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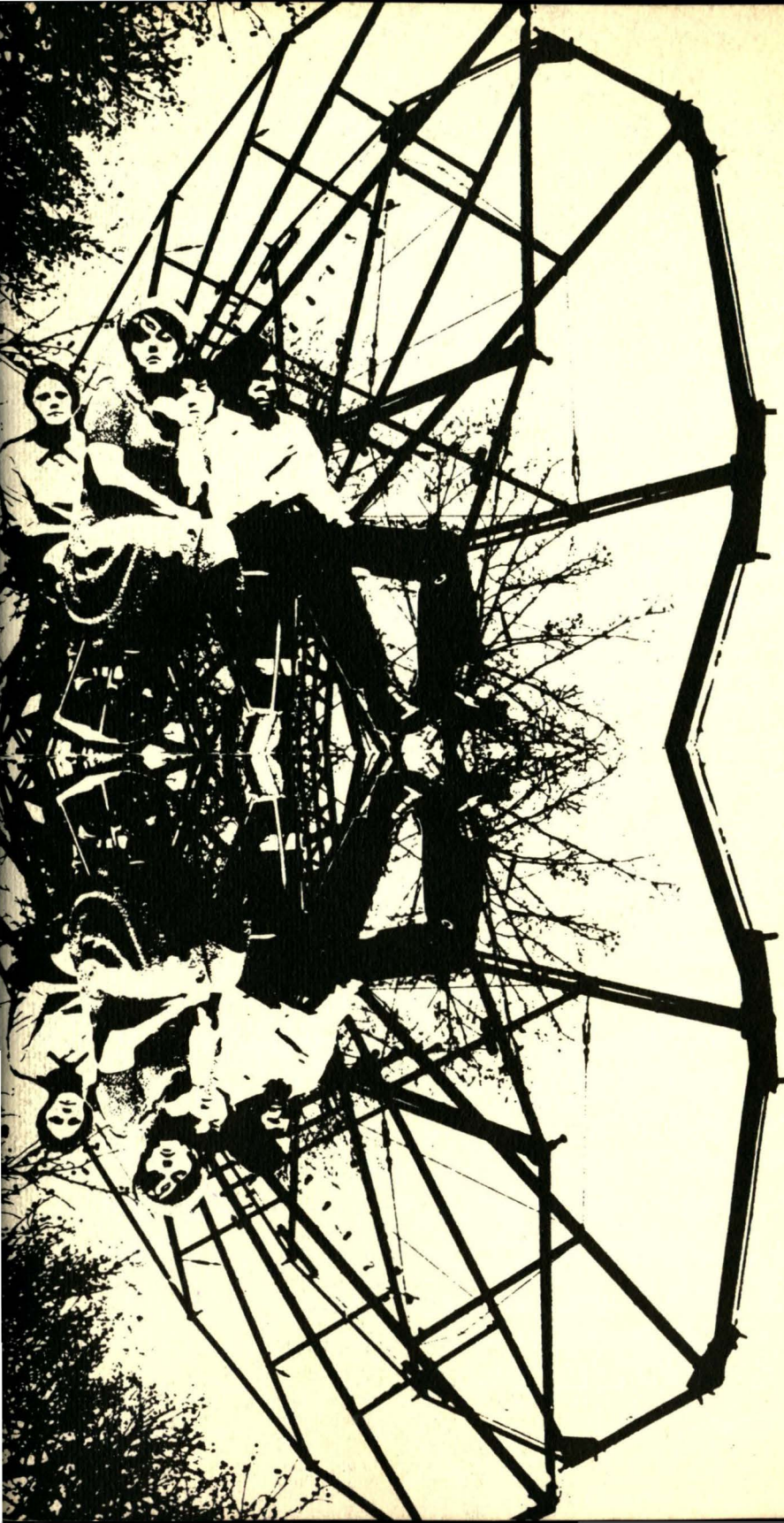
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It was the year of the spiders  
 From beneath every leaf  
 They came crawling  
 Eight-legged beings  
 With shiny black eyes  
 In their webs they trapped  
 The voices of men  
 And fed on them until they were full

Barbara Roush

THE SONG OF PASIAPHE  
 CANTO I\*

Argument: Pasiaphe. Her lineage. Her youth. Her parents' fate. Farmer Minus and his plans. Alcinous. Alcinous' potential; his failure. Impending doom for Alcinous. Pasiaphe: her puberty and affection. Farmer Minus and his improved plan. The mating of Pasiaphe and Alcinous. Her maternal contentment. A new cycle: fall and butchering time.

