

# TOWERS

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Volume 16

1960

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— Poetry

# Towers — Story

— Essay

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## Foreword

As we mark the steep descent of the sun we see it as a point in time, we see it as a large orange clock measuring our swift pursuit of the instant truth. We glance for one blinding moment and turn again into the shadows; we see the long distorted figure on the grass, and when we move it moves away. Always the shadow and the blinding light are there, and always the man is there trying to draw them together.

In an old rocking chair, the artist is stitching the fabric together while at his feet a sable cat is pulling it apart. But for a moment, when the sun is shining down on his bare head and his shadow runs zig-zag down the steps, there is a recognizable pattern to his work, there is a permanence. The bold stitches of paint and note and word are alive and real, and we are real seeing in them the union of opposites, seeing in them the coolness of eternity.

Herein listen for the creak of the rocker! Beyond the sound, see and touch the texture of the cloth to feel it defying the tug of the sable cat. Herein find the artist, and if his vision be not perfect, forgive him for the blinding sun.



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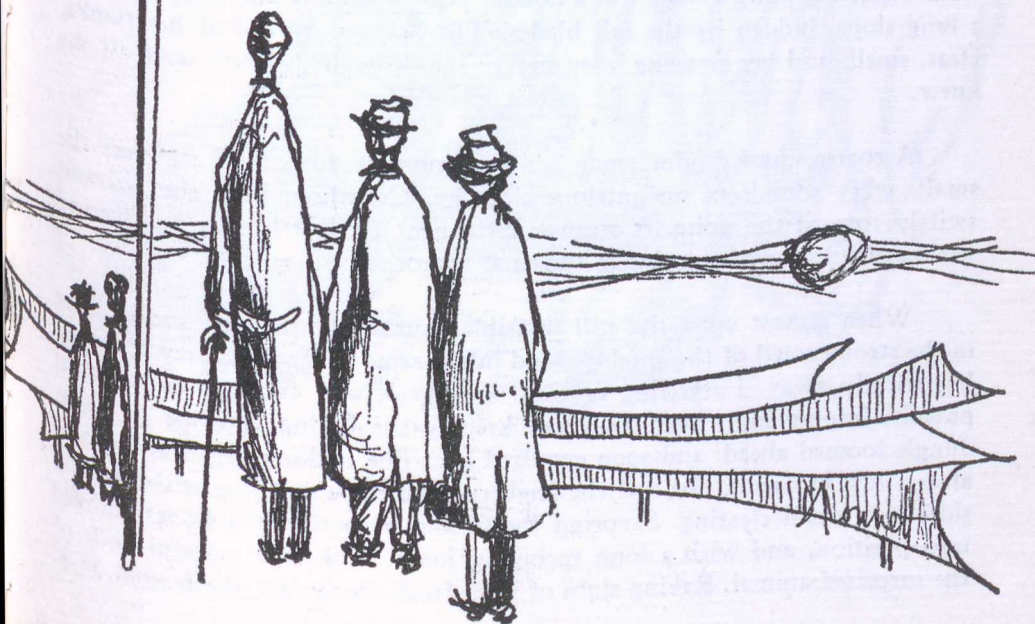




SOUTH MAIN STREET

*Bearded baubles on the brown branch of the street,  
Spitting their signatures into the dirt-raped snow,  
Warming the city's bridges, or . . .  
Lying in adultery with coffin-cold alleys,  
Hugging bottles of life-as-it-should-be,  
Old men. . . no place to go.*

DON LANDSTROM





## PRIMITIVE

Jan Manne settled back in an overstuffed armchair to listen to her new novelty record. Lighting a cigarette, she read the sparse comments on the jacket; they promised "authentic sounds of the African veldt and jungle, recorded with an unusual fidelity." The changer clicked and whirred into motion, and Katsumi, her Siamese cat, dropped lightly into her lap.

Expecting the usual raucous cries of bird-whistles and a barrage of percussion instruments, Jan was puzzled by the seeming silence of the record. Everything was quiet in the dimly-lit living room, but Katsumi's ears had pricked up, and she was sniffing with that small upward movement of her head. Then Jan could hear, or rather feel, all around her, the minute, innumerable noises of grass softly moving in a torpid breeze, water dripping on stone somewhere. A yellow heat seemed to hang all around her, seeping into her muscles, relaxed and stretched. It was a strange mingling of sensations: acrid, dusty smells mixed with the humid, heavy odors of congested foliage and, eyes closed, she visualized the open, grassy plain under a bright and metallic sky, then the closeness of the jungle, the weighty greenness, thick and tangled.

The sensual stimulation was delightful, and Katsumi seemed to share it, stretching under Jan's stroking hand.

The feeling of involvement in this strange, intimate world grew stronger. Jan moved softly through the waving grass, feeling the warm, baked earth under her paws — she was a lioness, yes — padding and sniffing down a long slope, hidden by the tall blades. The hot sun burned at her flanks. Heat, smell, and her swaying, easy movement through the bush were all she knew.

A coarse, musky odor made her stop, nostrils dilated. There were the small, wary sounds of an antelope close by. Crouching low, she arrowed swiftly toward the noise. A strange excitement thrilled her, and quivering with aroused strength, she began the final approach.

When almost upon the still invisible animal, she sensed a sudden fear in the strong smell of the antelope, and in the same instant, the prey bounded hysterically away. Forgetting caution, she gave chase, exulting in the wild pursuit, leaping high over the grass, keeping the fleeing antelope in sight. Jungle loomed ahead, and soon engulfed her. The stalking began again, and after a few moments, she saw the frightened antelope standing with heaving sides in a small clearing. Savoring the feeling of power, the lioness moved into position, and with a long springing jump, broke the graceful neck of the surprised animal. Raking slabs of flesh from the carcass, she feasted, tear-

ing the bloody meat in her teeth. A shrill cacaphony broke upon her ears — the invisible birds and animals shrieked insanely.

Jan Manne dropped Katsumi's mangled body, laughed with the monkeys, and started the record over.

ALLAN COLES





## THE CAMEL

We all have at one time or another seen a camel, whether we saw it in a childhood alphabet book or had it pointed out as the source of the worst smell in the zoo. At any rate, the camels are said to have been created two days after the roses, the orchids, and the tulips; the day after the peacocks, the hummingbirds, and the bluejays; and the same day as the panthers, the poodles and the platypuses. I am afraid I must file a slight variance to the Book of Genesis, Chapter One, Verses Twenty through Twenty-four. Those ugly, slow animals could not have been created with perfume, beauty, and grace.

I think camels were made of left-overs. The Author of All Things probably tossed all the bad-smelling dirty stuff that was left on top of four pairs of mismatched legs and feet, gave each five stomachs He had left, and hurried on to create man. A camel will tell you that camels know all there is about everything. Look a camel in the face, right in an eye if it happens to have an eye open. That smug, know-it-all look the camel has comes from centuries of seeing man stumble and stagger about the world. The camel knows that someday man will de-chlorophyll the world and by that time, he (the camel, of course) will have mastered completely the knack of getting along without water or food. You see, the camel knows he has five stomachs in which to store his food.

The humps of a camel do not store water or food. The humps are just humps. Camels with one hump are not envious of camels with two humps, or vice versa. The camels know the humps are just humps. They permit some of their closest friends among men to tie stuff and junk on the hump or humps and will even carry it for those men. That is if the men swear at them, kick them, and beat them hard enough.

To get a camel to move when he doesn't wish to move calls for the highest art of cajoling. The camel knows he should carry the stuff on his back (after all, he's not a jackass), and the quicker he gets on his way the sooner he can stop and think again. But at the time that the puny little man wants him to move, the camel usually is in the midst of a deep problem. (I've often thought that man should let the camel alone to ponder and work out those problems. If he did, the camel would most likely figure out a way to get rid of man and end all the problems of the world.) Once a camel has decided that he doesn't have to reflect on a problem any more and that he has been sworn at, kicked and beaten enough, he will, weather permitting, move.

You realize, of course, the camel knows all about the weather, and even whether to like weather. If a camel likes rain on a certain day, he will walk



for miles in a rainstorm or not walk at all, if he likes rain enough to sit down and enjoy it. Then again, he may prefer warm weather on certain days and cover miles of ground, enjoying the 125° temperature, or even sit down and contemplate the beauty of the steaming landscape from one position. Whatever way the weather happens to be, you can bet your last Iraqi *dinar* the camel will enjoy it.

The expression on the face of a camel becomes absolutely beatific when he is enjoying something. The muscles of his face loosen up and joy shines in his eyes. His tiny ears stand upright and wiggle ever so slightly, and his mouth becomes completely slack. If the cause of the happiness is behind him, a camel may even turn his head to gaze upon the source with rapture.

When a camel happens to become angry (and for a camel to become angry is a rarity, but it does happen), the same symptoms are beheld, except for one slight difference. The camel may bite. There is an advantage in being the friend of a camel, for he doesn't bite friends as often as strangers. Yet, when he is angry, he may bite. Also he may bite if he isn't angry. I think it depends upon the weather.

I had a camel friend once. I learned most of what I know about camels from him. I met him in "The Market Place of Smells and Dogs." (That's really the name of the market place; I called it something else.) He was enjoying the odors and sounds. He wasn't enjoying the sights because he had his eyes closed.

At any rate, I was given to him for a month. A man doesn't take care of a camel. A camel takes care of a man. The camel figures man has a lot to learn yet. This camel must have figured this man was the dumbest creature ever. To begin with, he taught me a lesson in patience. The loading of a camel is more complicated than the unpacking of an American woman's overnight case. And more stuff can be placed on the back of a camel than can be packed in eleven women's luggage cases. When it was all on my friend's back and we were ready to leave, he rolled over.

Now that was a miracle in pedagogy. For a camel to roll over is unheard of. Some camels go through life never having lain down once. They sit or squat, but never lie down. My animal friend wanted to teach me two lessons. Lesson one was "How to have patience;" Lesson two, "How to load a camel." It seems I put too much on one side of his long narrow body. Anyway, the patience lesson came after he was fully unloaded, and not before.

Screaming and hollering didn't move him much. He didn't care to hear my two phrases of Arabic, over and over. "I am an American," and "Where do I buy beer?" He didn't care to hear anything. He went to sleep. My

saviour appeared in the form of my other friend, ten year old Abd-ul-Katibun, and then we both took lessons. When Sahib Camel thought we had enough schooling in patience for that day (we were not to get diplomas for many miles yet), he got up and walked away.

This particular camel was supposed to be the last camel in the caravan. When the other camels saw him moving it was like sitting day on a donkey farm and Dodgers Stadium when the last Bum in the ninth has struck out with the bases loaded. (A camel lullaby would deafen a riveter.) My little friend, Abd-ul-Katibun, broke two sticks the size of softball bats on the knee bones of our teacher before the teacher decided to return to the classroom and continue with lesson number two, "How to load a camel." Luckily for me, Abd-lu-Katibun had eight or nine years of schooling in this lesson, and I passed my first exam.

Then it was that Mr. Camel wanted to ponder the international situation or some such thing. To do this he called over a bird-friend of undetermined nationality to sit on his head and talk to him. To laugh at this comical pose was dangerous, because, it is a known fact that a camel dislikes being laughed at; and when he is laughed at, he may decide never to move again. (You can tell by now that a camel's life is full of decisions.) Not wanting to irritate the camel, we did not throw too many stones or swing the stick more than once. Food placed on the ground was no enticement, not for long anyway, as Sahib Camel ate it. Finally, and only when all the ramifications of the problem had been discussed, the bird-friend left, and Sahib Camel stood up.

