grandmama fussed, "What made you say such a thing to your cousin?"

"But it's true . . . Isn't it true, Mama?"

"Yes, Dear, but you shouldn't be so blunt."

"Oh," she replied thoughtfully. ". . . Is Granddaddy in heaven?"

"Of course he is. His hell was on Earth. I know he's in heaven."

Lizzie didn't know what her mama meant, but at least she was certain that Granddaddy was in heaven.

After church, they all walked to the cemetery. Dirt was still piled high over the new grave. Aunt Darry filled the watering can that was always left by the steps to the vestry. Lizzie's Mama removed the wilting peonies from the vase; Grandmama replaced them with red gladiolas from her garden.

"The headstone will look very nice."

"George did such a nice job on it."

"He always did think a lot of Benson. He engraved that Celtic cross beautifully." She arranged the last gladiola. "Benson always liked Celtic crosses."

Happy sat on the bench in their family's plot. Lizzie walked down the grassy path to visit her favorite graves. Both were for children. One had a little lamb lying on top of the stone. The other had a baby angel. Her mama called it a cherub. Lizzie counted the little metal crosses at the foot of some graves. She knew that there were five on this path. Grandmama had told her that they meant that the men buried there had fought in the Civil War.

She came to the headstone with the lamb and patted its back. It felt hard and damp; it chilled her fingers. She read the epitaph: "Margaret Louise, Darling Daughter of Augustus and Florence Weston, January 4 to February 2, 1966." She knelt and felt the ground over the infant's grave.

"I wonder if it's cold six feet under."

• • •

Girlene and her daughter, May Helen, were fixing Saturday lunch for the family.

"I tell you, it's been over a week, and that chile ain't cried once."

"What chile, Momma?" May Helen asked slowly as she concentrated on peeling carrots.

"Why Lizzie . . . Happy's been crying all over the place. It's unnatural the way Lizzie's been. Her daddy says she's 'stowick.'"

"Stowick," May Helen's eyes widened.

"Stowick," Girlene said solemnly. "I hope it ain't no mental disease. Quiet, here she comes. Lizzie, you want a biscuit, Chile, I just buttered 'em."

"No, thank you."

Girlene and May Helen looked at each other knowingly and nodded.

Lizzie sat on the stool by the counter and listlessly search through some papers in a basket. Among the recipes, grocery lists, and receipts, she found a picture of her granddaddy and herself the last time they had gone fishing the previous summer.

In the picture she was sitting on his knee holding a four-pound bass. He sure was proud of his granddaughter that day. Of course he'd helped her land the fish, but she had baited her own hook and had decided herself where to cast the line.

Lizzie remembered how it felt to be on his knee, the tobacco smell on his fishing jacket, the strength she felt from his body as she leaned against his chest, one arm around her, the other helping her hold the bass, his rough kiss — he never shaved on fishing days.

A strange feeling gripped her stomach. It swelled within her, surged through her body. It came. . . . it came out in sobs.

Girlene ran over and swept the weeping child into her arms. They sat in the red chair. Lizzie sank her head into Girlene's bosom.

"That's all right, Chile. You just cry it all out." Then she rocked and softly hummed "Deep River" to sooth the child clutching her chest.

Betsy Shoolbred is an English major, interested in writing fiction. This is her second appearance in the Chronicle.

Elizabeth carefully spread out her damp towel on the lounge chair and then leaned back slowly, feeling herself relax as the intense heat of dry sun began to penetrate her skin. The far-off voices of laughing children mingled with the sounds of the lifeguard's radio and the distant jabbering of righteous bluejays. She brushed her auburn hair away from her face and took a deep breath, delighting in the familiar scents of suntan oil and sweet jasmine, which spilled over the redwood fence surrounding the pool complex. She was drifting off to sleep when her best friend, who had been studiously writing letters for the last half hour, interrupted her reverie.

"I can't believe that lifeguard over there, Liz. She's had her back to the pool for the last thirty-five minutes."

Liz had been a lifeguard for two summers, and she had always been healthily paranoid about anything happening to one of "her" kids. She put on dark sunglasses to protect her myopic eyes from the glint of the sun as it flashed off the icy-blue ripples and glared disgustedly at the lifeguard's back.

"What a flea-brain. Some poor kid could be entering the last stages of rigor mortis at the bottom of the deep end right now and she'd never even know it."

"I would, though. I've been watching the deep end and the four-foot. She's going to be really irked when I ask her for part of her paycheck."

"Look at her batting her eyes at all those high school hotshots. I can't even *believe* that one guy over there on the right — he just managed to flex every muscle in his entire body when he picked up the bottle of suntan oil that was in front of her. She's probably hyperventilating herself into a faint right now. I think I'll jump in and pretend to be drowning and scare the hell out of her."

"Liz," said Becky laughing, "it would be a cold day in hell when you drowned."

"So tell her I slipped and cracked my head on the side. I know! I'll go home and get some ketchup and pour it all over the concrete next to the pool and then I'll lie down in it and pretend I slipped and hit my head when I got up out of my chair." She was talking fast and gesturing like she always did when she was enthusiastic about something."

"I still say the ants will get to you faster than she will," said Becky, not bothering to look up from her stationery. "Besides, what if she tries mouth-to-mouth resuscitation?"

"Gross! For a head injury?! You're right though, better not risk it around a brilliant girl like her." Liz leaned back down in her chair, but she kept her eyes on the pool. Stevie Greene, a fragile-looking sixth-grader, spotted Liz and Becky and came swimming toward them underwater. When he reached the end of the pool he burst out of the water like the shark in *Jaws*.

"FUCK YOU!" he screamed at the top of his lungs, showering water all over Liz and Becky and Becky's letters. Liz jumped out of her chair so fast that Stevie turned immediately pale and darted back underwater.

"Don't kill him, Liz," said Becky calmly, "Just mutilate him a little bit."

Liz caught up to Stevie before he had gone six feet, but she let him scramble away to the side of the pool. He jumped out and ran through the gate as fast as his skinny little legs could carry him.

"He's such a turd," Liz remarked as she got out of the pool and sat down again. "Do you remember when he was in the first grade and I was lifeguarding and he dumped another kid's ten-speed bicycle in the deep end?"

"Yeah." Beck was still trying to wipe the water off her smeared letters. "Didn't he also throw somebody's bike in the sandbox so that sand got stuck all over the oil in the gears?"

"That's the one. We kicked him out for two weeks each time, but we never told his dad. Word was that his dad beat him up all the time — not for doing something wrong usually — just for getting in the way. Stevie just wants attention really bad. And," she add, "I knew *that* before I went to college and took twenty-one units of psych and found out that I was paranoid and had an unhappy childhood. Yup, there's just no decent men left anywhere in the world, Beck." Liz leaned back with an exaggerated sigh.

"Liz! He's only a sixth-grader!" Becky had a peculiar way of gurgling when she laughed hard and she was doing it now.

"I know he's only a sixth-grader, Becky, but some day he'll grow up. Now *that's* scary. Yup, I think I'll be going into the ol' nunnery pretty soon. I'm becoming convinced that you married the very last decent, intelligent, thoughtful man in the world, Beck."

"Well, I keep telling *him* that, but I'm sure that your knight in shining armor is out there somewhere."

"Uh huh. More like a pygmy on a turtle. Lindsey proposed to me again last night at the rehearsal."

"Lindsey-the-*gay*? When?"

"He was in the control booth at the back of the theater and I was backstage on the headset, working the curtains. He told me that I was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen and that he wanted to 'go straight' and marry me."

"What did you say to him?"

"I told him he had a wrong number." Liz took out some nail polish and began painting her nails.

"Liz, that was *rude*, but I wish I could have been there."

"I was kind of taken aback since I've only known him for three weeks. Hey — remember me telling you about Joel Parkhurst and Jerry Thompson?"

"Yeah."

"They came up to me last night at rehearsal with these deadpan faces and said that they were thinking of starting a heterosexual club and wanted to know if I'd join. They said that they're beginning to feel as if we're a dying breed and that it's time we stood up and were counted before the race dies out."

"What a bunch of hams. I'd like to meet them sometime." Becky noticed suddenly that her skin was taking of the hue of lobster, and she turned over on her back, wishing that Liz wasn't quite so fond of swimming. "So when are you going back to St. Louis and your job?"

"I guess I'll go back to work the week after the show closes. My boss says I can take the whole summer off if I want to, but I

think half the summer will about do the trick. It'll be good for me to get back to the old nine-to-five grind. He's been through a divorce himself, and he's really been more than understanding about the whole thing. It was his idea for me to take a long vacation and come home."

"Sounds like a nice guy. So. . . have you heard from Michael at all? Just tell me to shut up if you don't want to talk about it."

"Becky! You've been my best bud since the fourth grade. You can ask me anything — except about Michael. No, I'm just kidding. He came over to the apartment to pick up some of his things the day before I left to come here. He seemed pretty nervous. I guess he expected me to be at work. I asked him — in a very calm voice — how, after two years of marriage, he could care so little for me as to run off with another woman. He told me that that wasn't true, that he did care for me. He yaid he'd just decided that there was more to life than being 'stuck' to one women and that he still wanted to be 'friends.' He told me, and I quote, 'I care for you more than the average girl on the street.' I think he thought that I was supposed to be impressed that I was ranked so high."

"Oh Liz — what did you say?"

"Nothing. What could I say?" Liz looked into the water. She thought that very few things were more beautiful than the glimmering pattern of light created when the sun's rays bounced off the pool on a blistering summer's day. She brightened suddenly. "The guy just obviously lost his head. He went berserko and dumped the best thing he ever had — and for his secretary, no less. I mean, how unoriginal."

"Modest aren't you?" Becky smiled. She was bothered by Liz's false cheerfulness. Liz had always been very strong, at least outwardly, but she was perhaps being too strong now. Liz's mother had been worried and had called Becky's mother who had called Becky. She had then talked to her husband John. They had both come to the conclusion that it would be a good idea for Becky to fly up and visit Liz for a week or so. Of course, she pretended that half the reason for her coming was to visit her own parents.

She knew that Liz hated charity — hated kindness for kindness' sake. Liz had always been incredibly shy and had always automatically assumed that if someone was nice to her it was for reasons other than that they like her. What those other reasons were Becky had never quite been able to figure out, but she had finally accepted the fact that building up Liz's confidence was impossible.

"Well, have you met anybody interesting?"

"I guess," sighed Liz. "But everytime I meet someone who is intelligent and shares a lot of my interests I get tongue-tied. Isn't it strange how easily I can with a nerd but the minute I get around somebody I know I might be able to care for someday, I get instant mush-mouth. The other day this artist guy was explaining to me why it was so important to him to paint and you know what I said to him? I said 'um hum . . . sounds good. . . . I mean, sometimes my amazing wit just bowls me over. I've been painting for ten years and I finally find someone who feels *exactly* the same way about painting that I do, and all I can say is 'Um hum . . . sounds good. . . .' Let me tell you, Becky, it's a whole lot more depressing to be thought a shallow bore by someone you respect than to be dumped by someone like Michael."

"Um hum . . .sounds good."

"You can be replaced you know!" Liz dived into the pool, scattering water all over Becky, who broke out in her gurgling laughter again.

"I'll break your face, Stevie!" she mocked, joining Liz. The water felt like heaven, not only because it cooled her sunburned body but also because it seemed to break Liz's pessimistic mood. "Think of it this way, Liz," she said, her green eyes sparkling, "things could be worse — you could be pregnant." She turned to look at Liz, who was staring hard at the diving board, her face bloodless and drawn, looking as though it had been chiseled out of rock.

"Oh my God." Becky's whisper seemed to snap Liz's concentration.

"Oh, don't worry about me Beck." Her voice was high and quick. "I won't be able to be the full-time mother I always wanted to be but I'll manage. Now all I need to do is find that Pygmy. You know what I read the other day in the ladies bathroom at the theater?"

"No idea." Becky felt suddenly very tired.

"'A woman without a man is like a fish without a skateboard.' Cute, not true, but cute." Liz's voice was back to normal and she seemed preoccupied with watching a ball float by in the water. Becky didn't bother to ask if Michael knew that Liz was pregnant. She knew he didn't.

They both got out of the pool and began picking up their things.

"What time do you get off tonight?"

"Eleven."

"OK. Let's go out for some late-night pizza, like we always used to do.

"Ok." Liz never turned down an offer for pizza. "Oh my gosh Beck! Do my eyes deceive me?! The lifeguard's actually facing the pool."

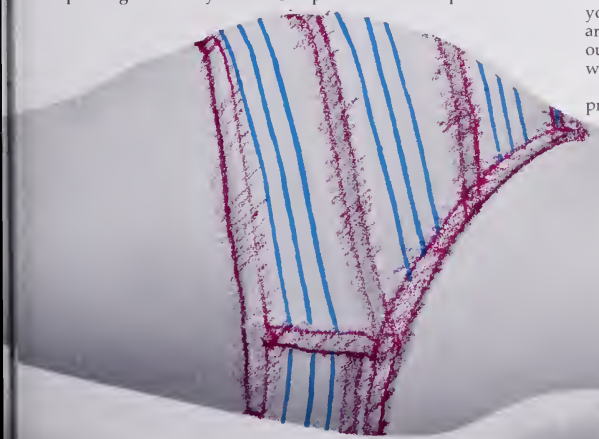
"You jest."

"I never jest. I'm just like Mr. Spock — humor is beneath me."

"Looks like her harem left. *Pity.*" The two women had almost reached the front gate when Liz veered off impulsively and walked over to the lifeguard.

"Uh, miss. I'd just like to commend you for the way you carry out your job. You obviously feel the weight of your responsibilities very heavily, and I just want you to know that I think you're doing a superb job. It's too bad more of our lifeguards aren't more like you." Liz smiled sweetly and the two walked out the gate past the sweet-smelling jasmine, toward the street where they had grown up together.

"I was going to offer her a job lifeguarding some beachfront property in Kansas, but I was afraid she'd believe me."



shoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoeshoe

Shoe, Oxford shoe, Oxford tie, pump, sneakers, boot, slipper, moccasin, sandal, galosh, arctic, overshoe, rubber, patten, clog, snowshoes, ski.

Then there is the Faust slipper. Would you too sell your soul for a pair? It is a house-cut shoe cut a little higher than most with a deep v-shape cut on each side, just in front of the heel.

But, as we all know, authors are prone to hang around the house all day long, shuffling in their slippers from the typewriter to the coffeepot and back again. So if Goethe can get his characters into slippers, why not Shakespeare?

A *romeo* is similar to a Faust slipper, but has elastic gores inserted in the cuts. For whatever reason, a *juliet*, for women, is a slipper high in front and low in back. Besides being words inferring certain design specifications, Romeo and Juliet were also lovers.

Here are the wild-eyed ramblings of a shoe lover: "I like shoes. They look nice. I like wearing different shoes. They're kinda like fashion, I guess. I only like good shoes—you know, quality. I bought two pair last week. I try to get them on sale." Most of the people I've talked with like shoes. There is little ill will toward shoes. Every person (with feet) and some horses has his/her own story to tell. Do you like shoes, and if so, why?

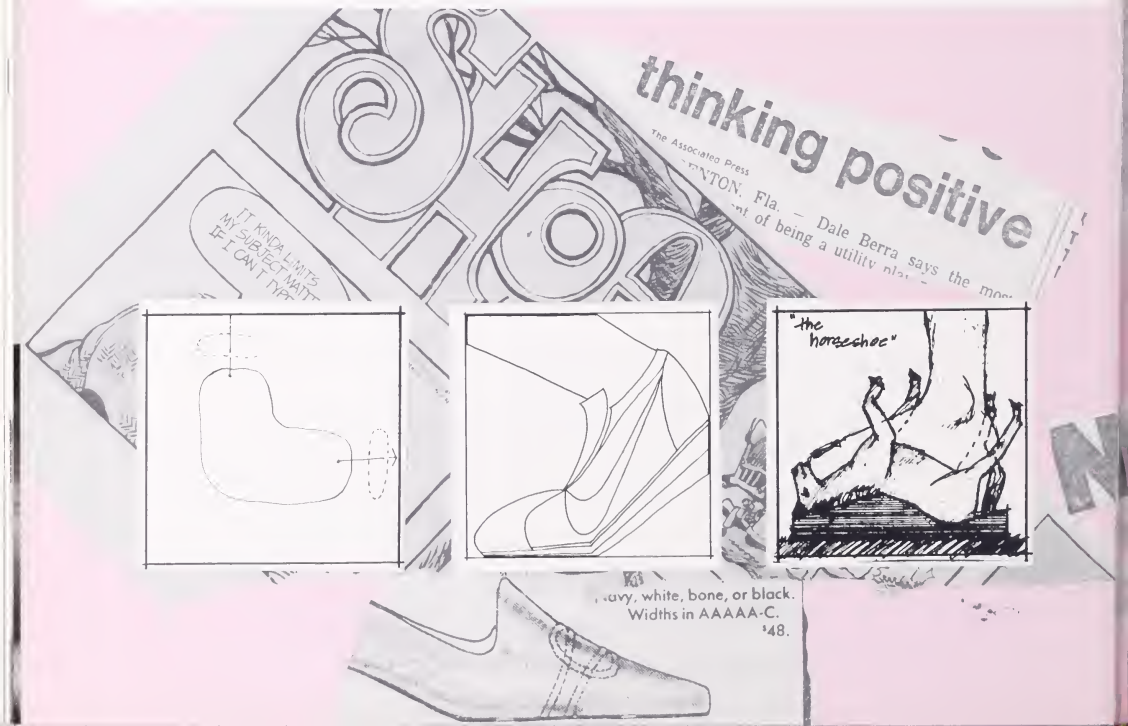
Some people like shoes so much they want to sing about them. Dancing shoes, Sailing Shoes, Old Soft Shoes, Bad Sneakers and a pina colada, my friend, stomping down the avenue by Radio City. Boots made for walking.

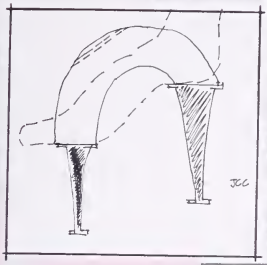
Shoes are things that need to be brought into the academic light of day. Shoes give people a social identity. The old theory which states that you can tell a person's status by looking at his shoes may no longer be valid. Some professor needs to check this out. A friend once told me that he would probably like and wear topsiders if everyone else didn't.

There is even a capital equipment depreciation economic theory which applies only to shoes. It goes that if you have several pair of shoes and change them like underwear every day, they'll wear out slower than if you wear one pair until they rot off your feet and then buy another. You don't get maximum return on investment by running them every day. Shoes need time to let the sweat dry.

The *Chronicle* asked many architects to try to design shoes. Why architects? Why not have them stick to buildings? Why not give some engineer the job? A shoe is defined as a durable covering for the human foot. A good building is, I suppose, a durable covering for people and their junque. But I say Webster is incompetent—or worse, a liar. I bought a pair of tennis shoes last summer that began to crumble a week after purchase. Not very durable, eh, Danny?

John Madera

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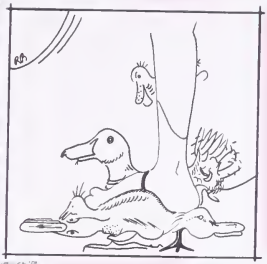
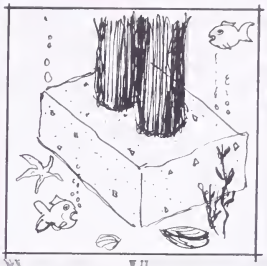
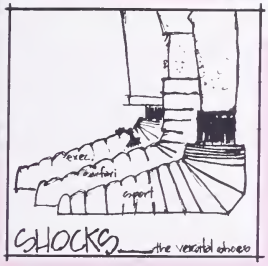
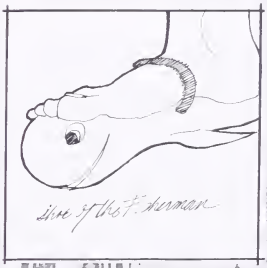
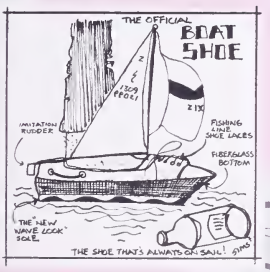


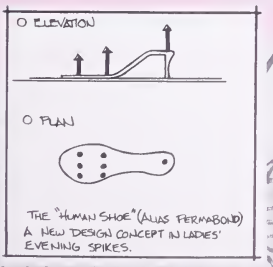



SHOCKS
the versatile shoes


INDECISIVE

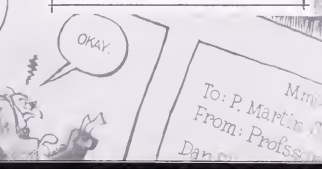



THE OFFICIAL
BOAT SHOE
IMITATION RUDDER
FISHING LINE SHOE LACES
FIBREGLASS BOTTOM
THE "NEW WAVE LOOK" SOLE
THE SHOE THAT'S ALWAYS ON SAIL!


O ELEVATION
O PLAN
THE "HUMAN SHOE" (ALIAS FERMABOND)
A NEW DESIGN CONCEPT IN LADIES' EVENING SPIKES.


PLAN
ELEVATION
SECTION AA
SECTION BB
LOUVERS FOR SHOE
THERMAL STORAGE
SOLAR PANEL
MASS FLOOR
SOLAR SHOE


MEMO!


OKAY.

1981-82 creative writing competition winners

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The cover photograph is by Richard Ramsdell, *a Fine Arts major at the University of Florida in Gainesville. The original photo is an untitled silver print.*

CHRONICLE

contents

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ideas

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM PRICE FOX

by Henry Levkoff

William Price Fox is the author of Dr. Golf, Southern Fried, Moonshine Light, Moonshine Bright, Ruby Red, and Dixiana Moon. *His short stories and articles have appeared in* Harper's, Esquire, Sports Illustrated, Audience, *and* American Heritage, *as well as a host of other magazines. He teaches at the University of South Carolina in Columbia here he lives with his wife Sarah and their son Colin. Mr. Fox was the judge for this year's* Chronicle *creative writing contest.*

I first met Bill Fox three years ago, as a student in his fiction writing seminar at the University of South Carolina. I was impressed over the next year by not only his accessibility as a teacher, but how he goes about teaching. Fox has the ability to read a student's story once and immediately get to the heart of it -- what is right about it and what is wrong. And when he tells you what he thinks about your story, he shares his insights, and you can almost forget to cringe from the criticism. Fox enjoys what he does, too, whether it's teaching or writing, and that feeling, along with his energy, is a launching pad for a serious student writer.

As we met for the first time in a year to do this interview, nothing had changed. He was thought-provoking and perceptive, and, as you will find out, direct. He is generous with opinions, some that you know are right when he says them, and a few that you strongly object to. But no matter how much you agree or disagree with what he has to say, he is captivating, as an author and teacher, as well as the subject of this *Chronicle* interview.

Chronicle: What we first want to know is this: You're William Price Fox the author now. But what made you decide that you wanted to become an author?
Fox: (laughs) That's a shit question, isn't it?
Chronicle: This is the key to your life - you've got to know the answer.
Fox: Well, I don't know. All right, let's see ... I wanted to be a golfer and I wasn't good enough, right. I was a bellhop, and I did pretty good at that. I figured I had to do a little better than that, so I went to New York and went into sales. I was there for eight years. About the sixth or seventh year I began writing because I was going with a girl that went to a new school and was studying under Carolyn

Gordon. Ever hear of her? She died this year. She's Alan Tate's wife. She taught a course in short stories, not short story writing, but we read Joyce, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and it seemed kind of easy, frankly. It seemed okay, but ... (gestures disapproval). Then I was making a lot of money as a salesman, and I always told a lot of jokes, and that came pretty easy. So what I would do is, well, I was at the White Horse Tavern with a fellow named Bill Manville who edited the *Village Voice*, and Bill did a column called "Saloon Society". And he was drinking too much one night to do an article and said, "Would you do an article?" I said, "Sure, I'll do it." So I did it in about twenty minutes. It's the one in *Southern Fried* about the tourist going to New York. It's the old standard -- country mouse going to the city, you know, and the last line is, "It's a great place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live here." He hangs around Times Square, he's got a gun, he throws up. He doesn't leave Times Square. He thinks this is New York. They ran that story on page one in The *Village Voice* and that week I got calls from *Harper's, The Saturday Evening Post, Holiday, Sports Illustrated*. So I began writing articles and short stories, short stories mostly. Ofcourse there were magazines around New York, and it seemed so easy that I didn't trust it, so I figured it wouldn't last very long. So I kept selling for another year, and then by that time I'd written *Southern Fried*, so I was making some money.

I couldn't decide when to leave sales. I was making a lot of money selling and writing, and I was getting an offer from Hollywood, so I decided to leave when the shadow of this building across the road got to a certain point on my desk. And the day it came I quit.

Chronicle: So that was when you decided to put your energies into writing?

Fox: Yes. I'm sure there were reasons other than that, but that was what I'd picked out as some kind of checkered flag. And I've been doing it ever since. Went to L.A. for about five years, doing some crap out there, and then went to the University of Iowa and replaced Kurt (Vonnegut, Jr.) out there. And I kept doing full time fiction.

"TWAIN'S SO DAMN PRECIOUS. HE'S TRYING TO SHOW YOU EXACTLY HOW THEY SPEAK, YOU KNOW. I DON'T DO THAT."

Chronicle: Is there anyone in particular who really influenced you?

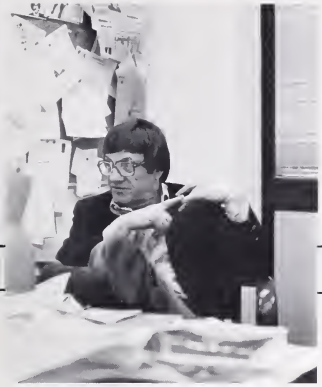
Fox: No, I've never really read anything that I really...See, I read very competitively. I'll read (James) Joyce. Remember "The Dead"? I think that's a super story. That's one of the best stories I've ever read.

Chronicle: So that's what you shoot for when you write?

Fox: No, I don't shoot for that. I just don't do that kind of stuff, right. And I don't do the kind of stuff that (Mark) Twain does, or (Flannery) O'Connor. And up until I began writing I hadn't read any damn thing, so there was no chance to be influenced by anybody. I'd read Edgar Allan Poe, and, who else? Not an awful lot.

Chronicle: You were just influenced more or less by your experiences?

Fox: Well, more about how things sound to me. I like a lot of action, and I've been in a lot of violent situations. I'll tell you exactly what happened. I was reading "The Bear", by (William) Faulkner in Carolyn Gordon's class, and when the bear was attacked by the dog, I realized he (Faulkner) couldn't write that scene. He steps off on it and makes some weird kind of metaphor. You know, the bears and the dogs were one, and blah, blah, blah. There wasn't any feeling of real control there. And I began looking for that in other writers, especially Hemingway and Fitzgerald, and none of them could handle that visceral stuff, that actual fighting. I didn't think. They seemed to get to it, and then walk off from it. As a matter of fact, I read that and said, "I want to do a fight scene," so I did "The Pit Fight". And I did one called "Razor Fight". It was



two blacks fighting in a cafe, two guys with razors, just to see how you could do that kind of thing, and what was possible. I hate to do that kind of thing, but I couldn't understand why people weren't writing actual fight sequences. Then somebody said, "You should read Jack London," so I read Jack London. He was full of shit, too. So I just didn't think they were doing it (writing actual fight sequences) which is a good way to go about it. You know, I was a little naive.

Chronicle: When you write, do you write about yourself?

Fox: Yeah, *Dixiana Moon* is sort of autobiographical in a sense. I mean, I got out of sales and went to Hollywood, which is about the same as the circus, right. And I can't decide about anything. I can't decide what I want to do next. I'm doing a novel, I'm doing a screenplay, and a play, and articles, and teaching, and I've never been one to organize my life. It's hard enough to predict what I'm going to be doing in the next couple of years, so I just do what I feel like doing, which is a real sickness. That's why I don't produce as much as I should. In *Dixiana Moon*, all the big decisions were made on a whim, you know, getting out of the business, making a U-turn and staying down there (in the South), based on the flimsiest kind of things. Underneath, that's why I love this stuff. I don't think people make decisions on cataclysmic things; they make them on little bitty things, and mostly feeling rather than anything tangible. So I tend to write about that. In "Ruby Red", it's the same kind of thing. She makes her decisions based on things of the moment, and there's no plan.

Chronicle: Invariably when you write, you're going to come across someone or something you want to write about that might bother someone if it was published. You don't want to shy away. What do you do?

Fox: I haven't had that problem lately. Usually I can change it around and make it comic enough so that it's not going to be hard at all. I mean, you don't have to write about some guy you know who's jacking off in the men's room and his kid catches him, something like that. That's the kind of thing you aren't going to write about, right? Hopefully. (Laughs). Maybe John Irving would.

"I DO NOT TRY TO BE FUNNY... I THINK THINGS *ARE* FUNNY. AND I THINK WHEN HUMOR IS MISSING FROM A PIECE, THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH IT."

Chronicle: Bringing up something that you mentioned: you say you're working on a lot of things. Why don't you try to write full time? Why are you still teaching?

Fox: Well, I like the routine of teaching. I like this office. And I don't like to be at home that much--the phone's always ringing. I need some kind of organizing thing. And teaching's only three days a week. And I like reading fresh things.

Chronicle: So it wouldn't do for you to just rent out an office somewhere?

Fox: No. If I did, I'd produce less, I think. I write very fast anyway. I like teaching. I've gotten so I'm pretty good at it; I can read stuff fast and tell about what's going on. And I'm usually very direct about comments.

Chronicle: Does your teaching and reading your students' work help you with your writing?

Fox: Yeah, to see where everybody else is screwing off, and to realize I'm doing the same thing. It reinforces that. Teaching's very hard. You've got to be very direct. You've got to be on your damn toes. You can't just slough it off.

Chronicle: Do you write every day?

Fox: Yes, as much as I can. See, I'm a compulsive writer, fortunately. It's no problem with me getting started, and I can always crank back up. (I'll write) half hour, hour, eight hours, depending on how much time is around.

continued on page 52

1981-82 CREATIVE WRITING

David Phillipson

Georgiana M. Harvey

Gary Cameron Horton

Barbara Jean Williams

Keith Alan Lang

John M. Trostel

Justin Hare

Judith Shepherd

Phillip Gervais

M. J. Wilhite

Bill Stewart

Michael E. Rukstelis

Mac Hester

Robert F. Stephenson, Jr.

Ellyn Hutson

Jim Van Buskirk

Kenneth L. Mitchell

Ellaine S. Gilliland

Sandy Granger

James Groman

Mindy Starnes

Sharyn J. Hyatt

Carl Schalachte

Paul Wachsmith

Greg Miller

Bob Pappas

Lee Plumbee

Gregory Scott Deshefy

Larry Hembree

Philip Gregory

Karen Unger

Michael Knotts

Greg McCollum

G.S. Deshefy

Sam Parler, Jr.

Arthur Slade

Florence Travis

Barry Reynolds

Albert Travis

J. S. Fox

Michael J. Harrison

Alyson Bomhoff

Joel S. Fox

Tim Belshaw

Robert Stembridge

Angela Smith

Levis Perry

Mary Ellen Sturgeon

John Mounter

Steve Hott

Paul DiBlasi

Gregory Scott Deshefy

Carole J. Connor

Sherri Craig

First Place Poetry

if you can believe:
that in every drop of rain
a pearl exists.
or that in the whitest of clouds
you can find a court
of pure knights
riding their fine streeds,
or if you have ever heard
the wind, in a gentle voice,
encouraging the snow
to travel with it on its journey,
then you can believe
in me.
but,
if you are so sure
that rain is only water,
that clouds are only mist,
and that the wind never speaks,
then i am only a shadow.

by Philip Gervais

First Place Prose

Sacrifice and Rice

by Mindy Starns

Mrs. Hobson leaned over. I think it was a totally unconscious act--sort of like frowning, or sighing. Of course, it probably wasn't something as strongly innate as breathing; but still it seemed to me to be done with no thought, no effort. Like it was patterned into her actions not as intended by some natural course, but instead from a century's collection of unconscious. The generations of her women leaned--as she did today--across family to clear dishes from the table. It was that simple.

"Care for some pie, Al?" she asked me in a tired voice, as she carried it to the refrigerator. She set it inside--balanced across two milk cartons--and shut the door. Surprised that she would even ask, I shook my head "no".

"I only got ten bags," she said, setting a stack of plates deep into sudsy dishwater. "Think it'll be enough?" She walked back to the table with an orange washcloth and scooped the last crumbs of dinner into the cup of her hand.

I didn't answer, knowing the question wasn't directed at me--knowing it was for any of the others there in the room except me.

"Probably," said Mr. Hobson. I breathed in deeply. Mrs. Hobson brushed her hands together over the trash in the corner and then returned to the sink. I could hear the vague clink of dishes, muffled by the water.