A black cow fed upon the grass  
 And pastured on the lee,  
 Of Angus blood she traced her line,  
 A bovine order, fat and fine,  
 Her name, Pasiaphe.

Her father was an Angus bull,  
 And some folk called him Ellis;  
 Her mother was a Hereford full  
 And for her Angus did she drool;  
 As for a grape-hung trellis.

Their little calf would often bawl,  
 And gambol on the slopes;  
 A real hide-bound calliope,  
 They called their young Pasiaphe,  
 And raised their beefish hopes.

But cows, like men, cannot account  
 For what they cannot know:  
 The leaves of fall put plans to rout;  
 A feed-lot took the mother out,  
 And Ellis, a live-stock show.

Pasiaphe was left alone  
 In Farmer Minus's pen;  
 For days she mourned her parents' fate,  
 Was off her feed, and lost some weight,  
 But gained it back again.

Now Farmer Minus had his plans  
 For young Pasiaphe:  
 Her tender haunch and meaty shank  
 Were just like money in the bank  
 In his well-'l)rafted hands.

A liberal ration of corn and fodder  
 Would put some flesh on Ellis's daughter;  
 And if that wasn't quite enough -  
 There were other ways of seeing that  
 Pasiaphe got nice and fat.

Pasiaphe lived quite content  
 In Farmer Minus's yard;  
 She had a hill, she had a tree,  
 And though there wasn't much to see,  
 Quite freely she came and went.

\* There are three Cantos in the original work.

Across the road, there lived a bull  
Owned by some other farmer;  
His face was white, his brisket light,  
His thews proclaimed his studly might -  
Alcinous, the charmer.

Alcinous had raised some hopes  
In his shrewd owner's breast;  
All heifers followed him around,  
And where he passed, they touched the ground,  
And laid their heads to rest.

This, did the fellow rightly think  
To be a sign that he,  
Allured by so much tit-and-tail,  
To father calves could hardly fail,  
But thus it proved to be.

For, scores of times, Alcinous  
Had chances to do his will  
With buxom cows with hips so sweet,  
So fair of form, so much in heat,  
But all results were nil.

No heifer pleased Alcinous,  
None on the grass or hay,  
He never gave them half a wink;  
It almost made his owner think  
Alcinous was gay.

At last despairing of his power,  
The farmer grew discontent;  
"I'll call the market this very hour,  
I'd sooner keep milk that's gone to sour  
Than a bull who's impotent."

Alcinous would likely be  
Meat hanging in a shed  
And buttons on a lady's coat  
The horns that graced his head,  
If not for Pasiaphe.

As time went on, to puberty  
Grew hesitant Pasiaphe;  
A maiden still, in ignorance,  
She often wandered to the fence,  
And lowed seductively.

For she adored Alcinous  
Far more than all the rest;  
I've often heard that blood will tell:  
Her mother's lust had worked its spell -  
Her own was put to test.

Old Minus knew Pasiaphe  
And saw her pine away;  
A fatter carcass she would have  
If he could get her big with calf:  
For this, does Eros play.

"And here's," he said, "the perfect time,  
The time to lock her up -  
I'll put Aicinous in my yard,  
And goad him 'till he gets it hard,  
And really ..... her. up."

The other farmer soon agreed;  
He hadn't a thing to loose:  
The bull would either take the teaser  
Or wind up in the butcher's freezer:  
Alcinous had to choose.

Cattle, and People, and other beasts  
Can sense an impending marriage;  
And so, it isn't too surprising  
That long before the day's arising,  
Pasiaphe looked to the east.

By morning's light, Pasiaphe guessed  
That something wasn't normal;  
She paced around, she glanced outside,  
In short, she acted like a bride  
Dressed in a wedding formal.

She peered down deep into her trough  
And saw her image there:  
Her eyes were large, her ears were tiny,  
Her nose was very black and shiny -  
She wondered if she were fair.

Pasiaphe soon heard a bawl  
And a most violent noise, too;  
On down the road, the farmer's bull  
Was not responding to his pull,  
But cried, as little boys do.

But inch by inch, Alcinous  
Was dragged into the pen;  
His big tears gushed upon the ground,  
His sobbing echoed far around,  
And met itself again.