By the time we had him headed in the direction we were to go, the caravan had jingled far out of sight in the *Dahna* desert. The supply of stones for twenty feet around was depleted, and my last stick had broken on his funny looking rump. But he decided he wanted to go towards Rutba in the Wadi Hauran, and we left. I thank the Creator of the all-knowing and all-wise camels that this was also the direction of my caravan.

DAVE HAMILTON



## LADY MACBETH

*Under the purple mountain  
An incidental king  
Lies dead.  
Stuffed down in a golden casket  
Ruby clusters  
Crown his head.  
Over his royal robes the garlands  
Signify a stately reign  
Elucidate a gracious manner  
Guarantee his claim.*

*(The grey ground crawled beneath the rose,  
The broken trees had turned to coal  
The grass lay burnt along the road.)*

*The funeral hall was deeply  
Hung in solemn velvet  
Folds.  
His citizenry were arm in arm  
Around his tomb  
Of beaten gold.  
The queen-to-be had gently gathered all  
Her tresses in a net  
And by the window where she sat  
Was cast a lovely silhouette.*

*(The sun was blotted orange and red  
And festered in a clouded sky.  
Above the castle wall none saw the martlet fly.)*

*The king was buried quickly  
With the customary  
Cannon shot.  
Behind a gilded fan, the queen  
Was smiling at  
Her subtle plot.  
In the darkest recess of the hall,  
After the sun had circled under,  
She whispered to her frightened thane,  
And her whisper rang like thunder!*

LARRY JACOBSEN



## BICYCLE TRUCKS

*Buddy and I both drive bikes.*

*Jirr-UMMMM! JIRRRR-umm!*

*Buddy got the orange one—I outgrew it,*

*And now I drive the blue one down*

*Through the trees and the stumps to Lakeshore Town.*

*Jirr-UMMMM! JIRRRR-umm!*

*Burr-RUMMMbumbum*

*bum*

*bum. . .*

*Hi Bud!*

*—Hi Joe!*

*—But we can't stop yet,*

*'Cause our loads are ready and our truck's all set*

*To start the drive down the mountainside*

*Through the green-black woods.*

*—Bye Bud!*

*—Bye Joe!*

*Outa my way!*

*I grip the bars*

*Gulp hard*

*Glare down*

*Jirr-UMM-*

*M-*

*M-*

*M-*

*M-*

*M-*

*M-*

*M-*

*Look-out!*

*Then down I go, ignoring people standing by*

*With green heads shaking, shaking 'No! You silly thing to try*

*To make this dangerous trip alone!—YOU'LL CRASH!*

*You'll Crash!*

*you'll crash. . .*

*I would laugh but haven't time—*

*The curve is coming fast—*

*The twisty, scarey crouching curve*

*That waits for me to pass.*

I'm gonna crash!—If I should die!  
But I can't think of that  
'Cause it's time to le-e-e-e-e-ean to right—  
Yeow! I've made it past!

HA! HA! HA! You can't get me!  
Brush me with your arms, your green, green arms,  
But I'm free—Free—FREE!

There's Bud ahead, waiting to unload  
At the Stump Warehouse in Lakeshore Town.  
Hey Bud! Hey Bud!

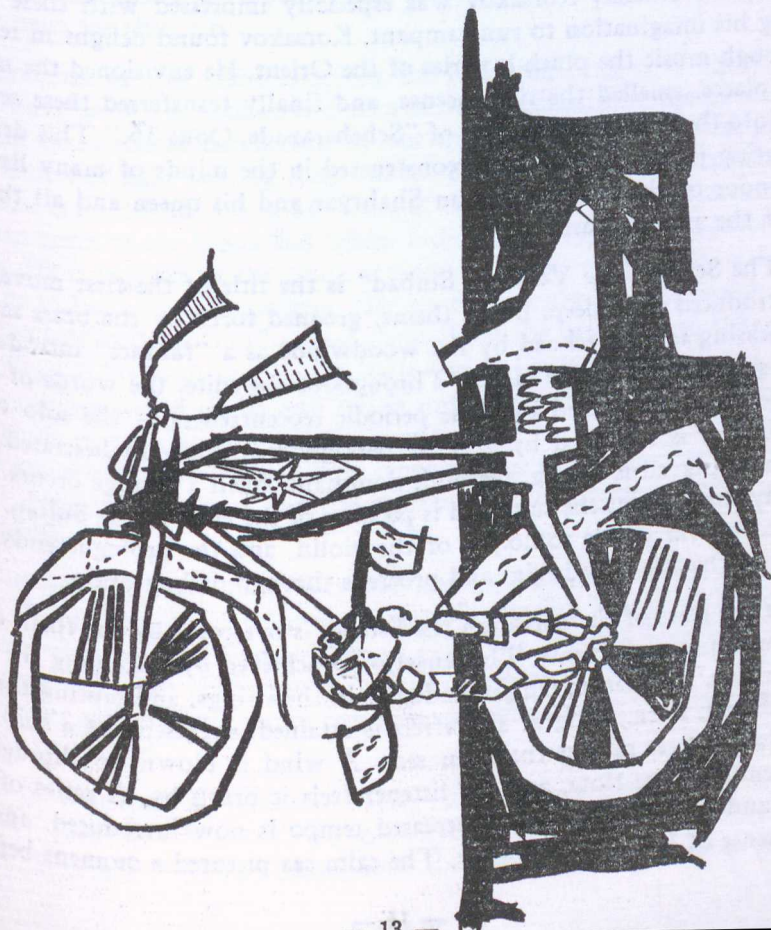
—Hi Joe! What d'ya know?

The old baby made it—quarter past two.  
Quarter past two? Boy, that's good.  
Let's drive to the pier and unload there—  
Jirr-UMMMM! Burr-RUMMbumbum

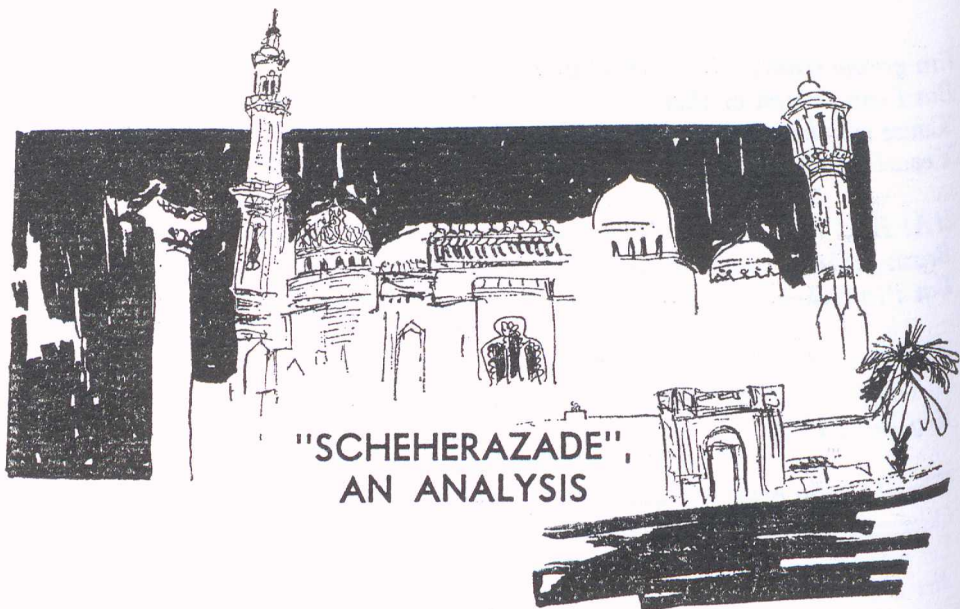
bum

bum. . . .

ROSALIE JOHNSON







The tales of the Arabian Nights told so many years ago by the Sultana Scheherazade have been recorded and read by thousands of people. The Russian composer Rimsky-Korsakov was especially impressed with these tales; allowing his imagination to run rampant, Korsakov found delight in recreating through music the plush luxuries of the Orient. He envisioned the monumental places, smelled the rich incense, and finally transferred these sensory images into the symphonic syntax of "Scheherazade, Opus 35." This dramatic, haunting piece of music has reconstructed in the minds of many listeners the splendor of the court of Sultan Shabryar and his queen and all the elegance of the ancient East.

"The Sea and the Vessel of Sinbad" is the title of the first movement. It is introduced by a deep, heavy theme, groaned forth by the brass section. The phrasing is then echoed by the woodwinds as a "fanfare" introduction for the solo passage of the violin. Throughout the suite, the words of Scheherazade are characterized by these periodic reoccurrences of the solo violin. This cadenza is followed by another passage, completely orchestrated. The theme now played is strong, forceful, dominant. Such a passage occurs intermittently throughout the suite and is peculiar of the voice of the Sultan. He is answered by the gentle soliloquy of the violin, and the prologue ends. The account of the tale now begins and proceeds through orchestration.

At the start of the narration the listener is overcome by the thrill of the fluid, sweeping movements. The sensation is achieved by sustaining the tones in the winds, fluctuating tempo gradually in the strings, and muting the tone of the French horn. A light, airy effect is attained, suggestive of a ship, Sinbad's, loose, free, sailing the open seas. A wind is blown up through the diminuendo of the flute, and the listener feels it brush by. A series of crescendos and anti-climaxes with increased tempo is now introduced, and one feels a sense of impending disaster. The calm sea pictured a moment before is



now a turmoil of crests and white-caps. The strings strain at the tempo, the horns blow an impatient staccato, the tension increases. Finally the climax is reached by a dynamic yet subtle orchestral chord. The strings reflect the moments of calm following the storm, the mysterious cello expands upon it, and beneath the flux of themes, one is vaguely conscious of the voice of Scheherazade drifting through. Gradually the song of the solo violin becomes predominant. The conclusion of the movement is characterized by strong symphonic chords, lessening in depth and power until the final chord, blown gently by a chorus of winds, is reached.

The story of the "Kalendar Prince" is portrayed in the 2nd movement. It involves a Prince who promises, while in a drunken stupor, to do a favor for a friend. This second young man has built a secret chamber beneath a tomb where he cohabits with his concubine. The lovers descend into their hideaway, and the Prince is required to seal the tomb. Years later the story is exposed, and the father of the young man demands that the Prince re-open the chamber. The father tells of his son's insatiable desire for his sister, and says that although he had forbidden any communication between the two, they had run off together and apparently hidden beneath the tomb. The two men enter the lovers' secret chamber and find their skeletons still lying together. The bodies have been blasted and charred by the fires of hell in punishment for their sin.

Creation of this mood is set by the haunting song of a bassoon solo. The elusive melody is then echoed even more melodically by the oboe and the mystical enchantment heightened by the quick deftness of the violins. The effect is that of light dancing feet, and the undertone gives only a hint of the orgy that is to follow. The gruff tones of the entire orchestra, accentuated by the deep notes of the basses and tubas, indicate an angry interruption by the Sultan. He is soothed by the violin cadenza as it rises and spirals, seeking the ultimate in her persuasive powers. Her search is rewarded; the rough orchestral sound dwindles to a call echoed throughout the brasses, then taken up by the strings. This sequence repeats itself twice, becoming faster and louder. The music spins and circles and twirls until the anti-climax is reached; the melancholy of the clarinet emerges victorious and the bacchanal is completed. The tormented theme subsides. The sweet sadness of the clarinet is caught up by the brasses, broadened by the strings, and symphonic unity is again established.