"Red beans!" Mrs. Hobson's mother said suddenly. Mr. Hobson pulled a dark brown toothpick from his breast pocket and began to clean his teeth. "If it's too much, you can cook up the leftovers with some red beans."

"Okay, Grandma," Nick said, dismissing her with a sing-songy voice. She drifted in and out so often, the family no longer bothered to listen for her clearer moments. I shifted my weight to one leg.

"Get the stuff," Mr. Hobson said.

Mrs. Hobson sighed as she wiped her hands on a dish towel. She walked to the pantry, pulled out a package and brought it to the table. I noticed a dark wet spot across the lap for her apron, where her stomach had pressed against the sink. I could remember seeing the same sort of spot on my mother, from eye-level, as a six year-old.

"Looks like a face, Mommy," I had said then. The Rorsharche of aprons and dishwater.

Now, Mrs. Hobson dumped the package's contents onto the table: ten bags of Mahatma Rice, a bundle of white gauzy material stuff, a couple of rolls of pink ribbon. She retrieved a pair of scissors and a spoon from a drawer and then pulled up

her chair next to Nick. I guess I tried to slip in, then, but I knew enough not to. They wanted me frozen, pressed by their resentment into as small a space as I could occupy. As far as they were concerned, my last vigil--my one last right in the Hobson household--was to lean tightly against the wall to wait for Dayna. That's all.

Mr. Hobson spilled some of the rice when he punctured the plastic on the first bag, but soon he had formed a sort of assembly-line:

Nick cutting the gauze into squares and the ribbon into strips, Mrs. Hobson spooning rice into the squares, Mr. Hobson tying the small bundles with ribbon, and Mrs. Hobson's mother taking the finishing rice bags and proudly stacking them on the table in front of her.

"Of course, now, red beans make me pass, "Mrs. Hobson's mother said.

I turned my head so I could see out of the window over the sink. It was framed in curtains made of this crinkly-looking material--orange with red roosters printed on it. Mrs. Hobson's black crucifix hung down from a nail on the top sill, and beyond that, all I could see was something big flapping on the clothesline next door. It was getting dark.

"Where's Dayna?" Mr. Hobson asked.

"Getting ready to go out with Al," Nick snapped, avoiding my eyes. The statement didn't add much tension to the room which was already so thick with it I was finding it hard to breathe. I shifted my weight to my other leg and loosened my collar.

"She oughta be here," Mrs. Hobson said. "It's her rice."

"She told me they needed some time alone together before the wedding," Nick reported in a loud whisper. I looked at him; he brushed his hands--dirty fingernails and all--through his short, short hair. My former ally, he had been the one Dayna and I had counted on to understand. We found out we were wrong the day we called him at the base to tell him. I think, in some ways, he was even more against us than the rest of them. And I think his attitude was the one that hurt her most of all.

"Alone together," grunted Mr. Hobson. 'How the hell can you be alone together?"

I wanted to reply. I always wanted to reply, but I had to respect Dayna's pleadings not to.

"You've got to believe it has nothing to do with you," she insisted to me once, her brown eyes brimming, her fingernails tight into my wrist.

And now Mrs. Hobson was brushing a gray strand of hair from her forehead, tucking it under her scarf with her thumb, looking very sad.

"I got so much to do by tomorrow," she sighed. "Married..."

"Married," said Nick.

"Married," said Mr. Hobson, suddenly turning to me. "Jeez, boy, how can you dodf this to our little girl?"

Everyone else turned and looked at me then, accusingly, as if they'd all been waiting for that to be asked--waiting for their cue. I hesitated, searching for the most neutral response I could think of.

"She's not a little girl," I said hoarsely.

"Eighteen is too young," Mr. Hobson said.

I think Mrs. Hobson's eyes were slowly filling with tears, as she looked away from me again and tried to keep on spooning the rice. I remembered what Dayna had told me Mrs. Hobson had said, the night we got engaged.

"I gave up my life for you!" Mrs. Hobson had yelled. "And look what you're gonna do with it."

"Who asked to be born?" Dayna had retorted.

And Mrs. Hobson had sat down on the green vinyl living-room couch then, suddenly quiet, and stared at the light fixture on the yellowed ceiling for several minutes. When she finally spoke, Dayna told me, it was very calm. Very low.

"It wasn't having you," she said. "It was the years after." She grabbed both of Dayna's hands and spoke right into her eyes. "It was the day I looked at your Daddy and knew I didn't love him no more. Knew maybe I hated him."

Dayna swallowed hard. Over her mother's shoulder, she could see her little baby booties, bronzed, on the shelf by Nick's army picture.

"Back then, you didn't leave if there was kids," Mrs. Hobson said. "You stayed."

Dayna pulled away, turning from her mother, nervously crossing and uncrossing her arms.

"Even 'Dear Abby' said to," Mrs. Hobson whispered, and Dayna didn't reply. She just sat there, pressing her hands against her eyes as hard as she could.

"There was always enough money," Mr. Hobson was saying to me now. "Maybe not new shoes every Easter, but she got a dollhouse one Christmas. She got a long dress thing for the prom."

I wasn't sure how to reply; I just kept praying Dayna would come down pretty soon. I knew I was sweating. So was Mr. Hobson. He got up from the table noisily, spilling some of the rice and almost knocking over his chair. Wildly, I wondered for a second if he was going to punch me; but he ran his hand back across his bald head and walked over to the kitchen window.

"Had to work--had to miss her high school graduation to pay for her present," he said in a much quieter voice. "Hell," he said, "I had to miss her confirmation to pay for the party afterwards."

"I never asked you to," Dayna said.

We turned, surprised, to see her in the doorway. She looked so good to me--her dark hair curling loosely, framing her face. She had her mother's tired, tight mouth, but her big eyes were her own. She stood, as she usually did, slouched forward slightly.

"There's just too much you should do first," Mrs. Hobson said suddenly, emphatically. "We scrimped our whole lives for you. For college. It ain't come to much, but it'd be enough."

"Classes start in a week," Mr. Hobson said.

"It'd work," Mrs. Hobson said.

They looked at us, pleadingly, as if at that moment we would back down. As if we'd change our minds. Cancel the florist. Call the priest. Cook up the rice with some red beans.

"I never said I wanted college."

I noticed Mrs. Hobson's mother then, her tongue between her lips, sputtering like a motor. She had piled the finished rice bags into a stack, and she was waving her right arm--her hand stiff--pretending it was an airplane.

"Dive bomber!" she said as she circled, swinging her hand up high, pausing, and then ramming it down into the middle of the pile. The bags scattered across the table; several fell on the floor. I suppressed a nervous laugh; Dayna looked aggravated. The other Hobsons barely noticed.

"What is this?" Dayna asked. "What is this here?"

"What?"

"This, here on the table."

"What?"

"I told you we didn't want rice," Dayna said.

"It's her rice," Mrs. Hobson's mother said loudly.

"It has no meaning for us," Dayna said. "It's just some dumb Chinese custom."

Mrs. Hobson blinked, clearly insulted.

"You need rice at a wedding."

"Not at my wedding."

"What kind of custom?" Nick asked. He was leaning back in his chair, arms folded across his chest. Dayna looked at him, hurt.

"Who'd be there to throw it anyway?" Dayna asked. "Just y'all and Al's folks."

"What kind of custom?" Nick repeated. She kept her eyes hard on him.

"Rice at a wedding is an ancient Chinese fertility symbol," she said evenly. He smiled, almost triumphantly; Mr. and Mrs. Hobson didn't seem to be listening.

"You know what they're doing to me," Dayna said to him. "You know all their tricks."

"Yeah, I guess I do."

She stepped toward him.

"So why you?" she asked. Slowly he let the chair rock forward until it was straight. He planted his feet on each side of the legs and set his elbow on the table in front of him, resting his chin on his fist.

"Baby sister was always so smart," he said. "Best grades, best chances."

"If there was only money for one of you to go to college..."

Mrs. Hobson began. Dayna stiffened. Quickly, Nick rocked his chair back again.

"Where else but the army can a man become so immediately independent?" Nick asked loudly. "So immediately financially independent?"

Dayna stood frozen until I reached for her. Slipping my arm around her shoulders, I started to guide her toward the door, but she resisted, instead suddenly standing up very straight and glaring angrily at her family.

"You cannot dump this on me," she said.

We left then, going out of the door and down the front walkway to my car. She was just about to slide in when we heard "Day!" from the house. We turned to see Nick, his face flushed a deep red, walking toward us. I stepped out of the way onto the grass, and he came face-to-face with her. He was nervously fingering the short hairs on the

back of his neck.

"It g-gets to the point," he stuttered. "It gets to the point where you there's only one way you could ever be."

She shook her head, not understanding. He took a deep breath and started again.

"Remember the Snoopy paint set they bought you?"

She frowned.

"The Snoopy paint set, with the little different-colored jars and the brushes and the little canvas with Snoopy on it?"

Dayna bit her bottom lip and nodded.

"And how you thought jar number six was jar number nine and jar number nine was jar number six and you painted him all red?"

She smiled.

"And his tongue all white?" she said.

"And you cried and cried when you figured out what happened?"

She nodded, smiling; I knew what he was talking about, too.

She had told me about it once--about how it was the first and last time he'd ever hugged her. He had wrapped her in his freckled twelve-year-old arms and rocked her back and forth, patting her head and saying the only words of comfort he could think of.

"There, there," he'd whispered. "There, there."

Now they both stood so much taller.

"I realized something then," he said. She waited for him to continue. "I knew then I could never be any other way."

"Any other way?" she asked, shaking her head. "What way? What?"

He motioned toward the house. "Like them," he said. "Like you're not." Her eyes narrowed; she looked like she had a moment ago, inside.

"You can't dump--"

"I know," he said quickly. "I'm not. I'm saying it was my choice." She looked away and then back again. "It was," he whispered.

I think a tear slipped down her face. I was embarrassed to be there then, having to watch this happen between them, but I didn't think they even thought about my presence, they were studying each other so intensely. Finally, Dayna stood on her tiptoes and kissed him on his forehead. The rims of his eyes grew red.

"I'm not making a mistake, Nicky," she said. Then she slipped into the car, and he turned back up the walk. I got in beside her and shut the door.

"I've got to ask you a question," I said. She settled down into the seat and then faced me. Black streaks striped her cheeks. She looked so sad.

"Are you marrying me to..."

She half smiled. "To what?"

"To get away from all this?"

She blinked, sending more mascara down her face. She looked down at her hands in her lap.

"You know," she said in a voice very soft, very even. "One time when I was a kid--I couldn't have been more than six or seven--Mama came home one Sunday and found me on the floor at the foot of their bed."

She swallowed hard.

"I had gone around the house and taken down all of the crucifixes, and there I was, on the floor with a screwdriver, trying to pry the little plastic Jesuses off the crosses."

She glanced at me, pulling a lock of hair behind her ear, and laughed nervously.

"She yelled at me, 'What are you doing?' but I just kept prying them off. 'Jesus ain't on the cross no more,' I told her. 'Jesus was a sacrifice but then he's gone up to heaven.' "

"She tried to take them away from me, but I grabbed them all up in my arms and started crying. 'He's not supposed to stay here!' I told her. 'It's hurting his hands to stay here.' "

I put my arm around Dayna and she grabbed my shirt and pulled me close to her, burying her face against my chest. I robbed her hair with my hand, thinking how very much I wanted to take care of her. Finally, she pulled away, wiping her face on her sleeve. She sat up straight and tucked one leg up under her, so we were eye-to-eye. She didn't look quite so sad.

"I'm marrying you for all the right reasons," she said. " 'Love' reasons."

I smiled and started the car. She put her hand on my arm.

"Take me home," she said softly, talking about our home--the new apartment we would share as husband and wife after the next day. "Take me home and hold me."

I pulled out onto the street and kissed the top of her head, knowing that she was okay now. Knowing that, for us, it was all going to be okay. □

Third Place Prose

The Thirteenth Floor

by Sam Parlor, Jr.

Jim Hopkins had been a computer programmer since he had earned his Master's Degree in mathematics and synthetic logic three years ago. He enjoyed his job on the ninety-ninth floor of the gigantic apartment building in New York City, which had been open for nearly two and one-half years now. Jim was in charge of programming the computer to handle all the phone and intercom calls which came in, as well as the budget, rent, and paychecks. The computer also controlled the hall lights on each of the one hundred floors. The lights were dimmed each morning between one and six o'clock to conserve electricity. So Jim was thoroughly familiar with every cubic inch of the apartment building, or so he thought.

On this beautiful June morning (as on every other morning, beautiful or not), Jim drove into the basement of the parking garage. His yellow Porsche glistened in the darkness. He parked, locked up his car, and walked over to the brown metal entrance door, carrying his passcard and briefcase. After inserting the card into the metal slit, Jim entered the door, which swung open for him automatically with a squeak. "Needs oiling," he thought, for the nineteenth straight day. Jim walked into the bottom floor of the apartment and handed the guard his I.D. It was just a formality; the guard knew him. In fact, Jim was the one who had programmed him.

Jim paused beyond the guard's desk long enough to replace his passcard and I.D. into his wallet. Then he walked over to the elevator and pressed the button. After a

short moment, the doors opened and he stepped inside and pressed button number ninety-nine.

As the doors met, Jim wondered if he could list all the prime numbers that were also Fibonacci and less than two hundred before the doors opened again. It was a game with him. Ordinary numerical computations were simple (like adding the serial numbers of catsup at the grocery store as one walks down the aisle), but a time limit made it exciting. "Let's see. Two, three thirteen--"

The door opened on the first floor. A beautiful young woman with long blond hair walked in. "Eighty-nine," he said, with finality.

"No quite," she admitted, looking down at her bust to reassure herself. His face turned red. "I mean that eighty-nine is the largest number less than two hundred that is prime and Fibonacci."

"Oh, I see. So what else is new?"

The elevator door closed again, and she pressed button number twelve. Jim said, "You must be new. Here, I mean. What's your name?"

"Linda. What's yours?"

"Jim".

"Are you one of those computer programmers?"

"Yes, I'm one of those".

She glanced around the elevator. It stopped at nearly every floor, taking people on and letting them off. Linda said, "Gee, I'll bet you know this building pretty well".

"Yes, as a matter of fact I have to".

"Let me ask you a question. Most buildings don't have a floor number thirteen. Why is that?"

"Well, some buildings are too short. But others don't have them because it is believed they bring bad luck."

"Then why does this elevator have a button numbered thirteen?"

"Well, they wanted five columns of twenty buttons each, B through nineteen, twenty through thirty-nine, up to eighty through ninety nine. Having no button for number thirteen would look weird, now wouldn't it? I mean, either all the columns would be screwed up, or a blank space would be in the middle of the button panel. Notice the single horizontal row of lights above the door. There is no number thirteen up there because it is not necessary. Try pressing button number thirteen."

She did as instructed. "The button doesn't light," she remarked.

"That's right. It is not electrically connected to anything. It's just a dummy button."

The elevator stopped at the twelfth floor. Linda said "Bye" and walked out. Jim was alone in the elevator now. The doors closed.

"Curious," he thought to himself, "this elevator is usually crowded this time of morning." He glanced at button number thirteen. An irresistable urge came over him. The elevator started to ascend. Quickly, he pressed the button. It lighted.

"No!" he exclaimed. It defied all sense of logic, and Jim Hopkins knew nothing but logic.

The elevator stopped. He realized that it had not been in motion long enough to have reached the ninety-ninth floor. Besides, button number ninety-nine was still lighted. Button thirteen wasn't lighted any more. Jim glanced up above the door. A "13" was up there, lighted and smiling at him. "To hell with your logic," it seemed to say. Seemed? Did it seem, or did it say? Jim wasn't sure. But just then the door opened. Jim saw what looked like most of the other residential floors. There were doors on each side of the long straight hallway. Jim stepped out of the elevator and put his briefcase down on the green shag carpet. The elevator doors closed behind him. He walked down the hall, glancing from left to right. 13A, 13B, 13C, 13D. He reached the end of the hall. The lights, everything was the same as on the other floors. Or so Jim thought.

Scratching his head, Jim walked back to the elevator, picked up his briefcase, and pressed the UP but-- "What? No, it can't be!" He pinched himself. There was no UP or DOWN button, but merely a metal faceplate. He dropped his briefcase. He walked to 13A and knocked on the door hard. No one answered. It was the same at all of the other apartments on that floor -- the thirteenth floor.

He thought hard. "A telephone-- that's it! There's one in the incinerator shuttle room for security." There was, but it was disconnected. He opened the one-foot-square door to the garbage shuttle system that fed on trash, literally. It was one of Jim's ingenious inventions. The shuttle ran on the energy released from the burning of the trash. The heat released also helped to warm the hot-water supply.

Jim started at the wall inside the small metal door. There was no opening for the trash to enter. But Jim was not discouraged yet. "The stairwell!" Jim ran over to the firedoor across the hall. He opened it and entered. So logic had won out after all. But had it?

As he started to climb the stairs, he remembered that he had left his briefcase by the elevator door. "I'll leave it there," he though. "If I go back to get it, these stairs might not be here when I come back." Then he realized what a stupid, illogical thing he had just thought. "But still-- I'll leave it."

He climbed up to the next floor and opened the firedoor. He stepped into the hall and noticed that it was empty. An uneasy feeling came to him as he walked down the hall. He glanced at one of the apartment doors, 13C. He ran down the hall to the elevator. There he saw his briefcase, just as he had left it. He opened it and looked at the papers. There were his, all right. Still, Jim Hopkins held tight to his logic.

Jim took out ten papers and spaced them evenly on the hall floor. He ran to the stairs, descended them rapidly, swung the firedoor open, and glanced down the hall. There they were, spaced in the same design. He jogged up ten floors and then paused to look down the hall. He was panting; the papers were still there. He collected them and placed them in his briefcase. "The elevator brought me here; it's going to take me back."

Jim saw a firebox on the wall, with an alarm, a firehose, and an axe. He took the axe and hit the metal faceplate where the UP and DOWN buttons were supposed to be. The blade hit lop-sided and the handle snapped. He threw the axe down furiously. He walked up to the next floor to see if there was another axe. There wasn't. His broken axe was resting on the floor.

The situation was so illogical that Jim began to understand how to defeat it. He pulled the fire hose off the rack. It was over a hundred feet long. He wondered what would happen if he held the end of it and climbed the stairs. He tried it. When he reached the next floor, he saw a fire hose coming through the firedoor and going up the stairs. He then thought of a logical way to force the situation to yield its secret to him. "I'll hold on to this end of the hose in my hand. It leads to the floor that I have just come from. I will then grab the other hose, which leads from this floor up to the next, and pull it down to me. Then I will have two different nozzles, one in each hand, proving that there are actually two different floors. If there are actually different floors, there must be a finite number of them. Therefore, I will be able to reach a bottom one and escape.

Jim kept a firm grip on the brass nozzle with his right hand. With his left hand he tugged downward on the other hose, which was resting on the stairs going up. The instant he did this he felt a sudden pull downward on his right hand. He tried it again. Sure enough, every time he jerked on one hose, the other would give a tug in the opposite direction.

He took out his pocketknife, scratched an "X" mark on the shiny nozzle, and threw it down the stairs. The other hose came tumbling down to him. The "X" he had inscribed was still on it. Jim gave up on the hose idea.

Soon a new idea struck him. He had a micro-tape recorder in his shirt pocket. He walked into the hall and recorded a few words. He left the tape recorder and ran up to the next floor and played back the tape. It had on it exactly what he had recorded.

By now Jim's morning coffee had run through him. He had to use a bathroom, but all of the apartments were locked. So he said, "Why not" and walked back into the stairwell. He let her leak down the stairs. Before he had finished, a drop of something hit him on the head. Looking up, he realized what it was and jumped back.

Jim Hopkins was beginning to get desperate. He remembered from his childhood how he could have gotten out of this place with only a mirror. "Look in the mirror. See what you saw. Take the saw and saw the mirror in half. Two halves make a hole. Crawl out of the hole."

Then he heard a voice, a woman's voice, from the hall. He ran to the hall and there was Linda, the same beautiful Linda who had actually spoken to him in the elevator. She said to him, "You told me there wasn't a thirteenth floor; but I mashed the button and it lit and the elevator stopped and-- and-- is there a Ladies' room around here anywhere?"

Jim laughed. She obviously had not grasped the situation. He replied, "Yes, there's a lovely green computerized one on the ninety-ninth floor. Go right on up. Use the elevator; it's so much quicker than the

stairs. Using the stairs, for some strange reason, one feels he is getting nowhere. I wonder why? Then again now there is that awful smell in the stairwell -- that awful smell of--"

"Please," she broke in, "some other time. You can explain later why you lied to me this morning. I gotta go. Bye."

"But I didn't lie! Don't you see? There IS no thirteenth floor."

"Bye again." She was walking back toward the elevator.

He screamed, "It won't open, fool! Don't you see? There is NO thirteenth floor. Twelfth, yes. Fourteenth, yes. Thirteenth, no."

She pressed the button, the doors parted and she walked in.

"Hold the door! For God's sake, hold the door!" Jim, the dignified egghead, bounded down the hall. Twenty feet. The doors were closing. Ten feet. He dived and met steel. Jim cried; not like a baby, but big salty teardrops ran down his face. "If only Linda would come back," he sighed.

The hours passed slowly by. It was midnight, according to his Timex. He wondered if the lights would automatically be dimmed at one. They were. Shortly afterward, Jim dozed off to sleep. At seven, he woke up. The lights were bright again. "Today, I break into one of the apartments." He picked up what was left of the axe and bombarded 13A. To his surprise, the wood of the door split. He kept hitting. Finally it gave way.

The apartment in which Jim found himself was a fairly nice one. There was no dust, but still the place didn't look lived in. He flipped the television on. It worked. It was on channel 13.

Of course the telephone was not connected. He used the bathroom, which had an abundant supply of "Charmin'." The refrigerator was full, and he ate a hardy breakfast. After he had eaten, he noticed the large sliding glass windows. Through them he could see a three-foot-wide porch with a sturdy cement railing around it. He slid one of the doors aside and walked out onto the porch. He would see the morning traffic below. He counted the floors below him. Twelve. Jim ran up to the next floor. Room 13A was open. (Someone had smashed the door in.) He went out to the ledge and recounted the floors. There were still twelve below him.

It was almost time for him to start work, he noticed. "That means that Linda might be riding up the elevator again in a few minutes. Maybe I can surprise her by catching the elevator on the twelfth floor. Yes, that's it! I'll just swing down to the twelfth story and knock on the little old man or lady's porch window and say, 'Hey, I'm from the thirteenth floor which is no more 'cause I'm so sore from jumping from the floor which leads to the door which is no more. How abut lend me your carpet for a little transportation across the way.' And the old biddy will say to me, 'Son, I've seen some kooks in my day, but-- but-- get out of my apartment!' And I'll be as free as a bird."

Jim Hopkins swung his right leg over the railing. He could see the cement top of the parking garage one hundred and thirty feet below. Few cars parked on the roofless top level because of the lack of protection from birds and kid's flying chewing gum. Jim Hopkins swung his left leg over the railing. He could see the white of the apartment building merge with the clouds over a thousand feet above. But no chance of rain today! It was much too cloudy. Too much cloudy. Which was correct?

"Jim," a voice called from behind him, a sweet voice, apparently full of concern for what he appeared to be doing. Jim, dizzy from looking up for so long, had trouble telling whether the voice was real or not real, or a combination which was< = to real but >= not real. Complex maybe, in a+bi form. Possible. Nevertheless, Jim whipped his head around and reached for a firmer grip simultaneously. In that instant: it was real, he was real, she was real, her voice was real, this floor was real. But like all instants, that one died. No firmer grip came, unless, of course, air can be called a firm grip.

"Jim, no!"

But Jim, yes. Jim fell, with constant acceleration and parabolically decreasing distance from the parking garage. He figured, even on the way down, exactly how long it would take for him to hit the cement. He hoped that the so-called "paradox" of Achilles never catching the tortoise, of the egg never hitting the floor, of the bullet never hitting the man, of the man never hitting the cement would, indeed, hold up. But it didn't, at least not from Linda's perspective.

"I-- I only wanted to show you, Jim. I couldn't compete with her. I wanted to destroy her, Jim, not you. Not you, Jim. Her. Logic." □

Honorable Mention Poetry

Mrs. A

I know a woman who lives in the country
Surrounded by phantoms and false memories
She speaks in circles whenever I try
To converse or to see past the fear in her eyes.

Hey!
Mrs. A.
Who are you today?
I know you're not all there
But you haven't gone away.

A childhood tragedy
Split your personality.
Now you shun reality like a vampire at dawn.

Open your heart to me.
Let me venture in to see
Cobwebs of insanity and dust-covered love.

by Gary Cameron Horton

Mr. Hogie

Mr. Hogie, please mow the south pasture
And the west half of the north pasture.
Don't run over the wisteria or the mimosa.
And don't let the hay cover up the toad's cave.
Pick up your money on Sunday morning.

Mary, I din't see the vines.
The toad run under the mower.
I put turnips on your porch.
You dont owe me any money.

by M. J. Wilhite

Second Place Poetry

The Old Home

When I feel some warming summer breeze,
I sense a pinch of longing for a home I never knew.
When I slash boot-long thru green-grown fields,
I hear a distant beat of primal music in the leaves.
When summer's sun beats heavy down upon the brow,
I feel Sahara-Kalahari.
(You see, a twig torn off still grows in distant sand,
Yet never can it be again the tree it was).
So when I see a river coursing thru its rocky bed,
I drift off in the current of the Congo.

by Levis Perry

Second Place Prose

The Vale of the Sun

by John Mounter

Lips of healthy greenery reached down the bank to the water's edge to accept the wet kiss of the lake, clear depths replenished by swift streams flowing unceasingly out of the surrounding mountains. A gentle breeze, singing lovely lullabies of the cool lake, caressed huge trees which stood meditating in the valley.

"In love with the day
In love with the day"

Many animals lived in this peaceful valley. Fish knifed here and there, sometimes jumping in flashes of silver from the surface of the lake, leaving ripples when they landed which spread and lingered like the passing thoughts of an intelligent creature. Small birds whispered visions in the leaves of the stoic trees which never moved except by sway occasionally with the chant of the wind. Rabbits rushed softly among bushes overladen with berries. Squirrels frolicked on the forest's nut-strewn floor celebrating the joy of eternal spring. And the slender deer led by the legendary

Hazel-rah lived a peaceful existence about which they had once only dreamed. All the animals of the valley were the happiest, healthiest, fastest, most graceful creatures that ever saw a sunrise. The coats of the does glistening in the sunlight, they sang their mantra as one.

"We love when we play
We love when we play"

High in the sky, where even the mountain peaks failed to reach, soared a huge eagle named Vyldym the Great, a magnificent sable form floating effortlessly on mountain air currents. When he flew to such heights this great bird could see beyond the mountains which sheltered the valley. Great he was; he could have carried away a full grown buck if he had wished to do so.

He would see endless plains where many horrible little monsters lived. They fought with each other for food, land and females. They even fought for fun. When he hunted, it was on these plains that he made his kill, but that was different. He never killed except to eat. And then he only killed animals which had all those terrible habits. Recently he had been having more difficulty in finding food. It seemed the cruel little things had finally succeeded in killing each other.

He never went to the plains for any longer than he had to because of the horrible things he saw. Sometimes he would pretend they were hallucinations caused by the thin air at the height required to get in and out of the valley. Surely such things did not really exist, he assured himself, diving back into the valley.

Hazel-rah was below him. Still diving, he landed directly in front of the frozen deer.

"Hello, Hazel."

"Uh, hello, you startled me for a moment just now. I was scared silly."

"You know you needn't fear me, little friend."

"Of course. Your eyes look ever so hungry."

"They are. Feeding outside the valley has become difficult. All the animals are disappearing."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"Don't be. Listen, I wanted to tell you that the outside world, it seems to me, is closing in on our valley. The mountains protect us now, but maybe not forever. Lately, the wind has been cold in the mountain passes. A few times, alone in my nest at night, it seemed the cold would cut right through me. I thought you should know."

"I'm glad you spoke to me. You should sleep with us in the valley when it's cold."

"Thanks, but no; I need to stay where I can see things."

"You ought to come talk to me and the other animals more often. Stop worrying for a while and enjoy yourself."

"Someone has to keep watch for evil."

"Come on, it would do you good."

"No, Hazel, keep in mind that I told you."

"I will."

Summer remained in the valley although snow fell in the mountain passes. The animals continued to thrive, praising the sun every day.

"We love in the sun
Our love of the sun"

Hazel was happy, for the coats of the does were full and shiny. Everyone was happy except the lone eagle. The eagle felt the cold pressing in on the valley when he soared to the mountain passes, always on the lookout for any sign of advancing evil.

Vyldym in his watchful flight was the first to see. Through the lowest of the passes came a man, the most treacherous beast of the plains. Vyldym studied the man with interest, following his movements with what seemed to be unwarranted concern. He could not find anything evil about the man, no matter how hard he tried, yet he could not help wondering why the man had come.

In fact the man was a wanderer, searching for something he had never been able to define. It could be said he was looking for the meaning of life, or at least of his own life, but actually he just wanted to be remembered as a wise man in some obscure corner of the globe. He had been searching so long he no longer expected to find his meaning.

The sage used a tall staff when he walked, his long white robes flowing with every step. He seemed old, although his face was not heavily lined. A lengthy white beard which flowed with his robes was the only hair on his head except for the silver brows that shaded his eyes, blue pools which rivalled the lake in depth.

Those eyes stared into the still water of the lake, where mirrored images shifted in and out of focus, and thought they found God staring back at them. He turned to the animals which had gathered about in

curiosity.

"Hello. My name is Santal. This place is surely a valley of faith amid the darkness, for I can see that you all live together in harmony and happiness. The sun shines here and I can see that its warmth is not wasted, for you all look very fine. I would like to live here with you as a brother for a while, if you would allow it. I hope there are many things we can learn from each other."

"You are quite welcome," said Hazel-rah.

Turning, Santal bent down and kissed the face of the lake. Then he looked up at the sun.

"Thank you," he prayed.

"I am glad that such as you has come among us. My name is Hazel-rah."

Hazel and the other animals moved forward to kiss the lake and look up at the sun, joining together in song.

"We love in the sun
Our love of the sun"

Vyldym wanted to join the others at the water's edge, but he could not help suspecting the sage of some sly spell. Vyldym did not know how, but he was sure that the man brought evil to the valley. Confused and afraid he climbed high into the sky, settling at last in his nest. Night was coming on and he waited nervously for sleep to follow.

He could not sleep for there were too many things to think about. Could the man be trusted? Why had Hazel welcomed him? Hazel was a fool. Even though welcoming the man might be the proper thing to do, it was dangerous when evil lurked so close. The night was cold. The coldest Vyldym had yet experienced.

The next day the eagle began to circle in the sky the way he often did, but inside he was churning with anxiety. He feared that the man would bring the evil of the outside world. Being the most wordly animal in the valley, Vyldym felt that he must take responsibility. He must watch the man closely to prevent him from doing evil. As he circled he listened with ears almost as keen as his eyes.

"Good morning, Hazel."

"Always, Santal. Would you care to join us in play or meditate with the trees today?"

"Oh, a little of both I imagine, as any good sage would."

"Although just a deer, I have tried meditating some. I always liked the mantra the wind hums up beyond the timber line."

"I'll try it, but the favorite spot of the legendary Hazel-rah might be too much for an old man."

"Ridiculous, Santal."

Santal smiled.

"I do know a game you animals could play."

"Please tell us how."

"Well, you try to collect nuts, seeds, and all sorts of food. You see who can pick up the most, the best, and so on. The prize is being able to eat the food you collect whenever you want."

"How long should we play?"

"Until all the food has been collected. There is so much food here in this valley that you might be able to play forever."

"Is it fun?"

"Hum, it is a good game because everyone who plays wins a prize."

"Yes, I see. That would be a good game."

"We work when we play
We work when we play"

The new game and its mantra sounded evil to Vyldym although he could not decide why. Just listening to them talking about food made his stomach growl. He decided to go hunting now since the man was going to meditate. Meditation should keep the man from mischief for a while.

After the eagle had left, Hazel-rah approached Santal, the sage.

"Santal, you seem to be a very wise man. I would like to talk to you about something important to this valley."

"You know I'll do whatever I can for this place, Hazel."

"I'm sure you would. Your game is quite enjoyable and the coats of the does are getting thicker."

"No need to avoid the point with me. Speak freely."

"Yes, you're right."

"Well."

"Our friend the eagle considers himself a protector of sorts to the valley."

"Really?"

"He is basically a good being, but I am worried about him. He has always been without a mate and I fear his inner passions may someday explode in some nameless way."

"I have not really met him, please continue."

"He is not happy like everyone else here. Last time I talked to him I saw hunger in his eyes. He says the world beyond the

mountains is a horrible place, and that this cold world is beginning to threaten our valley."

"I'm afraid that's true."

"Was that the reason for your game?"

"Yes, the wind will get cold and food scarce."

"I wondered if it was so."

"Don't be afraid. It is not necessarily evil that comes. Life needs perpetual change."