As wild-eyed as a preacher's son  
(Or any Roman cleric's)  
He looked upon Pasiaphe,  
His black and shiny bride-to-be,  
And went into hysterics.

The farmer said to Minus then:  
"I knew he couldn't do it.  
His tastes are really far too picky,  
He could have given her a quicky,  
If he just had the guts to ..... it."

With skittish prance and mincing gait,  
Alcinous shied away;  
He hid his head behind a tree,  
And as for poor Pasiaphe,  
He left her to stand and wait.



Another cow might take offence  
At such a sorry lover;  
But pressed by love's false tyranny,  
Unwisely did Pasiaphe  
Make haste to be a mother.

And thus emboldened by her love,  
With all the sentiment thereof,  
Basiaphe, in trepidation,  
Made bold to overstep her station,

And chase Alcinous.  
"That's it!" cried Minus from the side,  
"Go at it, girl, and get him!"  
A determined cow will not allow  
Her mate to limp without a row,  
Though she may soon regret him.

So around and around the farmer's house,  
Pasiaphe pursued her spouse;  
And with all the speed of a leather torpedo,  
Alcinous flew to protect his libido -  
Until at last he tired.

His lolling tongue licked out at her  
In spiteful resignation;  
And in that moment, bull and cow  
Exchanged their bovine wedding vow  
In halting consumation.

"By God! I thought I'd never see  
Alcinous pull it off!"  
But Minus pounced upon his neighbor  
And credited the bullish labor  
To his Pasiaphe.

"You know, old friend, Alcinous  
Till now has been a virgin;  
And so it seems you'd well afford  
To give a rather large reward  
To the one who made him burgeon."

The farmer grudgingly agreed;  
(With reservations still)  
A ten-spot thereupon he gave,  
But not to the one who had to save  
Alcinous from the kill.

That honor goes to Pasiaphe,  
Who gave her maidenhood that he,  
Unschool'd in Aphrodite's arts,  
Could prove himself a bull of parts,  
And from his death be free.

Alcinous, from that day forth,  
Proved that he was 'the charmer';  
All his reticence turned to dust -  
And all the profits of his lust  
Enriched a thankless farmer.

Thrice blessed seemed now Pasiaphe  
Who hastened to maternity  
By leaps and bounds - and pounds and pounds -  
And soon a roll of fat around  
Her middle came to be.

And as late summer turned to fall,  
And the creeks were filled with water,  
Pasiaphe's excitement grew,  
The time was soon - but Minus knew  
The time was for her slaughter.

All her potential, all her gains,  
Were to be of no avail;  
November's chill put plans to rout;  
Old Minus put this poster out:  
- A PREGNANT COW FOR SALE -

Joseph A. Seward

## MOVING

The earthquake that struck Los Angeles on October 8 registered 7 on the Richter scale, destroyed \$10 million worth of property and injured 27 people; none seriously.

Charles Benson Bartlett, III read about it in the **Los Angeles Times** the next day. The story was on the front page, flanked by news of riots in Madison, Wisconsin (on the left) and by news of the latest proposed terminal date of American participation in Southeast Asian land wars (on the right). Charlie thought about it.

The earthquake that struck Los Angeles on October 9 registered 8 on the Richter scale, destroyed \$100 million worth of property (including the Hollywood Bowl) and injured 54 people; none seriously.

Charles Benson Bartlett, III again read about it in the **Los Angeles Times**. The story was on the front page, flanked by news of riots in Washington, D.C. (on the left) and by news of a revision of the latest proposed terminal date of American participation in Southeast Asian land wars (on the right). Charlie thought about this also.

On the morning of October 11, Charles Benson Bartlett, III walked into the Los Angeles City Hall and confessed.

Actually, he arrived about noon, having detoured to get a haircut and a barber shave, reclaim his suit from the cleaners and drop by the apartment to leave a note for his roommate.

No one seemed particularly interested in his confession.

After 20 minutes of being directed down halls to other people who handled earthquake confessions, Charlie ended up in the Los Angeles City Police Day Room. He would have gone directly to the Day Room, but he hadn't been sure that causing earthquakes was a criminal offense.