Beneath the tangle of melody and counter melody, one distinguishes the tinkle of the triangle. The dynamics change, growing louder with each tone. The orchestra reaches a frenzied tempo. Only the gentle, ethereal song of the harp can soothe the chaotic sound. Peace is restored. Now the horns blow a beckoning call; the solo violin responds. A subtle change in dynamics brings the tale to an end.

The two final movements, "The Young Prince and Young Princess" and the "Festival at Bagdad," are embodied in the same lulling, lucid "tone-poems" that are prevalent throughout the suite. While listening to "The

Prince and Young Princess" one feels the romantic atmosphere, even sees the gurgling fountains and the beautiful formal gardens. The dainty femininity of the princess and the militant character of the prince are painted through music. The two predominant themes merge into a soft, caressing tone. Each listener is stirred by the warmth and lushness of turbulent young love.

Bagdad is a wild, wonderful place. The soft breathiness of the flute sets a dark, mysterious scene. Suddenly the trumpets triple-tongue and their fury is enhanced by the mad racing of the violins. The oboe emerges from the chaos and pacifies the rampaging sound. Calm is only temporary, however, for again the strings start. The darkness of their mood is increased by the brevity of tone from the brass. Dynamic and tempo increase. Trumpets tongue faster and louder. Fingers race on and on until the climax is reached. A full harmonic sound is achieved in its entirety for the first time. The gentle sweetness of the third movement is restored. The violins throb a plaintive tune; the harp plays lightly as the strings sustain a harmonic. The winds combine with the violin solo, each sustaining an alternate harmonic in a breathless, melodic kiss.

Rimsky-Korsakov has authored, in my opinion, one of the most highly self-identifiable pieces of musical literature existing today. He is successful because he conveys his message to the listening audience regardless of its knowledge of the stories of the Arabian Nights. The beauty of the music is accountable only to itself. To appreciate "Scheherazade" the listener must utilize only his own individual facilities in interpretation; this music holds for me a certain seductive enchantment. The music is beauty, and beauty will remain untarnished, self-explanatory, eternally.

DIANE DITE

## MODES

*It's fall today—*

*Because I don't like the chill barren drip*

*Of this slow lightime*

*No staccato chatter of events*

*No ooze of the stagnant pool*

*But lily pad and levis would suit me fine*

*(Stretch)*

*A slow warm Bach oboe tone*

*The purling notes*

*Whilst window dream and feel*

*The radiator knock brazenly.*

*It does not care for Bach*

*Nor stagnant days either*

*A true son of yawn*

*(Stretch)*

*Am I.*

ALLAN COLES







## TO AN INSTRUCTOR WHO ASSIGNED THE WRITING OF A POEM ON THE SUBJECT OF TIME

*"Write a poem on time," he says.  
"Haw Haw," I says. "I always hands  
my poems in on time."  
And I could hardly hold myself  
back from saying,  
(when I handed in my word-song)*

*"It's about time."*

*Then I thought about it for a while  
and said,*

*"I haven't got time."*

*No one's got time.  
There ain't no real time.*

HELEN NELSON

## CRAYONS

*Fat wax twists of red-orange violet  
slide from their paper covers to  
blurt color violence  
on smooth white walls.  
Fumbling, small fingers drop the box  
of red-orange violet on the oriental rug.  
Fat wax twists roll between varnished paws  
into darkness and wait for recovery by  
fumbly fingers.*

*Then whoosh - on the walls  
around, around.  
Crayola curls and soft corners blur and tangle  
under grinding grey cleanser.*

HELEN NELSON

## BIG ED GALLAGHER

The majority of the licensed officers of Great Lakes freighters today are of Irish stock. And almost all of these Irish sailors were born on an island three miles wide and fifteen miles long in the northern end of Lake Michigan. Gallagher, McCann, McCafferty, Sweeney, O'Brien — the roster of today's ore ships is mainly Irish. The major portion of these fresh water Gaelic seamen are able to trace their ancestry to one son of old Ireland, Big Ed Gallagher.

Edward Francis James Gallagher was born in County Mayo in 1853. His mother was a McCann and his father was a salt water fisherman who went down with his ship in the storm of 1858. He was rightfully nicknamed Big Ed; his body was 280 pounds of muscle majestically shaped and tempered to fit his six foot four inch frame. Big Ed was destined for sailing; but it was difficult for him to "fix to the idee" of fresh instead of salt water in his hair, though later he would be the first to tell everyone within hearing that the Michigan's "storm of '23 was worse'n iny off Mayo's coast."

At thirty years of age, Big Ed brought his family to Chicago, Illinois. Though others used the potato famine as an excuse, Ed came because "a man kin worrk an 'riz his head in Amerrica." After being a hod carrier for the construction of many of Chicago's major loop buildings, Ed got the smell of fish and water in his nostrils. He heard of an Irish settlement on an island in the northern waters of Lake Michigan.

Beaver Island had been first an Ojibway Indian hideaway and then a Mormon settlement. When the Mormons were uprooted, the hardy seamen of Michigan's fishing villages began to use Beaver Island as a storm port. The cup-shaped harbor on its northeast tip was well situated for the Great Lakes' terrible spring and fall nor-westers. When Irish fishermen began to bring families to "The Island" and to make their homes among its virgin timber, Big Ed heard about it from nephews and cousins who had made Chicago their home.

When Big Ed came home one evening in 1919 with the announcement that he had quit his job and wished to return to fishing, his wife, Margaret, let it be known that it was against her wishes. The proverbial Irish tempers flared, and the neighbors on 47th Street on Chicago's west side still talk of the discussion that followed.

So, with some of the money he brought from Ireland and the savings accumulated in thirty-seven years in Chicago, Big Ed brought his five sons and their wives and 17 children to Beaver Island. If Big Ed was disappointed



upon first seeing the island, he didn't let his family know it. And above all, he didn't let the people who were already there know it. The Island is pear-shaped from north to south and flat except for two hills on its northern end. There were only five buildings in the village of St. James. These and three huts and two wigwams housed the island's inhabitants.

As soon as was practicable, the Gallagher tribe built houses for all its family. Each son had his house, and each house was within hailing distance of Big Ed. The trees that supplied the lumber for all of the houses were individually picked out by Big Ed. A barn was built on his plot, and Big Ed went to the mainland to buy cows and goats. By the spring of 1921, the houses and barn were complete enough so that the men and boys could go back to the water.

Fresh water fishing is not much different from salt water fishing. The language is a little different and the boats are smaller. The sizes of nets and the manner in which they are lowered and raised are different. But Big Ed soon had the hang of it. Or if not, he changed it to his way and everyone else got the hang of it. Before the summer calms had come, Big Ed was acknowledged as foreman of Johnny Cross' fleet of six fishtugs. The *Mary C.* with Big Ed at the wheel, led the fleet and covered Lake Michigan from the shoal off Isle Aux Galets (which Big Ed called Skil-lee-gah-lay) to Little Sauble Point north of Muskegon. During that first summer Johnny Cross blessed Big Ed Gallagher, the loins of the man that fathered such a seaman, and the Emerald Isle for raising him. The season's haul turned out to be more than double that of any previous year. When St. James harbor became frozen shut near the middle of December, the boats were laid up. Big Ed supervised the laying away of the nets. Big Ed showed the young boys how to scrub a "catch box" clean in jig time. And Big Ed threw his mighty frame against the hawser lines as the tugs came up the way. When the *Mary C.* and her five sisters were cleaned "rright smarrt" and stowed away, Big Ed Gallagher led the crews down the St. James' one street to LaBlanc's Tavern.

Jake LaBlanc had been drawing beer and pouring whiskey for fishermen for many seasons. His tavern wasn't the cleanest tap on the Great Lakes, but it was the best known. After Big Ed had finished his fifteenth double whiskey, he decided that The Island was no spot for a Frenchman. Systematically and thoroughly Ed began to straighten out the place. The broken chairs went out the door. The dilapidated tables went through the window and Jake soon followed them. From the woodshed in back, Big Ed found a forgotten broom and swept and scrubbed the floor. When the tavern was cleaned to his satisfaction it closed. The next morning a huge sign, painted in crude letters but dripping with fresh, green paint, declared the tavern to be opened and named The Shamrock.



Through the gray winter months he gave impromptu lessons in seamanship in The Shamrock. Tables substituted for reefs and shoals, and the floor of the tavern became the deck of the *Mary C.* Heaving lines and fishing nets were brought up from the boat yard to be used in well attended lessons. And so it went every year: Ed bawling orders in The Shamrock, Ed swearing at the net men in the summer, Ed finding the new feeding place of the white fish near Pointe Aux Barques, Ed racing in a storm to help free O'Brien's tug off St. Helen's Shoal. Because of Big Ed the tug wheelmen on the Lake know how to reverse and turn in the trough of a high sea. Because of Big Ed the docks in St. James are shorter and further to the northeast for protection in the prevailing northwest and southeast winds. And even because of Big Ed there is a fog horn on Fagan Reef.

One thick night in the fall of 1931, Ed tied down the horn of the *Mary C.* and anchored in the middle of Fagan Reef. Before the boat's battery gave out, the three large tugs belonging to Spike Goss of Charlevoix came safely through the Straits of Mackinaw and slid past the white waters of Fagan.

Ed loved Lake Michigan. "She's a terrible mither, but she's beeyoutifull." In all her moods, Michigan never frightened Ed Gallagher. She could boil her blackest and twist the *Mary C.* full 360 degrees, but Ed's voice would be heard above all the wind singing Irish chanteys and the newest Tin Pan Alley releases. And Ed was Lake Michigan's own adopted son. To him she gave her secret weather forecasts. To him she told the feeding places on the white fish and the bass. In hard winters she let him take a team and wagon across her frozen back thirty-five miles to the mainland for supplies. In return, Ed blessed her as his mother and cursed her as his mistress.

The winter of 1940 in northern Michigan will not be known as an especially difficult or stormy winter. A small herd of deer came across the ice in a January storm and found enough forage to stay. Venison was a welcome change on the huge, round tables of the Irish fishermen. There were also enough fish in the families' *kladers* to last until April.

But the winter of 1940 was different. Big Ed hadn't been coming into St. James, and he hadn't been in The Shamrock since after the boats were laid up for the winter. Two of his sons, Little Ed and Eddie Jim, and Red McCann decided to stop by to see if there was anything Big Ed needed.

Big Ed wasn't happy. He had slowed down. He wouldn't be coming into The Shamrock for a while. The cold was getting at him. With just him and Margaret at home now he wondered why the boys couldn't bring The Shamrock to his place just like they did in 1934 at Tim McCafferty's wake. The

boys felt Big Ed was telling them to prepare. They should get ready for another wake. This one would be the biggest damned wake in Northern Michigan, probably the whole state.

The three men were right. The next morning at Mass, Father Branegan said that Big Ed had slipped away in his sleep. He hadn't gone while fighting a nor-wester. He hadn't felt the boiling black lake tear the deck of his "bawt" from under his wide, solidly planted feet. He had slipped away in his sleep.

Maybe that was why the wake didn't seem to get untied. Maybe the real reason *was* that Big Ed himself wasn't there. There would be no leg wrestling with Chief Bear's Big Tail. There would be no full-keg-tossing contests. Big Ed was gone.

Anyway, it was cold. The Coast Guard said it had been down to thirty-eight below the night Big Ed died. And it wasn't higher than thirty below the next day. Red McCann and Timothy John Gallagher, Ed's grandson, went out to Bob O'Brien's hill to start the grave. When Big Ed had first said he wanted to be planted on Bob's hill so that he would be able to see the lake and the harbor. Bob had raised quite a fuss. But now Bob said it was all right. Big Ed would be buried where he could see the lake.