"Maybe so, at any rate, the eagle is my true worry. If his hunger drives him too far, he might be tempted to kill in the valley, which would doom us all, for killing is forbidden. I also believe your presence here has increased the burden Vyldym tries to carry."

"Burdens ought not be borne alone."

"Exactly. Which is why I have sought your advice. As long as things continue their present path, the threat of Vyldym going astray grows steadily; and if he breaks, I fear for this valley. Can you think of a way to solve the problem?"

"Get the eagle to release his burden."

"It is impossible. He is solitary and holds himself aloof."

"I could leave."

"No, no, I wasn't asking you to leave."

"It seems there is no easy answer then, but to look to the sun. I will meditate on it tomorrow."

"Please do, Santal."

"I shall, I shall."

Vyldym soared through blasts of cold air over the plains. There was snow on the land below him; above him the sky was cloudy. He had been searching for food a long time without success. This desolate country was forcing the eagle to journey farther than ever before on his hunger's quest. He made his tired wings fly on, but still there was nothing to eat. Onward he searched until the mountains were almost lost to his wonderful sight.

Then he saw her. His hunger was gone, his tired body alive. He dived like a rock at her fleet form. Spotting him, she turned, wheeling gracefully. Spreading his wings slightly, he went after her, straining exhausted muscles beyond belief. Passion has no conception of reality. Somehow, he was right above her. Too late, the great eagle above was falling like a stone. Only an instant before impact his passion told him to brake, but braking suddenly at his speed only threw him tumbling out of control. Struggling to regain his balance, he crashed into her, clutching furiously. He was spinning through space weightless. Two senseless birds fell to the plains.

After a moment Vyldym came to his senses, his passion gone. Before him lay an inert mass of feathers. Somehow the beautiful bird had broken his fall, for some reason saving him instead of herself. She had been so good that she had given her life to save his. She was dead. "My God," he looked to the sky, "where are you?" The setting sun was hidden by clouds.

He forced himself to go home. He had killed her. What a cruel world it was in which things like this could happen. The world was hell and he hated it. Yes, hated. He kept repeating it in his mind, a malicious new mantra to some sort of malignant mediatation.

"I hate the cruel world
I hate the cruel world"

Although he was starving, he was not hungry. He had one purpose; he had been allowed to live to fight the evil in the world. Finally, eyes blazing, a demon came to perch above the valley, dreaming of horrible, eternal war against evil sorcerers, blaming the world for his fate. His primary thought was that he must not allow the cruelty of the outside world to be brought to the valley, no matter what the cost.

Rising early, Santal went to meditate beyond the timber line. The chilly morning air made him feel so much alive he trembled. He looked up for the sun, but the sky was overcast. The clouds had moved in during the night. He saw a speck moving against the backdrop of clouds which he realized must be the eagle. Seeing the eagle reminded Santal of the subject of his morning meditation. He sat down, crossed his legs, and began to hum.

"The summer is over
And winter is here"

And so he sang to the background of the wind. It was a peaceful, easy wind he heard, and he soon found himself shifting consciousness very easily. The humming was coming together nicely when suddenly a menacing new mantra sounded in discord to the melody.

"I hate the cruel world
I kill the cruel world"

In a flash of movement the sage blocked the attack of the great eagle with his staff. Talons scarred the strong wood, but they did not touch so much as the robes of the man. Standing, Santal started defiantly up the mountain with a look of sudden resolution. The evil thoughts could not be allowed to penetrate the valley. The eagle continued to attack him, but each time he turned it aside with his staff. Each attack increased the resolution he felt. He felt exhilaration as well as fear and concern.

Santal looked up to the top of the ridge

which was his destination. It was a long way there, and the last few hundred feet were a rugged rock face. If he could just get to the top of the ridge. He spoke softly to himself to fight his fear.

"I must have no fear
Fear is little death"

He came to a rock crevice which forced him to begin actually climbing. Hooking his staff to his belt, he worked his way slowly upward. The climbing required all his effort now; he had no free hands to wield the staff against the eagle. He did his best to ignore the beast, just concentrating on reaching for new handholds on the broken rock, always moving upward.

"I hate the cruel world
I hate the cruel world"

A steel-tipped talon ripped through the white robe. Fortunately for the sage the opening in the rock was small enough to shelter him partially from the eagle's attack. This infuriated the winged demon even more, and it screeched with insane rage.

In the valley the trees shook as a howling wind disturbed their meditation. The animals shivered in a chill air like none they had felt before. They looked up at the sky, but the sun was hidden by ominous clouds.

Up above, Santal came out on a ledge. He raised his staff just in time to keep the talons from his flesh. He broke into a sweat as he crawled on toward the ridge. There was no protection here. If the eagle attacked again before he reached the top of the ridge, he would just have to be lucky enough to survive it. The freezing wind was full of sound now, drowning the little faith Santal still had.

"I hate the cruel world
I hate the cruel world"

The sound pounded in his ears. He climbed on. Clinging to cracks in the stone, he pulled himself up, ledge by ledge. He was in a near frenzy, he hurried so. He moved rapidly, bruising his body on the hard irregular rock, always moving upward for another straining grip in some icy fissure.

"I hate the cruel world
I kill the cruel world"

Steel knives slashed across the sage's back, ripping white rags from the blood red skin. Jarred from his hold, his battered body began to slide roughly down the cliff face. He screamed.

"My God, No!"

For an instant a narrow beam of light shone through the clouds, falling upon the sage. In an animal-like reaction he reached out and seized his staff. His hands found it just as it lodged between two jutting rocks, jerking his body with sudden force. Somehow his grip held.

The sun was gone again. He hung there, desperately clutching the staff. Naked, bleeding, and almost unconscious, he dangled in the air like a corpse.

Suddenly he realized he was alive. As he pulled himself up he thanked God with renewed faith. He was climbing again, each movement an effort releasing new pain, but also reminding him he was alive.

"I must have no fear
Fear is little death"

He slithered onto a ledge. His breathing was erratic and heavy. His body was covered by a mixture of blood and sweat which was trying to freeze in the cold air. It tasted good as it trickled down his face into his mouth.

He looked up. There was only one more climb to the top of the ridge. With renewed strength he started up the wall of rock. He left red prints in the snow here. He kept climbing as the harsh sound grew in his ears once more.

"I hate the cruel world
I hate the cruel world"

Like a lithe animal he leaped up the last few feet to stand atop the world. He stood erect and determined before the eagle's onslaught. He bellowed at the sky so loudly that all the valley could hear.

"God, my friend, guard my end."

Massive wings spread and talons flashed, a blunt staff was raised, the two met and fell out of sight into the lands beyond the mountains.

"Hazel-rah," asked a bird, "Did you hear that noise a moment ago?"

"Yes."

"What was it?"

"I think Santal was saying 'Goodbye friends.'"

"Oh, I didn't know he was leaving."

"Neither did I, but such are the ways of sages."

"They are a strange sort."

"He was a great man and we shall always remember him by playing his game."

"We work when we play
We love when we play"

Softly it began to snow. Hazel walked through the woods down to the lake, talking to the other animals. Everyone seemed happy. The trees were losing their leaves to meditate even more majestically than before. The icy wind whistled thrilling new mantras amid the bare limbs. The animals were all joyfully huddling together to escape the cold. And the coats of the does, Hazel noticed, were thicker, glossier, and softer than he had ever seen.

"We love when we lay
In the valley of play" □

Third Place Poetry

In a Dark Time -as of Rothke

In a dark time the eye begins to see,
darkly. But there is a blind spot
where the optic nerve fountains from the screen of sight:
here pictures sometimes disappear
beyond the curvature
of the earth's descending vanishing point.

What's madness but nobility of soul
at odds with circumstance?
The circumstances are contaminated. Tunnel vision
is only safe from the middle of the road. Anything less
soon scrapes the edge, that place
where question marks bare teeth. The naked eye
can see farther than a clinging to
hyphens of paint and signs and colored lights

Moths do the same thing,
final mind's eye fixated spiralling
into the flame. Tonight a luna moth beat itself against
a fluorescent storefront. I caught it,
tented hands around a fluttering geometry of
sherbet green wings broken and wilted
and shimmering with fatigue.

Curiously enough the rhinoceros is an endangered species;
some people believe the horn, when ground to find powder,
is a powerful aphrodisiac.

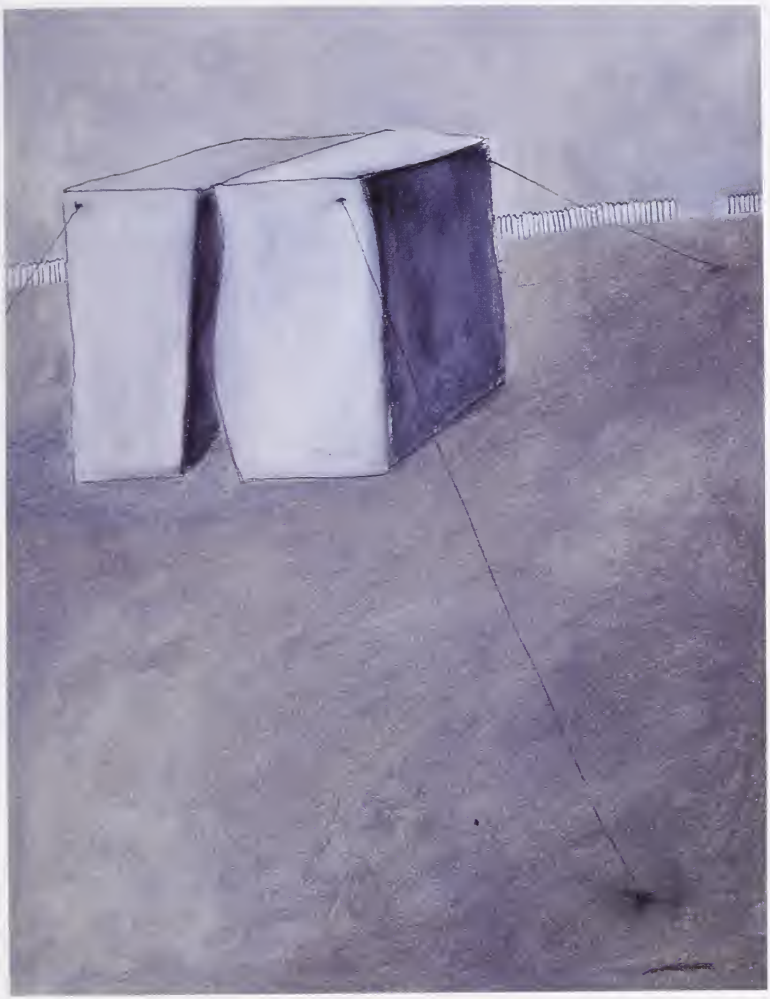
A tree falls in the woods, echoing.
How long do falling bodies take to light,
and when they do, are they higher or lower?
Newton used an apple, Euclid a compass,
Egyptians the sound waves of pyramids.
Indians sensed a murmur of chakras along the spine.
In a room full of mirrors we use ledgers and hours and
portioned moments stolen between the lines.
And see our sweating shadows pinned against a wall.

tim belshaw
29 june 1981

untitled Richard Ramsdell *silver print*

ART
section

Arrow and Time Sharyn J. Hyatt *Gouache, 17" x 21"*



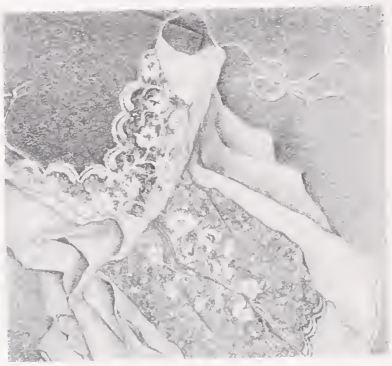
untitled Jose Suarez

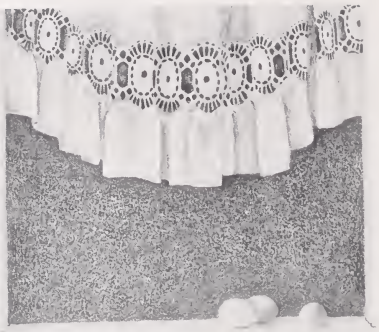
St. Christopher's Fan Patricia L. Jenks *aquamedia and enamel, 5¾" x 8⅛"*

Carnivale Cruise (poolside) **Lantz Caldwell** *photo collage*

untitled Bob Lorig *photograph*

from the series Spacial Observations J. Weston Lotz University of Florida *Cibachrome, 8½" x 23½"*





untitled Virginia S. Stuntz

pencil drawings

untitled Virginia S. Stuntz *b/w photograph*

untitled Jacquelyn Ford Morie University of Florida *collage*

untitled David M. Hamilton *Cibachrome*

Yes, Humphrey Bogart is Alive and Well and Living in Boston David M. Hamilton *Cibachrome*

untitled *b/w photograph*

untitled Dan Brossart *b/w photograph*

Pest House: Quarantine Measles Claude T. Davis

Wood, apple, cedar, walnut, pine, and bass wood

Nature Shrine Thomas W. Jones *bronze*

Jeanee Redmond

ceramic

Jeanee Redmond *ceramic*

War Woman Sheri Hyatt

pencil drawing, 11x17

untitled Kent Lineberger

pencil drawing, 20x30

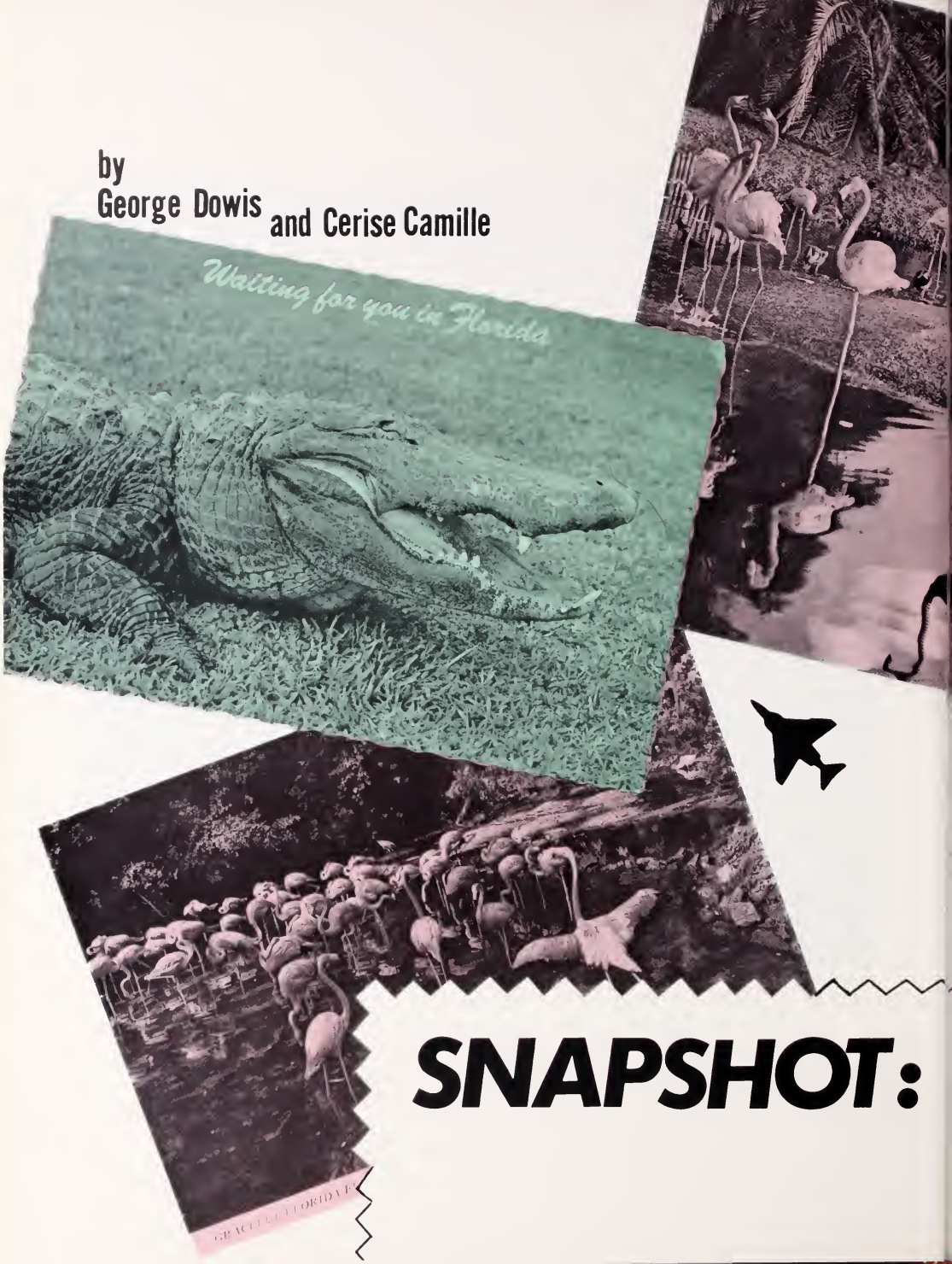
Anonymous Facades and Pavements Series #5 Cerise Camille *b/w photograph*

Anonymous Facades and Pavements Series #6 Cerise Camille *b/w photograph*

Anonymous Facades and Pavements Series #10 Cerise Camille *b/w photograph*

Anonymous Facades and Pavements Series #11 Cerise Camille *b/w photograph*

by
George Dowis and Cerise Camille



SNAPSHOT:

A TWELVE DAY GLIMPSE OF THE FLORIDA ARTS

Picture Florida. Sunshine and beaches. Oranges and grapefruits. Alligators, lizards, and pink flamingos. Golden-Agers in their campers and Cadillacs. Miles of boulevards lined with palms. Those sexy Italian cypresses that Van Gogh loved so. Lush vegetation of the tropics, tourists, and tacky souvenir shops. Land of the sinkholes, eternal Gulf winds, and the Fountain of Youth.

In 1513, the Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon discovered what he thought to be an island, and, in a sense, he was right. Florida has always possessed unique qualities quite separate from her neighboring states. Perhaps it is the startling contrast in geography that lends itself to a relaxed lifestyle, or an alienation from the seasonal changes, which produces a sort of timeless climate.

Indeed, Florida is much more than a vacationer's Mecca. Although it continues to attract a steady stream of senior citizens, disenchanted Northerners seeking refuge from the harsh winters, and real estate developers sanding their palms for a fast buck, there does exist a host of hard-working individuals seeking ways to improve business, industry, politics, and culture. There is a direct relationship of this constant influx of progressive-minded people to the growth of the arts in the state. The arts are enjoying a renaissance with Florida as a whole taking an active role. Corporations are investing in nationally recognized and emerging artists who show themselves to be promising business assets. A recent study of the economic impact of the arts in Florida indicates that the arts are a multi-million dollar industry, with a return investment of nearly 750 percent.

George Firestone, the Secretary of the State of Florida and an ardent supporter of the arts, has contributed greatly toward making the state what he has described as, "truly...a state of the arts." Several years ago, while serving in the State Senate, Firestone introduced legislation which more than tripled state arts funding, from $400,000 to $1.4 million, annually.

With the continual growth of the state, many artists have chosen to migrate to Florida to work and teach. Florida is the home of several internationally known artists including Robert Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Oscar Bailey, Philip Guston, Syd Solomon, Duane Hanson, Jerry Uelsmann, and

Jules Olitski, as well as a number of nationally recognized figures such as Evon Streetman, Robert Fichter, Donald Saff, and Tom Turner, to name only a few. It should be apparent why Mark Alexander, co-founder and managing editor of *Visions*, a quarterly on the visual arts in Florida, described the state, during a late night interview, as a "hotbed for the arts."

Many events are drawing widespread attention to the state; the opening of the Salvador Dali Research Museum, made possible by the recent acquisition of the A. Reynolds Morse collection of art and manuscripts by Dali, is scheduled to open its doors in January, 1982. The Center for the Fine Arts in Miami, a 36,000 square foot facility presently under construction, and designed by internationally known architect Philip Johnson, is yet another high drawing card for exhibits, artists, and appreciators. A tentative opening date has been set for Spring, 1983, according to Director Jan van der Marck.

Typically, we associate art with museums, galleries, and teaching institutions: in Florida, several community colleges and independent art schools, three major universities and countless museums bring the arts to the people through a broad range of displayed art, instructional facilities and studio and exhibition space.

Efforts to bring the arts to the people, unlike the typical approach to art education, have been uniquely successful. A subtropical climate has allowed Florida's arts to take to the streets. Sidewalk shows, arts and crafts fairs, intensive workshops, demonstrations, co-op studios and galleries, advertising, and public exhibits of every imaginable sort continue almost year round. In an exclusive editorial in *Visions*, Secretary of State Firestone said, Communities are finally realizing that the arts no longer cater to just a small elitist group, but have wide-ranging significance to a greater segment of the public."

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In such an intense artistic climate, with artists practicing in every visual arts medium except snow sculpture, photography has taken a special significance. The unique quality of the light, or perhaps the eternal summer, favorable for outdoor shooting, are a few reasons why photographers have developed a taste for the region. To quote a statement by Bob Polzer, a Florida photographer; "Photography in Florida has that marvelous Peter Pan quality that is a tribute to instructor and student alike."

At Daytona Beach Community College, we saw an exhibit by two photographers, Jerry Uelsmann and Diane Farris.

"Photography in Florida has that marvelous Peter Pan quality that is a tribute to instructor and student alike."

Uelsmann, who has been described as the "Grandfather of Art Photography in Florida," is known for his surrealistic manipulated images; his process of multiple exposures often yields a visual paradox, assaulting and contradicting our rational senses. In many instances, the physical properties for the images lend themselves to the visual language between the normal and the abnormal. A brutally disfigured stone, floating weightlessly amidst the wispy clouds above a calm ocean's horizon may set the tone for the flavor of Uelsmann's work. Although Uelsmann's imagery has been compared to the work of Magritte and Dali, he has gone a step beyond. While the Surrealist paintings sometimes appear to be casual additions of dissimilar objects, Uelsmann's photographs, through the use of strong compositional elements, contrast, and patterning, synthesize the individual forms into a dynamic whole. Journalist James Hugunin put it this way: "Uelsmann's printing easel became the dissection table on which he assembles disparate imagery, fragmenting reality and putting it back together again to suit his visions."

Diane Farris, like Uelsmann, also employs constructive techniques. Generally, however, her imagery is visually less complicated, perhaps less symbolic, and more literal. Delicate, almost dreamlike figures appear in her photographs, creating a spontaneous reaction in the viewer's mind. She speaks of her "moments of vision... at the camera and in the darkroom... when elements come together 'rightly', manifesting some of that beauty, order, disorder, sadness or joy, which live at the heart of things."

In its 25th year, the college is regarded as of the finest photographic facilities in the country. Although there is a wide range of "art photography" being produced at the school, and the programs embrace a strong aesthetic philosophy, D.B.C.C. is primarily geared toward photography's applied technical aspects. Courses in lab techniques, photojournalism, portraiture, commercial and illustrative photography, and quality control constitute a curriculum designed to produce readily marketable talents. Patrick Van Dusen and Eric Brittenbach, professional photographers and faculty members at D.B.C.C., offered an abundance of information and a "ten-cent tour" of the sophisticated laboratories, darkrooms, multi-media facilities, portrait studios, and display areas. It was the best dime spent on the whole trip.

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At Crealde School of Art in Winter Park, we found a special interest in promoting commun-

ity awareness in the arts. Periodic workshops by prominent artists, studio facilities, and professional guidance are bringing attention to Crealde. Director Jim Megargee offered a warm welcome and a guided tour of the meandering studio, gallery, offices, and grounds. In addition to a comprehensive visual arts program, with notable strength in the areas of photography and sculpture, Crealde has established ARTREACH, a program designed to provide special audiences with artistic experience. Art therapists conduct workshops for handicapped, elderly, etc., through music, poetry, drawing, painting, dance, puppetry, and other forms, helping students discover their potentials.

While at Crealde, we happened to meet Tom Turner, nimbly poised with a few newly finished vessels. Turner, a nationally known potter, and a former faculty member at Clemson, has chosen to leave the academic environment in pursuit of what he considers to be more effective teaching methods. Says Turner: "I decided the best teaching I could do would be to do my best work. Then when I do a workshop or show, it's there as an example of my efforts for people to examine or question. I never quit teaching. I quit academia."

Turner, who has been widely published, and is a recipient of numerous awards, grants, and fellowships, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the South Carolina Arts Commission, now lives and works in Florida.

On an unexpected tip, we were invited to the grand opening of LIGHT IMAGES GALLERY, a new cooperative photography gallery in Winter Park. The premiere exhibition consisted of the work of seven regional photographers, with a wide range of subject matter, a varied approach to format, and that virginal anticipation characteristic of any new business in it infancy.

Just south of Ft. Myers, in the calm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, are the islands of Sanibel and Captiva. Captiva, for the last eight years, has been the home and studio of American artist Robert Rauschenberg, one of the most influential figures in contemporary art. Although Rauschenberg played a leading role in the transition from Abstract Expressionism to Pop Art, to describe him solely as a Pop artist would belittle the value of his achievements. Rauschenberg's invention of the "combine painting," collage assemblages of photographs, newspaper clippings, patches of fabric, paper, cardboard, string and even household objects, have given birth to an increased visual dialogue among abstract artists. He has also been active in other creative fields, particularly in the performing arts, stage design and production, and has performed as a dancer with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company.

"I decided the best teaching I could do would be to do my best work... I never quit teaching. I quit academia."

Questioned about his decision to isolate himself on Captiva, as opposed to the cultural nucleus of the city, Rauschenberg responds: "New York is a maze of unorganized experiences peopled by the unexpected. Change is unavoidable. (It is) a catalyst of abuses that exercises the muscles of art. Florida is a tropical, constructive release of primitive extravagances in time, growth, weather, space, and light. (It is) a complement to the city."

Rauchenberg has studied at the Kansas City Art Institute, Missouri; the Academic Julien, Paris, France; and Black Mountain College, North Carolina, with Josef Albers.

At Black Mountain, Rauschenberg studied photography as well as painting and drawing. And, although he chose to pursue the latter, he has kept photographic imagery central to his work. So it comes as no surprise that Rauschenberg has emerged on the scene with a renewed photographic vision. A limited edition portfolio of his early photography was recently published. Last spring, an exhibit of 150 photographs by Rauschenberg was held in the Beaubourg in Paris Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France. His first photography exhibit in America was held in 1980 at THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S GALLERY on Sanibel Island.

We attended an opening at THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S GALLERY, and saw "The Naked Ladies of Pittsburgh," a series of photographs by Frances M. Cox. She describes the show as an "experimentation in nude photography," and a "confrontation with nudity in which a group of six women came to accept their bodies as simply an extension of their own individualized lives." Cox, a nationally exhibited editorial photographer and photography teacher at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh has also documented ghetto life, a West Virginia mining town, a Kikuyu village in East Africa, a Pittsburgh rescue mission, and a Hare Krishna community.

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In Sarasota, we toured the vast grounds and galleries of the Ringling Museum of Art. The expansive acreage around the museum also accommodates the Ringling Mansion, the Circus Museum, and the Asolo Theater. The Museum of Art contains twenty separate galleries housing work ranging from Greek, Roman, and Egyptian sculpture to one of the finest collections of Baroque and Renaissance paintings in the Western world to contemporary

art. The museum is, if you will pardon the expression, a freeze-dried version of the history of modern man, requiring countless days of attentive viewing for one to grasp.

Sarasota is also the home of perhaps a dozen commercial galleries of notable repute. We had time to visit two, the Steven Katzman Gallery, Inc., and a newly opened branch of the I. Irving Feldman Gallery of Southfield, Michigan.

We chatted with Steve Katzman, who showed us around the small, but adequate facility. Katzman's gallery, an instructional facility for photography, represents some of the finest photographers in the medium, including Walker Evans, Ansel Adams, Harry Callahan, and Jerry Uelsmann.

The Feldman Gallery specializes in international contemporary art--primarily paintings, drawings, and original prints by such artists as Joan Miro, Henry Moore, Yaacov Agam, Paul Jenkins, and Andy Warhol.

The St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts, reputed to be one of the finest museums in the Southeast, was our next stop. The museum consists of nine galleries, containing American and European paintings, in addition to Oriental, Pre-Columbian, French sculpture, period furnishings, and decorative arts. An imaginative display of paintings of the last hundred years, from the Impressionist work of Monet, Renoir, and Cezanne, to the contemporary work of artists like Rothko, Newman, and Gottlieb, graces the gallery walls, providing a sweeping transition from room to room, and from period to period. Also on display are the works of some of the giants of the 16th and 17th centuries, including the hauntingly effervescent portraits by Rembrandt and the unsurpassed masterly etchings by Albrecht Durer. As if all this were inadequate, the museum has also accumulated an art reference library, geared for research, of over 5000 volumes, and one of the most comprehensive photography collections in this corner of the country, with images by numerous major photographers including Alfred Steiglitz, Edward Steichen, Berenice Abbott, and Edward Weston.

A short drive later we entered the gates of the main campus of the University of South Florida, in Tampa. Our main interest at U.S.F. was to gain information about GRAPHICSTUDIO, a collaborative "experiment" in printmaking, founded in 1968, under the direction of Donald Saff, a nationally recognized artist, graphics historian, and Dean of the University's College of Fine Arts. The studio was founded to provide the Tampa area with cultural nourishment by bringing in nationally and internationally known artists. Saff, members of the faculty, professional artists, and a number of local and regional interests brought the project from concept to reality by establishing a working studio dedicated to the creation and production of experimental graphic art. During the seven year existence of GRAPHICSTUDIO, nearly 100 projects, mostly original lithographs, were executed. Such artists as James Rosenquist, Robert Rauschenberg, Jim Dine, Philip Pearlstein, Arakawa, Richard Auszkiewicz, Nicholas Krushenick, and Richard Smith brought fresh ideas to an otherwise cloistered academic setting. Saff comments on this point: "I've always been somewhat disturbed by the pontifical approach to teaching. I felt that art teaching that resulted in the production of professional work was an important way to overcome the obvious limitations of the descriptive method."

"New York... is a catalyst of abuses that exercise the muscles of art. Florida is a tropical, constructive release of primitive extravagances in time, growth, weather, space, and light. (It is) a compliment to the city."

In addition to GRAPHICSTUDIO and the College of Fine Arts, the University of South Florida is promoting the arts through ART BANK, a collection of 62 traveling exhibits of original signed graphics and photographs by major artists. Established in 1969 by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts administered through the Florida Development Commission, ART BANK his displayed works by a score of leading contemporary figures, including Le Corbusier, Gene Davis, Ernest Trova, Alexander Calder, Miner White, Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Lindner, Andy Warhol, all the participants of GRAPHICSTUDIO, and many, many others.

We spent most of the next day at the University of Florida, in Gainsville. After touring the College of the Fine Arts and the Department of Architecture, we questioned several students in the graduate program in photography. We were curious about any influence that may have been inherited from their teachers Evon Streetman, Wallace Wilson, and especially Jerry Uelsmann. After viewing their work, which always serves as the best answer to such questioning, we were satisfied to find that all but a few of the students were producing manipulated or mixed media photographic work of one sort of another. Although some influence was apparent, the images were quite individua-

lized. Additions of collage elements, applied paint, textures, and superimposed images, providing a rich variety at the University of Florida.

Although Tallahassee is the State's capital city, and would seem to be a center for cultural and social activities as well as politics, a vague sense of separatism seemed to hang in the air. The geography, the climate, and even the people seemed different. As we toured the Fine Arts Building at F.S.U., and the graduate studio (held in several warehouses of a small industrial park in downtown Tallahassee), our last stop before heading back to South Carolina, we felt the warm Florida radiance dissipate into gloom. The work we saw lacked the freshness to which we had grown so accustomed. Perhaps we had become saturated; undoubtedly, we had been spoiled. At any rate, we knew then that it was time to point the car, burdened with luggage, paraphenalia, pamphlets, books, magazines, catalogues, notepads, and two weary humans, homeward.