In the Los Angeles City Police Day Room, Lieutenant Victor Gomez and Sergeant Moses Lincoln Carver were on their lunch break. Sergeant Carver and Lieutenant Gomez had flipped to see who would go out for lunch, and Sergeant Carver had won. He had sent Lieutenant Gomez to the Taco Bell for burritos, tacos and coffee. He always sent Lieutenant Gomez to the Taco Bell. Lieutenant Gomez always sent Sergeant Carver to Colonel Sander's.

"Uh, excuse me," said Charlie as he stepped into the room. "I was sent here by a girl in Traffic Division."

"Yes? Can we help you?" said Lieutenant Gomez.

"Well, I hope so, you see, it's about those earthquakes. You know the ones I mean?"

"Yes. We noticed them," said Sergeant Carver.

"Well," said Charlie, looking at the floor, "I want to confess. To causing them, that is."

Charlie shuffled nervously while the two policemen looked at each other. They raised their eyebrows in a knowing way and Sergeant Carver nodded at Lieutenant Gomez and then got up and left the room.

"Why don't you sit down here and tell me about it?"

"No, I'd rather stand," said Charlie, "Thank you just the same."

"Suit yourself," said Lieutenant Gomez, moving closer to the door.

"Don't worry," said Charlie, "I'm not going to try to escape or go

nuts and hurt anybody. I'm not violent by nature but, you see, sir, I move things. Without touching them. Levitation or something. Anyway, I didn't realize my own strength and I was having nightmares and I guess things just got out of hand."

"You move things?"

"Yes, sir. But I didn't mean to hurt anyone. Like I said, I was having nightmares."

"Move something," demanded Lieutenant Gomez.

A paper cup of coffee rose from the table and inverted itself over the cardboard box of burritos and tacos.

"That was my lunch," said Lieutenant Gomez weakly.

"I'm sorry," said Charlie. He lifted a burrito from Sergeant Carver's box and moved it within reach.

"Thank you," said Lieutenant Gomez.

"You're welcome."

Less than an hour later, Charlie was moving desks in the office of the Chief of Police. The Chief prided himself on being able to quickly and decisively react to new and unusual situations. He sent Gomez and Carver home to get some rest and he told his secretary to take the rest of the day off. He also sent a note to the police physician saying that Sergeant Carver had been under a great deal of strain lately and that Lieutenant Gomez had apparently developed eye trouble. Then he called a friend in the Pentagon.

Two days later, the Chief of Police was appointed Deputy Assistant Regional Director (Interim) of the FBI and Charlie was moving tables in the Pentagon.

General Clark Christian, Chief of the Army Office of Research and Development prided himself on being able to recognize valuable discoveries and to react quickly and decisively to claim credit for them. He put Charlie under 24 hour guard and called the Chief of Staff.

"General Warfield, Sir?"

"Yes, Clark?"

"Would it be possible for you to stop by my office sometime soon? I know it's unusual, but I have discovered something that **might interest** you."

"It's not. You usually have. It usually doesn't."

"It will. I promise."

"Okay, I'll be there around two."

"You won't be sorry, Sir."

"I hope not," said General Warfield.

By 2:30, Charlie was moving General Christian around his office and General Warfield was collapsed in convulsions in the corner.

"You were right, Clark. I'm not sorry," General Warfield gasped.

"Sir, don't you understand?" ranted General Christian from the vicinity of the overhead lights, "This could revolutionize troop deployment. We could move armies without planes. We could move tanks, trucks, guns, bombs, ammunition, people. There's no end."

"Poppycock. It's a long way from moving generals to moving armies."

"But General Warfield, he caused the earthquake in California. He



has untapped powers. He can move things almost instantaneously for miles..."

"S'that true, son?" interrupted General Warfield.

"Yes, sir. I was having nightmares."

"Put him down."

"Yes, sir." said Charlie, dropping General Christian.

"I to4. you so." said General Christian from the floor.

"Be quiet, Clark. I'm thinking."

"Yes, Sir."

"Why, we could revolutionize troop deployment." mused General Warfield. "We could move armies without planes. We could move tanks, trucks, guns, bombs, ammunition, people. By God, Clark, there's no end."

"I know, Sir. I know."

The next morning, Charlie, along with most of the General Staff, was at Fort Mead. He had told General Warfield that he was not sure if moving things a long distance was dangerous or not. He had never done it and he insisted that the experiment use only volunteers who fully understood the chances they were taking. "C" Company of the 212th Infantry Battalion volunteered to a man.