Red and Timothy John bent their muscular backs to the job. But the ground was too hard to break after the sod was torn off. Red broke the handle on his shovel on the third try. Timothy John built a fire on the spot, hoping this would soften the ground. But it didn't work. The ground was frozen solid below the first six inches.

Back at the house after Red and Timothy John had melted the frost in their nostrils, someone suggested leaving Big Ed outside. No one was shocked at the idea. After all, it was cold enough. The big woodshed on the back of The Shamrock would be where Big Ed would want to lie.

So Big Ed spent the cold winter of 1940 in the woodshed behind The Shamrock. There were no more orders given out and there were no more navigation lessons. The Shamrock was quiet. Big Ed was finally buried in the middle of April on the very top of Bob O'Brien's hill. From there Big Ed could see the fishing boats come from Skil-lee-gah-lay; he could see his beloved Lake.

DAVE HAMILTON



## APOTAAAYM

*Young Artist of Joyce, reread and seen again,  
At UCD against Ireland and Church—  
Almost a Jesuit, you really didn't have to cry  
About Irish outhouses full of vile pipesmoke  
Or Daddy Arnall's hellhouses of Catholic coals  
Or birdgirls in new seas  
Or Gaelic prostitutes in the Jewish Quarter*

*You set your life at twenty.  
Then proclaimed your art to med students,  
Learned Norwegian,  
Schooled the English in English  
Ran away to Italy and Paris  
And wrote of Ireland.*

*Well damn your yellow insolence  
And damn you one way or another.*

*Reread and seen again,  
You baptize your forehead  
And then thighs with oils of Pope and Prottly.  
(And I tire of your being epiphanized every chapter.)  
You drink weak tea and cut classes  
And are called bitch by Dad.  
So you will not serve, nor submit, not admit.  
Very significant!  
Oh Gaelic Greek, schooled in Latin,  
And then Gallic, I'll read one more  
Meaningful Manifestation,  
An Epiphany of yourself to me.*

GEORGE MISHKIN







## NOCTURNAL TAPESTRY

*Tonight there is a ring around the moon,  
A ring of footsteps on the frozen ground,  
The scratching, fleeting footsteps of a ghost.*

*Upon the creaking sidewalks shine the stars,  
Whose unreflected beams are turned back,  
To secretly devour themselves.*

*Beneath the ringed moon is silence,  
Traced by winds and soaring wings,  
Upon the glacial movements of the clouds.*

*Within this silence, blackened spiders dance,  
Hidden from the lighted wind,  
Who seeks them out to turn them into dust.*

*Here cruelty abounds among the naked trees,  
Who rip the evening's garment with their limbs,  
Revealing whitened streams of emptiness.*

*The baying hound evokes transparent fears,  
That crystallize upon the circled lawn,  
Embroidering silver scars of sadness.*

*The night retreats into a crimson pool,  
Filled with the living tears of ghosts,  
Whose answer and whose grief becomes our own.*

MARGENE SWANSON

# PREXY AGONISTES—A DRAMATIC NARRATIVE THE ARGUMENT

A president of a great broadcasting network, known to everybody as Prexy, has been punished by the FCC by being locked in an isolation booth in his sumptuous Madison Avenue office. He is forced to remain in the booth for eight hours of every day for the entire season (thirty-six weeks). Powerful klieg lights are focused on the booth, and the air-conditioning has been removed.

## Dramatis Personae

Prexy, the president of a great network

Dahlia, his fifth wife

J. B. Solon, of the congressional committee that indicted Prexy

Chorus of vice-presidents

Scene: An office building on Madison Avenue, 50th floor.

PREXY. O cursed day that I was forced  
Into this hellish ignominy  
O cursed night that I was betrayed  
By Philistine Dahlia, most hated of all  
That cursed breed who first deceived  
Our primal ancestor.

CHORUS. Beloved Prexy, chief of all men,  
We bewail thy fate and offer succor.

PREXY. O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of kliegs!  
I beg of you, give me my  
Glasses dark, that I may subdue this awful glare.

CHORUS. Any wish we can grant thee, O Chief,  
On pain of death that one we are forbid.  
(Enter Dahlia)

PREXY. O what's that hellish tapping I hear?  
Canst that be one of the accursed breed?

CHORUS. Yes, O master! 'Tis Dahlia, the betrayer.



DAHLIA. O Prexy! Forgive one who in a  
Moment of weakness betrayed you.  
On the altar of Mammon I have atoned:  
I have sacrificed the rare Vicuna stole  
Thou gavest me when we lived in Arlington.

PREXY. Yes, I remember when I was eyeless  
In Virginia, at the Pentagon with  
Slaves of our great bureaucracy.  
Little then did I know you wouldst  
Tell all and bring this pain upon me!

DAHLIA. So thou will not forgive me?  
O Mammon! Is not Vicuna rare enough  
For thine altar? To Reno must I wend  
My solitary way. Forty-two days  
Among the barbarians must I live.  
(Exit)

PREXY. Thus always be the fate of those  
Who fall prey to feminine deception!  
Too late was I warned of their wiles,  
And seduced five times was I!  
(Enter Solon)

SOLON. Long have I waited for this day!  
To see the mighty Prexy imprisoned in  
His own deceitful chamber. 'Tis the  
Crowning glory of my glorious career!

CHORUS. Gloat not, O Solon! To see the  
Mighty fallen is not a gloating matter.

PREXY. Boast on, O Solon! I will yet live  
To see thy hated corpse upon the floor.

SOLON. Take care that thou not overstep  
The bounds of tactfulness, O Prexy!

PREXY. Prometheus upon the plaza had not  
The downfall I have suffered: O Solon,  
My limit has been reached, hated one.  
Out! Out! Before my fury slips loose its  
Hated bonds.

(Exit Solon)

CHORUS. Phoebus hath made his golden journey, O Master.  
The hour hath arrived when thy hated cabinet  
Opes its glistening jaws and spews thee forth.  
(Exit Prexy from booth)

PREXY. Better to reign in Gotham than  
To serve in Washington, O Chorus!  
I must seek out and find the hated Solon:  
Gotham hath not room for us both.

CHORUS. Do nothing rash, O Master. Hell hath no  
Fury like a congressman scorned.

PREXY. Farewell, O Chorus. I must undertake  
This arduous journey to recover my dominions lost.  
Down! Down! Unmeasured distance falling I must go  
To set right wrongs against me done.  
(Exit Prexy toward the elevators.)

THE END

DAVE KINCHEN

## STOLEN MOMENTS

*Between the first star and the last,  
the smiling Venus, Mary's star,  
we steal a moment, hastily snatched—  
and bask in pleasure, lizard-like.  
The beauty of the star belies  
the cruel control that follows  
with inquisitions of the world  
and iron maidens of convention.*

BOB FLEMING





## THE FEUD

Birdie and I were finishing our tea and cinnamon toast in her tiny kitchen. She and Poker John didn't have much of a kitchen—or much of a house, either. There were only four rooms set upon a questionable foundation. There was a hole torn near the bottom of the screen door. Just last week I have visited Birdie and while we were talking, in hopped a chicken, right through the hole. I must have looked surprised, because Birdie had said, "Oh don't mind her! That's just crazy old Peterella; she don't hurt nobody."

Birdie set her cup down, looked at the gilt clock, and said, "Poker John's late. Must be he found more tomato worms than he figured on. If he don't get in soon, he won't be able to see." She reached up and patted at her hairnet. Birdie had a head of the thinnest hair I've ever seen, and it was such a frizzy grey mist that I suspected the net kept it from floating away.

The screen door banged.

"That bastard! Birdie, you know what that no good bastard has done? He's put in five acres of tomatoes! Wasn't enough he beat us out of half our profits last year, sellin' for a nickel a pound. Hell no, the bastard's got to stick in two more acres!"

Poker John was enough to scare anybody when he was good and mad. He didn't notice me; I kept hold of my tea cup and sat still so he wouldn't be likely to. When he was mad, he filled a room. When he wasn't mad, he still filled quite a bit of space. Poker John was big, over six feet six inches tall, with a hank of stiff grey hair that never stayed put and big buck teeth. I could see a vein jumping in the side of his neck.

"Now John, you know we'll make out. Let the old fool keep on givin' his produce away. We'll still eat," said Birdie.

"That man has done nothin' but give me hell ever since he moved in two years ago," snapped Poker John. "First he insults a man, then he won't keep his fences up and his damned hogs wreck our yard—they get over here once more and I'm going to shoot every son of a bitch and then wrap that rotten barbed wire around his neck. Last year he gets most of our tomato business and now he's going to have more, damn him."

"Now dear, you shouldn't let that old reprobate get on you like this. Let him be ornery. We'll get on just like always, and you know what doc said about gettin' all steamed up."

It was getting late and I excused myself to go home. On the way I thought about Poker John. He was really letting old Axel get his goat. Before Axel had moved into the neighborhood, nobody had ever crossed Poker John. Nobody dared. Not that he wasn't liked; he was just eccentric enough to be entertaining, but no one trifled with his temper. He could stand over somebody and cuss him right into the ground the way you'd drive a stake in.

Nobody who'd ever heard of it forgot Poker John's first encounter with Axel. He'd gone to town to see the doctor about an infected finger. He couldn't find him, and lost the little patience that he had. The finger was hurting him. Rushing down the street in a real pet, he ran into Axel, grabbed his arm, and snarled down at him "Where in hell's the doctor in this town?"



Axel, who'd never seen Poker John before, looked up at him and slowly replied, "I don't know—and what's more, I don't give a goddam."

Poker John looked, let go of him, and walked away. Nobody had seen anything like it before.

From that moment on, the cards were down. Somebody dared cross Poker John. The rest of the neighborhood watched the feud with interest and real enjoyment. I enjoyed it at first, but I was beginning to worry about it now. Poker John was acquiring a fine complex. Everything old Axel did infuriated him; he was sure Axel was out to ruin him.

The next morning I was sitting on the porch, stirring up my baking powder biscuits when Poker John stomped up on the porch.

"Emmy, that no good son of a bitch has done it again. He snuck in last night and poisoned every damn last one of our jars of applesauce. He thinks I don't know it, but I aint so dumb I can't tell. He's tryin' to kill us both!"

"Oh for heaven's sake, Poker John, how could he possibly get in and open jars without you waking up?"

"I don't know, but that's what the fat bastard did, sure as I'm standing here telling it. Let him come tonight—I'm staying up with the shotgun. He comes back and he gets blown clear to hell."

He stamped down the steps and headed for home to oil the shotgun.

A week later, Birdie came to see me. She was so upset she even forgot to pat at her hair.

"What am I going to do, Emmy? We found Peterella dead this morning and Poker John says Axel poisoned her. She was so old she should have died long ago. Now John tells me he'll kill him! What am I going to do, Emmy?"

"Oh, he can't be serious. He gets worked up, but you know he'd never hurt anybody. He'll get over it."

But this time he didn't get over it. When Birdie went back home, she found him stretched out on the floor by the shotgun. He'd had a stroke.

When I do my dishes in the evening, I can look out the window and see fat Axel in his tomato patch, stooping over the plants, picking off worms. He has put in another acre of tomatoes.

JANIS STEVENS

## LAVENDER WHIRLPOOL

You leave The Walls behind you. Turning, you see the door, the black mouth, closing, letting you go into The Light. You can't remember The Light very well. It was just a place beyond The Walls. And you wanted to leave The Walls like hell.