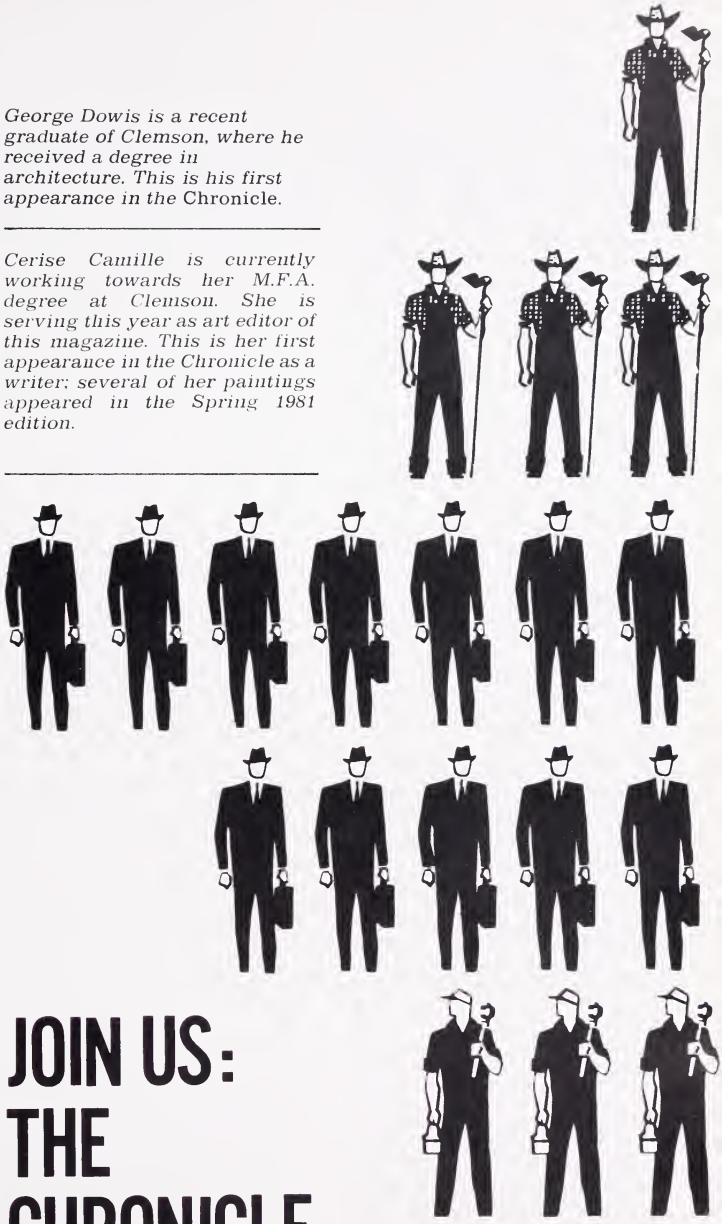
□□□

Maybe other states will take Florida's cue. To quote from *The Maxims of Marcel Proust:* "Only through art can we get outside of ourselves and know another's view of the universe which is not the same as ours and see landscapes which would otherwise have remained unknown to us like the landscapes of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing a single world, our own, we see it multiply until we have before us as many worlds as there are original artists...And many centuries after their core, whether we call it Rembrandt or Vermeer, is extinguished, they continue to send us their special rays."

Perhaps we can all catch a few of these "special rays." □

George Dowis is a recent graduate of Clemson, where he received a degree in architecture. This is his first appearance in the Chronicle.

Cerise Camille is currently working towards her M.F.A. degree at Clemson. She is serving this year as art editor of this magazine. This is her first appearance in the Chronicle as a writer; several of her paintings appeared in the Spring 1981 edition.



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....FOX

Chronicle: Most writers are affected by anything that goes on around them and aren't as quick-starting as you say you are.

Fox: Yeah, well, you get in certain gears. You can screw around and get nothing done, then all of a sudden you get into it.

I just read a book the other day called *Around the World in Eight Days*, published in the '40's, by a fellow named Wyly Post. He died with Will Rogers in Alaska. He trained himself not to think, not to think at all, so he could fly and react to situations. I don't do that, but I think it's better to do your thinking while you're writing, rather than rooting out what you're going to do next and the problems you're in all the time. And by doing that, you come at it with a little more energy, I believe. People are being surprised by your stuff, and that gives you a little more energy. My stuff's light enough where I find it funny enough myself not to worry about it.

I just finished something for a magazine called *Signature*. I did the thing in about an hour. Ten pages long. Flat one hour, one draft, and I sent it up, and they're buying the goddamn thing. It's so easy to write this kind of thing. Listen to how this goes: (Picks up manuscript and reads exerpt)

"How 'bout those Tigers, stopping Nebraska at the Orange Bowl...That's the first time South Carolina has been number one in anything except killer snakes and pre-teen marriages since we fired on Fort Sumter. No, Ira, people around the Exxon Station are so excited they're talking about secession."

Now, that's the kind of stuff you can do like that (snaps fingers). You get right into the kind of slot, you can just roll with this.

Chronicle: Do you edit a lot?

Fox: Yes, more than anything else. And I use a big black mark to make sure (the deleted line) is really out. Once it's gone, it's gone. If you do a thin line through a line, that means you haven't decided whether you're going to keep it or not. When you draw that thick kind of line, that mother's gone, right.

Chronicle: In *Dixiana Moon* your main character, Joe Mahaffey, a young guy, has gone to New York to make a new life for himself. He's trained for his first sales job by a sharp but very lazy salesman, and the salesman gives him this advice: "There's only one way to sell, and that's to go out and get yourself in trouble, and then dig your way out." How close does that advice come to your own philosophy?

"(FOR A WRITER) THERE'S A DEFINITE ADVANTAGE TO BEING UP IN NEW YORK... I TELL EVERYBODY TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE AND GO UP THERE."

Fox: Exactly. It's what happened to me. I met this fellow in New York who said, "This business is so complicated that I can't teach it to you, but if you get in any trouble, I'll get you out." That's the same thing I tell students now, that writing is so complicated, that if you look at all the problems you won't write. Every line you write, hell, there's a thousand decisions there, so you just forget that and go ahead and do it. That's about the way I operate. That's exactly on it. So I'll dig myself into a tremendous hole and then I'll get out, but unless you're in a hole, there's nothing to work with; you sit there with a blank page and don't get in trouble. You have nothing. So I'd much rather see a student or myself make a mess, in total trouble, just crap, then get something. The ones that sit there and say, "Well, what I'm going to do is..." well, then you know nothing's happening. They're not going to do a thing. They'll plan themselves into doing nothing.

Chronicle: Is getting in trouble and then getting out the way you live your life, too?

Fox: Pretty much. I can't bounce too many checks. I mean there are certain things you've got to do. You've got to pay rent and a few bills, but apart from that, pretty much, yes. But not totally. I've got kids and some obligations, right? (Smiles.) I've got a golf game I've got to take care of.

Chronicle: When people talk about you and your writing, they generally refer to you as a local color humorist, comparing you with people like Twain and O'Conner. Do you think that's a fair assessment?

Fox: I don't think so. I don't even like Twain that much. I'm reading *Huckleberry Finn* again, and I just can't see what the damn... I don't know, I just think there are other ways to do it than Twain did. Twain's so damn precious. He's trying to show you exactly how they speak, you know. I don't try to do that.

I don't know how to take myself; I never have. I like being called a comic writer. I don't like saying "humorous" writer, because I like doing a little more than that.

I don't know, because I get very good reviews and very bad reviews, and they're absolutely 180 degrees apart all the time. I'm a hard person to put in a pigeonhole, I think. (He picks up a review from his desk.) This is Garrett's appraisal, very well thought out, I mean, Jesus Christ, it's very flattering. Compares my work to Caulder Willingham, Mark Twain, and Henry James, of all people. And I

never read James. I don't know what they're talking about.

Chronicle: Do you try to find the similarities?

Fox: No, because it just confuses you.

Chronicle: When you start seeing the comparisons?

Fox: No. When I write articles, I realize it's an article. You need a point of view. You need some kind of hook, and whatever you start off with, you finish.

I don't know who you can compare me with. It's certainly not Flannery O'Connor or Mark Twain. I think they're quite different. I tell you who I like better than them is A. J. Liebman, the old New Yorker writer. And I like Garcia-Marquez better than anybody. He's my favorite writer. Had I read his book, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, before I began writing, chances are I wouldn't have written anything. He has done it all, as far as I'm concerned, in that one book. His others don't work, because he's too crazy. He's gotten on the edge and just gone over. But that one book is marvelous. I've read it three times, and I'll read it again. It's the kind of book where you can do this, and I think a book should be like this. I think a book should be able to withstand someone picking it up at any point and reading a page out loud, and *really* getting off on it. When somebody's got some deliberately complicated plotted thing, where the language is flat and dull, and advances the scenery and people, but it's dull to hear out loud, something is missing. But in Garcia Marquez' case, you can read anything and get off on it. And most writers fail that. Occasionally Fitzgerald does it, toward the end, and Joyce does it, but very few.

Chronicle: Is there any writer's work that you particularly despise?

Fox: I don't like Joyce Carol Oates at all. I find that too introspective and wormy. There's a wormy quality about it. She takes everything and examines every goddamn facet. I find that interesting in a sense, but I don't want to be *around* people like that. It's like somebody telliny you a long, long story.

And I don't like people who try to be funny. It's got to come out of the material. These comic writers, like Fran Leibowitz, who wrote *Metropolitan Life*, are interesting for a couple of pages. Then after you read four or five pages, you say, "Oh come off this shit." Everything is milked, you know, and everything is funny. Getting out of bed is funny, putting on your shoes is funny, putting on your socks, everything from the bathroom... These *aren't* that funny.

"HERE'S MY IDEA. I DON'T THINK THERE'S TRAGEDY *AND* HUMOR; I THINK IT'S ALL TOGETHER. IT'S A REAL MIX."

Chronicle: But then you do like someone like Nora Ephron?

Fox: Yeah. I like Buchwald. You wind up liking the people you know. That's what's typical, that's what's weird about this field. I mean, they can write some real crap. Like Vonnegut's stuff, a lot of it's just dreadful, but I know him and like him, and Joseph Heller the same way. And you know what they're trying to do. You know where they've been and what they're trying to break out of. That's what happens.

Chronicle: Is it important to you to write a comic story, or should we sometime in the future expect from William Price Fox the Southern answer to *War and Peace?*

Fox: No. (laughs) You won't get that. No, I don't *try* to be funny, I really don't. I do not try to be funny. But I find things so outrageous, you know. I think things *are* funny. And I think when humor is missing in a piece, there's something wrong with it.

Chronicle: In any piece?

Fox: Any piece, unless it's an autopsy. That should be straight. I mean, some things have got to be straight. Some death scenes out in the coffin would resist anything, but I've seen good Italian movies where the death scene was very funny.

Here's my idea. I don't think there's tragedy *and* humor; I think it's all together. It's a real mix. I think (John) Updike's best book was a thing called *Beck*. It's funny as hell. It's got all the information he wants, but it's funny and easy to read. And very memorable, whereas his other stuff tends to go on too long and it's got a leaden quality about it. But I just think there's so little humor around, that if you can get ahold of it, it's nice, you know.

The kind of obituary I did on Doug Broome was done very well, you know, and it was a funny obituary. He was funny in life, right, so why in the hell should we have a turgid obituary about him? Why not just remember him the way he was?

Chronicle: In your Doug Broome piece, and *Southern Fried*, as well as in *Dixiana Moon*, it's generally funny the whole way through. However, there are some points at which it seems like you're on the fringe of pathos, where funny things happen to *sad* characters. You're on that fringe, but you're very careful not to be there too long and not go too deep into the fringe.

Fox: That's a very good analysis, that's really very true.

Chronicle: How conscious do you have to be to avoid that?

Fox: That's a very good appraisal. Well, I don't like pain, right, so I'll get right to it and I'll

do what's called undercutting. I'll go underneath that or I'll leave the rest up to the reader. I don't think it's necessary to drag stuff out. I'm not aware of it all, frankly. As a matter of fact, in *Dixiana Moon*, where he (Joe Mahaffey) says, "The world owes me a living, zooma, zooma, zooma," he doesn't believe that.

Chronicle: But he *wants* to believe it.

Fox: He wants to believe that, and it keeps him going, you know. It's the kind of thing he keeps saying over and over again. But the very singing of that song makes it ridiculous that he'd believe that. I mean, no one believes that, right? Except a grasshopper. He's too smart to believe that, but the irony's what I like. I do a lot of that.

I'll tell you what I do. My dad drank a lot and did a lot of time in jail. He was not a very good provider but was a genius, a musician, and a linguist. He finished the fourth grade but he was a real scholastic type. He made whisky and he had his own gambling place. And he moved us one time into a house, a live-in attic, four boys and a mother and dad, with the nails coming down. We were on the catwalk for a couple of months. My brothers and I found that so funny. I mean, it was terrifying, but you couldn't stand up straight or you'd hit your head. But it was funny at the moment, right, and when we get together we always crack up about that. And I find *that* is a very big wellspring for me. Things were so awful, and there was so much colossal poverty, but we found it funny. Here we were, very intelligent, bright, sharp kids, living in situations like that. And we kept telling ourselves, "This is only a test. In a few days there's going to be a Cadillac come up from Transylvania and say, "Y'all have suffered long enough. We're taking you back..." That's the kind of thing that can sustain you and get you through situations like that. And without that, you turn into something else. I mean, getting very, very depressed, and turning into the mass murder type, or something.

But I don't think humor's a release from tragedy, I really don't. I think that's full of shit. I think it's part of it. I've talked before about my brother dying. The last thing he said, when he called his wife over, was, "Thumbs'll take care of everything." He called me "Thumbs" all the time, because I'm not very good at mechanics. She said, "What do you mean, 'Thumbs'?" and he said, "Mary, you're in the middle of an inside joke." And that was the last thing he said. He wasn't *trying* to be funny; he just *was* funny. So, that was not a release from tragedy; it was just a part of it. And I think one of the problems we have, in this country especially, is that the philosophy is wrong, that idea that everything is "either/or." It's either funny or sad, one or the other, black or white. The mix of these is so much richer. And you've seen crazy people that do one thing funny and then (snaps fingers) something the opposite.

"...ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE IN THIS COUNTRY ESPECIALLY, (IS THAT) THE PHILOSOPHY IS WRONG, THE IDEA THAT EVERYTHING IS *EITHER/OR*. IT'S FUNNY OR SAD, ONE OR THE OTHER, BLACK OR WHITE. THE MIX OF THESE IS SO MUCH RICHER."

Chronicle: Are you a crazy person?

Fox: (Laughs.) Yeah, I'm right on the damn edge out there. If I hadn't been writing, I'd be behind locked doors with paper slippers, and eating with a spoon. Naw, I'd be selling or something, or in some racket or something. I think everybody's a little crazy. They ran checks on us up at Iowa, you know, all the writers up there. There was a lot of schizophrenia going around there, a lot of it, but it was manageable. (Laughs.) I think you've got to have that.

The sound you hear is such a small wavelength to the available sounds that the dogs hear and birds hear. You take a tape recorder and record just a mockingbird's song, and then slow it down to one-third, it's like a damn full orchestra, you know. We just hear so little of what's going on out there, and we see so little, experience so little, try out so little. But once you get out beyond that, there are millions of possibilities.

Chronicle: We're talking about possibilities. For a writer from the South, are possibilities for his career going to be less than those of a writer who lives in New York

Fox: Yeah, they always will be. Let's take someone for example... Walker Percy would maintain himself anyway, wouldn't he? But he didn't for a long, long time. His novel, *The Moviegoer*, didn't sell, you know. It sold two thousand copies, and it won the National Book Award. Then when they reissued it, had he been living in New York, that book would have sold a lot more. It's impossible, I think, to make a living writing for the magazine unless you live in New York. You hang around Elaine's (in New York), hell, I go there a lot, and everybody's always there. And most of the writers and all of the editors hang out there, or the Lion's Head, or the Algonquin. And you can always find somebody.

Say you're editing *Signature* or *Travel and Leisure*, and you want some writers. You'll say,

"Who's in town?" *Signature* called me the other day and said, "Would you do a piece for us?" I said okay. Now, how they got to me was, the ex-editor of *Travel and Leisure* is now working for them, and I got to *Travel and Leisure* when I was in New York.

Now here's the situation. If you're in New York and you're an editor and want to put together a magazine, it's much easier to call someone and meet them in a bar and say, "How about doing a piece for us? How do you see it, this way or that way? Can you go here?" It's back and forth, a lot of talk.

If you live in, say, Valdosta, and they want you to do an article, they have to send you a letter. Then a phone call, then back and forth. And they have never seen you, they don't know if they can count on you, or if you've got two heads, or if you're going to Bob Jones. They don't know what the hell they're getting into, right, but if they see you and know you've done stuff before, that's a big jump.

Matter of fact, the editor of *Harper's* got Norman Mailer to do that series on the moon shot and the march on Washington, that was strictly at Elaine's, all that. He drank Mailer to death for two weeks, and finally, Mailer just gave in. He said, "God damn, you know, I've got to go with you, because you've spent so much money on me." It's not always that way, but *Esquire, Playboy, Harper's* ... the *Atlantic's* getting that way now. The whole crowd, they're in Boston now, but they're all out of New York. If you're in the magazine business, you need to be in New York. If you're doing books like Percy, that's different.

I just signed a contract for a company called Peachtree Press in Atlanta to do a bunch of articles of mine. I think that's a good idea, because they can sell the hell out of articles down here better than Viking can out of New York; they can promote it through the *Atlanta Constitution. That* may be a new trend, but that's a very risky business, because they don't have the recognition that Harper's or Viking does. A book comes in to the clerk's desk from Viking or Harper's, they're going to review it, right? It comes in from Peachtree, they might say, "What is this? Some damn religious outfit?" Which it might be. (Laughs.) But you've got to be in New York to start off, or L.A., or Chicago. Maybe Atlanta, if you have a column in the paper. There's a fellow named Louis Grizzard who writes for the *Constitution.* His book sold, I think, seventy-thousand copies of that thing. Peachtree bought it up.

But there's a definite advantage to being up in New York, and to think there's not is just folly. I tell everybody to get the hell out of here and go up there. I'll read your stuff, but you've got to be up there for the contacts. And the editors are looking for new writers, that's the thing.

Chronicle: How about California?

Fox: That's as good, for screen writing. You've got to be out there, though.

Chronicle: We're convinced. We're on our way to get a couple of plane tickets to New York now. But before we go, is there anything you could possibly think to add to this interview that we forgot to ask?

Fox: Nope. □

Henry Levkoff is a 1979 graduate of the University of South Carolina where he studied under James Dickie and Mr. Fox. He is former poetry editor of The Crucible, the literary magazine of U.S.C. This is his first appearance in the Chronicle.

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Chronicle's literary issue, of sorts

Fall 1982

Contents

Front cover sketch by Ruth Goodman

Maybe I am a fool, Henry thought as he and Amos moved on through the darkening pines growing close on the brick-hard red road. Maybe I am a fool, because I am here on this mule in the same county I grew up in that is so backwoods the people up in Virginia who were backwoods themselves made fun of me. Here I am and Dan is somewhere in South America. But I couldn't help it. Dan didn't understand. He didn't understand how much I needed to be brilliant.

Henry had been riding almost two hours now, and the sun had gone down and the summer air had cooled a little. A big three-quarter yellow moon had risen, flooding the pine woods around him with a kind of half light and he and Amos shambled on towards the dance. The big moon coming up over the trees seemed not only to light the woods but to quiet them; it seemed to settle an enormous heavy silence on the great dark trees, a hush that flowed down through the branches and came to rest in the thick undergrowth. It was so quiet that Henry could hear the bullbats that had come out with the moon flitting and squeaking in the air above him.

Well, he thought, I have come a good ways and I am almost there and I still have plenty of time. So he got down off the mule to stretch his legs and left Amos standing there in the half-light of the road and walked into the shadows at the edge of the trees. He squatted there in the darkness on the shoulder of the road and felt for his dollar to make sure that he still had it. It was there. If he didn't have the dollar they would probably let him in anyway but it was a point of pride to have it. It showed them that for all his living way out there by himself and never seeing anybody he still knew how to do things right. Squatting there he watched the mule and allowed himself a cigarette out of the store-bought pack he had gotten three weeks ago in town. There weren't but four cigarettes left and he would have to be careful to make them last until he went into town again. He dragged hard on the cigarette and when it was done, he ground it out on the road and walked back to the mule and swung up and Amos started off without Henry having to do anything, started off in his slow shuffling way. Riding on through the night with the moon climbing still higher into the sky over his head, Henry heard a train whistle blow away far off, coming to him through the thick cream silence of the woods and darkness. Must be going through Johnson's Crossroads, he thought, on its way to Augusta. Hearing the train whistle always reminded him of how sometimes they would hear it when they were working in the field, he and his father and Dan, and his father would pull up the mule and listen to the whistle for a minute, just staring straight ahead and listening. Then he would throw his head back and sing out loud enough for the boys to hear, Blow you bastard, blow. Someday I'm going to ride you to the end of the line. Funny how he would do that, Henry thought now. He could just hear the sounds of the dance coming to him from up the road, voices and laughter and the music high and above it all. He urged Amos on. Funny. He never did anything about going anywhere, and would only say that when we were in the field. He'd yell out, and then say, Get up, mule, and go back to plowing like nothing had ever happened. Dan did something though. He caught that train and rode it clean to the end of the line and then went on where it couldn't take him. Maybe I am a fool. Maybe I am a fool for coming home because I could not be brilliant.

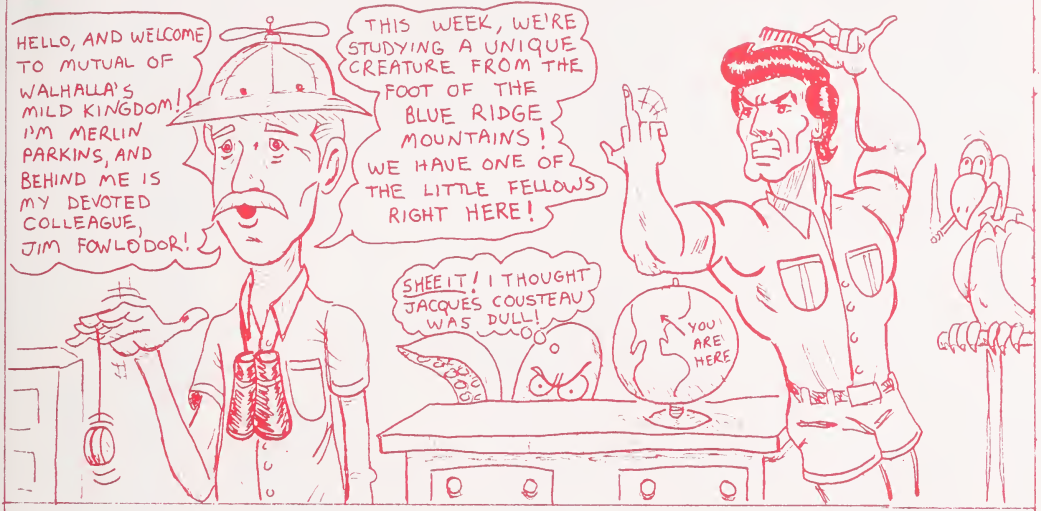
Henry rounded a curve and saw ahead, not fifty yards away, the lights in Hamp Freeman's house and he saw the figures moving in and out, some heading down towards the barn. Going to get a drink, he thought. He saw the people standing in groups and talking and laughing and some of them dancing to the fiddles that called out into the night. And as he rode up into the edge of the yard he felt in his pocket for his dollar. It was not there. He yanked Amos to a halt and the mule protested with a grunt. Henry sat there on the mule in the edge of the yard with the lights from the house almost reaching him and people walking by close enough for him to hear their conversation and did not move.

He did not move for what seemed to him to be a long time and then he slowly put his hand back into his pocket. The dollar was gone. He very carefully and very slowly put his hand in each pocket of the suit and still the dollar was not there. I have lost it, he thought, I have gone and lost it. He sat there not moving with all the commotion of the dance going on around him and no one noticing him yet and thought, well, now I have lost it and I cannot go in. They will let me in but I am not going to go up to Hamp Freeman and say, Hamp, I am sorry but I don't have any money, can I come in? He sat there stock-still with the mule like a statue beneath him and tried to think where the money could be. I had it when I left, he thought, I know I did. And I had it when I got off the mule and smoked a cigarette. There, he thought suddenly, when I pulled the pack of cigarettes out of my pocket, the dollar fell out and I did not see it and it is lying there in the road now. I can go back and get it and be back here in less than an hour. Still he made no move, did not kick the mule up and turn him back down the road. I am sitting here, he realized, because I am afraid. I am afraid I will go back and look and the dollar will not be there. Because what I hope will be won't be, and what I need to be there will somehow have vanished, disappeared, carried off into the darkness by something. The dollar will be gone somehow.

You fool, he said aloud, startling himself. Suddenly he snatched the mule's head around so hard that Amos almost turned back on himself and sat down. Get up, said Henry, and kicked the mule viciously in the ribs, surprising him into a trot. That dollar will be there, it has to be there, I will make it be there, he thought as he bounced heavily on the mule's back. And I am not getting there fast enough. With rising joy he pulled the mule to a halt and ran to the woods where he broke off a large branch. Running back, he brandished it at the mule, saying, I'm sorry, Amos, but I'm going back and I gotta get there quick. He was nearly shouting now, and as he scrambled up on the mule, he did shout and slammed the branch down on the mule's rump. Amos squealed and broke into a clumsy gallop, tail flung high, and hammered down the road, bearing Henry shouting through the pines towards his dollar.

ARTHUR SLADE

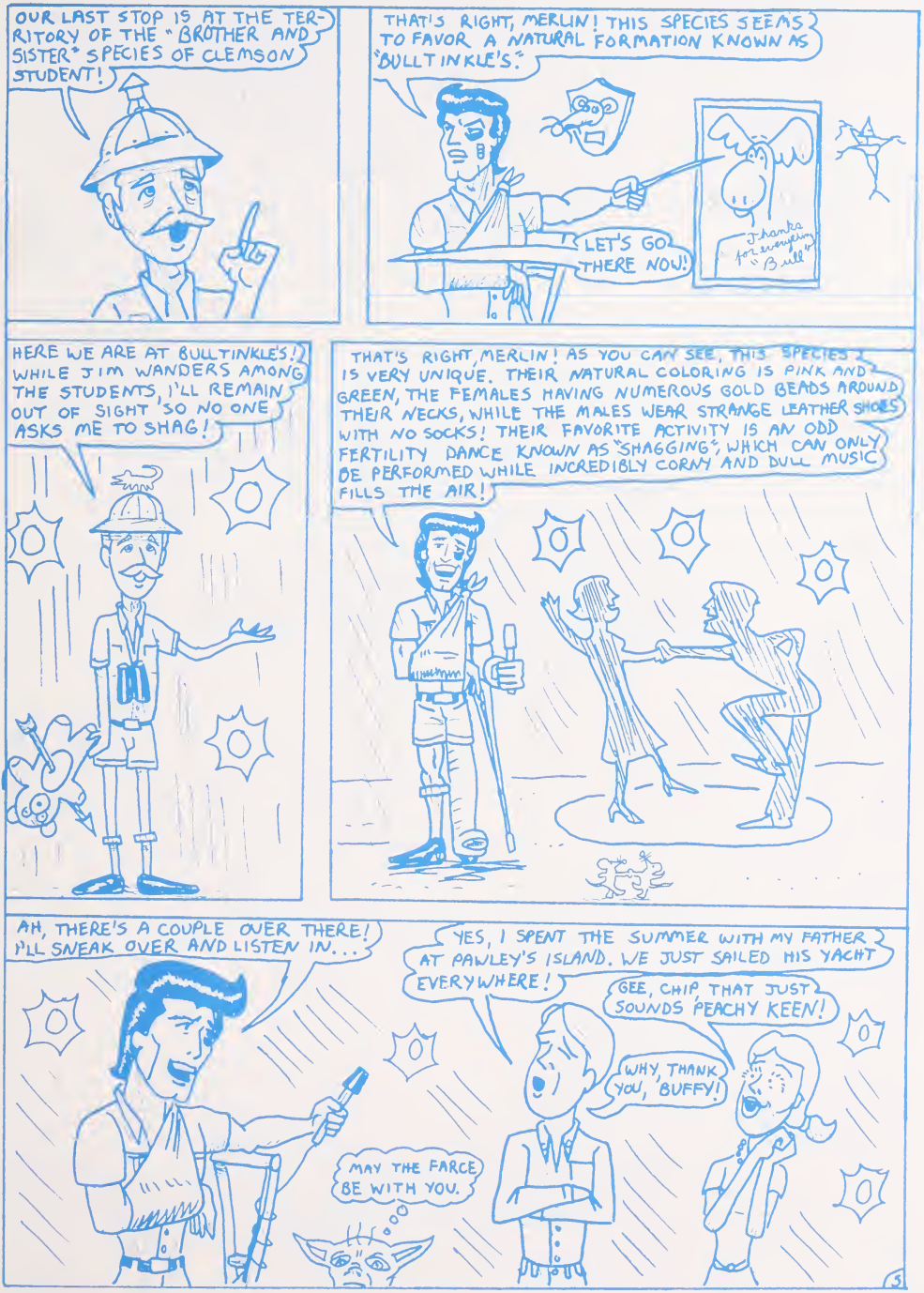
MUTUAL OF WALHALLA'S MILD KINGDOM!




LAST WEEK, MERLIN AND I VISITED CLEMSON FOR A FIRST HAND LOOK AT THE BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF THE VARIOUS TYPES OF STUDENTS!
CONSTRUCTION
SAVE THE AARDYARKS
WANTED SKINNED
THAT'S RIGHT, JIM! WE STARTED OUT HERE, IN THE AREA KNOWN AS "JOHNSTONED," WHERE A HERD OF SPECIMENS OF THE "INDEPENDENT" SPECIES WERE PERFORMING A MATING RITUAL KNOWN AS THE "HALL PARTY". LET'S GO THERE NOW!
NO THANKS! I'D RATHER PASS A KIDNEY STONE!
HERE WE ARE AT THE HALL PARTY! WHILE JIM CONDUCTS THE EXPERIMENT, I'LL STAND OUT OF THE WAY SO NO ONE PUKES ON MY SHOES!
COME ON, BABY, GIVE IT UP! I'LL MEET YOUR PARENTS TOMORROW, I SWEAR!
STAMP OUT VIRGINITY
I'M STANDING OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM DOOR, WHERE IT SEEMS MALE AND FEMALE SPECIMENS ARE ENTERING INTERCHANGEABLY! OF COURSE, THERE ARE THE EVER-PRESENT MIND-ALTERING SUBSTANCES!
"I LOATHE BEACH MUSIC"...
THE END UP
WHERE'S THE KEG?


THERE ARE VARIOUS COURTSHIP RITUALS TAKING PLACE HERE, ALONG WITH WIDESPREAD BRAIN CELL-DESTRUCTION!
HEY! YOU IN THE KHAKI SHORTS! DID YOU PITCH IN FOR THIS PARTY!?
UNNNHH.
WHY, NO, YOU SEE... I'M JIM FOWLODOR FROM MILD KINGD...
WELL, WE DON'T KNOW YOU FROM SHIT!! WE DON'T LIKE FREELOADERS, DO WE FELLAS?!
RONCO
UNK!
WHAT'RE YOU STARIN' AT?!
UH, OH! IT SEEMS THAT JIM IS IN TROUBLE! LOOK OUT, JIM, THAT KNIFE LOOKS AWFULLY SHARP!
-HIC-
CRUNCH!
SLASH!
IKRAK!
PAIN AND SUFFERING
PLEASE DON'T MESS UP MY HAIR...
AFTER A FEW HOURS IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM, JIM IS READY TO CONTINUE WITH OUR ADVENTURE!
YEAH, AND THAT DAMN MUTUAL OF WALHALLA ACCIDENT INSURANCE YOU SOLD ME DIDN'T PAY A DAMN CENT!
NOW, JIM, IS THAT PROFANITY NECESSARY?
OH, EAT A BIG ONE!
MOVING RIGHT ALONG, OUR NEXT STOP IS THE ABODE OF THE "INTELLECTUAL" SPECIES, AN AREA OF CLEMSON KNOWN AS THE "LIBRARY"!
NOT ACTUAL SIZE
THAT'S RIGHT, MERLIN (YOU OLD FART). THIS IS THE HABITAT OF THAT RARE SPECIES OF CLEMSON STUDENT WHO IS ACTIVELY SEEKING TO BETTER HIMSELF!
LET'S GO THERE NOW!


THERE'S A SMALL GROUP AT THAT TABLE THERE! WHILE JIM LISTENS IN, I'LL STAND OVER HERE SO I DON'T GET AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX!
HOW TO SPLIT ATOMS
THAT'S RIGHT, MERLIN! AND THEY'RE SPEAKING SOME STRANGE TONGUE I CAN'T TRANSLATE
YOU MUST DIFFERENTIATE THE INTEGRAL OF THE DERIVATIVE IN ORDER TO DEDUCE THE COEFFICIENT OF FRICTION 'K'.
I KNOW, BUT FIRST YOU MUST COMPUTE THE ISOSCOLES OF THE AZIMUTH RADIOLARII.
AS YOU CAN SEE, MERLIN, THIS SPECIES SPEAKS A LANGUAGE KNOWN ONLY UNTO ITSELF.
SSHHHH!!!
EXCUSE ME I'M JUST CONDUCTING...
SIR, YOU'LL SIMPLY HAVE TO BE QUIET!
I KNOW, BUT YOU SEE, I'M JIM FOWLODOR, AND...
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM, MA'AM?
THIS MAN REFUSES TO BE QUIET, OFFICER!
NOW WHAT'RE YOU STARIN' AT?
IT SEEMS THAT JIM IS AGAIN IN TROUBLE! WATCH OUT, JIM! THOSE POLICEMEN ARE FROM PENDLETON, AND THOSE SHOTGUNS LOOK AWFULLY DANGEROUS!
NO PROBLEM, OFFICERS! I'LL JUST BE RUNNING ALONG...
HALT, OR WE'LL FIRE!!
BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!
PLACE FOR RENT
AFTER A FEW DAYS OF EXTENSIVE SURGERY, JIM IS READY FOR THE LAST LEG OF OUR JOURNEY!
DO NOT OPEN BEFORE X-MAS
DAMN MUTUAL OF WALHALLA!