"Excuse me, Sir." said the Commander of "C" Company to General Warfield, "Could you tell me what we're doing here?"

"Just an experiment, Captain. Just an experiment."

"Yes, sir."

Shortly thereafter, Charlie carefully checked the map coordinates and then moved "C" Company of the 212th Infantry (men and equipment) to a parade field at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. It took exactly one second according to the elaborate timing mechanism that General Warfield had set-up.

"Hello," he shouted into the microphone. "Are they there, yet?"

"Yes, sir. They're here. When did they leave?"

"Just a second ago."

The only mishap in the move occurred when PFC Bladen MoCaully arrived at Fort Bragg three feet low and a split second early. The Armored Personnel Carrier which he had been driving arrived in place and on time. After that, Charlie insisted that troops and equipment be moved separately. General Warfield agreed.

"Good for morale," he said.

By early November, Charlie had become a permanent part of the War Room. Using information on exact locations provided by satellite, he had successfully moved the First Infantry Division (men and equipment) from Fort Riley, Kansas to Germany for operation Reforger IV, the 8th Cavalry (men and equipment) from Germany to Fort Riley, Kansas and the Commanding General of the Pacific Theater home for his daughter's wedding.

On December 8 Charlie moved every member of the United States Armed Forces not in actual combat to a large, flat area in the Mojave Desert. There, the largest gathering of military men in the history of the world stood at attention to watch General Warfield receive the Distinguished Service Cross.

By December 21, having been thoroughly tested, Charlie was assigned to his first combat duty. He was to move 200,000 troops (and their equipment) to Southeast Asia for a massive offensive that was to last exactly four hours. Then he would move them out again.

"Ingenious." said General Christian.

"Yes." said General Warfield. "The press will never know, let alone the Russians and the Chinese."

In the War Room, General Warfield walked over to Charlie who was closely studying the board that had the carefully-calculated map coordinates of every U.S. military unit in the world marked in grease pencil.

"Ready, son?"

"Yes, sir." said Charlie.

"You are striking a great blow for freedom and justice today. It's a big responsibility, but don't be afraid. We're with you."

"I know, sir. Thank you, sir." said Charlie, turning back to the board. There was a tense silence in the War Room.

"Okay, Clark. Turn him on."

General Christian tapped Charlie on the shoulder. Forehead wrinkled in concentration, eyes glued to the carefully-calculated map coordinates, Charles Benson Bartlett, III carefully dumped \$297 billion worth of equipment (including small arms) into the Marianas Trench. He then transferred every member of the United States Armed Forces (including those in actual combat) to a large, flat area in the Mojave Desert. Pausing only to transfer the General Staff to Shungnak, Alaska (except for General Warfield whom he re-assigned to Hanoi), Charlie transferred himself back to his apartment.

His roommate was sitting on the couch and reading a copy of **Zap Comix**.

"I did it." announced Charlie.

"Heavy." said his roommate, looking up.

"I'm going to bed."

"Uh, you wanna do some acid to sorta celebrate?"

"No." said Charlie. "I'm tired and I need some sleep."

You know how acid gives me nightmares."

Bob Hall





THE SOUND BEFORE THE FURY

characters:

- 1 Herman-a college football player.
- 2 Patsy-in love with Herman.
- 3 Samuel-a pansy.
- 4 Theresa-a New York bitch.
- 5 Sarah-a negro.
- 6 Sally-a good student.
- 7 Frieda-cheerleader.
- 8 Loudspeaker-a mumbled voice.
- 9 Ticket-taker-an old man.

(Assorted people in the crowd.)

(Scene-Frieda, Patsy, and Sarah sitting on a concrete block.)

*Frieda.* Do you really believe it?

*Patsy.* Believe what?

*Sarah.* Haven't you heard about it?

*Patsy.* No, I haven't.

(entering from left.) *Samuel.* Frieda, Patsy, Sarah. Hello there.

*Frieda, Patsy, and Sarah* (together). Oh, hello, Samuel.

*Samuel.* Are you going to see it?

*Sarah.* Can we see it?

*Patsy.* See what?

*Samuel.* Yes. This afternoon at three. Better get your tickets now if you want to go. It will probably be a sell out.

*Frieda.* Where is it?

*Patsy.* What?

*Samuel.* At the stadium. You'd better hurry and get your tickets now, though. It's eleven o'clock. (Samuel exits left, his blue scarf trailing in the wind.)