You are there again; The round man whose fat rolls down his body like melted wax; the pencil of a woman, who smells of lavender and promises you lemon drops if you will be good; the blonde, young girl who sits in a dark corner and plays with her fingernails. It's funny; you used to sit in corners behind The Walls, playing with your fingernails just like her. And even this place looks like The Walls. It is dark, with shadows in the shadows, and with locked doors which are never, never opened. Even the air smells the same — as though death were masquerading as life; damp and musty, with a slight fragrance of lavender and lemon drops.

They give you some paste and pictures. You don't like the paste; it sticks on you and slows you down. But the pictures! They are red and blue and yellow and lavender! They remind you of what you thought The Light would be like. Slowly, hesitantly, the blonde girl slinks from her dark corner; her eyes look at you with a gaze that you can not understand. Why, you think, she is like The Light, too! She sits next to you and holds the pretty pictures. She likes you, and so you like her. But suddenly she throws the lavender pictures on the floor. She begins to cry, and you don't know why. As you place your hand on her shoulder, a black shadow falls upon you; it cuts The Light around you like a knife and throws you into the dark. The round man has brought his net of black and has killed The Light. The girl cries more. Why?

Then you smell the lavender, and you know the pencil woman has come. But she doesn't have lemon drops; she has a black newspaper, and she hits you, you, until you begin to laugh. The blonde girl has stopped crying, and she looks at you. Your laugh has made her stop crying, and so you laugh. But the pencil woman is shaking you, trying to push you into the shadows again; her twisted, black silhouette and decayed, lavender smell remind you of a dying weed. You laugh. The round man begins to turn red, his fat flowing from his body like a burning candle. You laugh harder. They want to take you from the blonde girl, from the bright pictures, from The Light back into the shadows again. You laugh and laugh and laugh.

And then the black mouth opens, waiting to thrust you into the shadows once more. In the dark shadows, there is peace and quiet, and you can think how nice The Light will be. You smile, away from the lavender whirlpool.

DON STEINER





Study from Munch

## BACCHANAL

*Warm breath throbs  
As sharp points impale the sun  
To hold it still  
And drain its energy.  
The air bleeds green blood  
    That weaves and pirouettes down the clawing limbs.*

*Soft pink mouths explode in birth  
And breathe extravagantly  
    Weave to the "pulse beat" in the ground,  
Dance carelessly  
In the bacchanal,  
Then fall exhausted at their peak,  
    Of frenzied,  
        Hurried  
            Span of life.  
Leaving a socket and a scent.*

*All is take, and dance and show  
As earth shudders into life,  
Recoiling from the violence.*

*Spring is a man-like time.*

JANE GERTENRICH



## A LEAF OF CUMMINGS

"A poem should not mean|But be." This statement by Archibald MacLeish fully characterizes one aspect of the art of e.e. cummings' poetry. For in many of his poems, cummings wishes only to paint a picture, project a feeling, sound a tone. There is no meaning, no idea, no moral in these poems. The reader sees a group of letters arranged in such a way so as to portray an instant fleeting joy. At times there is only a sudden manifestation, an epiphany — in the Joycean sense — of the commonplace into something beautiful. These poems are art and exist for its sake alone.

A representative poem of this genre is the first one from cummings' latest volume of poetry.

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The poet employs a pictorial typography to aid in perceiving the image of the poem. He invents a word to characterize a mood. There is a hint of a musical tone. And that is all. We can say no more about the form of the poem. But the form is bound to the content of the poem.

Briefly, paraphrased, the poem reads: "One, a leaf falls. One, iness," This is almost ridiculous in prose. But in the manner of its arrangement, the poem pictures a solitary leaf spiralling down. The mood caused by the leaf's descent is "falliness." The musical tone "Fa" — a single note — contributes to the sense of loneliness in fall.

All of us have seen a leaf drop from a tree in autumn. But have we ever been immersed in a mood of solitary falliness by its descent?

Here cummings places us in this feeling. He permits, however, an unlimited area for us to travel in this emotion. He plays the chord; and from its tonality, we hum a melody. No T. S. Eliot dares now to ask, "What precisely do you mean?" Cummings spirals down a leaf, and I feel an autumnal loneliness.

GEORGE MISHKIN

## YOU REALLY THINK SO ?

"Come in!"

The study door opened just a crack. A pair of hazy blue eyes peering out from behind black pixie-frame glasses peeked around the partly opened door.

"Sure it's all right that I come in?"

When I saw that face, I wanted to yell, "NO! NO! NO!" But I forced my mouth up at the corners and disguised the dislike in my voice with a little sugar.

"Why sure, Honey. Come on in."

The door swung open, revealing a slender girl clad in shimmering blue taffeta. As soon as I saw the blue dress I knew why Honey had come to me. But I wasn't going to satisfy her this time. I wouldn't, I wouldn't, I wouldn't!

She posed, framed in the doorway, for several seconds — a cute girl. The pixie glasses resting on a tiny, turned-up nose dominated her face. A smear of vivid pink covered the child-like mouth. Eyes, nose and mouth belonged to a round face framed with tight honey-blonde curls. Natural, I'd been reminded many times.

She glided slowly across the narrow room, balancing carefully on heels which added at least three inches to her small figure. At the window she did a neat pirouette and stopped facing me, her head tilted slightly upwards as if to say, "Well?" I had to say something.

"Uh — Honey, did you hear that Jo's been elected president of her sorority?"

The upward curve of her mouth slowly straightened out, and her head dropped a few inches.

"No—I-I didn't." Her face brightened. "But have you heard that I'm up for president of History Club? And they say I've got it made!"

I kept telling myself, I won't, I won't, I won't! And I didn't say anything.

The smile again disappeared from her face. She perched on the chair opposite me, very carefully smoothing out the enormous skirt of her dress.



I knew she was taking great pains to draw my attention to the new dress. But I'd promised myself that this time I wouldn't take her bait. I grabbed a sudden thought.

"By the way, I'm going home tomorrow, Honey. Want me to call your parents?"

"Uh—n-o-o-o. I-I guess not. . . . Oh yes, you might call and tell them I got an A on that history exam I was so worried about."

An A? I tried to conceal my surprise as I stared at this diminutive lump of humanity. A pair of cloudy blue eyes searched my own face. Pretty good, I admitted to myself, but I refused to give her the satisfaction she was fishing for.

"Okay. . . Is that all?"

"W-e-l-l, might tell Mom that I won the scholarship. Even beat Bill Peterson on the test!"

Her head tilted upwards again.

"Why, that's great, Honey!"

The words slipped out before I could stop them. Her mouth broke into a wide grin.

"You really think so, Pat?"

I wouldn't give her any more satisfaction. I wouldn't! But I had to answer. I wanted to scream, "Sure I do. I think it's wonderful—Marvelous, GRreat, EXCELLENT! You're a genius, a regular Einstein. — And your new dress is beautiful—GORgeous. You're a living doll. . . So go." But I didn't.

"Sure, i-it's great."

"Thanks!"

Her round face wreathed in a smile of triumph, she jumped up from her chair. Crinolines crackled as she shook the wrinkles out of her skirt. Once more she pirouetted in front of me and paused, that same expectant look on her face.

But I picked up some papers from the desk and began leafing through them.

"Well—I guess I'd better be going."

Her voice revealed her disappointment, but I WOULDN'T! She shuffled slowly across the room towards the door. Her hand was resting on the doorknob when I heard myself mumbling.

"Uh, Honey, your new dress looks real nice on you."

She spun around, her little mouth stretched out in a smile from ear to ear, hazy blue eyes dancing.

"You r-e-a-l-l-y think so?"

"Yes!"

"Thanks, Pat!"

The door clicked shut, and her high heels clicked rapidly down the hall. I threw the papers on the desk in disgust.

PATRICIA HAYES

## IN THE DITCH (With apologies to Jack Kerouac *et al*)

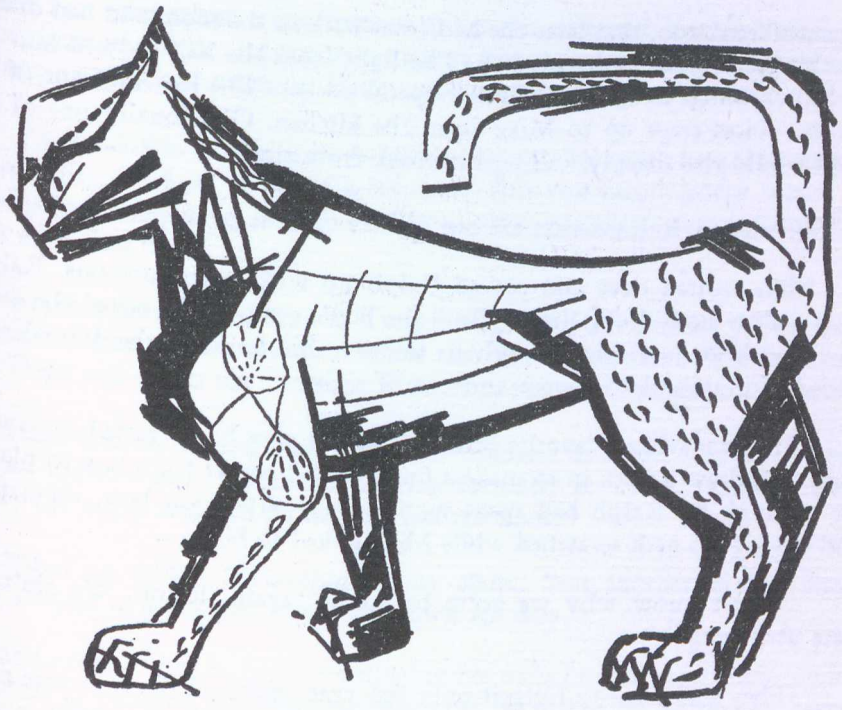
*The beatnik salutes the world with his beard.  
His bota, his Sartre, his Bhagavad Gita,  
Protect him from miltown—the world man has feared.  
Laughing, he kicks a beer can into the ditch.*

*To him the world is a great big can—  
Inviting itself to be kicked.  
A can punctured at both ends, leaking out man  
Into the littered refuse of the ditch.*

*Russia is one hole, the other is the USA.  
The beatnik squashes the can with his foot,  
And bubbling babbitts pour onto the clay.  
Regretless, the bearded silhouette walks down the road.*

DAVE KINCHEN





## ON TO THE NEXT

"Look out, will you, kid? Want us to load *you* in the truck, too?"

Mike backed quickly out of the way of the two men and studied the ground for a long time, rolling a pebble under his shoe. He was not really afraid of the movers any more. The two men in dirty grey coveralls had carried his family's furniture out of the house often enough that he knew they would not hurt him. They were not the same men ever, but the pattern of events was the same. First the knock on the door and the short talk with his father. His father always got angry, and then his mother would come out and talk with the movers. She never became angry, but she talked a lot, and insisted on accompanying the movers on every trip they made into the house.

Mike stepped far back off the sidewalk as the men appeared again on the porch. This time they were struggling with his bed. It was only a narrow roll-away, but on the stairs it was awkward for the men to handle. Its rusty springs squeaked at every bounce, just as they did at night when Mike tossed in his bed. The sight of those springs brought him back to the night when he had been awakened by a crash directly beneath him. He had screamed, and lights had flashed on in the room. His mother reached him first and he sobbed out the story of the noise. He remembered how she had looked under the bed, and then tucked him in again and talked softly to him until he went to sleep.