OUR LAST STOP IS AT THE TERRITORY OF THE "BROTHER AND SISTER" SPECIES OF CLEMSON STUDENT!
THAT'S RIGHT, MERLIN! THIS SPECIES SEEMS TO FAVOR A NATURAL FORMATION KNOWN AS "BULLTINKLE'S."
LET'S GO THERE NOW!
Thanks for everything "Bull"
HERE WE ARE AT BULLTINKLE'S! WHILE JIM WANDERS AMONG THE STUDENTS, I'LL REMAIN OUT OF SIGHT SO NO ONE ASKS ME TO SHAG!
THAT'S RIGHT, MERLIN! AS YOU CAN SEE, THIS SPECIES IS VERY UNIQUE. THEIR NATURAL COLORING IS PINK AND GREEN, THE FEMALES HAVING NUMEROUS GOLD BEADS AROUND THEIR NECKS, WHILE THE MALES WEAR STRANGE LEATHER SHOES WITH NO SOCKS! THEIR FAVORITE ACTIVITY IS AN ODD FERTILITY DANCE KNOWN AS "SHAGGING", WHICH CAN ONLY BE PERFORMED WHILE INCREDIBLY CORNY AND DULL MUSIC FILLS THE AIR!
AH, THERE'S A COUPLE OVER THERE! I'LL SNEAK OVER AND LISTEN IN...
YES, I SPENT THE SUMMER WITH MY FATHER AT PAWLEY'S ISLAND. WE JUST SAILED HIS YACHT EVERYWHERE!
GEE, CHIP, THAT JUST SOUNDS PEACHY KEEN!
WHY, THANK YOU, BUFFY!
MAY THE FARCE BE WITH YOU.
5


AS YOU CAN SEE, MERLIN, THE CULTURAL PATTERN OF THIS GROUP BORDERS ON NAUSEATING!
HEY, YOU! WHO YOU CALLIN' NAWS.. UH, NAS.. UH, WHATEVER YOU SAID!
INFLATE TO 75 LBS.
I ♡ VIOLENCE
IT SEEMS THAT ONCE AGAIN JIM IS IN TROUBLE! WE FORGOT ALL ABOUT THE MOST AGRESSIVE SPECIES, KNOWN AS THE "JOCK". WATCH OUT, JIM! THOSE JOCKS SEEM AWFULLY IRRITATED!
LISTEN, FELLAS, THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE! I'M JIM FOWLODOR!
OH YEAH? WHO DO YOU PLAY FOR?!
WHILE JIM TAKES THE BEATING OF HIS LIFE, I'LL SLIP AWAY UNNOTICED!
THAT'S WRONG, MERLIN! YOU'RE GONNA BITE THE DUST THIS TIME, ASSHOLE!!
HEY, FELLAS! GET THAT OLD SKINNY GUY IN THE SAFARI HAT! HE'S THE SPORTS DIRECTOR FOR ABC!
CAN I HAVE THE KHAKI UNDERWEAR?
I WANT THAT HAT!
I WANT HIS TEETH!
RIP
THE END
THAT'S OUR SHOW FOR THIS WEEK, FOLKS! BE HERE NEXT WEEK FOR MUTUAL OF WALHALLA'S JIM FOWLODOR SHOW! AND REMEMBER, JUST AS I STABBED MERLIN IN THE BACK TO TAKE OVER THIS SHOW, MUTUAL OF WALHALLA WILL DO THE SAME FOR YOU!
SO WHERE'S BOLLWINKLE?
-FINIS-
GILLESPIE

Svenson

Trickling mold and algae grew over the fountain in Philadelphia Square, and sunlight seldomly shined over the ancient, skyward buildings. Traffic seemed of an older, lesser age, few cars, mostly street cars and bicycles. Soiled, repulsive pigeons flocked around a still body and pecked uncaringly at the cracked pavement around the waterwell. The street was full of slow motion shoppers, pedestrians, birds, music, and laughter. It was silent. It trickled.

Svenson wore a dirty, white garb with dehydrated Jello on the collar and throat-searing medicine on the right sleeve. He sat at the waterwell's edge and recounted his life. His dizzy head slumped in his hands and the eyelids grew nearer to the ears. He counted the hair on his wart and stood.

He noticed the mechanization around him; the ever-dragging civilization he often excused as dreams. He thought surely he was better than what he saw.

A glaring white woman approached him.

"Can I help you find something?"

She was a stocky old thing, a nurse or something, at least eighty or a hundred, Svenson thought. Her hair was clean, and her body was intact, but she smelled of spoil. A smell Svenson learned to hate.

"Excuse me, sir, are you feeling alright?"

She seemed a nice civilized machine, concerned, but too persistent. Svenson hated her and eventually she walked away.

A young boy came troddling by, the way young boys often troddle. He was small and cute in his own, serial number way.

"Hey, Mister?" the boy said in a slight, post-baby garble.

The boy was very dirty, like most boys, Svenson thought. The boy squinted at the sun behind Svenson's head. His nervous gaze reflected the solar brilliance onto Svenson's eyes.

"Hey, Mister, you seen my ma?"

The boy was attractive, at least. Svenson despised boys. The boy walked away, unperturbed.

A pigeon stepped near his shoeless foot. Svenson reached for its neck, and was pecked. The bird was treacherous, missing a toe, smut in its feathers, dying. The pigeon seemed to growl at Svenson in sheer, statical hatred. Svenson loved birds. He grabbed quickly, and broke gently, its thin neck. Svenson managed a sardonic smile.

He returned to the sanitarium to watch T.V.

D. M. McMinn

ONE MORE FAREWELL

One more farewell
to this I've come to know
I say
with reluctant
unsure eyes
even a possible tear
falling
for unknown futures
and remembered, special pasts.
A long trek
takes me from those
shared in such a way
never understood
so strong, trusting
like no others ever
and based on beliefs
of love and spirit.
What more could one ask
in times of uncertain growth
light in darkness
colored individuals painting life,
each rare
appreciating true self.
Now leaving I see
mist of light greyness
penetrating sun
pines like centurions
guard the bounding road.
Bright flames dance
in light of last night's fires
crashing waves
changing times
a turning away so evident
faced and unfaced
lingering doubts
enjoyed honesty sings
bringing . . . maybe hope.

Don't I hear
the songs of last evening?
(Love Song, Teach
Your Children,
For All the Lonely People,
and Where Are You Going)
Bringing, in candle light
rushes of all
I know occurs
with this farewell.
Wait . . .
I fear
it has become so unprecious,
life.
Is that not
the bird of freedom
I struck
with my speeding car—
going where?
In realization
I drive on doing nothing
for the small creature
yet crying for the act.
Flashes of pictures
clearly felt,
new comfort,
rising, setting suns
of burning orange
(reminder of the month).
Sleepless days
so few minutes
wanting endlessness
but knowing.

Desires, compassion,
conflicting emotions
but new awareness
questions old attitudes.
I thank you
departing mystery
for making all
we're living.
Not perfect, no,
but supportive and caring
in a world so cold.
Also for your listening
to my new honesty
and saying special words.
Though often I doubt
your realness, I know
creating is becoming.
Your leaving will be
damning but so,
I cry for the new
to be at all as good
and I trust abilities.
Not even that's important
now
for though still feeling
strongly,
the tears of last night's mass
I turn to new worlds
and worry their effects.
Improvement or regression
to inner self and doubt?
One said it was my choice
but
decisions are weakly picked.
Another gifted me
such support
in awed admiration, and
I loved
but alone,
cold hatred disbelieves
driving confidence away
leaving only . . .
emptiness.

The road goes on
putting north world far behind
fate's begun taking over again
and another farewell's been said.

I came upon you
holding audience in a crowd
dressed in garb of black
trimmed white here and there.

You stood so still
I watched your eyes
and transfixed,
by mere irony.

Here was one
acting out my game
among the many who stood
ignorantly gazing.

The crude observers did
not know how to respect your act
only I understood
and faced you honestly.

Foolish few did dare
approach too near,
remarked stupidly
and grounded eyes at your gaze.

You did not respond.
I accepted the absence
in your acts and stares
then took it to heart . . .

Knowing.
One mirrored look
I did need
to see what I've become.

So I was defined
by one soul—performing
speaking with a glance
you told me—

All I am living,
the life of a clown.

(paint smiles on white face
send out among the millions
make laughter and joy
show what it's about, life
true self unrevealed
lost
beneath make-up, wig.
Unnoticed will be
all that you nightmare in daylight
all that you scream in dark night.
Be the clown
the mime
control what you portray
present it to the world
and watch the applause begin
minus one tear)

To the one who never
said, "here" when given call
who learned so much
from her short time
had a rare gift to
the pre-arranged world
but who always
teetered like a carelessly
thrown book on
the edge of a shelf.
Now see how she lays
like a child's
broken rattle
all in pieces—
none too important
alone,
crying not,
making no noise,
lost but not worthy of repair,
she says—
for what's redone is
never the same
and what would this
patched rattle do,
but wait . . .
to break up
again.
Besides
how quickly she learns
to become the play toy
of fixed works around her.
Shakes not the same
this abused toy
who made noise
at the world,
now she
can be held
only carefully,
in the palm of a hand,
not a fist.

AMPHITHEATRE

Don't we sit
quiet and meditative
like still lifes
accosting a kitchen wall,
in the shadow
of lighted fountains
between snatches of
something to make us more?
Alone though
all of us are.
Even those with each other
share only so much—
an embrace is but an instant
and that empty singularity
remains . . .
Though we smile
cheerful laughs
we are always
caught, somehow, in between.
So many motives, questions.
We lay like pulling taffy
unwrapped
waiting the finish,
the ultimate unknown.

by C. Blair Palese

One special hour
or two
we spent.
Funny.
What I gave and took
in such short time
equals a lifetime
with well known faces.
Yet—what do they matter?
How time ran for us—
on a new, unnatural scale
like in a wink of an eye
you were there
then not.
See how the summer fades now
and memories glow dimly
but warmth in a lonely heart
burns always, somewhere.
I read your words
think strange—that last night
didn't we wander somewhere
between friendship and more?
Isn't mystery catching—
like giant statues in the sky?
What a pair, we two.
Me departing on artificial wings
praying I have the strength
to keep them attached
and fly life's course
without crashing.
You piecing life with gentler eyes
not crediting enough
I think
to your gifted talent
to live, love, share.

Is it confusion—
is that what we commoned?
Perhaps.
Plus maybe,
facades of sanity
that we both
exploded for each other
in bright blazes.
A difficult thing
I'd have to say.
You picked up the pieces
so carefully
and left me
portraying a strong castle
towering.
But me,
no architect,
say forgive.

Now we stand
for us,
lifetimes apart
but with me you follow
and with you I stay.
When my lost soul
craws, crying
light my eyes with your caring
and understand.
Then
life will spin on
and for a time
will be free
of unexplained darkness
that has caged you and me.

Vivid stripes
from sun-drenched blinds
standing there
female
dressed always
in the most bizarre
yet alluring.
Layers on each of all kinds,
but most alarming
stunning,
that expression
more than the face
multi-shaded, ornamented.
What it paints
in one snap
would take words
a hundred fold,
says
touch me not—

I am reflecting
as such beauty
as mine will do.
Stroking that shape
the most different, like no other,
as waiting
for the world to notice.
And it does.

Then there are others, real
reaching for it—
that amazing image—
so worshipped.
But as we
turn, pose, dress, make-up, reflect—
no one sees;
too busy
reading magazines.

What am I
but lost emotions
fighting never to win.
Cold strengthening ambition
reaching sometimes
for a touch of more
turning off whatever was there
now not knowing what once must have been.
Struggles to be, to have, all
in the confines of a limited world.
To fly without wings
to create colors never seen
to hold on to the setting sun
running the world in chase
never to let it fall.

There are dreams
I say will never be
and I hope I believe.
I fight reality
but
when I see that statue
of the gilded Madonna
standing vast before me
don't I believe
that all heaven could be
is dreams come true?
Nothing more or less,
and think—
only living to die
is my heart's continuing.

I've heard the songs
seen the paintings
feel strength in them all.
I cry tears for unknown pains
then stop short at those
of my own.
I put on the face
I think will bring happiness
whatever that may be.

I've reached not to find
and wonder—
is there hope in my cold eyes
for anyone or myself?
Conflicts go on
no matter what I achieve
and comforts are few.
Satisfaction's one I never see,
setting goals on distant stars
and struggling with the case of stairs
that climbs in empty space.

Come what may
I live for it all
and I live for nothing.
Being yanked in every direction,
my misshapen form continues
to breathe, to beat,
to smile, and cry.
Stay back, kind love,
for fear and hate and search and pain
drive me to what is.
Answers are lost
setting suns light my eyes
dark pools reflecting nothing.
I don't move
but hang in limbo
wondering . . .
what next?

PINK BEACH

What brought us to that moment
none will ever tell,
a pink lit sandy beach
did shine just for us, the few.
We waded in the pastel waves
reflecting subtle skies
and in one soft moment
I stopped—to reach inside myself
searching . . .
for one rush of emotion
to feel the beauty of it all.
But no, I did find nothing
of tears of joy
to cries of confusion
not even, a thankfulness
but only sorry I've failed
at such a simple age.
I've lost myself
in barriers without end
till now,
I'm so far down
I am
beyond hope of return.
If given only one small chance
to cross that burning bridge
would I go to find it there
or run away in fear?
The chance is none
and I don't know
if worth it it would be.
But only that one perfect night
was wasted all on me.

more by C. Blair Palese


R 217

Michael L. Puldy

The Fall

The light from the window filled the room and etched out the weathered creases of his face. His eyes were closed, and his long lashes covered the red circles on the edge of his eyelids. The long, straight nose, the proud erect chin, the taut cheek muscles, they all stood out like features on a statue. I had seen his face many times, but, in a way, I was seeing it now for the very first time.

"What are you studyin' on?"

In scrutinizing features, I had failed to see his eyes open. For a moment, I was startled, and we sat staring at one another. Although his eyes were red from sleep, they seemed to see through me as if he were searching for the answer to his question inside my head. I had heard the expression "piercing eyes" all my life, but I was only now realizing what it meant.

He seemed to find whatever he was searching for, and he broke his gaze.

I started to answer his question, but it seemed academic now.

"How you been, Grampa?" I half shouted at him. Ninety-eight years of faithfully carrying vibrations had left his hearing a little shopworn.

"Very well," he replied in a monotone voice. He always replied this way no matter how he felt.

I hated having to shout at Grampa. It seemed ludicrous that a man should be so reduced by age as to be the object of people's howling. I guess nobody ever said that life isn't ludicrous.

Uncle Wade had once tried to rectify Grampa's hearing trouble with a battery-powered hearing aid. After half an hour, Grampa threw it out. "Dang thing makes too much racket," he had said.

I remembered how everyone had laughed about Uncle Wade's "fancy transistor radio." Hardly a Sunday afternoon passed that we didn't hear the story retold.

Sunday afternoons were a special time then. We'd pile in the car after Sunday morning worship service and drive through the country to Grampa's weatherbeaten farmhouse. I remembered thinking that it was the biggest house I'd ever seen. It doesn't look so big anymore. It's kind of disappointing to watch the walls deteriorate and the overwhelming vastness of the house diminish. Sundays aren't the same anymore. No more Grampa's house. I haven't been to morning worship in a while either.

"You can't go home again."

Thank you, Thomas Wolfe.

Once I asked my father why everybody went to Grampa's on Sunday afternoon. This is what he told me. "It's a family tradition."

I thought we went to keep Grampa company. But, after everyone had eaten dinner, all the women would help Grandma do the dishes and talk about that day's sermon or last week's DAR meeting. All the men would lounge around the den and manage to slip in a few fishing stories between smoking cigarettes and falling asleep. Grampa just sat in his rocker with his cane across his lap, saying nothing.

You were right, Dad.

Grampa pulled the blanket down with his long, crooked fingers. His sinewy wrists revealed a former strength that, like his hearing, had failed with age.

Dad said that he still couldn't picture Grampa as an invalid. He saw him with his overalls on, helping somebody raise a barn or driving a mule-drawn plow, while Dad and his brothers broke the ground with hoes.

"Those were the days," Dad always said.

It's funny how a man's childhood gets better as he gets older. Dad cusses about having to mow the lawn now.

I pictured Grampa sitting in his rocker by the potbelly stove, cane in lap. I had known a different man.

"I want to talk to you, Bobby," Grampa said as he sat up. "You know, I ain't gonna be around this old earth forever, and before the good Lord calls my name, I want to give you something."

His words tired him, and I watched as he caught his breath.

"There are some old tools of mine in the barn at home. Nothing fancy, just a saw, and a claw hammer, and a couple of other things. I used to do pretty good work with 'em when I was your age. Maybe your Daddy's told

you about that? Anyway, I'd like you to have 'em."

"I'd be honored," I said in my most humble tone.

"What?"

"I said, 'I'd be honored.'"

"What?"

"Sure," I shouted. The object of people's howling.

He leaned to one side, making the light strike him more directly. Once again, I was aware of his face. His strong face. It wasn't a virile, glowing strength like that of a young man's face. It was more of a subtle resignation, as if he didn't care if his taut cheek muscles fell and exposed his cheekbones, like those of other old people. But his face had been turned against the wind so many times that it didn't know how to fall.

"I told your Daddy to pick up those tools. I told him to get my old shotgun off the mantle, too. He liked that gun a lot when he was a boy. Maybe he'll give it to your children one day. I'd like them to remember me."

He breathed hard. I'd never heard him talk so much.

"Anyway," he continued, "I wanted you to have something to remember Grampa by, too."

I felt my Adam's apple swell.

"You talk like you're going somewhere, Grampa."

"I am, son. I'm goin' somewhere fine. Somewhere that I can have a big house with fine, strong walls. I never much cared for big rooms. Too many people crowd into 'em, and you never know who belongs and who don't, but nothin's finer than strong walls. That's the most important part of a house. Oh, sure, everybody talks about the foundation being strong, but a foundation ain't squat without strong walls to keep wind and rain from gettin' in where it can do real damage."

His erect chin dropped a little.

"You still doing' good in school?"

"Yes, sir," I managed to choke out as my swollen Adam's apple grew larger.

"Your Daddy was always smart, too. You've got a good family, Bobby, a good foundation."

"Yes, sir, I know."

Once again he searched my face for a response. Maybe he hadn't heard me. I'd forgotten to shout. His eyes no longer penetrated me.

"I'm going to sleep now. I've talked too much. I'm lucky the good Lord has let me talk so much. Most men aren't so lucky. By the time they figure out what to say, it's too late. Their time's up."

I wondered if I would have something to say before my time was up. It's a shame that a man who has known life for 98 years dies and is replaced by somebody like me, who's a stranger to life. Somebody who hasn't lived long enough to have anything to say. Nobody ever said that life isn't ludicrous.

"You go on home now. Your mama's probably waitin' supper on you."

I wanted to say so much. I wanted to tell him that I had come to see **him** on all those Sunday afternoons. I wanted to speak, but my Adam's apple wouldn't let me shout.

Grampa's eyelids closed.

"Your Daddy coming tomorrow, Bobby?" he whispered.

"Yes, sir," I managed to say.

"Tell him not to bother."

My Adam's apple seemed to burst, and my vision blurred.

As I turned to leave, he heaved a breath.

"You get those tools, Bobby . . . and, Bobby?"

"Yes, sir?"

"Build strong walls."

He exhaled, and for the first time his taut face seemed to grow tired. I thought I could see his cheekbones through the skin.

I turned out the light and closed the door.

Outside, the sky had turned gray, and the rain splattered on my cheeks. I was glad the other visitors saw only raindrops rolling over my face. Then, I had a silly thought. "Maybe nature cries when it beats down strong walls."

As I stepped off the walk, the sun began to break the clouds.

Lee Plumblee

I feel tense and homesick at the same time. The German countryside here is so stark. The city buildings are gray; the people look unhappy, and one place looks just like the other. I can't imagine how these people can stand these living conditions—there is so much in the U.S. that I take for granted. Never again will I feel that I have it bad.

So begins my first impression of East Germany. I wrote these words in my journal the first day we drove inside the border. I was traveling with four other Clemson students, two German professors, Edwin Arnold and Patricia Wannamaker, Dr. Arnold's wife and two children, and Dr. Wannamaker's husband, an accounting professor.

There were ten other people with me and yet I felt all alone.

It is very hard to explain my emotions while experiencing the Communist systems for ten days. I will say that whatever the range of my emotions, they were always strong. I wrote more in my journal during these ten days than I did the other twenty-three days of our trip.

I found out that the East Germans had to wait at least ten years for a car once it is ordered. Their cars are very small, so small that they looked more like playthings than the luxury transportation that they are to these people. We were touring in our western cars, a Volkswagen van and an Opel. I wrote in my journal: "The people stare at our West German cars like they are so special—our cars must seem extravagant to their toy-like cars."

The people here are also very limited in what they can choose to eat. I thought of our numerous grocery stores and supermarkets at home which sell so much assortment of food. Here it is quite different. There are very small, old buildings which sell limited quantities of fruits, vegetables and meats. The foods are of poor quality compared to our standards. In one store window I counted twenty oranges which were a brownish-orange color. I couldn't believe that these people had so little from which to choose. I noticed at the meat shops that there were long lines of people waiting outside. We would see them line up early in the morning when we started our tours. We found out that there was an extreme shortage of meat because the Russians had ordered most of the meat to be sent to suffering Poland.

I must say that we ate in some of East Germany's finest restaurants, and never once did I enjoy the meal. At one restaurant I found a large, live grub in my salad. It is ironic that since we were American the East Germans were trying to give us their best. (We always got meat served at our meals, but it was frequently tough or full of fat.) They wanted us to believe that their Communist system really worked.

Another startling difference between the U.S. and life behind the Iron Curtain was the environment itself. There was an immediate change in the scenery once we crossed the border. The countryside lacked a luster—it seemed void of any abundant life. The cities, with the exception of East Berlin, were simply unattractive. The buildings were a dirty gray; many were in ruins. I had the feeling that the people took little pride in their surroundings.

I had a chance to get a sense of how the young people feel here when I went to a discotheque in Dresden. One boy I danced with asked me in broken English about the American lifestyle. He had such an urgency in his eyes as if he wanted to know whether or not the rumors about our country were true—Did we really oppress our workers? Do the whites really hate the blacks as much as he's heard? I was disturbed by the fact that this boy could know only what his government tells him about America. He would never have a chance to read one of our newspapers or a book about our country. He was not free to search for the truth. Whatever his government tells him is the only truth he would ever know. And from what he told me, America sounded more troubling than his country.

Of course, the most disturbing experience I had, besides visiting Buchenwald concentration camp, was riding along the Berlin wall separating Communist East Berlin from the free West Berlin. Our group had planned a one-day excur-

Journal of East Germany

sion into West Berlin, and through extensive checks and delays, we were finally allowed to board a train taking us out of the East.

I felt very uneasy in the train station because guards with submachine guns were patroling high above us in the loft of the station. I could see silhouettes of figures with their threatening weapons slung over their shoulders. I realized how committed the government was to preventing its citizens from leaving without permission. I learned that it is not until a person reaches the age of 65 that he is free to leave the country if he wants. This seems an obvious age for the government to let go its control, for this is the age when the citizens are due their pensions. Naturally the government would encourage those to leave who could contribute less and yet were due for more.

This passage in my journal describes the process of our getting into the West and what I saw of the Berlin Wall: "A lot of trouble to get over to the West—much waiting, lines, screening of passports and questioning. Saw nothing but old people going to the West. I wondered if for some this was the last time they'd be in the East, leaving their homes, families and friends behind. We saw the wall while on the train. At one point the border is in the middle of a lake, so just below the surface of the water the East Germans have placed barbed wire to prevent anyone from swimming for freedom. Found out that recently a little boy had tried to swim the lake, but as he struggled, bleeding and drowning, the West Germans could do nothing but watch in horror. They could not take the risk of going out to save him because the boy was in neutral zone where anyone would be fair game to be shot.

"On top of one wall, I saw rolling bins which prevented a person from grabbing hold to hoist himself over to the other side. After that wall there was another wall with jagged glass on top where one would place his hands to grab hold. On one neutral 'no man's land' I saw numerous beds of nails and mine areas."

Witnessing something like that and then trying to convince myself that it was really 1982 and not 1945 was an emotionally draining experience. At one point while we were still on the train we passed a part of the wall which had apartment buildings built directly behind it. We saw a young boy in the window of an apartment waving furiously at us until we were well out of sight. I wondered how his parents would ever be able to explain why he couldn't ride the train with those going to West Berlin.

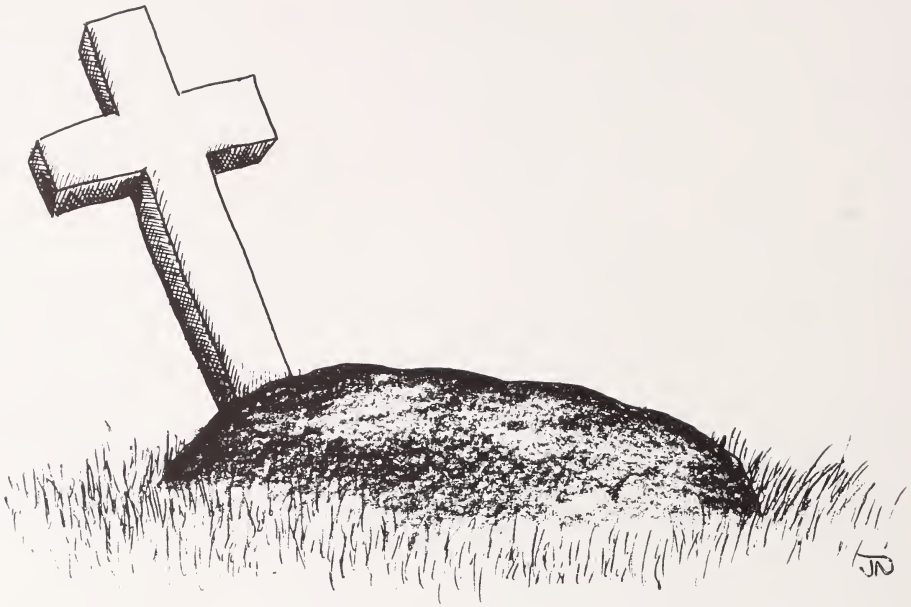
I must add that one freedom which I highly prize and which I regard more as a basic right than an honored privilege is the freedom to worship my God. The many churches we visited in the East were void of both spirit and people. The majority of the people here are atheists. The government not only encourages atheism, but also sees it as an advantage because then the people can devote full service to the state.

There is so much more I would like to share about my trip behind the Iron Curtain. The most accurate description I could give is this concluding passage I wrote in my journal towards the end of our stay in the East:

"I never considered myself lucky to have visited such a destitute land, yet some luck lies in having had experienced, firsthand, life behind the Iron Curtain. I saw a country of grim-faced, unenthusiastic and paranoid people of which one commented, 'We are prisoners [of the Soviets].' I talked directly with some who openly revealed that they felt captured and drowning in the Communist system. These East German people, who at the beginning of this century considered themselves free, were today observed and admitted to be pawns in the Soviet game of expansion.

Many with whom we had opportunities to speak were very eager to talk, and yet at the same time were literally looking over their shoulders in case an informer to the government might overhear. I was emotionally and physically exhausted after my ten-day visit because of the harsh differences between the Communist East and the free West."

NANCY SNOW



Uncle Deke died on March 30 and was buried on the first day of April, otherwise known as April Fool's Day. We received the news over that most impersonal and objective of inventions, the black plastic telephone which resided stably next to a dispirited-looking philodendron on the table by the kitchen door.

A distraught female voice informed my father late Wednesday night that Deke, "the great and noble spirit," had passed away earlier in the day while plucking mealybugs from the undersides of his zucchini leaves.

"Great" was no exaggeration, for Uncle Deke weighed no less than 437 pounds. Apparently his mighty heart had stilled during the vigorous gardening ritual he undertook every morning from eight until twelve.

My father, being the emotional and deeply sensitive individual that he is, sleepily mumbled the replies expected of him, hung up the phone, climbed back into bed, and promptly forgot the whole incident.

Of course Uncle Deke's death could not be put to rest so lightly. We were expected, as members of the family, to be present at the funeral, and so early Friday morning we piled into the car and headed down the road.

We arrived in Georgetown at twelve that morning after a relatively peaceful ride and proceeded to St. Peter's Episcopal Church on the corner of Magnolia and Washington. Or rather, we tried to proceed. The city of Georgetown had apparently changed somewhat in its layout (or somewhat in my father's mind) since the earlier years when he had last visited the city.

After traversing up and down countless unfamiliar streets, my mother suggested, albeit somewhat timidly, that somehow my father had made a wrong turn, and while we certainly weren't lost, perhaps we were just a little misplaced, and maybe my father should stop at the next gas station and ask directions.

My father's reply was abrupt and to the point. "I don't need any help. I can drive this damned car myself. When I need help I'll ask for it."

Feeling compelled to reply to this brutal and totally unwarranted attack I chimed up from the back seat, my voice oozing with sarcasm, "Yeah, you're certainly doing a wonderful job without us."

This clever remark elicited surreptitious, approving chuckles from my brothers and sister.

My mother turned around and glared at me angrily, her eyebrows drawing together in furious punctuation to her unspoken remark.

I'll never understand why my mother feels compelled

THE FUNERAL

to support my father in these irrational bursts of anger. After all, my father is the one who is wrong! But support him she does.

"And we don't need any help from you smartasses, either!" my father roared.

My brothers and sister and I retired in injured silence, our ill-deserved wrongs hanging heavily in the air of our '79 Chevy van. Our parents, however, did not seem to notice the ominous quiet, and so we continued our travels for approximately ten more minutes, finally stopping at a conveniently-located Exxon station so my father could ask for directions to the church.

We arrived at the church at approximately 1:30, barely half an hour before the ceremonies were to begin. The church was filled with people. A wave of somber greys and greens and browns spilled from the doorway and splashed outward onto the green lawn. All told there were over 400 mourners present that day.

Deke Andrews, M.D., apparently had been a well-loved and respected member of the community. Surviving Deke, and present of course at the funeral, were his wife Jane, his daughter Beth, and his only son Fred. Also surviving but not attending was another daughter, Sarah, who due to diminished mental capacities was unable to be present at the funeral.

We alighted from the van into the milling milieu, somehow forged our way through it, and ascended the steps of the chapel.

After paying our sincere condolences to Aunt Jane, who looked somewhat better than could have been expected, (we later found out she was under the calming influence of seven bourbon and Cokes consumed earlier that morning) we were seated.

Uncle Deke's casket loomed like some enormous black specter in front of the altar, dominating and subduing the gentle Christ depicted on the wall behind it with the sheer power of its enormous size. Even Jesus Christ could not compete with Uncle Deke's awesome bulk.

Uncle Deke's son Fred was nowhere to be seen, but his daughter Beth was seated directly in front of us.

"Isn't it just terrible?" she said. "I don't know what Mama'll do now."

"Well, at least he died doing what he liked best," replied my ever-practical mother.

"Yes," said Beth, "that's nice. I'm glad he was in his garden when he died. Isn't the weather nice?" she added as an afterthought. "It's so nice of all these people to come. It means so much to Mama."

Beth was not first in line when the good Lord handed out brains. In fact she probably wasn't in line at all, but what Beth lacked in intelligence she made up in good intentions.

Everything was "nice" or "good" or "fine" to Beth. My father had once remarked that someone could present Beth with a nice, fresh pile of dogshit and she'd reply in all seriousness, "Why, what a nice pile of dogshit."

She had left home at the age of twenty-four to take a job as a file clerk in a small firm, and had failed miserably. After a disastrous love affair with a disreputable shoe salesman, she had returned home, never to venture out on her own again. Safe from all the evils of the world, Beth spent her days producing intricately knotted shrimp nets constructed from nylon string, and caring for her sister Sarah who was fond of producing burping and farting noises at inappropriate moments in conversations, drooling in half-empty Coke bottles, and other equally attractive practices.

As Beth concluded her edifying and perceptive insights, the funeral proper began, promptly at 2.

It was a serious, long, drawn-out affair, tedious and overdone in its supposed solemnity and import. After all, Uncle Deke was dead and he certainly didn't care about any of it.

Apparently everyone else did though because the church reverberated with weeping and wailing and snuffling, crying and snorting, and all the other terrible sounds of lamentations people make when in misery or whatever state they happen to be in. My brothers and sister and I were all mildly amazed and slightly aghast at this great reservoir of emotion gushing forth from this assorted group of people.