*Patsy.* What is it?

*Frieda.* We'd better get our tickets.

*Sarah.* It's the strangest thing, really.

(Scene 2-Sally and Theresa sitting on a concrete block. Herman sits on the floor.)

*Herman.* I don't know if I really believe it.

*Sally.* Well I don't. You know that.

*Theresa* (calmly). Yes.

*Herman.* Imagine. A real ...

*Theresa.* That's just it. How can it be real? I mean, it's probably a publicity stunt or something for some new fabrication.

*Sally.* No, the papers say it's real enough.

*Herman.* Well, do you believe everything you read?

*Theresa.* Well of course she does.

*Sally.* Well, no, I guess not.

*Theresa* (rather bored by it all). Well, let's not be skeptical till after we see it.

(Scene 3 - At the stadium.)

*Herman* (Yelling and waving his left arm). Patsy! Patsy Future! Over here!

*Patsy* (Acknowledging). Herman! (Waving her left arm.) Herman Sandibutt! Over here!

(They come together.)

*Herman.* Well, I didn't think you'd be here.

*Patsy.* Well I did. (pause) I came to see ... it.

*Herman.* Well, what do you think?

*Patsy.,!* don't know. What is it?

*Herman.* You mean you don't know?

*Patsy.* No, I just heard everyone talking about it, so I bought a ticket.

*Herman.* Yeay. Eight bucks to see it, and if it's not real I'm going to get angry at somebody. (Stamps foot for emphasis.) Uh-d-o you think it's real?

*Patsy.* I don't know. Herman, I don't know what it is. The paper said it was real.

*Herman.* Yes, I know. I read it. (Herman starts smiling and acknowledging all the people he knows and doesn't know.)

*Patsy.* Uh, Herman. (She interrupted.) Herman.

*Herman.* Yes? (He turneq. his smile to her.)

*Patsy.* What is it?

*Herman.* A tree.

(Scene 4 - At the stadium.)

Over the loudspeaker comes a voice that mumbles, and no one can understand it. The gates to the stadium open.

*Ticket-Taker.* Tickets please. Only those with tickets, please. No general admission here. Tickets - oh thank you, young lady. Tickets. Tickets here, please. Thank you. Keep moving. Flow nice and easy. Tickets please.

*Patsy.* (Catching up with Herman, who has advanced through the gate). Herman - Herman. A tree?

*Herman.* Yes. That's what they say.

*Patsy* (Stopping, then running up to him, latching to his arm). But a real tree? Why, there hasn't been,one in years.

*Herman.* I know.

*Patsy.* But how does it live?How does it grow? How - Oh god - a tree? (She clutches her mouth in awe.)

*Herman.* Well, that's what they say. Let's wait till we see it.

(Scene 5-Inside the stadium.)

The stadium is completely dark.

Over the loudspeaker comes a mumbling voice no one can understand.

The gates are closed and locked.

A noise fills the stadium of 20,000 people, who are all talking at once. A whine - a deep muffled sound - like a deaf-mute trying to make contact.

At once - all the stadium spot lights flash on, and the stadium falls quickly silent. There in the center of the field stands a sapling.

*Loudspeaker.* This, ladies and gentlemen, is a sapling of a white mulberry tree. In early times it was used in the making of silk. (Samuel clutches the blue scarf around his neck and moans.)

*Loudspeaker.* The silkworm thrived and produced the fine silk threads for its cocoon only after it had taken for its food the tender leaves of the white mulberry tree.

*Sarah.* How could a thing like that actually live and grow?

*Samuel.* Gee, I don't know. Kind of weird, isn't it?

*Sarah.* I mean - how was it born?

*Samuel.* Yeay, I know what you mean. Kinda gives me the creeps.

*Theresa.* Well, I see it, and I still don't believe it. It's just a fabrication. That's all. (She waves her hands over her head.) Some gimmick for some nut who wants to sell those gross things for us to set around in our rock gardens.

*Sarah.* Yes, well, I'd never buy one.

*Herman.* Probably won't have to. Unless the government issues an edict requiring us to.

*Sarah.* Oh God. They wouldn't do a thing like that. Would they?

*Theresa.* Who knows? (She throws her hands up in the air and catches them.) Who knows?