He remembered, too, that later she had come back in the room and had drawn something out from under his bed. The light from the hall showed him the flat brown bottle as she put it in her apron pocket. The low murmur of his parents' voices crept up to Mike from the kitchen. Occasionally one of the voices would rise sharply, calling him back from sleep.

"Come on, kid, get that cat out of here or he'll get stepped on."

Mike trotted over and picked Ralph up with both forearms. Ralph's furry yellow body hung limply from the boy's grasp. Mike rested the cat on his raised knee just long enough to improve his hold on the animal, then carried him around the house and out of sight.

This was Mike's favorite corner. The old grey house jugged its jaw out here, then drew it back in to make a fine secluded corner for a boy to play in. Or to think in. Ralph had spent many a lazy afternoon here, cat-napping and having his neck scratched while Mike talked to him.

"Don't know why we gotta be movin' again, Ralph. We ain't been here very long."

They had come to Detroit only last year. After all the corn was picked, Dad said, there weren't any more jobs on the farm. Mike was sorry. He liked the farm. He picked corn, and people thought it worthwhile doing and praised him for it. Moreover, playing and working in the fields all day kept him far from the raised voices of his mother and father. At night the bright sun and the spent energy of the day forced sleep upon him, and he did not hear the harshness and the anger. He knew the anger was there. He could feel it jumping in the air at breakfast. But he ran outdoors as soon as he could and spent his time forgetting it.

"The foreman didn't like Daddy, Ralph. Daddy said that old Ted gave him all the hardest jobs to do. Daddy didn't like doin' all the work while everybody else did the easy things. That's how come we left, Ralph. Daddy said so."

Mike was almost convinced himself, Almost, but not quite. Even the limited experience of his eight years told him there was something more behind it. That something, he felt, involved the flat bulge in the pocket of his father's jacket. That was the way it had been at Springfield. He himself had been there, and the remembrance of it brought an actual shiver to his body.

"You lousy Dago," Frank had said. What are you tryin' to do, run this station on a nickel? I can gas ten times the cars them damn high school kids can, and you got me working for a lousy dollar ten an hour, same as



them! You tried raisin' a family on a dollar ten an hour? You just tried it?" Frank weaved a little and shook his greasy fist at Tony. Mike watched from his seat on the Coke machine. Both men had forgotten he was there.

"Settle down, Frank! You get paid what you're worth here. If you were a mechanic, you'd get a hell of a lot more. But you barely know where the gas cap and windshield are, and half the time you're so damn drunk you can't even find them!"

Frank's arm swung up, but Tony had gripped the slighter man's wrist and shoved him against the wall before the blow could land. "Nobody calls me a Dago and draws pay from me. Now take your kid and get out of here!"

Mike had scrambled from the Coke machine and had wedged himself between the two men, crying and beating furiously at Tony. Frank grabbed him by the upper arm and pulled him out the door.

"Shut up, Mike! It's nothin' to cry about. Just another stinkin' little job. I wanted to get out of this filthy town anyway."

Mike found that he had been digging his nails into the soft earth under him while he thought. Brushing his hands off, he picked up Ralph and began to rub his fur the wrong way.

Inside the house his mother's voice was shrilling directions to the movers. "Careful with that end table! Oh, please be careful, you're scratching it on the doorknob!"

Mike puzzled over his mother's concern for the table. It, like all their other furniture, had seen many years of wear. Its surface was pock-marked by cigarette burns, the explorations of Ralph's feet, and odd-sized dents where ashtrays had been dropped.

Her voice had had the same shrill tone at times last night, only there had been tears in her voice then. Mike had listened until they went to bed, then pretended to be asleep when his mother looked in on him.

"Frank, this is the last time. I'm not going to put up with it any longer! Each time we go to a new place, you promise me it will be the last. If you don't stick with it this time, I'm getting out."

"What in God's name do you want me to do, Mil? Take all that crap from those jerks down at the plant? Is that the kind of mouse you want me to be? You'd sure be satisfied, wouldn't you, married to a guy who did nothing for the rest of his life but splice two wires together, the same two wires, a thousand times a day!"

"All I want right now is to hold this family together! I've had twelve years of it, waiting at night to see if you'll come home drunk or sober, with a job or out of a job. Or if you'll come home at all. I've had all I can take, and if Chicago doesn't work out, Frank, I'm leaving."

"What's the matter? Haven't you got guts enough to stick it out? For better or for worse. Ha!"

"It's not only me, Frank. I'm thinking mainly of Mike. He's been in five different schools now. It's not good for a kid to move him around like that!"

"Good for him, hell! That kid's been nothing but a nuisance since the day he was born. I warned you before we were married that I didn't like kids!"

"Oh, Frank, please!" Mil began to sob.

Mike rubbed his face against Ralph for a moment, then with the cat dangling from his arm, scuffed his way to the kitchen door and into the house. He walked slowly through the four rooms studying the flowers on the wallpaper, the worn, brown places on the linoleum. His mother hurried in from delivering final precautions to the movers. "Get your jacket, now, Mikie, we're almost ready to go. The bus leaves in a little over an hour. And say good-bye to Ralph now, because of course you can't take him with you."

Mike felt the bottom drop out of his stomach. "But, Mom. . . !"

"Be still, honey. He just can't go to Chicago with us, and that's all. Now run on outside while Daddy and I lock up."

Mike jabbed first one arm, then the other, into his faded blue jacket. With the cat clutched to him, he wandered out to the sidewalk. Burying his face in Ralph's fur, he shut out the sight of the street, of the house.

With a wriggle, the uncomfortable cat squirmed from the boy's grasp and ran under the porch. Tears tumbled down Mike's face and washed painfully into the thin red scratch on his chin.

"Ralph!" he sobbed. "Come back here! Oh, please come back!"

Mike's mother stepped out the front door, looked at her watch, then adjusted her slightly dated pink hat. Descending to the trembling boy in the yard, she put her arm across his shoulders and began to steer him toward the street.



"Come on, Mikie dear. Don't worry about Ralph. He's a very smart cat, and I know he'll be able to take care of himself."

The little party moved down the street, Mike's father trailing with the two battered suitcases. Mike, piloted by his mother, stumbled along sideways, looking back over his shoulder.

"Ralph, you wait there! You wait for me, Ralph, okay? I won't leave you! I'll come back and get you! Wait for me, Ralph!"

JANET STRADER

### DEMAIN (Tomorrow—)

*The boiling sea will inundate the pine,  
The glacial slides descend to meet the sand,  
The world will shudder at the edge of time,  
And all out bravest days dissolve,  
Into a summer rain*

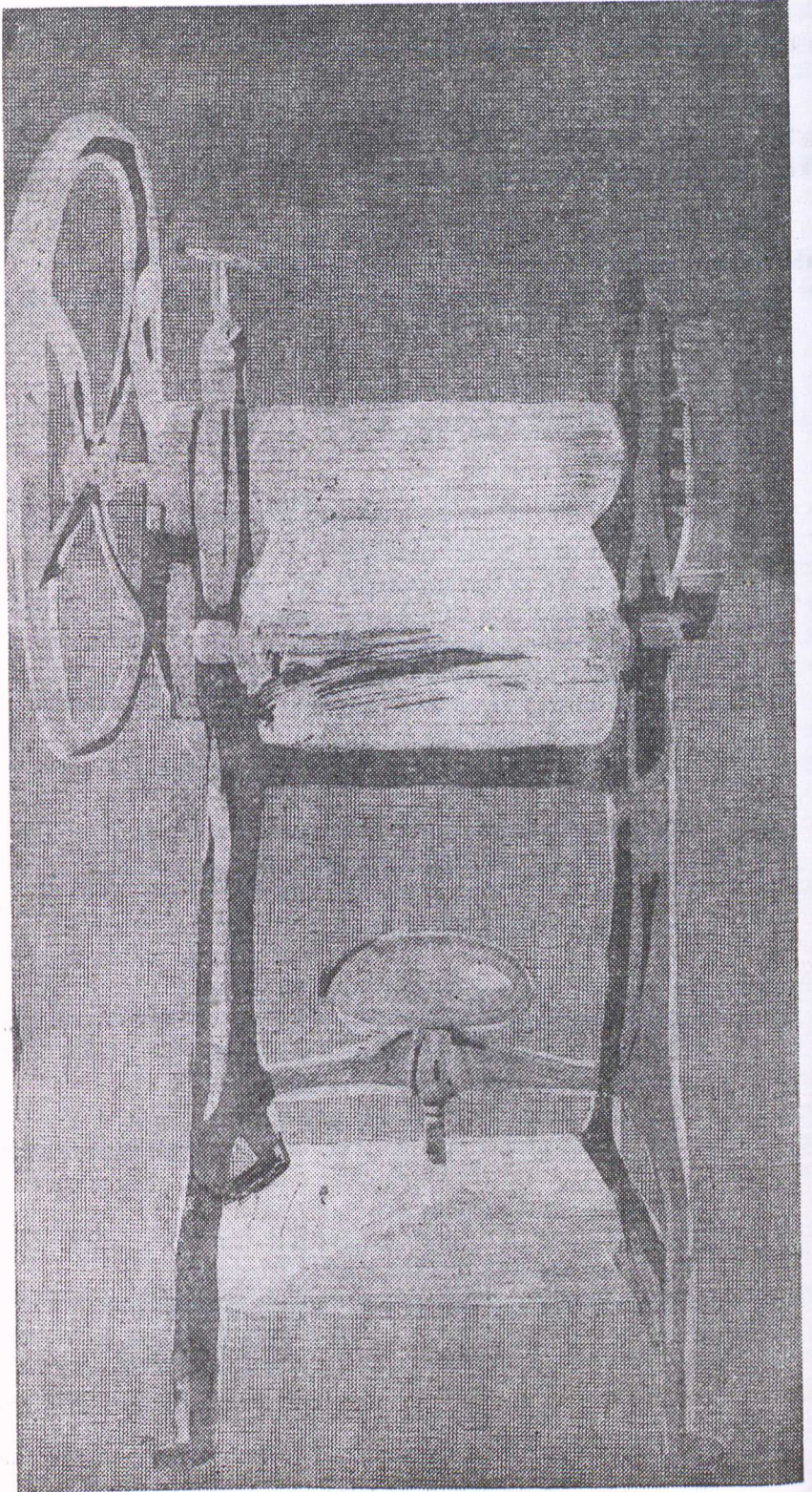
*The rising birds will fester in the heat,  
And soon their sun scorched wings will beat the air,  
When laden with the weariness of time,  
Devoid of any song, they swoop,  
To die in salted pain.*

*Continuous ascensions of the sea,  
Will stream between the passages of stars,  
Enveloping the silent shores of space,  
With humid mists that rise perpetually,  
Then fill the fens of time.*

*The limitations of the hour will droop,  
Expanding into flows of orange light,  
The point where time returns will fall away,  
And stretching out, above, around and underneath,  
Will be eternity.*

MARGENE SWANSON







## IDLE CURIOSITY

Just after I was released from the Army, I was given an opportunity to work in the Guided Missile Division of one of the Illinois Army Ordnance depots. This type of work, of course, is of a very delicate nature and extremely complicated, but at my beginning level much becomes routine in a short time. Each worker was assigned a specific duty to perform and until he was graduated from one of the training schools at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Alabama, his scope was justifiably small.

It was the beginning of another routine day, but before it was over my work and just plain living would take on a new significance. Although the man I was working with was one of the best in his field, he was a "channel" thinker, or a man who could see and do only what was right in front of him, and component parts of a missile meant nothing to him until each part in turn was called into use.