We concluded, after observing a monumental black woman, similar in proportion to our recently deceased uncle, whose great lowing bellows echoed to the very rafters of the church and threatened to shake the foundations on which the august structure stood, that some people simply enjoyed funerals. They were a wonderful way to get out and express yourself. After all, there she was back in the sixth row, moaning, and rolling back and forth, and bleating, and apparently having a grand old time.

We decided that out of the 437 people present at the funeral only three were truly sorrowful. Those included my brother Scott who had been suffering all week from a bad case of diarrhea, my Great-Aunt Gertrude who had had a large, inflamed boil removed from her posterior the day before and was no doubt somewhat uncomfortable on the hard wooden pews, and a small baby in the fourteenth row who wailed throughout the entire proceedings.

Uncle Deke's son Fred was also unhappily occupied because of the funeral, as we found out later. He had, the night before, been embroiled in a terrible argument with his mistress who threatened to leave him if he did not immediately divorce his wife, Chris, and marry her. The thought of losing his plentiful, ardent, and giving mistress on one hand, and his gentle, obedient, affluent wife on the other was about all Fred's slightly less than average brain could handle.

My Aunt Jane was far too mellowed, due no doubt to her earlier-ingested bourbon and Cokes, to be fazed by anything.

Beth found the whole ceremony "nice," which wasn't too surprising.

The rest of the crowd seemed to be there because it was expected of them, out of curiosity, or from lack of anything better to do.

The minister finally concluded his oration and the pallbearers stepped forward and took their places on both sides of the coffin. They knelt and lifted. And lifted. The strain of Uncle Deke's 437 pounds rapidly became apparent on their faces. Tightly knotted backs and bulging calf muscles evidenced this. Spasms of pain flashed across the pallbearers' faces. Their eyes bulged and beads of perspiration trickled down their foreheads, which were laced with pulsing blue rivers of protruding veins. Ever so slowly the giant casket began to rise, hovering in mid-air almost like some newly-created miracle.

The pallbearers plodded slowly down the aisle between the two columns of people.

"Boy, I'd hate to be them," said my brother Scott. "They should've just rolled 'im down the aisle."

I felt this remark to be inappropriate under the circumstances and jabbed Scott as hard as I could in the ribs with my elbow.

"Bitch," he said.

"Dumbass," I replied.

"Shitface," he retorted.

"Pisshead."

He punched me in the stomach.

I kneed him in the nuts.

"Cut it out, you two," my mother snapped. "This is neither the time nor the place."

What was the time or the place? She did not say, and I did not ask. Neither did Scott.

The weather was no longer "nice" when we moved outside with the other mourners, en masse, to the gravesite.

It had turned chilly and rain seemed imminent.

"Aren't all the flowers nice?" said Beth. "It was so nice of everyone to send them."

The grey clouds hung in heavy silence, closing persistently in on us while a slight wind puffed half-heartedly, seemingly unable to get up quite enough strength to really blow. It seemed appropriate funeral weather.

The casket was delivered, with no small effort, to the grave. A small crane slowly began lowering Uncle Deke into the grave.

Suddenly I realized Uncle Deke was really gone. Nothing was left. The whole day suddenly seemed like a macabre joke. Up to that point, the funeral had seemed kind of like a game, a play on life. I had thoroughly expected, at some appropriate moment, Uncle Deke to pop out of his casket, dressed in his favorite old shirt and pants and waving a zucchini in his left hand, and yell "April Fool's!"

The casket sank out of sight and an old, wizened black man dressed in baggy, dirt-stained, cotton pants, began shoveling the warm, sweet-smelling earth over the coffin.

ALLEGRA JENKENS

BEACH SCENE

The ebb and flow of the waves
Are like your breathing—heaving
Yet even, subtle yet so clear.
(I am aware you are near.)

I watch as your chest fills and falls
And I think of how nice it would be
To become a force which would make
Your breath quicken at my presence.
(Are you aware I am near?)

Your form is sculptured like a shell—
Beautiful though—smooth curves of skin
Stretch taut as you walk.
I want to feel those curves
As I now touch the ridge of this shell,
Caressing and stroking each dip.

Come on, take me on
Like you do the chilling waves—
Never stopping to feel the cold,
Just the sensation.

I am near, and though at first
I make you shiver,
I will soon like the ocean
Make you warm.

98.6 FM

Turn the volume up.
I want to hear that music past.
Cat, if you're listening,
I'm still waiting on the peace train.
But you know trains these days—
You just can't set your watch to them.

What I hear now has no depth.
It's all skin talk.
I'm talking skin deep, soul depth.
(Like the difference between a scratch and a cut.)

Music past makes me bleed.
I flow with emotion.
(I hear a song—it sounds like me.)
A retrospect knife carves feelings
Into me identical to grooves gone by.

Groove on, oldies.
Your message will never fade.
(My scars will never heal.)

Let me tell you,
I'm bleeding now to an oldie
To which some other bleeder
Will say, "I second that emotion."

by Nancy Snow

YOU WILL NEVER KNOW

A cloud rolls up into the sky,
Carrying my dream on high,
A mellow day, grass so green,
Daisies with a scent so keen.

Another day I am with you,
Such days! They are so few,
Thy holy person I ache to touch,
Yet would it really mean so much?

You notice my wild dancing eyes,
The trembling glance which quivers and dies,
A smile that won't go away,
'It must be love' you say.

That day grew into night,
My love supplied the light,
You touched another all night long,
And I fought to keep my evening song.

My love is big, my love is strong,
But still you wondered what was wrong,
Could it be that I can't take,
Loving you for your own sake.

They told me he was dead
And I in bed ill with flu
Closed my eyes.
Death, the invisible black reality
Had taken my love away
To another place.

It was a blood clot, they said,
A freakish accident that killed
My beautiful Bob.
I lay listening to the heavy rain outside
My throat and head constricted
With tortuous pain.

Should I try to pray?
Or eat the food on a waiting tray?
Why do anything?
Death, like birth, can be premature
And who am I to wonder why
Bob has died.

WHEN YOU ARE THERE

When you are there beside me,
It is no strain to see
The flashes of love that dart
Into the air which keeps us apart.

Something inside me quickens with joy,
Blood runs thick, I playfully toy
With the concept of suddenly letting go,
And finding myself in Ecstasy Row.

I have seen the finest picture,
Climbed the highest hill,
Heard the sweetest music,
When you are there.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

She moves gently through time
Seeming to caress the very air
With her presence, unconsciously sublime
Yet humble in her touching care.

Being with her at any time
Wrapped in soft, fleecy clouds
Is to become at once divine
Concealed behind Love's misty shrouds.

The silent hum of work undone,
Of wicked wind unseen, unheard
While torrents rage outside
And I so safe, so warm within.

My head it throbs, as I immune
To life around, above, below,
Seek to expiate my soul
Through love and yet more love.

Books of knowledge lie
Scattered
On my shelves.
Dry monuments of past
Endeavor
Waiting to be the
'Chosen one.'
Wisdom whispers softly
In some tomb
Its garb as sober as
A nun.

Yet listen closely, for I have found
A precious gem, sparkling and glowing,
Its radiant hues o'er tumbling in
Sweet opaque joy.
Unconscious of its greatness,
In humility it trembles and throbs—
The heart
Pulsates its wondrous message of
Love.
Eyes that see,
Open in delight, entranced
By this gem.

But what is this marvel?
It is you, me, us,
We ourselves.

I thought I saw a chasm
In the depths of deep despair
A black hole in the darkness
Going I knew not where.

I stood above the chasm
Looking down, down below
And at that very moment
I heard a voice say, 'No.'

The chasm opened wider
Is suicide a sin?
Then suddenly I was outside
Watching me jump in.

Who is she with trembling foot
That moves toward death's door?
Then the chasm disappeared
And I am she no more.

THE RESTLESS SOUL

Sitting still and reading in solitary state,
Filling the mind with imagery to escape
From reality! Responsibility is tedious,
As is the self when thoughts extraneous,
Cover intent and still action.

by Judith Shepherd

The 1975 staff reenacted the Last Supper for that year's Taps group shot.

A history of the Chronicle

*Above is a F**K button as it appeared on the front page of The Tiger. The buttons were worn by editor Robert Wheatly following the burning of the Fall 1969 Chronicle.*

The Chronicle magazine has been surrounded by an aura of rebellion in recent years. The center of several campus controversies during the 1970's, Chronicle editors seemed to court the disfavor of the administration by running controversial material and almost allowing the magazine to lose its status as a funded organization. The late Dave Roberts, 1975-76 editor, told a Tiger reporter, "We will print anything The Tiger and Taps won't." But these incidents are just a small part of an intriguing history which began in 1897, nine years after Clemson opened.

The original Chronicle was a product of the Calhoun, Columbian, and Palmetto literary societies and editor Gordon Wiggins. The first Chronicle was a 6×9 affair with poetry, jokes, short stories, a column of campus news, and ads from local merchants. The only campus publication for many years, the Chronicle served as literary magazine, newspaper and yearbook until The Tiger and Taps were founded.

The magazine was published in this small format for most of its thirty-five-year existence, though from 1921 to 1923, and from 1925 to 1927 a large magazine size was experimented with. It was put out on a monthly basis until 1929 when, for reasons unknown to this Chronicler, the magazine was abandoned.

Over the next thirty-two years, while The Tiger and Taps flourished, the Chronicle faded further and fur-

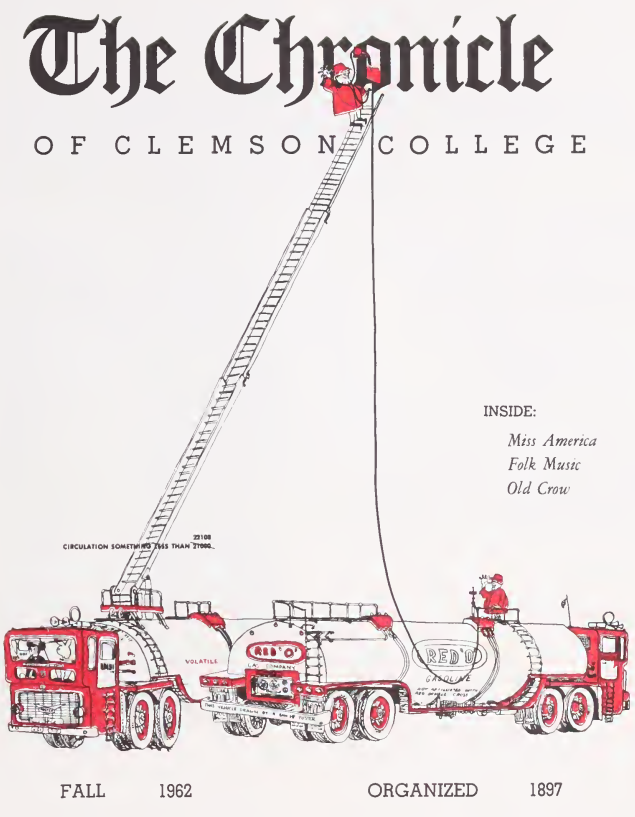
ther into oblivion. In 1960 a student named Jesse Owen Allen sent out a plea to revive the Calhoun Literary Society. Though at first it was known as the Clemson Literary Society, the group soon reverted to the historical title. The turnout was not tremendous, but it was large enough to get the society reformed.

The group began a feature in The Tiger known as the Clemson Literary Section, a biweekly, two-page tabloid with jokes, stories, cartoons, etc. This feature appeared in The Tiger from the spring of 1960 through the early part of 1961, when the Society's president, T. C. Wheeler decided to revive the Chronicle as a separate publication. (When the society was reborn, its advisor was a young author and English professor named Mark Steadman. He was instrumental in the return to a magazine style, and has been with the Chronicle ever since.)

The first magazine appeared in the spring of 1961, and it was an instant success. Wheeler and the Calhoun Literary Society decided to publish it on a regular basis, setting a goal of four issues per year—a goal which was rarely reached. The Chronicle prospered during the sixties, if it did suffer from an identity crisis, and in 1963 it was one of two college magazines to be awarded All-American honors by the American Collegiate Press Association.

The reborn Chronicle sported a true magazine format complete with photography and use of color. In 1966 a reorganization resulted in the Chronicle becoming a fully funded campus organization, independent of the Calhoun Literary Society, and experienced growth during the latter part of the decade. The sixties saw only one incident in which the administration forced the staff to change a magazine before it was distributed, something that was all too common to Chroniclers of the seventies.

The incident occurred in the fall of 1962, when Bill Metts was the editor of the magazine. Jerry Poster, the art director, designed a cover which illustrated two gasoline trucks manned by Mickey Mouse, the Playboy bunny and Chronicle's mascot.



The cover of the Fall 1962 Chronicle, above, became a center of controversy when it was discovered that the license plate of the truck at left had a hidden message. The staff agreed to scratch out the license plate on each copy before distribution. This cover also shows the red "O" slogan popular during the sixties.

Just as the magazine was about to be distributed, someone informed Dean Walter Cox that the license number on one truck (6-21-3-11), when converted into letters, spelled out an explicit sexual act. Dean Cox requested, and the staff complied, that the magazine not be put out until the license numbers were scratched out by razor blade on all copies. The magazine was finally distributed in April of 1963. With the exception of this one event, the Chronicle entered the seventies with a bright future before it.

As the fall issue of 1969 was about to be distributed, printers R. L. Bryan, Inc. encountered a word they thought unprintable in the spring issue which they were then typesetting. This issue was not, oddly enough, a product of the Chronicle staff. In order to save time, editor Robert Whitney had the staff prepare the fall issue, and assigned the spring issue to the Clemson Literary Workshop.

Cox was informed and he told the

printers to abandon the spring issue. Subsequently, someone burned all the copies of the fall issue, although it did not contain anything offensive. In defiance of this action, Chroniclers under editor Robert Wheatly began wearing buttons in the fall of 1970 which read "Chronicle Censorship" with a large "F**K" in the middle.

Not known to miss a good story, The Tiger ran a front-page photo of the button with the caption "*UC*". Dick Harpootlian, then editor of The Tiger, later apologized under pressure from the ever-vigilant Cox.

In the spring of 1974, co-editors Tom Johnson and Gene Troutman found themselves very short on staff members. According to former editor John Madera, the two expected their Chronicle to be the last ever, and proceeded to put out "a large, special, farewell edition, signed and numbered." The magazine appeared, but Johnson and Troutman distributed only about 2,000 of the 5,000 which were printed. The other 3,000 have been found in such diverse places as Johnson's downtown apartment and a mobile home in Pendleton.

As a result of this incident, the Student Senate Finance Committee did not give the Chronicle funding for the 1974-75 year. The following fall editor Harold Lee, along with staff member David Roberts, went before the Senate and asked for emergency funding. The Senate denied Lee the $12,000 which he requested, but did grant him $9,000 for a "rebuilding period."

As the seventies ended, the Chronicle was once again embroiled in a dispute over the magazine's contents, this time involving two nude photographs which editor John Madera and his limited staff had approved for publication.

A representative for R. L. Bryan found the nudes when he was going over the layout of the magazine, according to Madera, and told Susan Deloney, dean of student life. Deloney and Cox had a meeting with Madera and his staff, which Madera described as rather bizarre.

"Dean Cox wanted to protect our 'goody two shoes' image, so the state would not cut funding for the campus media organizations," Madera said, during a recent interview, "yet he rejected a gray, non-erotic photo [by Bob Brown, a candidate for a master's degree in fine arts] and accepted a much more arousing picture [by architecture student Leslie Wade]. We always thought that said something for his taste in women."

Although they did not want to get involved in a legal fight they had no chance of winning, Madera claims that the staff did get in touch with the American Civil Liberties Union as an indication that they were not going to take things lying down. Madera maintained throughout the incident that both photos were an integral part of the magazine, but R. L. Bryan didn't want to print either of them.

This is the nude approved by Dean Walter Cox as it appeared in the 1980 Chronicle. A second nude originally included in the magazine was successfully blocked by Cox.

Asked if he expected any trouble about running the photos, Madera replied: "I thought that it might cause some problems, but I also thought that since times had changed since the previous occurrences of censorship, no one would complain. Besides, we weren't running the pictures in any spirit of rebellion. They were just a part of the issue."

After another round of discussion, Madera decided to put out one large issue in the spring of 1980, which the printers completed with no further complaints, not wishing to risk losing Clemson's business. The spring issue was printed containing only the one nude approved by Cox.

In the past few years, each issue of the Chronicle has been quite a bit different from the previous one, but during the sixties and early seventies several features did appear on a regular basis. A humor page was found in nearly every issue in this period, as well as a feature known as "Gentleman's Choice." The latter consisted of photos of Clemson co-eds in various settings around the area. "F-Stop" was for a long time the showcase for photography and the "Chronicle Gallery" contained much of the artwork submitted to the magazine. A column called "Wavemakers" highlighting outstanding members of the university appeared regularly in the late sixties and early seventies.

Chroniclers also have used inserts quite cleverly in past issues. The spring issue of 1971 featured a four-song record on which members of the staff sang such classics as "On Rainy Days" and the Who's "Tommy." This issue also featured a modern art poster. The April 1972 issue included the Chronicle Multimedia Inter-Dimensional Hypercube, a cut-out and fold-up figure of bright red and black. The Spring 1980 issue, which contained Leslie Ward's nude photograph, also had a poster insert. And the spring issue of 1979, in response to the very popular Alpha Tau Omega pin-up calendar, included a calendar of well-built Clemson men.

The Chronicle has also had a fascination with gimmicks in its 22-year history. One gimmick has been the use of a mascot, or emblem for the magazine—the first one appearing in the fall issue of 1962. A small, bald man in mediaeval garb, carrying a French horn, he was nicknamed "Hornecophillus" by the staff. In the early seventies a fat duck became the mascot of the magazine. He was shown blowing into

a strange, twisted tuba, which had some saying from this period (e.g., "Far Out" or "Right On") coming out the other end. The most recent mascot, a small monk carrying a walking stick and some scrolls, appeared in the middle part of the last decade.

Other gimmicks involved unusual covers. The cover which contained the offensive license plate also featured a red "o" in the word "Chronicle." Inside the magazine was an explanation. For months the staff had been putting up signs urging people to "look for the red 'O'," and this was it. The "red 'O'" slogan was used several times during the sixties. Also, the March issue of 1969 had a totally white cover, no doubt inspired by the Beatles' White Album that appeared shortly before the magazine was put together.

The controversial spring issue of 1974 was unusual in several ways. As previously stated, those copies which were distributed were signed and numbered by editors Johnson and Troutman. Also, due to a bookkeeping error in which the inside front and rear ad spaces were sold twice, the magazine had an added paper cover. Furthermore, it was the

This elderly monk was the mascot of the Chronicle during the mid-seventies.

largest Chronicle ever put together (104 pages).

Other issues of interest include the February 1975 magazine which focused on American culture, the Spring 1976 production which was dedicated to the Bison-tennial, the Spring 1981 issue which was oriented around feet and shoes, and last year's Chronicle, which was filled to the brim with airplanes. The only parody issue in the history of the Chronicle appeared in 1965 and was entitled Plowboy. Complete down to the ads ("What sort of Kid reads Plowboy?"), and featuring a dairy cow as the centerfold, it stands out as one of the most carefully planned and edited issues of the last 22 years.

If the magazine itself has been through changes during the last 10 years, so has the typical Chronicle staff member. John Madera, the editor in 1979–80, and a four-year staff member, gave some insight into this subject during a recent conversation with this Chronicler. Madera recalled some of the differences in the 1975 staff that he was on as a freshman and the 1980 staff which served under him when he was editor.

"The seventies were at their peak at Clemson in 1975, so the staff was mostly concerned with putting out a very radical product," he said. "My first meeting as a freshman took place in the Chronicle office before the University Union was remodeled. It was a trashy looking place with beat-up furniture all around, and graffiti on the walls.

"The staff was sitting around on the floor, most of them having extremely long hair. Some of them turned out to be gay. The meetings that year were characterized by bull sessions in which people just ran wild with ideas, many of them incredibly stupid; that was where we got a lot of our ideas for stories and features."

The 1976 staff celebrated the Bison-tennial by crossing the drained library pond.

Overall the staff was dedicated and met their deadlines most of the time, a problem which Madera was faced with during his year as editor. When he became editor he was faced with a small staff, who were not all that dedicated to the magazine. "We only had one really gung-ho staff member that year," Madera reminisced. "He was our art director, an architecture major. He would stay up late all the time to get something really perfect, but even he was likely to miss his deadlines."

Missed deadlines resulting in late magazines, or even absent magazines, have continued to plague the Chronicle up through the eighties, causing the administration to reevaluate the necessity of the magazine. Concerning the future of the magazine, editor Sha Sifford said, "Hopefully we'll have one."

WILLIAM F. STEPHENS

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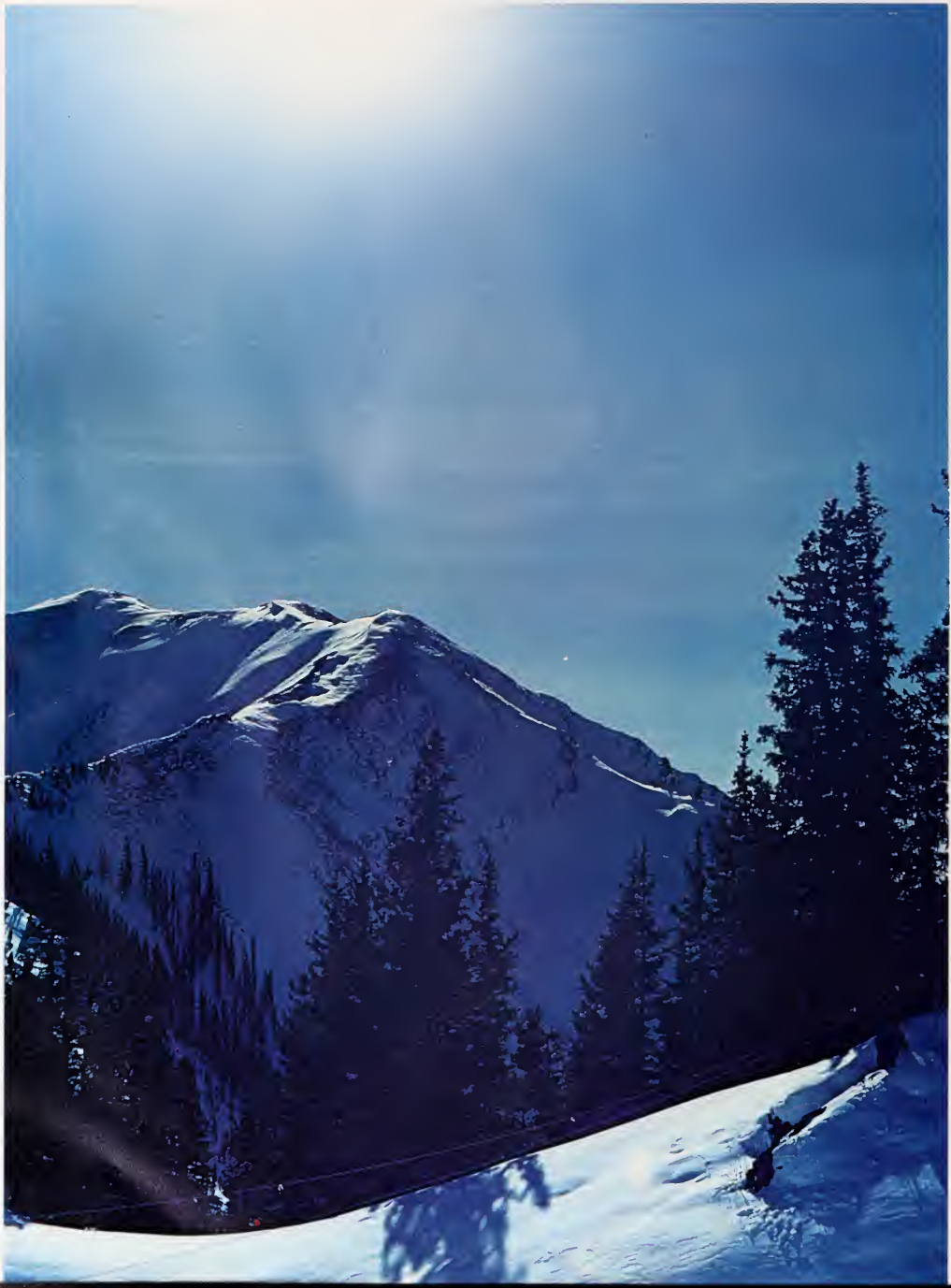
Chronicle

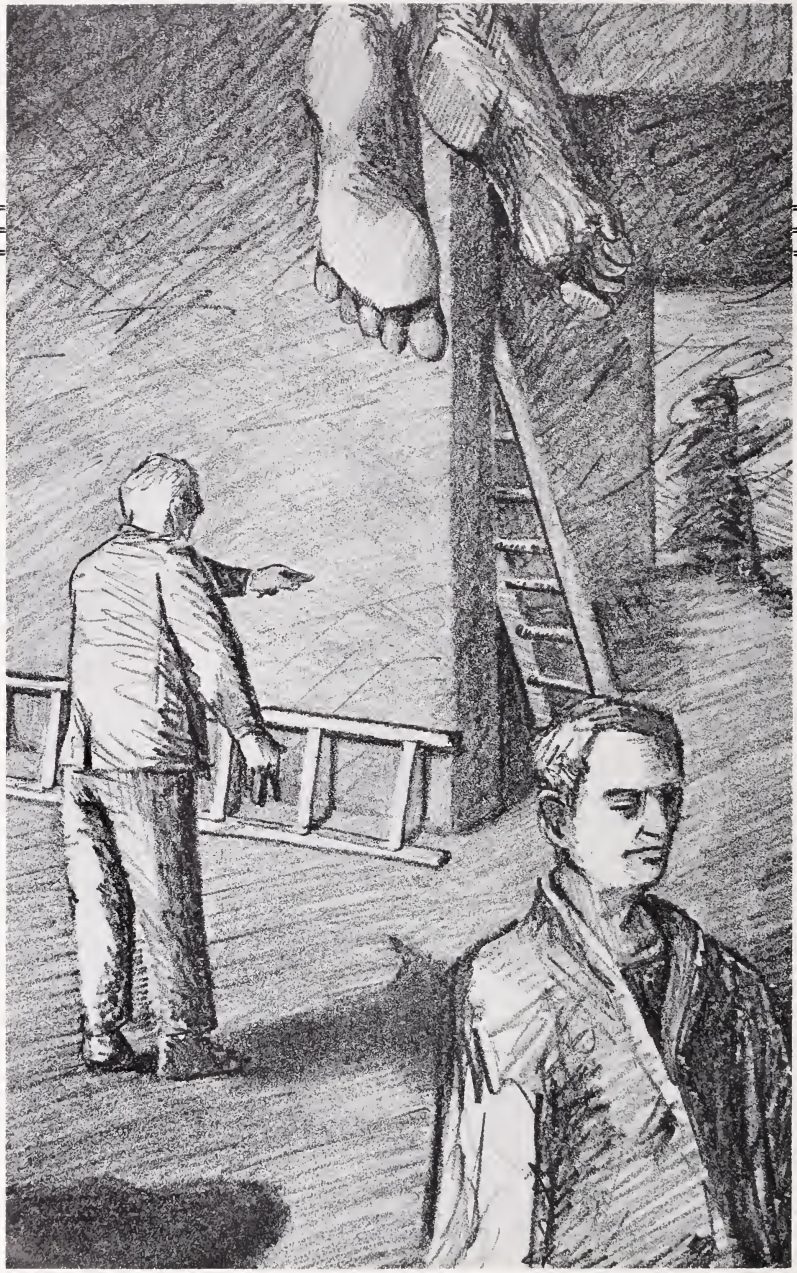
Chronicle



The Aspen Mountains, Colorado

Michael L. Puldy

Todd Beck



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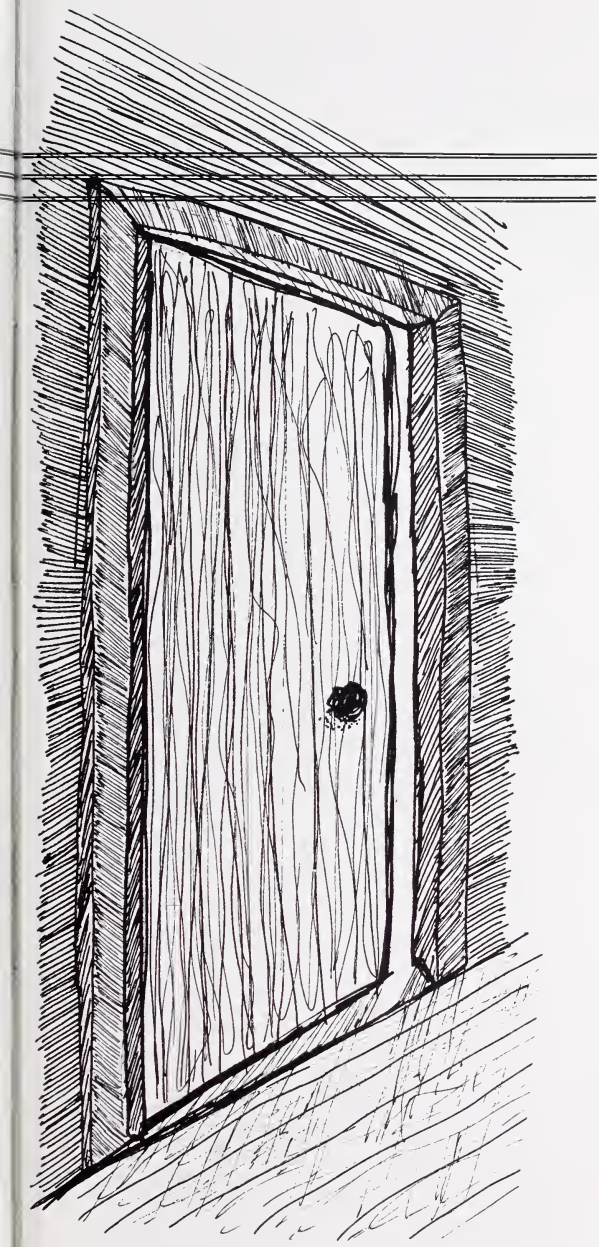


The boy was the first awake as usual. But he had gotten used to that. In fact, he liked it that way. The early morning minutes of solitude used to scare him, but now, at seventeen, these moments rushed him like a great flood.

In one sense he hated to be the first every day, to realize the condition he and his parents were in. The room always stank. It would never be rid of that pungent cloud of filth, human filth that became a part of him because he was born of it. He knew other people's lives weren't like this.

He rubbed his face in circles, hard around his eyes, and stretched the morning stiffness from his arms and back. His bare feet swished across the gritty floor as he made his way to the window. The rust and corrosion around the window made a terrible screech as he forced it open in jerks, but the noise was not nearly enough to wake his drunken parents. With the window open, the sour smell of perspiration and mildew combined with the thick noxious air of the city.

Even at daybreak, the city had a fair amount of bustle. It was just a hum, but it was so constant. By midday it would be a deafening roar with heavy construction always underway, buses hissing to stops, horns blowing, motors revving, an occasional siren blaring loudly then fading away, and the constant buzz of people shuffling in the street filling any possible quiet gaps. But the morning, that's what got to Bruce, because the hum was endless. It was like the powerful rumble before a storm promising to burst forth in full force. Bruce had become both intrigued and horrified by this power. It meant to him that people were always out there with something to do, always going somewhere with somebody, and everyone seemed to have a purpose. He wondered about himself getting out there.

He plopped back down on the flat bedroll to enjoy the last few minutes of peace before one of them awoke. He flipped his pillow over to feel the cool underside against his face. He could look at his parents together, asleep but never touching, and half imagine peacefulness. They appeared content, but sometimes his father was not there on his side of the bed. Bruce knew he was passed out drunk somewhere but he never asked about these nights of absence. His father would have lied anyway; he knew nothing else.

"Bruce, shut that goddamn window, boy!" his father called in a croaking morning voice.

"Why? I like the fresh air—this place needs it," Bruce mumbled back nervously.

"Well, if you like it so damn much, get on out there in it. Go on, get out if you don't like it in here. If your blood's too good, leave. You ain't helping nobody around here anyway."

The truth of his father's last words pounded Bruce heavy in the chest. His father turned over with his back to Bruce and mumbled, "Fresh air, shit. Sounds like a bunch of goddamn street noise to me."

Bruce knew more than he wanted to about his father. That his filthy, gambling way of life couldn't leave him. He would never do much of anything and Bruce knew

that. He lived with it. His father was part of him. But Bruce dreamed of the days when he could greet mornings with the innocent optimism others enjoyed. He was scared of the shadowy darkness their room always had. He rose quickly from his bed now and began to dress for work. His only thought was to get away from his parents soon, even if it was only for the day. Work allowed him a place to go and gave him something to do, but, ultimately, it let him forget himself. Someone else had bought his time now and expected his work. He liked that simplicity.

"Bruce," his boss called, "we got another truck coming in – get that dock cleared off now!"

"O.K., I'm just about finishing with the morning shipment."