Loudspeaker. It bore large, dark purple, almost black juicy fruit .. Something strange happens on the field - a bud opens and a small leaf slowly unfolds. Twenty-thousands screams blast the stillness.

A herd of people fill the concrete streets screaming:

Oh god, it's alive.

It's coming after us.

We're doomed, doomed.

We'll suffer for this.

Doomed, doomed.

But in the empty stadium on a concrete field, a slight breeze causes the little tree to tremble, and the leaf falls slowly to the ground. The immense heat from the stadium lights killed the tree. The world is once again safe.

the  
end

-michael adkins



#### THE NEW FRONTIER

The woman on T.V. wails  
That another short-life American spring-time  
Evening is beginning to rise  
In Ohio, from the valleys.  
How many filing parents  
Stand dead and half-hidden in frozen thoughts  
In the stale air, along the soft paths.  
Smug child specialists pass through cut grass  
In well-trimmed trails, and smile,  
And pass out wisdom.  
A girl slumps in a doorway.  
Her legs are bare to the thigh,  
Her face red, she blinks slowly  
At the evening.  
At the sound of wisdom, her eyes  
Fall quiet, like gray slag.

Randy Foster



TO CLARINET PLAYERS

I know now  
what you did not  
Next summer  
i will know even more  
I hate turning pages  
with your blood  
I'll make it up to you  
on gray winter afternoons . . .  
i'll praise you to strangers.

-Joanna D. Sexton

Laughter remembered  
Ripples down stones of silence  
Echoing itself.

I passed among you  
But the sentence of your eyes  
Kept dismissing me.

-Shirley Klein

TIN CANS

Labels, colorful as rainbows,  
Flimsy, welded cans down the seams,  
Piles of cans rolling together,  
Campbell's, Heinz, A&P, Stokely's,  
Luck's, IGA, Del Monte,  
Busted open cans  
With molded bamboo sprouts  
Spilling out like smelly intestines,  
Every No. 303 scrambling in fruitful confusion;  
All of the rattling,  
Except one container,  
Succotash flattened by one heavy stomp!

-Stan Coberly

You're a negative impulse  
in a field of positive flowers  
a regal no  
in an abundance of yesness  
the flaw  
in a perfect dress  
the tear drop of sorrow  
on a happy face  
the smudge  
on a shiney mirror  
the dark spot  
in a fluffy white cloud . . .  
You're the frown  
In a crowd of smiles.

(The frown) Aug 71

-Robert Wayne Fort

While spending a week in a village at Elephanta Caves: situated on an island seven miles off the coast of Bombay in the Indian Ocean.

The silver sunsnakes slither on waves and turn into fluttering butterflies before a rain of fish headed arrows reach them. And bubbles like scales spring from the sea into the unknown void.

Under the mild Indian Sun on my back I carried a large gunny sack of dried Waquti fish peeking down the small brown black nipples of a hermit woman sitting on the roadside. I was thinking of the old ice cream days in America.

The birds flew out of his sail white beard. Innocence swept up and down his jelly bones. He became a child of seven suns. Seabred. Walking bare assed with a silver chain around his bottom. White lambs slept with their heads on their mother's back where inside love bounced like laughing waves. It was time for another coming of the sage.

In the sea pit off the jetty I spat. The crabs and the tiny one legged limping lobsters in one swift motion like the flipping of a wicked hand quicker than the coming of a wind unsent for: darted into their dark holes. A city of black round neat cells laid in front of my eyes. Tomorrow again when the Herculean arms of the steel sun under the jetty's legs begin to thin out: I could come and squash the large awkward mud black crabs into milk and let the birds roam about at high tide. But the wind now alone having taken the last of the sailboats to another shore leaving the rusty red anchors asleep cries a tune of all life's sacredness.

The sun behind the trees slowly gathered its rays. On the thin branch rocking the monkey saw the fiery fruit. He knew of the yellow ascetic robe issuing a fountain of orange purple and grey magic. Out of the glimmering orange gong came a gliding eagle heading for the blue country. And before the ocean enveloped her child the monkey flung itself into the melting fire and the gurgling wind turned into a cold man looking at a far away sail: reaching for the mountain's thigh.

Dawn's dark is here. The round silent shadow of my candle sways black. Dawn has rested her shoes and now their reflections lie black. Like useless driftwood they sit quietly in the window. A fisherwoman outside shoeless brown and slender walks across the disrobing seashore. The fisherwoman's reflection falls into the clear glassy backwater. Her naked feet flutter and ruffle the small pool. And now still lies the water. Morning has come but she is gone.