This morning we were working down in one of the shoreline "pits" in Chicago and as I finished my work at the forward end of one of the missiles, my plodding "boss" was slowly tinkering along at the middle, or brain center, of the missile. With a little time to kill, I strolled aimlessly around the pit, casually noting the uniformity of the sleek, white killers as they sat ready and waiting on the loading racks, each one charged with two hundred and seventy pounds of high explosives, in addition to its acid fuel. Idle curiosity came into play now as I decided to look underneath just to see, mind you, how this row of missiles appeared from the bottom, when I noticed a rod hanging down from one of the missiles. The rod was more like a stiff piece of wire and was hanging about an inch into an innocent little puddle on the floor. "Hey, George, what's this rod for?" I casually asked, whereupon George pulled his head out of the ailing missile, and wiping his hands on a rag, he started toward me examining his thumb as he walked. When only a few feet away, he stopped dead.

"Don't move, Mike," he whispered hoarsely. A switch clicked in my brain and I froze. There was a long minute of silence as George tried to decide what should be done, and I was forced to remain in the most awkward, semi-kneeling position on the cold, damp concrete that I could possibly have allowed myself to be caught in under such circumstances. The physical strain was bad enough, but with missiles forming an immediate ceiling over my head and an unknown liquid at my feet, my racing imagination made the Jupiter "C" look like a kiddy car.

Finally George whispered soothingly, "Now, Mike, I want you to be very careful when you start walking. No, not yet! I'll tell you when." I felt perspiration run down the bridge of my nose, and as the scraping sound of

a heavy object being dragged over concrete came to my ears, a chill swept over me; if only I could turn around and see what was going on.

"O.K., Mike, you can relax now," said George cheerfully. "You know the 36 volt tester I brought down? Well, the two test leads fell out somehow and the positive lead was in the water by your feet. The negative lead was by your right heel about an inch from the same puddle. If you had accidentally kicked that negative lead into the water, that would have completed a 36 volt circuit and the copper rod dangling in the water would have been all she needed."

George, placing the rod into its proper position, continued, "If you hadn't called my attention to it, one of the G. I's. might have started the morning hose-down of the floor and. . ." he turned with a thin smile.

"And what, George?" I barked a little out of patience.

George opened the exit door and said, "One and a half volts is all it takes to set one off. . . all those missiles in this concrete enclosure!" He chuckled to himself as he crossed the freshly fallen snow.

I'll never forget "channel thinking" George, and I doubt very much if he will forget my idle curiosity.

MICHAEL H. HINDS





## BUS RIDE

*Sallow.*

*Shallow.*

*Stale people swarming in a bus.*

*Grey, sodden faces breathe*

*Second hand air. Steam*

*Drawn from wet wool*

*Cringes on the windows and,*

*Gorged with stagnation,*

*It bursts and runs.*

*Armitage next, Armitage, and*

*Did you get that on sale, where,*

*So I told my old lady*

*If she didn't want to watch the fights,*

*Get the hell out, can I see a picture*

*Of your boyfriend, oh, he's cute, Fullerton next,*

*Hey did you hear*

*Diane got engaged, my god won't they shut up?*

*Vital speech, beautiful lives, dead.*

*Winding, grinding through their words*

*Comes all they live for, stand for.*

*Hope of the world slouches in a black jacket.*

*The wisdom of age gums a slimy cigar stub.*

*Let me off. This bus*

*Is going nowhere.*

JANET STRADER



## TIME AND LOVE MEASURED

### *Time and Love*

*Measured by*

*frog  
leaps and  
hopscotch  
the beat of a red paper heart,  
the circumference of a chocolate egg,  
the sweep of a sparkling stick.*

*Running from*

*goblins, facing the east and  
sitting down to a turkey feast.*

*Sounded in*

*bell tones, packed ten feet tall  
with yards and yards of red ribbon  
wrapped round the earth.*

*ARM WIDE and SKY HIGH  
and bushels and bushels of  
Moons with handless clock faces  
and jump rope arcs and  
white snow pies cut in wedges by fox and geese.*

*The quick flame of shooting star,  
the sparks from whirling disks,  
the silver flash of slender runner.  
By the yard and not the inch,  
By the handful not a pinch,  
Spending every copper minute,  
Gathering up the world within it.*

CAROL DOERR





## THE RITUAL

She wore the same dirty housedress she had worn all week. A grease-splattered apron bound her stout body, and a wilted bow drooped across the back of her wide hips. Leaning over, she opened the oven and reached inside for the baking dish. "God damn it!" The words rang in the empty kitchen with a hollow, mocking sound. Even the clop-clop of her shoes against the floor sounded empty as she crossed the floor to bathe the burnt finger at the brown stained sink. The kitchen door opened, and the draft made the limp cafe curtains stir slightly. Despite Pat's careful effort, the door slammed shut. The woman at the sink turned quickly and snapped, "Can't you learn to close that thing right?"

The sullen reply was inaudible.

"Answer me!" the woman shrieked.

"Yes," the girl mumbled.

"Kids! Never can get a decent answer from 'em anymore. Always gotta be so damn wise." She muttered on and on. "Nowadays you kids are too precious to lift a finger around the house. Always got to send an engraved invitation to get a little help in the kitchen." The tone died down to a whine. "I'm so tired — work like a god damned slave all day. Why the hell can't you *do something!*" With a vicious snap she flung a dish towel to the floor. Pat turned and scuffed toward her bedroom.

"Where are you going?" her mother demanded.

"Out."

"Out where?"

"To Bev's house, if you must know." Pat entered her room and noted with pride the fresh flowers on the desk, the blue checked curtains, the polished floor. She meticulously patted the pillow on the bed into shape and crossed over to the dresser. She pulled out the top drawer, revealing a disarray of bottles, brushes, socks, and purses. A veil of talcum powder from an overturned tin was spread over the contents of the drawer. Pat's eyes widened.

"Looking for something?" The voice, sweetly sarcastic, issued from the doorway.

Pat lifted her eyes from the drawer and confronted her mother. "Who's been in my drawer?"



"Guilty conscience, dear?" The tone was scathing.

"Mother, were you snooping in my drawers?" Pat demanded. "This is my personal property and my responsibility. How could you dare be so nosey?" Hot tears stung her eyelids.

"And you are my responsibility," scolded her mother. Pat's eyes, catching sight of the object her mother held, dropped to the floor. "Where the hell did you get these?" Pat's mother dropped the crumpled pack of cigarettes into the open drawer. "My god, kid, what do you think you are — some cheap tramp walking the streets? There's time enough for paint and this other foolery. What do you do it for — to impress those half-assed boys that hang around a street corner? Keep it up — keep it up and see where it takes you — see what real trouble is!" The voice raged on, finally reaching a furious crescendo. The woman leaned against the door frame, exhausted by the outburst, her face contorted with emotion. She raised her eyes and groaned, "Oh god, god, god. Why must it be this way?" Suddenly her wrath returned. "You sneak!" she shrieked. "You damned little liar! Can't you ever tell me anything? Can't you share one shred of your stinking life with your mother? Why can't I know anything? Oh — go to hell!" With a single thrust she rejected Pat's attempt to approach her.

The girl stood back in a corner, eyes flashing, watching her mother. "Why, Ma — why did you have to go poking in my drawers?" Her voice was heavy with contempt. "Why, Ma?"

"Why?" The voice cracked. "Why, you ask. If you can't behave decently who's going to look after you? Me, that's who — me, me, me!" She pounded her chest to emphasize each word. "Oh my god." The tears came and she covered her face with her hands.

Pat's senses absorbed the image before her — the printed cotton dress, faded and crumpled, the greying hair, rumped and unkempt. "Mama, Mama," she thought, but the words stopped in her throat. The mother reached out and held her daughter tightly, smelling the light scent of flowers. Pat felt her mother's dress rub against her arm and the material felt stiff with dirt; the familiar smell of onion reached her nose. Rough hands stroked her hair and her body stiffened.

The cool night air brushed against her face as Pat closed the door and turned toward Bev's house. Reaching the sidewalk she looked back at the house and saw mother's heavy body silhouetted against the window. Clenching her fist tightly she thought, "You bitch" — then waved good-by.

DIANE DITE



## RAIN ON GOOD FRIDAY

*It is meet and just, I said  
as I looked through the window  
at the Good Friday morning,  
harsh and cold  
and tear-dropping with rain.  
It is meet and just that elements  
should weep where man has failed to weep.  
The rain remembers.*

*Do this in remembrance. . .  
and man lunch-buckets off to work  
or last-suppers noisily  
in the chromed cafeteria.  
He runs from the bus stop  
with a soggy newspaper in lieu of umbrella.  
The rain remembers.*

*Rain reminds man of rubbers  
forgotten in the foyer,  
reminds him of sinus,  
of his scars and his joints.  
And last and least  
to his cash-box mind  
it reminds him at last  
of a temple-veil-rent,  
which the rain remembers.*

BOB FLEMING



## THE VILLAGE

*Here, very high in the Andes,  
Where the buildings are built  
With a whiter kind of stone,  
And old men walk with bent heads,  
Over the pebbles of the sloping streets,  
Making thin shadows  
On the white, rough walls,  
Here, where snow is, always,  
A miracle has occurred.*

*To this village, where old men pause  
To look at something in the mountains,  
A crowd from the city below has come;  
Has come, hearing of the miracle,  
To see the girl.  
They have roared three times  
So that, on a high iron balcony,  
She has three times appeared.  
The crowd is milling about in the street,  
But it is noticeable  
That the old men are gone.*

GERALD POWERS

## TO SLEEP, PERCHANCE

*The dark is not dark, but filled with neon suns  
Novaing against a linty flannel night.  
My eyelids squeezed, the colors flame and burst—  
Oranges, reds and greens, contrasts and complements,  
Until that spot of white grows, hesitant at first, to blot out all  
the rest.  
The juice runs down, the fires die; time now for dreams.  
The people come, audacious flannelgraphs, stealing from me their third  
dimension,  
To play and love and die,  
Dreams with souls and souls with dreams  
Crying, Come with us and play with us and love with us and die with us!  
And I, laughing, run to join them.*

DON ABRAMSON

## A COUPLE OF STAPLES

The old woman squatted by the ruined pansy bed. Her eyes traveled from the smashed flowers to the barnyard. There in the barnyard stood a cow, carelessly swishing her tail, blinking her eyes, and chewing a cud of purple pansies.

"Damned creature!" snapped the old woman as she pushed an uprooted flower down into the soil. "How many times must I tell that man to mend the fence? Twice this week you've plowed up my pansies, you sway-backed wreck." The woman continued muttering invectives under her breath. Her underlip twitched in irritation as she tossed a mangled pansy to one side.

The old woman rose, her task finished as best she could finish it, and looked slowly about her. It was hard to really look at, and see, a farm you'd lived on for forty-five years. Arms folded beneath pendulous breasts, she stared. Her gaze encompassed the square house with its rapidly sloping stoop, the ancient barn listing dangerously to port, the corn crib leaning in the opposite direction, and the paintless privy with a hornet's nest tucked up under its roof. A calico cat ambled off the stoop, stopping to paw ineffectually at a patch of sandburs stuck fast to her coat.

The old woman winced and winked her eyes shut for a few seconds. "Herb!" she called. "Where is that man?" She turned and her glance fell upon the huge elm that shaded the house. There was usually a fishing pole propped against the girth of the elm. No pole was in sight. "Fishing!" The woman exploded the word from her lips. "Forty-five years married and what have I had? Five children and forty-five thousand fish to clean." She looked once more at the mashed plot of flowers and shook her head with such energy that the bone pins loosened from her topknot and stood erect like angry antennae.