"Good work, but hump this one through. We've got to get this order out today or the man will be on both our asses."

"Alright." Bruce jerked up his work pants and shoved his sleeves above his elbows. His work sped up noticeably.

He loved the feeling of achievement and the belief that he was needed. Gary, his warehouse boss, seemed to sense this and always acknowledged his work. Bruce tried to please Gary and working hard seemed to do it. If he could only protect this and not let even the tiniest part of his family ever come into work, he could survive.

Mr. Burris owned the company that Bruce worked for. It was a very prosperous electrical supply warehouse, and Burris gloated over its success. Other than his morning ritual of meeting Catholic mass and a high-stake poker game the third Thursday of every month, the man was never distracted from his business. He had never married, had no brothers, no sisters and his parents had long been dead. His life was eaten with profit raising, cost cutting, and account opening. He did everything necessary to keep that sign permanently fixed on the old warehouse building:

BURRIS ELECTRIC SUPPLY, INC.

He lived in a high-class apartment, but inside was white and artless. Profit wouldn't change that. Mr. Burris owned two other branches, but Bruce had never seen either. In fact, he knew very little about the man or his business – there was so much distance and Bruce felt every bit of it. He had been working for almost a year and sensed that soon he would have to face Mr. Burris in his office. Bruce felt tight in his stomach and throat at the thought of the two of them in a big, plush office. The other workers had told him that Burris liked to call his workers in after about a year just to talk. He would ask about their future, how they liked the job and sometimes about their backgrounds. That horrified Bruce. He didn't want to tell anyone about his background. He had tried so hard to keep it apart from him when he was at work and Burris could ruin it all.

"Gary, come in here, please," Mr. Burris said.

"Alright, sir, one moment."

Gary turned to Bruce and said, "Be right back. Keep up the work and we'll get this job done."

"Sure thing, Gary," Bruce said continuing to pile up the wire spools.

"You want to see me, sir?"

"Sit down, Gary." There was a long pause that unnerved even Gary, who was usually comfortable with Mr. Burris. But something was bothering him in a strange way. "It's about that Derrick kid. What's with him? Do you know?"

"Bruce?" Gary asked surprised.

"Yes, Bruce."

"Well . . . 'what's with him,' sir? I don't know, other than he's real quiet. He does what I tell him and tries real hard. I really don't know what you're asking me, Mr. Burris."

Bruce stepped into the hallway beside the office just in time to hear Mr. Burris say, "Well, Gary, I just don't trust that kid. I've got this strange feeling about him, and I don't know why, but it's there. Do you know *anything* about him?" Burris was demanding.

Bruce tightened with hatred and fear. He knew they were talking about him. He was scared of what Gary might say. He tried hard to remember if he had ever told Gary anything that would hurt him now. He was hiding behind the door right outside the office.

"No," Gary said, "I don't think I can help you, sir. Everybody back here has taken a real liking to Bruce, including myself. Especially lately, since we got him to talk a little bit."

"What's he talk about?"

"Anything . . . same thing we all talk about. I guess it comes out a lot about women, sometimes sports, or the rent – just whatever. Bruce likes to play pool a lot. I suspect he's good, too."

"How about his work and his accomplishments? Or college, does he ever mention that?"

"No, sir, he hasn't, but he's the best I ever had back there. Hank and Matthew fight every morning about who gets him in their truck, and when he works the loading dock just about everybody tips him there, too. Even ole Coney sees the sweat on his face and buys him a Coke. Wasn't no tipping on that dock before Bruce. Hell, wasn't hardly no loading except when I did it myself. I could continue, Mr. Burris, but you don't seem . . ."

"No more delivering for Bruce, I want him at the shop from now on, got that?"

"Why?! Bruce does great on the routes, besides he loves it. It's his favorite part of the day, you'd think."

"My name's on those trucks and I said leave him in the shop."

Bruce was losing control. Thoughts raced through him so fast now he couldn't keep everything separate. He remembered the night his father was carried off. He could feel the red lights flashing in the hot night – every beat of light circling around like a pulse giving a split-second glow to all objects in its path. He could see his father's ashen, lifeless face appearing as if nothing was happening, and the miserable sobs of his mother hanging in the background of all the commotion. He almost burst from behind the door because he should not have been there. He felt his father was behind there with him, and his

helpless mother was too. He wanted to go away, and never see anyone or feel anything again. He hated his parents and he hated Mr. Burris. He wanted to die, but he couldn't move. He couldn't even breathe freely now.

"Don't say no more, please, Gary!" Bruce thought, but he was already losing hope. Mr. Burris was suspicious and would dig until he was satisfied. Bruce was plagued with guilt he didn't deserve. He constantly felt inferior, like people knew something about him —something he didn't even know himself yet. He wanted to escape and drain himself completely and try again, but those thoughts were futile and only frustrated him.

"Gary, I want you to watch that kid and let me know about anything that might seem fishy."

"Sure, whatever you say, Mr. Burris, but I don't think you have anything to worry about." Gary's statement withered and died somewhere in Burris's stare.

"It's my company and I'll decide when I need to worry," Burris said coldly, gazing far beyond Gary's head. Nothing more that Gary had to say seemed to be registering with Burris. The man obviously had to satisfy something for himself about Bruce.

It was past time to get off work when Gary and Burris finished. The office and the warehouse workers had already cleared out. Bruce was trapped. He couldn't leave now. He would have to stay there the whole night, and the thought chilled him. He knew there must be alarms all over the building.

Gary walked out of the office with a terribly distraught look on his face. He walked right past Bruce but saw nothing. The boy was as still as his nerves allowed, peering through the crack behind the door.

Mr. Burris sat silently at his desk, forever it seemed, just staring, with his arms resting on the desk. He was tapping his fingers on the wood top and Bruce could hear every beat. He was miserable. He wanted so badly not to be caught, but he couldn't bear the thought of stepping out from the door and satisfying Burris' suspicion.

The boss, finally, as if snapping out of a trance, rolled his chair back, spun around and began the routine work of closing the office. Bruce knew that Burris had been thinking about him. He was aching from fear; every muscle drew together hard into a quivering knot because of the cramped stillness, and his head and chest pounded violently as he forced himself to take tiny breaths to keep the silence. The boss was almost finished and ready to lock up. Bruce saw the bank bag clutched under his arm and a briefcase in his hand. The other hand was juggling a huge ring of keys. The office door was locked. Bruce heard the big glass window rattle inside the wood molding. He was almost sick with fear. He had no idea if the door he was behind would be left open or not. He was begging hopelessly not to be caught, because the thought of facing this man under these conditions was crippling. How could he explain or begin to convince Burris of his innocence?

Bruce was soaked. His hair was hanging all around his face in black clumps. The sweat and dust from the warehouse was rolling in grayish streams down his cheeks, seeping into his undershirt or falling from his nose and chin to the white tile floor. He knew he could not last much longer. Everything he had in him was spent.

The door swung away from him, and the light from the fluorescent strips hit Bruce hard before he could even see the face on Burris. The kid experienced, all in that moment, absolute hatred for this man who revealed him. He felt himself chilling from the inside as the white light seemed to be sliding his skin away from the bone. He could only think to race over the man and out the door and never return, but he could not move. Burris had some sort of power over Bruce that froze him. Nothing in the boy's body was working right. He wanted to blot the man out, the warehouse, too, and blot himself out.

He still hadn't looked at Burris. His gaze was fixed on the money bag. Suddenly, he wanted that bag and he wanted to kill Burris even worse. Bruce had put everything he had into making this job and his life work and Burris was ruining it, so he fought for a way out, any way where he would not have to stand here fully exposed in confusion and futility. In these seconds pressed against the wall without the ability to hide himself, Bruce searched his mind for an alternative, but something gripped him now and he could do nothing but yield to it.

The thought of Burris's blood did not scare him. He had to fight against a smile at the idea of this man being at his mercy, and of the money bag. He suddenly saw a way to equate himself, even surpass this successful man. He would kill him and rob him.

"Goddamn it!" Burris jerked back in fear, "Derrick, what the hell are you . . . I knew there was something about you! I knew it, you little bastard!"

Bruce flashed the box-cutter between himself and Burris with strange expertise. He was without fear now, and he loved it. All he could do was smile in silence at his triumph.

The blade whipped across Burris's face starting under the right eye and curving down around the cheekbone to the earlobe. His bloody teeth were visible through the gash in the cheek. Bruce remained calm as he jabbed the blade into Burris's chest crunching through the ribcage. The man slid down the wall and folded into a contorted pile.

Bruce lifted Burris's body slightly with the toe of his boot and kicked the money bag out across the slick floor. He cleaned his hands, the blade, and the bag, and wiped some blood from his boot. The cold water felt good splashed on his face; he cupped his hands and ran some through his hair. He was surprised that nothing bothered him. Nothing at all. Burris had not even set the alarms yet so Bruce walked out the front door and down the street toward his home.

It felt like home. He entered the building and began climbing the stairs to the room where he and his parents lived, paying close attention to the distant echoes bouncing around the stairwell from floors above. The sounds soothed him, and there seemed to be no smell. When he got in the door, no one was there. He dropped the bag on the table and crossed the room to the window. He forced it shut, collapsed on the flat mattress—and slept.

George Corontzes

A Spring Breeze

It is almost perfect
When a breeze floats down
Here into the valley,
And the tall grass comes alive
To its tune.

And the warmth in the air
Is Springtime. It's here,
And we all rejoice and
Are happy once again.

It has been such a long winter,
The bitter wind and . . .
Ice, sticking to the window,
Begins to melt. At last.

I'm glad; yes, I'm glad
That Spring is here.
It's been too long since
It last left on my face . . .
A tear.

Broken

Fragile leaf
Hangs upon the tree.
Tomorrow I may see it again,
Lying on the ground,
Broken and dead.

And to think of
Who may have carelessly
Stepped upon it
And never known.

The Warm Ground

I found a leaf today.
Dead but not dead
And hanging on.

Broken but not broken,
It lay on the warm ground
Next to the cold cement.

With an appendage
Torn but still hanging on.
I picked it up
And put it next to me
On the cement.

Looking at me for a moment,
It came alive
To the wind.

And stopped to rest again
On the warm ground.

by Dan Albergotti

Jerry Gorman

John Turner

Michael L. Puldy

The Matterhorn, Zermatt, Switzerland

Wayne Tolbert

Weeping Willow

I, the weeping willow, weep not now or ever weep.
For many take my countenance to be sad and mournful –
when my inner heart and soul reaches out to whoever
can feel my warmth.
As my leaves and limbs move in the breeze, they harken
to any a lonely traveler who walks thine paths by day.
Therefore, heed my weeping voice – for it sheds not a
tear or solemn heart – yet, it calls for peace and joy.

Black Mother and Child

I sit by the window and look outside and dream of days to come. I hold within me another life, another world, a future quite uncertain.

I hold a black child – warm as any other. When he kicks, it is the struggles he'll have to endure. When he moves it's for the burdens he'll have to shoulder.

I ask the Lord to bless my child – to make him strong; so he can work long and hard, to be wise; so he understands the world, to be loving; so he can care for all.

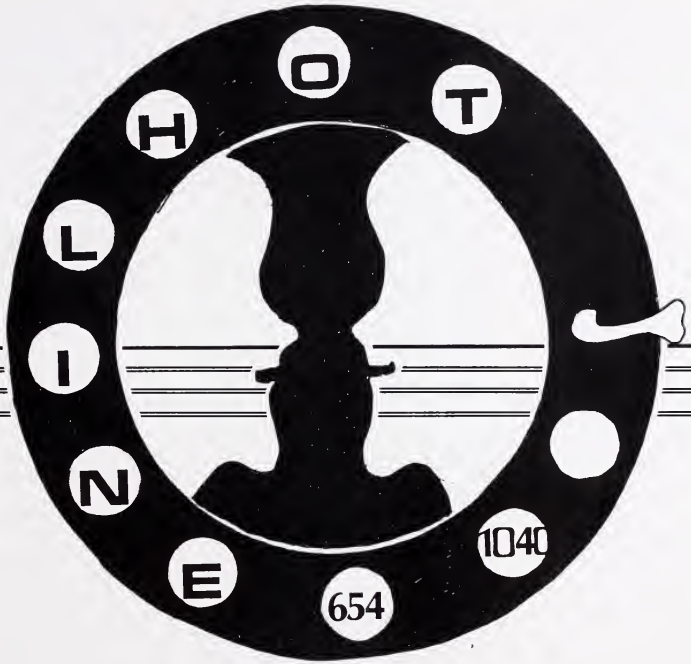
Within me grows his faith, hope, love, his happiness and his sorrow. Oh yes, he'll be swift to evade the evil and clever to know the good. His roots run deep in the soil, and his branches reach far into the sky. The spirit will watch over my child – my soul will always love him – as I sit by the window and look outside and dream of days to come.

Deep Poetry

There's a burden upon me to push my people along.
There's a burden upon me to have a free home.
To educate my children, and teach them to be strong.
There's a burden upon me to have a mind of my own.

by Gerald Ham

Jerry Gorman



HOTLINE

In September of 1982 the Clemson HOTLINE went cold for keeps. It was a quiet morning in September, early into the fall semester, when Cyndy Belcher, the HOTLINE advisor, and I quickly dismantled the HOTLINE room, in the process destroying over a decade of accumulated confidential files detailing hundreds of calls taken by HOTLINE listeners. The nostalgia was heavy for us both as we cleaned out a room where many unforgettable hours and evenings had been spent in a unique form of service to others.

Cyndy, an assistant professor of nursing, had served for several years as HOTLINE advisor and listener, succeeding the original advisor, Otis Nelson. During the spring semester of 1982, Cyndy took extended maternity leave, losing touch with the group and its activities. I could find out little from her about HOTLINE upon returning to Clemson after an absence of five years.

On August 13, 1982, I returned to my alma mater as the new associate dean of student life. During my first two weeks on the job I tried to obtain some information about the status of HOTLINE as a student organization. I found out that the organization did not apply for student government funding in the preceding spring. That was my first indication that the HOTLINE fire had finally burned out. I decided to proceed to the YMCA to view the remains personally. I entered the unmarked door at the end of the darkened hallway and experienced a sense of journey back into an earlier time at Clemson.

I was a student member of HOTLINE during the period of 1974 to 1977, covering both my undergraduate and graduate tenure. That affiliation was one of the most memorable of many special attachments for me as a college student. Like several others involved with the LINE, I invested countless hours as one of the corps of HOTLINE volunteers who manned the HOTLINE phone seven days a week, from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. A special part of my life ended when I worked my final LINE shift, and I felt the same

kind of loss in the realization that 654-1040 would no longer ring in service for Clemson University students.

The campus HOTLINE crisis intervention telephone service operated on campus for over ten years, arising out of a desire by members of the YMCA executive cabinet to serve some student needs for peer counselors. The first HOTLINE group consisted of nine members who set up shop in a large room on the middle level of the Holtzendorff YMCA, directly under the Y chapel. A HOTLINE telephone number, 654-1041, was established and promoted, with the service for manning that phone evolving around some determined needs. The primary focus of service always remained as the provision of an empathetic, caring listener for the troubled caller. The evolution of the LINE saw other needs expressed, including information dispensation and the making of referrals to other agencies. In short, HOTLINE evolved into a nighttime crisis intervention phone service much like other similar operations.

The HOTLINE organization was generously provided for by YMCA staff members in terms of maintaining the space allocated for the HOTLINE room. Otis Nelson and Butch Trent were certainly supportive of the efforts of the LINE volunteers from this respect. The LINE was generally supported by student government as well when it came down to yearly funding appropriations. Other individuals, such as Fred Steele of the Counseling Center, were of much-needed assistance to training programs developed for LINE listeners. With the help of these individuals and others, the HOTLINE flourished for over a decade as a small, but vital support group for Clemson students.

HOTLINE was structured just tight enough to maintain control over the four main items of regular business that were essential to the stability of the operation: (1) the filling of the monthly "listener calendar"; (2) interviewing for prospective members; (3) the maintaining of the HOTLINE room; and (4) the continuous training for all members. That the structure of the group accomplished these functions as well as it did was as much an outcome of chance as of design.

Each spring semester the LINE listeners elected a president who assumed the often tedious chores of managing the budget, keeping the calendar filled, and occasionally organizing cleaning details after everyone was fed up with the general disarray created by a dozen or more persons sharing the same "lodging" without benefit of maid service. Seldom did anyone seriously campaign for the post, yet HOTLINE was guided by some of its finest listeners, people like Susie, Cecil, Ky, Bill, Hamie, Bruce, and others. These were the individuals who carried the burden of office by signing on for a Friday night shift that no one else would touch, like the evening of Tigerama or the USC basketball game.

Every so often the LINE organized into committees to deal with functions like candidate interviewing and organizing the semesterly training retreats. This limited structure was about all that could be tolerated by some of the group's more iconoclastic members. Otherwise, individualism and gentle anarchy were the general rules of order for the conduct of HOTLINE affairs.

The assemblage of HOTLINE listeners was perhaps as interesting as any group on campus. There probably was not a single identifying factor that could set apart HOTLINE members from other students. There were certain individuals who were as distinctively different as one could imagine from the general Clemson population, while others would have passed as the "neighbor down the hall," the average student. The common thread holding these individuals together was a desire to personally help an unknown, faceless caller through a troubled night.

Some of my most intense and interesting personal encounters and friendships at Clemson were developed within the membership of HOTLINE. Several people I shared LINE experiences with are still among my most treasured of friends. Greg, who joined me as one of two grad student members of the group, maintained correspondence with me over a two-year tour he spent as a Peace Corps volunteer in Micronesia. One very close HOTLINE friend hosted me twice at her home in St. Thomas, sending me postcards from sporadic island-hopping forays in the Caribbean. These folks and others whom I shared intense, intimate experiences with are friends I will never forget.

Two HOTLINE experiences shared by all members served as the catalyst for the forging of such strong interpersonal bonds. The central, binding experience was that of actually manning a crisis intervention telephone service. We each gave a part of our precious time to attend meetings and spend evenings waiting for the HOTLINE to ring, and this common mission bound some of us as close together as any fraternity or sorority ever held its brothers and sisters.

The HOTLINE room was a rather off-beat, comfortable, slightly decrepit enclosure about the size of a living room. It was decorated with overhead pipes that clanged at inopportune times (i.e., 3:48 a.m.), bright purple shag carpet, walls that changed colors depending on the mood and amibition of the current membership, and posters covering those walls that attempted to impart some kind of Kahlil Gibran-like optimism. This was home for me at least four evenings every month for almost four years.

My HOTLINE home also was furnished with a refrigerator, bed, large desk, file cabinet, and a burned-out stereo console that did pick up three or four local radio stations. If you wanted to watch television, you needed to lug one down to the room yourself. The one item of furnishings that dominated the decor of the room for many people was the red phone that sat unobtrusively on the desk. The room was comfortably furnished for purposes of spending a night every so often, but it was never a palatial retreat

that one could scarcely wait to revisit. For one thing, the bathroom down the hall was dingy at best, without an adequate shower, and the outside window was broken. Female members of the LINE were seldom totally comfortable spending the night in a dark, secluded section of the YMCA, especially since there was no ready help available in the event an intruder appeared. More than once in a while an unidentified face would peer in through the unlocked door, decide that this was definitely not the right rendezvous location, and quietly disappear.

The second central experience which helped the formation of a cohesive group was the continuous training regimen required of LINE listeners. Much of the training to develop listener skills was integrated into a continuous program centered around weekly meeting segments and self-exploration of educational resources. Resource materials were always in evidence at meetings, and particular items were highlighted for reading during shifts.

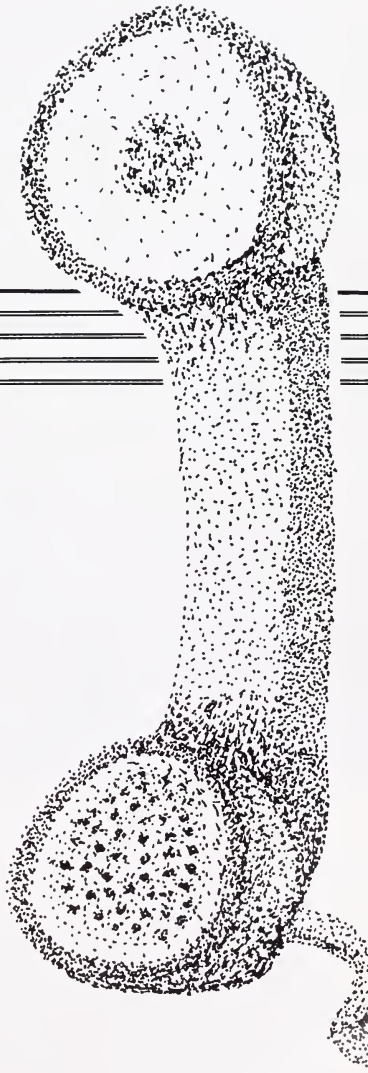
Many HOTLINE training programs focused on development of listener expertise in subjects frequently raised by clients. Typically, such topics included illicit and prescription drugs and abuse effects, alcohol abuse, sexual activity, pregnancy, and venereal disease. A typical training program might involve a description of the Physician's Desk Reference, an extensive volume of drug information, followed by an exercise in which a listener would be required to identify and describe a drug based on a verbal description. More than once in a series of shifts a listener would actually be asked by a caller to produce such a description for a drug about which the caller was uncertain.

One major focus of listener development concentrated on the interpersonal skills and listening techniques needed to man the LINE. At its very essence, HOTLINE advertised itself as a "confidential listening friend" to the caller. To that end much of the training was oriented toward expanding good interpersonal and listening skills to enable listeners to better fulfill their roles as peer confidants. Because the moods, communication skills, and needs of callers were so diverse, the recognized need to develop strong listener skills in communications was foremost in all training programs.

The centerpiece of this phase of the training was the semesteral weekend retreat. Each retreat was a memorable experience, in and of itself, both for the understandings and awareness experienced and the relationships created out of an intense communal experience. I enjoyed HOTLINE retreat weekends at Seabrook Island, Highlands, N.C., and Brevard, N.C., among other places. These weekends have remained in my memory as high points of my Clemson student days.

HOTLINE retreats represented intense periods of time in which members were given every opportunity to open up to other human beings in an environment of trust and caring. The rationale behind this approach was to get members to feel comfortable interacting with other members on a non-judgmental, empathetic level similar to that needed in serving clients. This formula, somewhat akin to encounter group experiences, seemed to develop the awareness and understanding sought, although not as readily for everyone.

I cannot adequately convey the emotional highs I experienced as a result of retreat participation. The most profound friendship I ever developed with a woman besides my wife occurred during one mountain retreat, and that bond of affection and affiliation has been going strong for over nine years since. Two guys, Ky and Greg, are still like brothers to me in many ways, as the result of weekend encounters and continuing activities through HOTLINE, even though we have been separated by great distances. I'll never forget sitting on a North Carolina mountaintop writing poetry, inspired by the surrounding vistas and by my encounter ex-



periences with a listener named Ann.

Those somewhat idyllic weekends spent in soul searching, inner reflection, and camaraderie helped form a support group that was estimable. One always felt a stronger sense of confidence in one's ability to help the next LINE caller after having spent a weekend relearning how to hear what others really are saying. That renewed confidence, the personal development, and the emotional elation resulting from a weekend encounter of the closest kind kept many of us from burning out after many hours spent in anonymous service to others.

Once one went through the training program and was "certified" as a HOTLINE listener, it was left up to the individual to sign up for a first solo night on-LINE. Prior to this step, a beginning listener would have spent at least two or three partial shifts with an experienced listener observing actual caller/listener interaction, or perhaps role-playing call situations. The decision concerning readiness to "hold the LINE" was always a personal one.

So, what was it really like to spend an evening in a quiet room in the Y, waiting for a red phone to ring? Well, typically one waited for a call to come in that never was made. Most evening shifts were spent doing everything except talking on the LINE. In one sense, it would appear that an absence of calls was a reassuring indication that all was well with the student population of Clemson. Few of us were willing to accept such a simplistic conclusion, which must have accounted for the fact that we continued to sign up for shifts in order to be there for the eventual caller.

Some shifts were busier than others. One could predict that one or more prank calls would interrupt a Friday night shift, often during the early-morning hours. I worked several nights where it seemed that one good call after another came in. It was always a safe assumption to figure on getting at least one call during an exam night stretch.

Generally, the nature of HOTLINE calls fell into fairly predictable categories: relationship problems, academic troubles, financial worries, family dilemmas, and general depression. Sometimes substance abuse was a confounding variable in the caller/listener dialogue. Occasionally, suicide was interjected into the caller's situation.

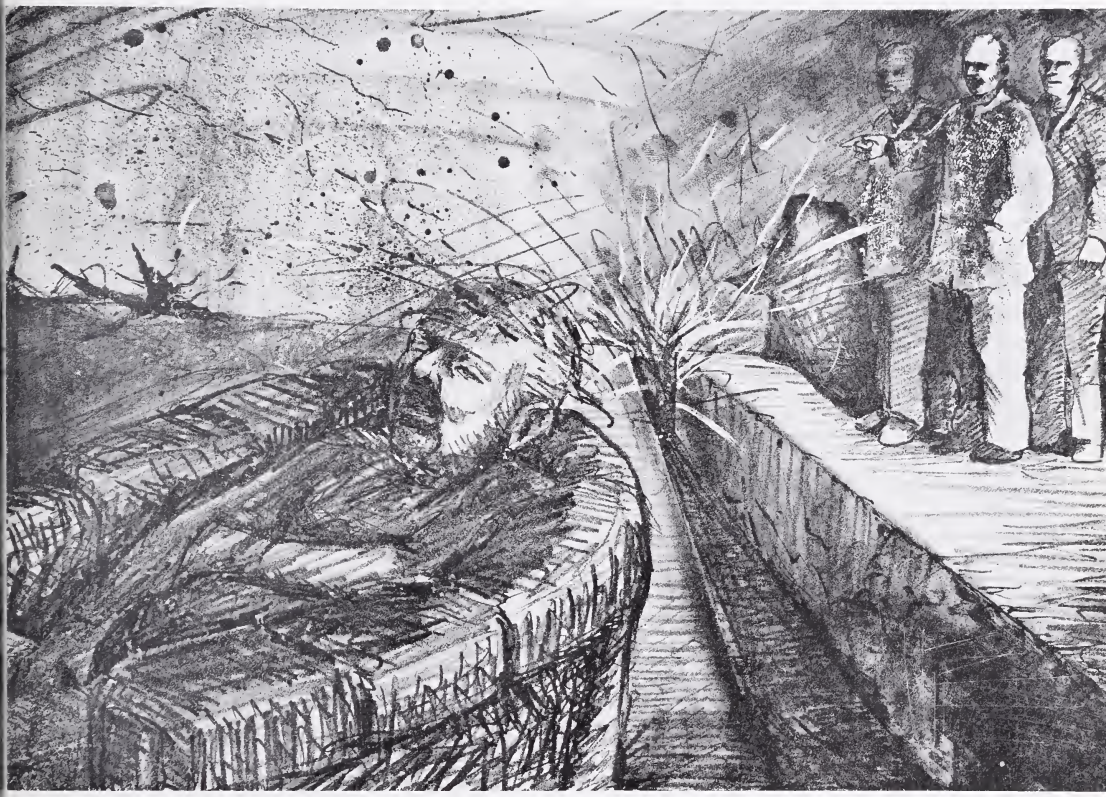
More often than not I listened to students who simply wanted to talk to an impartial, non-threatening listener who would be a sounding board for the caller's own solutions and feelings. I tried to help callers work through problems by getting them to identify the problem, get in touch with their feelings, sort through possible alternative action plans, and make some commitment to the chosen solution. I also gave information requested from callers and made referrals to other agencies both on and off campus for further assistance. The Counseling Center, campus ministers, and county agencies were often used as referrals for particular types of problems. I also just talked with callers who needed to talk through depression caused by the unique stresses of college life and the universal tensions experienced by most young adults. These callers utilized HOTLINE because they needed some person to listen to them, period.

Now that the HOTLINE has been disconnected, I expect that its impact on the Clemson campus will remain simply a memory for the few individuals involved with it from both ends. The nature of the organization practically ensured that its demise would go relatively unnoticed because the LINE was always cloaked by a veil of anonymity. No HOTLINE listener ever wore a jersey identifying him or her as a LINE member. Old editions of Taps do not include membership photographs representing the organization. Although some prominent students were members of the group over the years, few people would have been able to associate them with the LINE. Bob, my roommate and fellow WSBF jock, was one of the few people who ever got to be associated with the group; apparently several people recognized his voice on the phone because of his radio activities. Bob left the organization rather than compromise his confidentiality and effectiveness as a listener. Notoriety was something of an anathema for the individual listener.

I'm not sure why the LINE finally died such an obscure death. Perhaps its time was past as a helpful friend to today's Clemson student. Originally, the LINE dealt with issues such as hard-drug abuse and draft evasion, issues that are not currently in vogue. It may be that today's student wants a more personal, intimate contact with a confidant than is provided by an anonymous listener. I don't believe that the current collegiate environment provides any more psychic shelter for stressed, troubled students than Clemson did during my student days. In that sense, the need for the services of a crisis intervention service for some callers may never diminish. The steady growth of diverse crisis intervention services in society today would seem to support this supposition.

The HOTLINE was a most unique organization during its history on the Clemson campus. For many of its listeners it provided an outlet for expressing concern for others, for serving some ideal of service. For some HOTLINE clients the organization represented one more human link to an increasingly depersonalized insensitive environment. For myself, the HOTLINE experience represented my most concrete expression of an idealism which I disappointedly find lacking by too many of today's college students. Universities and colleges need groups and services like HOTLINE to maintain that necessary sense of humanity for students who get lost in the collegiate shuffle. I hope that my return stay here will see more such support organizations develop.

Kirk Brague



Steven Chapp

Sunset Song

Why does a day proclaim
Vivid beauty at sundown
When life is on the wane?

Could it be an aged truth
Boldly asserted, least understood
That denigrates the God of youth?

Age is a splendiferous ripening
Or so the sunset says,
When rich red rounded clouds
Appear only at the end of day,
A final blossoming ere the shrouds
Of night descend.

Where Goest Thou?

There once was a happy child
Playing at the seashore
Who thought that the whole sea
Could be captured in a bucket.

Why am I so sad to see
People pass in front of me
All going somewhere?
Or is it all a dream
And perhaps they only seem
To be moving.
No, people are going places.
Look at all the faces
Boarding trains.
Then seated, look again.
Watch the faces feign
To read newspapers
Rather than see you there.

Where do all these people go
With silent faces bowed so low?
They move and yet stand still
Captive to an inexorable will
Which drives them on
And on - - - Down
The same pathway every day
Without a glance another way.
This then is adulthood
For some,
But not for you or I.

A Voice Calls

What can it be that calls
In soft sweet melodious voice
Amid the jarring city sounds
And concrete city sights?

Is it just a dream
That moves my soul with joy
Or why the sudden ecstasy
On a sober working morn?

A whiff of someone's cigarette
Carried through the air,
A subtlety, a parody,
For what is really there?

Myriads of wonders impinge
With tender, sharp sensation.
Ssh, let's listen—
"Today is beautiful," whispers
A voice—The voice of elation.

by Judith Shepherd

John Turner

Steven Chapp

Bryan Sifford

When They Played

When they played in the warmth of the sun,
Astonished at each new trail
Left by an unseen jet,
Their entire world lay in the darkness
Of its diminished universe.

They had travelled through the murky depths
And beyond,
Propelled into illuminated darkness,
All the while watching their world grow smaller,
And smaller.

Now, under the well-understood blue sky
Some stopped this overplayed game to watch
With puzzled faces
Three trailing white crosses
Fade slowly and silently over the earth.

by Susan Penney

The tide rushes out;
  Muddy oyster flats emerge;
    A breeze bends marsh grass.

The cast-net whirling
Spreads against orange-red sky,
Drops,
Snags heedless prey.

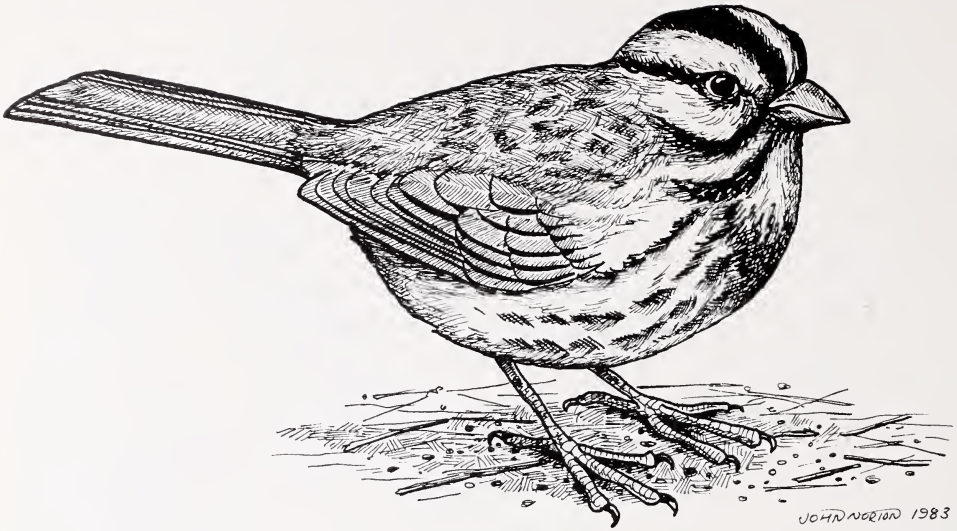
The piper skitters:
Never catching, Never caught.
Still, waves beat the sand.