Around the corner of the tilting barn came an old man. He was a short man who walked yet as he had always walked, with a light, firm step. The woman stood with arms still folded, and watched him as he approached. The sun and years had combined to furnish the old man with a complexion the color and texture of dried bacon rind. His fishing pole jiggled in the sun and kept time to the strains of "Darling Nellie Gray" the old man whistled.

The old woman's face softened for an instant as her ears picked up the whistle, but she once again set her mouth and determined to be firm.

"Herbert," she cried, "Will you look what happened to my pansies. You promised to fix that barnyard fence last week. Now my flowers are all



ruined!" The words tumbled out quickly, as though the old woman feared a loss of resolve. "I want that fence repaired this very evening."

"Now dear, I wouldn't get all worked up about a few pansies," soothed the old man. He bent to pick up a wilting flower, looked at it carefully, and continued "They wasn't any great shakes this year anyway. But I guess it wouldn't hurt to get the fence fixed. Shouldn't take more than a couple of staples."

Most of the fences on the farm showed the results of a couple of staples. Some sections of fence merely leaned tipsily outward, others sagged, and still others had unconditionally surrendered to neglect.

The old couple silently had their supper. After the meal was finished, the old woman went to the fishing pail in the corner and pulled out three trout. The scales made little flicking noises as she scraped them off onto a paper. The mounting mass of scales glittered in the dusky kitchen like wet sequins.

The old man rose from his evening paper, kissed his wife on the cheek, and muttered, "Now if I can just find my staples, we'll get that old bitch penned in." He left the kitchen then, and walked out on the porch step to draw on his manure-coated boots.

The woman wiped the clinging fish scales from her hands and sighed as she watched the erect figure stride toward the barnyard. From the porch where she sat with the three trout in a bowl on her ample thighs, the old woman saw the barn through the dusk. The dusk seemed to shade out some of the barn's shortcomings. The sharp hammer blows which echoed against the barn were as comforting to the old woman as the strains of "Darling Nellie Gray" which still persisted from the barnyard. Perhaps a couple of staples. . . .

JANIS STEVENS

## ADAM

The empty laughter of the earth people blows like dry leaves through the autumn galaxies. The nervous signs flash, REXall—REXall—REXall—darkness. Soon the rain begins to fall. Down in the gutter the laughter fades to a chortled echo.

A smoldering heap of leaves dissolves before the staring eyes of a boy who sits, bent inward, on the curb. He shivers beneath the blue frailty of his jacket and suddenly leaps up, as if prodded by the blackness that leans upon

his arm. He feels the force of the earth beneath his feet and the magnetic pull of space. "ADAM—Adam—adam," echoes through the silence.

He runs, unheeding of the rain, down the naked street to the bridge. The bridge is moving with the river, past the trees and secret caves along the banks. Adam reels in delight, yelping to the stars. He bangs the bridge affectionately, bruising his young palm on its roughened stone. "Hey, there's magic in this bridge," he crows. "There's summer all stored up inside this stone—I can feel it warm and hiding right inside!" He laughs again, disturbing the troll who hides in the darkness below.

Now sauntering after having made his great discovery, Adam approaches the treacherous sidewalk, its greyness turned to livid red and green by the neon-colored rain. The only safe thing is to leap as fast as a frog, avoiding the fiery chasms. He lands, with a jolt, at the end of the line of parking-meters and monkey-swings his way to the corner.

"ADAM—Adam—adam!"

"COMING—Coming—coming!" He gives the mailbox a furious kick, the sound of which bounds sharply off the bridge.

"Adam, ain't I told you before to get in here when I call? I'm tired of yellin at you. Get in here when I call you, boy!"

"But mother, I had to put the town to bed. I've told you this before, but you never seem to understand."

"What do you mean, boy, put this town to bed. This here old town can put itself to bed without no help from you."

"But mother, I had to see the bridge."

"Adam, that old bridge is dumb, it don't care if you come by at all."

"Mother, there's summer in that bridge, I felt it warm against my hand."

"Well then there's winter in there too, old dead winter right inside."

"No, mother, only summer, who would want to store up cold."

"Now you stop askin' me those things or that big old troll will eat you up alive!"

"Mother, will tomorrw be winter again?"

"Get to sleep, Adam! I'm tired of talking at you!"

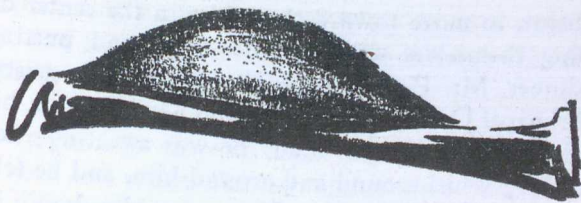
"I'll have to tell the bridge—how is it to know when winter comes?"

"Adam!"

"COMING—Coming—coming—."

MARGENE SWANSON





## IMAGO

It was final. Mr. Passant's petition had been denied. He watched the frozen moment of ice circling in his glass, trying to spin out into the cold air; but it was caught and melting in his hand. Mrs. Paul was saying how sorry she was. "Perhaps it would be better this way; you would have more time." She had trapped him in the corner where the Degas hung. He could understand now why the chrysanthemums were so confused and variegated in that dull basket and why the woman sat there not wanting to look at them. He did not want to look anymore either at the waves of red and yellow and white of the broken stemmed flowers of the dying bouquet, or at the brown tablecloth, or at his passion spinning in his drink, or at Mrs. Paul talking about religion and her father.

Mrs. Paul gave him up as old and uninteresting, and he watched her supple body slip away into the congested air of the art gallery. He watched her move from group to group dropping conversation on their plates. It was the trend to cluster in groups and share ideas until they became insipid like the liquid trickling down your throat, until the goals were common and the objectives clear. That was what Principal Donne had really meant. He was an excellent technician, but he wasn't a teacher; he was brittle in the face of change. That is what Mr. Donne really meant. He was coming up to him now like a huge Monarch butterfly safely hidden in the colored crowd. He came to rest by the Degas, but he never noticed it.

"I'm sorry to see you leave, old chap. That age requirement is a beast. It should be lifted. I hate to let a good man slip through my fingers. Curse retirement anyway. Say, but this is quite a party old man, quite a fling."

Mr. Donne was young with young ideas, and he spoke precisely. He sold himself to people with a certainty and an exuberance which parents liked. Ellen liked him too. When he first came to their house, she had thought he was selling something, and they both laughed when the explanations were out. Even Ellen had bought him for her last child. "He was handsome," they said; and as he talked, the dark hair above his eyes silently clashed with his straight white teeth. As he walked away without receiving an answer, Mr. Passant heard his ice clink in his glass; it hadn't melted; there wasn't time.

Everyone began to move toward the tables in the center of the gallery, while surrounding themselves with familiar faces and putting aside their drinks for the dinner. Mr. Passant couldn't assume their gaiety, and he sat down quietly, Principal Donne on his right and Mrs. Paul on his left. He ran his hand over the soft skin on his head; he was sweating; he watched the pictures of the gallery whirl around and around him, and he felt through the ice their soothing warmth. He felt himself momentarily drawn into the circle, spinning with the Renoirs, the Cezannes, the Matisse's; he felt life pulsing through him, carrying him out of the thin air into the cool dusk.

Then Mr. Donne's voice broke over him as he read the epitaph. "We are indebted to Mr. Passant for his loyal service, his fine contribution to our school and community. We hope that he will hold us ever in his memory. We wish him the best of luck." After the songs, the brief goodbyes, Mrs. Paul's tears, the empty cups, the coats in the dark corridor, a last longing look at the Degas, it was all over, and he was rushed out the door into the snow.

He waited until everyone had gone. He couldn't smile, but they smiled freely in the dark. He put his hands in his pockets and started walking. The thin moonlight had worked the formless world into a sculptural masterpiece, and he followed the sharp speared fence upward into the shadows of the old school. Below him he heard the fresh snow squeeze solid under his feet. For an instant he felt himself pulled gently into the building, and he was there rolled up in the maps, standing below the Acropolis, in Athens, in Sparta, in Corinth; he was Pericles delivering his heroic epitaph; and he was there too in the dusty, chalked boards, in the empty chairs, and in the hundreds of excited, blue eyes that passed before him.

"Mr. Passant, Mr. Passant!" They had brought red apples, and he had told them about metamorphosis. "What is that?" "Well, it has to do with the life cycle," he had told them. "What is that?" And so he had told them about the butterfly, the Monarch and the Swallowtail and how they went through the cycle. He hadn't told them about man, about man's cycle. "First there is the egg," he had said. When one of the children asked why, he couldn't explain, the explanation was too scientific; it left out the wonder and the mystery of birth. They had let the caterpillar rub against their skin, and they had laughed at the certainty with which it crossed the black desks and curled up to sleep. As the days passed, it wound a silky envelope around and around itself until its cocoon shown golden on the tree, and it remained immobile and frozen in the hard shell which was spun so young, so long ago. How impatient they were for the adult, how very impatient. Each morning they would beg to see the cocoon and to touch its golden surface. The day the imago came out of the shell was a miracle; they were so silent and so afraid to breathe. It floundered momentarily in the bright artificial light, spreading its crumpled wings; it was a Swallowtail with prolonged, bird-shaped hind



wings. When its was dry, they watched it fly out the window in dizzying, upward circles; and then it came down diving through the blue air, and then there was nothing but the colored flowers.

Now he was back in the cold night where the snow had begun to fall evenly on his coat and where the streetlights were only vaguely discernible on the corners. He ran his gloved hand over the mailbox, and a dark, red streak cut the white, patterned surface; he watched while the snow quickly covered his deliberate tampering with its design. The Degas still hung on his mind, and he thought for a moment that the woman was looking at him, as if he knew what she wanted, as if the flowers didn't exist just for an instant and they saw each other with perfect realization. And then the snow fell between them, and he strained his weak, grey eyes, but the chrysanthemums and the dull, rectangled tapestry blurred his vision; and then she was looking somewhere else.

His corner came up quickly. He was warm inside, and the melting snow ran down his coat in colorless trickles. He forced his coat into the cramped closet. Ellen called from the back of the apartment.

"John, John, is that you?" She came into the room, her red cheeks aflame from the stove. Her apron was flowered, and he had to force the Degas out of his mind. "How was it honey?" She pecked him with kisses like a young bird. He felt his eyes watering from the cold. "Oh, all right, you know how those things are." She made him sit in the deep brown chair, and he felt very old and tired. He vaguely felt her remove his shoes and put on his slippers. His body was limp and wet, and he only barely felt the gentle weight of the blanket as she covered him. "Now you just rest awhile" was far away, and he felt the snow melting off his face. She was looking at him again, the woman in the Degas, they had both the same feeling about the uncertainty of the cycle. He watched the imago circling out the window up and up in endless circles and the young blue eyes impatient, and the grey eyes impatient still. He fell away quietly into sleep. He would be up in the morning; there would be things to do; the cycle was only beginning, and he lay wet and trembling in the dark.

LARRY JACOBSEN



## AWARDS

### PROSE:

First place: "*Imago*"—Larry Jacobsen

Second place: "*The Feud*"—Janis Stevens

Third place: "*Big Ed Gallagher*"—Dave Hamilton

### POETRY:

First place: "*Bus Ride*"—Janet Strader

Second place: "*Demain*"—Margene Swanson

Third place: "*Bicycle Trucks*"—Rosalie Johnson

### JUDGES:

Warren Ober

Lucien Stryk

Virginia Moseley