Pine tree—tall, rough-barked,
Rapped in lavender fragrance,
Stands beside alley.

On cracked asphalt
Strewn pebbles, sun glint mica—
Crabgrass emerges.

A trash can overturned,
Charred picket fence half fallen—
Humid spring days arrive.

by Stephen C. Moriarty



The Sparrow

The sky was clear, and the sunlight spread over its infinite blueness filling the day with light and giving the sky that brilliant hue which seemed to merit the name often granted it by the poets, "The Heavens."

But Jeff didn't look at the sky. He watched the back of the seat in front of him as the plane taxied to a halt before the terminal. He gazed through the window, trying to pick out his grandparents among the throng of people who had come to meet the passengers, but his search was in vain.

As he turned away from the scene outside the plane, he dropped his jacket onto the floor of the aisle. As he recovered the jacket, the envelope fell from its inside pocket, and he picked it up, holding it to the light. The sense of disbelief which had constantly accompanied him since the first reading of the letter some five months before returned. He took the letter from the envelope and began to read again trying to overcome the feeling. But his grandmother's scrawling script had not changed.

Dear Jefferey,

I hope you have been well. We are all doing fine here. Grampa's in the garden, like he always is this time of year. I tried to tell him it's too cold to be breaking ground, but you know how mule-headed he is. "Farming's in our blood," he says.

Jeff, we didn't write before now because we know how hard you work in school and all, and we didn't want you to worry, but as you know, your mother's not been well.

We took her to Doc McCarron last week, and he sent her to a specialist to be tested. I hardly know how to tell you this. They found out she's got cancer. I know this sounds like a cruel way to break this terrible news to you, but we had to tell you sometime

and we didn't want you to be too shocked when you got home.

The specialist says the cancer has spread a lot, and when that happens there isn't much they can do. He doesn't give her long, but you never know about these things. You really don't.

We just have to trust in the Lord, Jeff. He knows best about these things. Don't worry too much, please. We wouldn't have written at all, but we try to put up a good front for her and we didn't want you to look too upset when you see her. We all have to be strong, for her.

Grampa and I will meet you at the airport. We are looking forward to seeing you.

Love,
Grandma

The disbelief was still there, but it had grown. It had grown from the numb disbelief of helplessness into the active disbelief of denial.

"How dare them," he thought to himself, "How dare them tell me to trust in the Lord and everything will be fine! How can they say that? How can they feel no more than that?"

The passengers started filing out of the plane, and Jeff got to his feet, realizing that the long flight was over. The trip had seemed to pass without his recognition. He felt as if he had been in a dream state of unreality ever since he began his trip home, as though the plane had traveled, not in miles through mere air, but through the expanse of time itself, every passing moment-mile of which brought him closer, not to his home, to the place of his childhood, but to . . . What? He didn't know, only to some previously unrecognized destination.

As he filed down the steps to the runway, he picked out his grandparents standing among the crowd. It was his grandmother, or more accurately, it was his grandmother's dress that caught his attention as he approached the old couple. A sudden feeling of painful nostalgia filled him as he recognized the dress, and he stopped still, feeling as though the distance between himself and his grandparents had grown suddenly.

"It's the same one she wore that night," he thought, remembering the Sunday evening of long ago in detail, its vividness rushing back through his memory. He remembered. It was the night of his baptism.

Jeff stood still and numbly watched his grandparents as they approached between the parting sea of travelers.

"Hello, Jefferey," his grandmother said, taking his cheeks between her damp palms and kissing his cheek, smearing her dark-red lipstick over what seemed to Jeff the whole right side of his face.

He felt a sudden loathing for the old woman standing before him, for the author of the letter, but he exchanged pleasantries with his grandparents, masking well, for the moment, the bitterness that dwelled within him. When the small talk had ended, he followed his grandfather to the baggage claim terminal and then out to the parking lot.

The ride home from the airport covered almost 130 miles of country road, and as he climbed into his grandfather's weathered Chevy, Jeff settled back for the long ride home. When he had told his grandparents for the last time that he was still making good grades and getting enough to eat, Jeff looked out the window and watched as the budding trees passed along beside the rolling pasture. He felt a momentary relief from his bitter disbelief, seeing the familiar surroundings of his homeland, but soon a spark of angry fear returned, and his memory began to involuntarily recall the last time that he had seen his grandmother's dress.

It had been a warm spring night, he remembered, and the interior placidness of the small church had seemed to diminish visibly as each guest sifted through the doorway. The pure, wholesome light of the waning afternoon had tried vainly to penetrate the stained-glass windows.

Jeff remembered how he had sat on one end of the front pew along with the other candidates for baptism and how he had noticed, had felt, a gloomy darkness growing in the building. A sudden sense of fear had arisen within him, a fear which he recalled vividly, and which he could now associate with that which he had felt when he had played in the loft of his grandfather's barn until after sundown and then had to walk home alone through the thick darkness of the pasture. He thought to himself, now a man twenty-one-years old, "What did I fear? What?" knowing that it had been the unknown, the unreal, those things which he couldn't even see, let alone control, which had frightened him, frightened him with the sudden awareness that they might be real after all.

Jeff remembered how he had looked up into his grandfather's face as he had waited in the dressing room for the preacher, and how he had listened to the questions of the other boys as they voiced their last-minute concerns to their fathers.

"Will the water be cold, Daddy?"

"What if he holds me under too long? Will I drown?"

These questions had seemed to satisfy the other boys, but Jeff had wanted to know more from his grandfather.

"What will I be like after I come out, Grampa? When it's all over?" And he remembered how the old man had stared calmly at him and said with the same assurance of every other adult in the room, "You'll be just like you are now, son . . . only you'll feel lighter 'cause all your burdens will have been washed away."

"Lighter?" he had thought, feeling suddenly puzzled and more afraid, "Lighter?"

The others had all been baptized before him. He had been the youngest and the shortest of the candidates. When the girl in front of him had climbed the steps on the other side of the baptistry, he had descended into the pool. He remembered how, astonishingly, vividly, how his dark, wet pants had clung to his legs, while the white robe which covered his body had risen on the surface of the waves and spread about him like billowing clouds surrounding a mountaintop, exposing the shirt, which his mother had told him not to wear, that he had stained romping in the schoolyard. And he remembered also the guilt, the unbearable shame which he had felt upon being exposed, not only to his mother, who had trusted him, who had believed in him, but to all the pious pillars of godliness that he had ever known. He had wanted to cry

but was too afraid even to produce tears.

Then the preacher had spoken, his words passing inaudibly over Jeff's head and out into the sanctuary to be absorbed ("To be hungrily devoured," he now thought) by the congregation. When the words had ended, he had felt the handkerchief cover his face as the preacher braced him with his free hand.

He had resisted, feeling that if he went under, if he experienced that very act which was supposed to symbolize his cleansing, that God would surely punish him, until the preacher had whispered in his ear, "Don't worry, son. There's nothin' to be afraid of. This is a happy day." And then he had given in, feeling himself being lowered into the water, thinking, "If only I could hide the stain. If only I were clean," and then, as his face became submerged in the green pool, "No, I never will be."

Then it was over. The preacher led him up the steps of the baptistry, and he had stood dripping, his wet clothes feeling as though they would pull him to the floor and his knees bowing weakly.

"That was nothin' to be afraid of, now was it, son?" the preacher had said.

"No, sir," he had replied, shaking despite the heat.

"And how do you feel now?"

He had stared up into the oval face of the man, to whom he had never spoken, although he had attended his services for ten years, and his mind raced for an answer, an answer that would hide his guilt, his cold, from this man of God. And suddenly, he thought of his grandfather, and the words spilled involuntarily from his lips.

"Lighter, sir. Like all my burdens have been washed away."

2

"Well, here we are."

His grandfather's voice interrupted his thoughts, and he looked up to see the plain, white house and the big pecan and pine trees that landmarked his grandfather's property, and he thought to himself, "It's happened again. Another whole 130 miles, and I still don't feel like I've left New England, but I'm home."

"You sure were sleepin'," his grandmother said. 'We thought you'd given up the ghost."

"Sleeping?"

"Shore was," his grandfather laughed, "like a knot on a log. You must've been tired from the trip."

"Yeah, I must've been," Jeff said, thinking, "No. It wasn't sleep. If only it had been."

The gray twilight was settling, and the warmth of the sun was replaced by the chill of an evening breeze. Grampa and Jeff carried in the suitcases and books and then went to warm themselves by the hearth. Jeff watched his grandfather's worn face, its glowing reflection of the fire. He studied the face intensely, and he realized that his grandfather had features which he had never seen, not just features which had changed with age since he had been at school, but features that he had known were there all of his life and yet which now seemed strange and unfamiliar.

"What has changed?" he found himself mumbling.

"What's that?" his grandfather responded quickly like a man suddenly awakened from sleep.

"Oh, nothing. Just talking to myself."

His grandfather chuckled. "People sez that's the first sign of bats in the belfry."

"People also say, 'There's no fool like an old fool.'"

His grandfather laughed into the warmth of the fire, yet something seemed different, even with the old man's laugh.

"Jefferey," his grandmother called as she bustled into the room, "Why don't you go in and see your mother?"

He felt the mirth of his grandfather's laughter drain from the air, and the room was silent.

"Now look, Jefferey," his grandmother continued, "I told you she don't look too good, so don't be shocked. She's pretty weak, and I reckon she's worried about how you'll feel when you see her. So you brace up. You've got to be strong. The Lord'll help you. You just believe."

"Just believe," Jeff thought, "*Just* believe?"

But before he could respond, he found himself being led through the dimly lit hall, to the bedroom that his mother had occupied since her illness.

The room he entered had belonged to his mother when she was a young girl. Bits and pieces of the old days remained, standing in marked contrast with the new furnishings and medical necessities.

The first thing that caught Jeff's eye was a plaque on the wall. He had seen it on the numerous occasions when, as a child, he had visited his grandparents and slept in his mother's bed, but his memory was now unable to fill in the details which he couldn't see in the dark room. He moved closer and strained to see through the darkness.

It was wooden with a porcelain inset on which was inscribed a pair of folded, praying hands below which were the words:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.
Amen

The childhood prayer was framed by colorful etchings of flowers and trees, and at the bottom was a sparrow with its head thrown back and its beak open as though it were in song.

Jeff glanced over the plaque and the other surroundings of the once-familiar room that now seemed as dark in memory as in reality. He felt, once again, the odd strangeness, the newness of change that he had experienced only moments before with his grandfather, and again wondered at the change and what had caused it. He moved back toward the light switch, but when he reached to turn it on, he hesitated, staring at that point in the darkness where he knew his mother lay and thought, "Here I am, home, and it doesn't even seem like I've moved, even through time, let alone through all the miles between here and New England, not since I got the letter, and now here I am with the source of it, and I have to face it, and I don't even know how to believe it yet."

Then, through an effort seemingly greater than he thought himself able to exert, he turned on the light.

His mother lay on a huge bed whose large, garnished headboard seemed to diminish her already-spare figure.

Jeff first noticed the smallness of his mother, enveloped in the great bed, but then he looked at her face.

Her hair, where there was any at all, was gray and thinning. Her face, which Jeff remembered as flushed and comforting, was now sallow and drawn. Her clear, hazel eyes were closed in the depths of sedated sleep, and the unnaturalness of her appearance terrified her son. He gasped for breath and felt his heart begin to race, and before his mother could awaken, he flipped off the light and ran from the room, stopping in the dark hallway and trying to steady his frantic breathing. He tried to recall the denial, the disbelief whose numb emptiness had at least been physically bearable, but his mind seemed unable to function over the pounding of his runaway heart.

"If only I could breathe," he thought, "If only I could breathe," and then the darkness of the hallway grew thicker, and he collapsed.

When he awoke, his grandmother was standing over his bed, bathing his forehead with a damp cloth. Seeing his eyes open, her troubled face instantly, almost involuntarily, assumed a pleasant half-smile, and she said, "Well, now, are you back from the dead?"

Jeff felt repulsed by the unintentional irony of the question, as well as by what seemed to him his grandmother's mock pleasantness. He pushed her hand away from his brow and sat up dizzily in the bed.

"What's wrong, son?" his grandmother asked, the half smile fading temporarily from her face, "What's the matter with you?"

The repulsion that Jeff felt only served to fuel the cold fire of his bitterness which had grown steadily since he received the letter five months before, and now that diurnally-growing curse consumed him, and he, unknowingly, yielded to it, imposing a wall as real as any physical structure between himself and the spurned sentiments of his grandparents.

He rolled over, facing away from his grandmother, and stared silently at the wall.

"Well," she said, "I reckon you're still a little shocked. It's my fault. I shouldn't have let you see her 'til I knew she was okay. But that's alright," and, even facing the wall, Jeff could see her face resume the half smile, "It'll be alright."

She walked out the door, stopping just long enough to whisper over her shoulder, "I'll call when supper's ready."

"She's a fool," Jeff thought as he heard her leave, "pretending to be so serene, just like an old angel, when it's all false. Didn't I see the worry in her face, the wrinkle in her forehead before she masked it with that stupid, fake smile?"

He remained with his back to the open door, staring at the cold, blank wall until he could think no more.

Then, refusing to be summoned like a child, he rolled off the bed and walked toward the kitchen. As he approached the doorway, he heard his grandmother's voice, and he quickly slipped around the corner, concealing himself from view and listened.

"I'll declare, I don't know what's wrong with Jefferey," she said. "He just don't seem the same. Ever since he got home, he just acts stranger and stranger."

"I know what you mean," his grandfather replied. "When you look at him, when you talk to him, he seems to be a hundred miles off. I'll bet he ain't said ten words since he come home."

"This thing's changed him alright. Of course, I don't reckon there's a boy who wouldn't be changed by his mother's death. I just hope it ain't too much for him."

A long silence followed, and then, unbelievably, Jeff heard his grandmother begin to weep.

"I hope it ain't too much for us all."

Jeff heard his grandfather rise from his chair and walk across the room. "Now, honey," he said, "the Lord don't put no more on us than what we can bear, and He gave us the words to comfort us when we need it. Remember what the psalmist said, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me through the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of . . ."

"No!" Jeff shouted, jumping out of the shadows and into the kitchen, unable even to listen to what he refused to hear. "No, it's not so. I won't listen to it. How can you believe what somebody wrote two-thousand years ago just because it's in a book? How can you walk around in this, the very same house where she is, and say that the Lord will this and the Lord will that, and wear those pleasant expressions and still believe she . . . that your daughter is going to . . . that she has . . . She doesn't have it. The Lord isn't our shepherd, and He won't do anything, because she doesn't have it. I won't believe she has it."

He ran from the kitchen and back to his room, slamming the open door and leaping onto his bed. Lying there in the darkness, alone, he began to recount the events that had occurred in this house, trying futilely to discover what it was about his house that had changed, what it was that made him seem a stranger, not only in his home and to his family, but within and to himself as well.

The room in which he lay had served his grandparents as a guest bedroom. Jeff remembered how he and his grandfather used to read Bible stories from an illustrated children's book in this room until his head would nod, and he would fall asleep, his mind filled with images from the colorful pages. But that seemed long ago in a forgotten time, and Jeff now felt incapable of comprehending it as a part of himself. He felt as though all that had formulated his early life had been swept away simply because he had willed it so.

"It's all gone now," he thought, "because I deny, I refuse to believe that it ever was. The Bible stories, the baptism, it all means nothing now. I am free." Yet as he lay isolated in the darkness, the image of his mother lying in the great bed flashed like a dim, undeniable spectre over his mind's eye.

3

"You'd better come, son, your ma's callin' you. It don't look good. You'd better hurry."

His grandfather's words roused him, and he wondered how long he had slept. The room was still

dark, he noticed, as he wearily followed the old man into the dark corridor.

When he reached the door of his mother's room, he stopped still. He saw his grandmother, who for the first time since he could remember looked distressed, and he struggled with his quickening heart. When he felt as though he could walk without fainting, he stretched himself to his full height and defiantly entered the room.

His grandmother cried openly now, and his grandfather embraced her comfortingly and began to close the door.

"We'll leave you alone with her. You call if you need us," he whispered.

And then he was alone with his mother.

She lay before him on the bed, already looking more dead than alive. Her thin, gray hair was combed and her sloping forehead was contorted with pain. Yet, when she opened her eyes and saw her son standing over her, a grim smile appeared at the corners of her mouth. For a moment, Jeff saw the warm glow of his childhood in his mother's sallow cheeks, but he still stood erect and defiant. He approached and took one of her thin hands into his own, stroking it gently as she had done his on so many occasions when he had been the victim and she the comforter. And now he even repeated the same words that she had used.

"It's going to be alright, mama," he said chokingly, "You're going to be fine." But this time his mother, the constant comforter, failed to agree.

She shook her head, and her lips pursed, forming the word that Jeff never heard, would never have allowed himself to hear, yet which he understood just the same.

"No."

She closed her eyes again, and Jeff stood, still erect, but shaking now, and thought, "She will be fine . . . she will . . . this will all pass," but even the thoughts seemed to fade into dimness, and once again, his heart pounded.

Jeff held his mother's hand for what would have been several minutes, if time had been a conscious reality, but he was unconscious of time now, feeling only that bitter conflict within himself, until he noticed his mother struggling to sit up in the bed. He stared, amazed at her effort for a moment, then he helped her.

Her eyes were wide open now, but when Jeff called to her and stood before her, she seemed not to see him. Her gaze was fixed on one of the windows, outside of which the darkness of night was thickening in anticipation of the coming sunrise, and her mouth formed around words again, but this time, Jeff heard a hoarse whisper. He put his ear to her lips. For a time he was unable to decipher the whispers, but then it struck him, and he heard his mother say, "The light . . . the light."

He looked out the window but saw only blackness.

"It's dark outside, mama," he said, but she remained rigid, staring at the dark portal.

And then, Jeff heard a different whisper, and once again he leaned his ear to her lips.

"The . . . the garden," she said, "It's beautiful . . . it's . . . " and his mother looked at him. Whether or not she saw him he didn't know, but he felt the erectness, the defiance waver. He grabbed her arms and looked into her face, intending to say, to cry, "No! It's dark outside," but he found himself only able to whisper as his mother had done, and the words spilled forth before he could stop them.

"It's beautiful . . . yes, it's beautiful," and he thought, "Yes, and you are dying."

As he watched her, Jeff saw the smile return to his mother's face, and a solitary tear rolled over her cheek. He struggled halfheartedly with himself, with his fear, with his bitterness, with seemingly all that was a part of him, even that which he thought he had left so far in the past, but then it was as though a flood tide of postponed emotions was released, and his bitter disbelief was washed away on a cascade of tears.

He embraced his mother, clinging to her diminished figure as though he already felt it slipping from his grasp, feeling her chest rise and fall with sobs in simultaneous rhythm with his own, and for a few brief moments which seemed separated from that incessant flow of time, and its brother death, mother and child sat like two lone infants in a new and isolated world, clinging desperately to one another in something that was more than strength, or reassurance, or even hope, as though through their embracing union, life itself was sustained and shared.

But, ultimately, Jeff felt his mother's grasp relax, and he laid her on the pillow. His tears were exhausted, but his breath still came in gasps. He looked at his mother's face for several moments, until his breathing slowed, and then he bent forward and closed her eyelids.

Oddly, his bitterness grew dim, and he felt suddenly relieved, as if the cold heaviness which he had borne for the past five months ("No, which I have borne since my baptism," he thought) was replaced by a feeling of unburdened elation.

He became aware of something deep within himself, something, he knew, that he had just seen in his mother's eyes, which seemed new, yet more revived than new, and he thought, "Perhaps this is hope," knowing that it was more than hope, as he felt it, even now, begin to surpass his grief.

He slowly leaned forward and kissed his mother's cheek. Then he covered her with the sheet and walked from the room.

As he entered the living room, he saw his grandparents sleeping on the sofa, their long vigil having finally yielded. He started to call to them, but stopped, gazing at his grandfather's face and recognizing the previously strange features.

"Yes," he thought, "I've gotten home."

Leaving his grandparents in peace, he walked through the kitchen and out onto the back porch.

The sun was just beginning to loom above the horizon, and Jeff stood silently watching the glowing streaks of dawn pierce the darkness. As the light spread and the dark faded into the brilliant blueness of day, he heard a rustling in the branches of one of the tall pecan trees, and looking up, he saw a sparrow leave its nest, its wings fluttering in a spectacular reflection of the sunrise, and his eye followed it as it soared, spiraling upwards into the heavens.

"This," he said, breathing deeply and turning his face to the sun, "This is morning."

Lee Plumblee

Portage Glacier, Portage, Alaska — Robert Miller

Yad Vahshem, the holocaust memorial in Jerusalem — Michael L. Puldy

A Feast of Hearts

At the pervasive sight
of only myself,
I've been shattering mirrors.
And this
after eating so many tasteless hearts.
They were lying about
as many red petals
so I selected
what I thought would be best
and served them up
in a bright china chaffing dish.
But they were as any other hearts.
I left the table,
forgetting my ready linen napkin
and went to the mirror on the wall.
At the sight
I was aghast, of course,
at the guilt
that never tends to be there
and at the speed
in which I wash
my tell-tale face and hands.
It's left a ring
around my stark white sink.

In conversation, I say
it's intake.
Yes . . . it's survival.
But when at dinner parties,
the guest of another well-known stranger,
I avoid red meat.

Sacramental Wine in Mourning

In mourning
chase once around the grave square.
Perhaps a winter afternoon,
then, dreaming
of marrying the departed,
you can fold back the veil
of sweet and hopeful
that lays about like death.
You never believed it anyway.
Instead,
take on the black cloak
and drink the sacramental wine.

Sip the darkness.
Endless in the view to eternity.
And if the sun
were to grace this hallow hall
the blindness would too be empty.
So as you vowel yourself away
with a bittersweet swallow of blood,
let go importance.
The faces of the distant guests
are only others long betrothed.
They've given up seeing in each other,
that's only nothing in their eyes.

You say void it the expanse
that waits when you are done
but you've made your decision.
Would better timing
bring a holy alternative
to the purgatory newlyweds
knowing better that belief?
It's always too late
when you hazard such questions—
you drink on.
On and on
until your senses fade.

The taste is disappearing.
It's a toast to the finish
and to what's gladly left behind.
The final cup goes empty,
still, in the dregs remains
the poison potion of living.
The ready taking of the end.

by C. Blair Palese

Todd Beck

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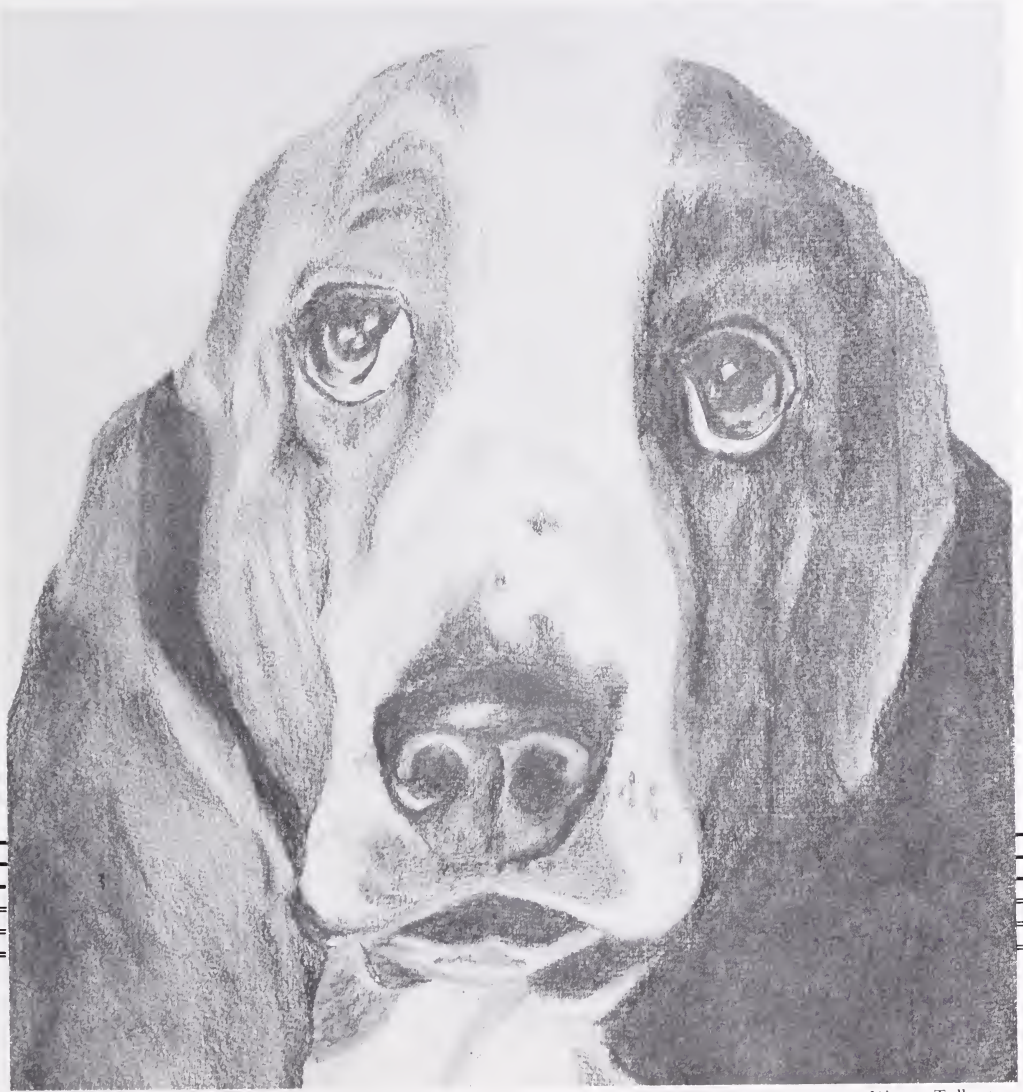

Wayne Tolbert

Jerry Gorman

Michael L. Puldy

Father's

Clyde woke up when his ancient alarm clock went off at six-thirty. He turned off the clock, a father's day gift from his son many years ago, and went into the bathroom. His wife, Allegra, was already up, fixing breakfast for the two of them. Clyde put on his work clothes and walked into the kitchen.

Allegra was smiling as he walked into the kitchen.

"I declare, I don't know what's got into you lately, sleeping past six, and such," she said. "Now, come on in here and eat your breakfast before you're late for work."

"Now, woman, don't go orderin' me around," Clyde laughed as he sat down at the table. "Why, man and child, I been workin' at that plant for nigh on thirty years, and I ain't never been late, and I ain't figurin' on startin' now."

Allegra laughed and set the meal out on the table. Bacon and eggs, grits, toast, and coffee were eaten in the warm, yellow light of the small kitchen. Allegra didn't waste time trying to make conversation that would be ignored; Clyde liked to eat in silence.

After he finished, Clyde put on his old, brown coat, and walked out the front door. He turned around, walked back into the kitchen, and kissed his startled wife on the cheek. Without saying another word, he walked out to his truck, started the engine, and drove off to work. Allegra wiped a tear from her eyes, and started to clean up the kitchen, all the while humming a tune she had heard on the radio the night before.

Clyde drove his truck into the parking lot of the factory where he worked. The stark white sign with black letters greeted him as it had for thirty years—

THE SINGER COMPANY
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Clyde parked his truck and walked toward the gate that protected the plant from the outside world. Clyde showed his badge to the security guard at the gate, and was welcomed with a genuine, if tobacco-stained, smile.

"Hey, Clyde, how you doin' this mornin'?" the guard asked.

"Pretty good, how 'bout you?"

"Ah, I guess I'm all right. Damn, it's cold early this year, ain't it?"

"Yeah, I don't reckon it's been this cold this early as far as I can remember."

"Well, we'll see you."

"Yeah, see you this evenin'"

Clyde walked toward his department. He entered the building under a sign that said

PLANT MAINT NENCE

and walked toward the tool-and-die shop. His job consisted of handing out tools and instruments that the plant management considered too valuable to issue to every machinist. He even had an office to go with his title. His "office," a seven-foot-by-seven-foot cubicle crammed with boxes and cabinets of tools, came as a reward for twenty years on an assembly line.

On his desk, amidst the pile of tool catalogs, was a picture of his family. In the photo, Allegra was a lithe, young woman of twenty-eight, and Hugh was a Tom Sawyer-ish boy of ten.

Hugh was wearing a blue sailor's suit; Allegra had on a green print dress; and the two of them were laughing. Clyde remembered taking the picture at a family reunion in 1958.

Clyde sat down at his desk and cranked up his old percolator. He settled back, with his feet up on his desk, and waited for his "customers" to start coming.

About nine-thirty, Jimmy Hannah came up to Clyde's hole.

"Hey, Clyde, how you doin'?"

"Pretty good. What you need?"

"I need a dial indicator. Ole man Johnson's lettin' me start on my first fixture today," the young man said with obvious pride.

"Well, hell, I'da thought you'd be makin' fixtures by now."

"Ah, you know how old man Johnson is. He won't

Day

let me do nothin' unless he's there to personally supervise. He acts like I'm gone kill myself or somethin'."

"Yeah, well, he's probably right."

"Shit, didn't me and Hugh do the best in vocational school?"

"Yeah, and I ain't never figured out how y'all did it."

Jimmy laughed. "Yeah, I reckon we were pretty sorry back then, weren't we? I sure do miss Hugh. Things just ain't the same without him around, are they?"

"I don't reckon they'll ever be the same again."

"Yeah, well, we'll see you."

"Yeah, see you."

Jimmy walked off, and Clyde poured himself another cup of coffee. He wiped his eyes with trembling hands, and tried to get his mind off his son. He started to work on his orders for the next month.

The math of this had always bothered him. He had never had much success with math, even simple arithmetic in elementary school.

"Well, looky here, old Clyde's a-workin'."

Clyde looked up from his work, and saw Preston Simmons, a stocky, balding man who always looked as if he were looking for a fight.

"Hey, Preston, what you need?"

"We-ell, I need another job, but if you ain't got none of them, I'll take a twelve-inch micrometer."

Clyde walked over to the mahogany cabinet in the corner of his tool crib, reached into the tangle of tools, and pulled out the micrometer Preston wanted.

Clyde almost dropped the instrument as he handed it to Preston, and he collapsed into his chair after Preston left. He swallowed a huge gulp of his coffee, and the scalding liquid forced him into a coughing fit.

He decided to walk to the canteen for a Coke. As he opened the glass doors of the haven for the employees, his eyes teared up again, but Clyde didn't know whether it was caused by the coffee or what.

The girl at the counter frowned at Clyde for interrupting her gossip with the other women there.

"She wouldn't be mad at me if she knew how bad I feel," Clyde thought. "But, damn, she looks familiar. I wonder if she's the girl Hugh took to the junior-senior that time."

Clyde ordered a small Coke, and as the girl got it for him, he asked her name.

"My name's Carol Monroe. I'm Arthur Lee Monroe's youngest."

"Didn't my boy, Hugh, take you to the junior-senior one time?"

"Yeah, and I never saw him much after that. What's he doin' these days? I reckon he's already married, ain't he?"

"No, he never got married. Y'see, well . . . Hugh's dead. He got himself killed in the war."

"Oh, well, I'm real sorry."

Clyde could feel the girl's embarrassment. He told her not to worry about it, that it happened a long time ago, and that there wasn't any use fretting over it.

Clyde walked back to his "office," and began to count the hours until lunch. After lunch at Bobby's Cafe, Clyde settled into a grinding wait that came naturally after thirty years of employment at Singer.

When Clyde walked out of the plant at three-thirty, he noticed that it had started to rain. As he drove home, he didn't drive his usual route past the cemetery. He drove through town, and stopped off at Ruth's Flower Shop. He walked out of the shop with a stem of daisies under his arm, and he laid the flowers on the dusty dashboard of his pickup.

Allegra opened the door for him when he came home, and she laughed when he handed her the daisies. She put the flowers in a vase on the dinner table, and the two of them ate their dinner in silence under the warm, yellow light of the dining room.

Clyde sat down in front of the TV after dinner to watch the news, and Allegra cleaned up the kitchen, sometimes wiping a tear from her eyes, all the time humming a tune she had heard on the radio that afternoon.

Alan Cannon

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Ibrahim's Other Place

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Chronicle

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The students behind this semester's issue are Sha Sifford, editor; Lee Plumblee, literary editor; Alan Cannon, advertising manager; and Tim Brady, features editor, as well as numerous contributors (with special thanks to John Norton, Donza Hyman and Michael L. Puldy for their help).

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