- Raj Malholtra



#### MUDDY MINDED

Heavy heavy thoughts  
When the rain comes  
To wash it away  
I will know what it is  
I want to say

-Barbara Roush



### AT THE ZOO/3 PENNIES

Pleased with my fingers  
I reach into my pocket,  
take out 3 pennies.  
I buy 2 balloons,  
fill them with hydrogen,  
and tie them to my fingers.

The string slips over my  
long oily fingers  
like cola over ice  
and the balloons go up in the air  
so swift - so fast  
that my hand jerks back and forth.

I rise high into the air -  
so light and free -  
my head is like a ruptured spleen.

Then the air pressure is great.  
The balloons burst  
and I fall once again  
like a brick in the water.

Ooh. I moan. Ooh.

-michael adkins

### WAITING FOR MY FEET

New shoes in a dream  
they were steel and I  
couldn't run in them,  
I wanted leather ones.  
They hurt my feet  
and made them bleed.  
I had to run  
from the witches,  
I was desperate and scared  
I grabbed an axe.  
I laid one foot  
on top of an old milk can  
and swung the axe,  
again and again.  
I swung hard to free one foot  
the other was numb  
I couldn't feel the rust  
sink into my shin.  
I hid the shoes  
with my feet in them  
so they wouldn't know  
I was free  
An hour later  
my leg stubs were burning  
like flesh on fire.

An idea:  
burn the stubs and close them  
The witches were coming to see me  
imprisoned in those shoes  
Running from their  
dungeon in the snowy mountains  
y stubs were awkward  
They stuck in soft places.  
I held the screams  
that burst in my veins  
and dripped out on every step  
that I could steal.

They could find me I knew:  
I left red holes in the snow.  
I hid under a glacier  
smiling and waiting for my feet  
to grow back.  
Four days I sat

knowing I'd have new feet,  
but they found me.  
The witches  
stared comically at me and left.  
I ne'er moved a muscle  
sitting there half smiling  
waiting for my feet  
to return.

- Jeff Smith

#### CANOPENER POEM

electric canopener cranks and prangs my can  
open  
its a whirring shame  
and Mamma said, as she handed me the  
concealed thing  
in red ribbon and green paper with berries.  
"Oh, I just love mine."  
and I, rather shamed that it sat  
like a Buddah in my kitchen, burned incense  
on its  
baked enamel case.

- Linda Fuchs

#### OH, FOR THE LOVE OF MARGARET

The true course of love is never smooth, they say, but it's a sure thing that it's long-longer than we think. Think back; a story will come to mind, and if it isn't too long, or long ago, we'll tell it together.

Not too many years ago, in the Appalachian fall, the morning recess of a little one-room schoolhouse was about to begin.

"H'All raht, gals and boys," the schoolmarm warned in her characteristic way, "H'all raht now, it's ree-cess time. 'Member t' play like liddle ladies and gents."

'Like liddle ladies and gents' was exactly what Margaret, the siren of the first grade, had in mind. Impatiently waiting in the foot-hills beyond the schoolyard, she scuffed up and soon to get her patent leather shoes ready for kicking. And who, may we ask, was to receive the be'nefits of this attention? Why, none other than little Hobert, the Beau Brummel of the grammar school set. Soon she saw him dawddling along through the autumn leaves, hands in his pockets, ready for fun, games, and - - - Margaret?

"Mah, don't the time pass quick when yore a-having fun?" There she stood, the three-foot queen of the holler, with her jump-rope slung seductively over her shoulder. The sight, not unexpectedly, brought a lump to Robert's throat.

"Naw. Ever' blame second passes like an hour."

"Even in the far t' grade?" It was obvious that ennui was not, in Margaret's book, a fashionable attitude for a suitor. But Hobert only replied:

"I reckon I gotta start somewhere."

Margaret gave her bubble gum the perfect pop of nonchalance, as if to say that she didn't care, anyway. On his part, Hobert was beginning to get impatient with the delay of play-time, and interjected:

"Wahl, wha' ja wanna do?" To Margaret, this was an open invitation, as broad a proposition as she was likely to hear for the next ten years; but in her coy, well-bred manner, she only replied,

"Do? Wha' chew talkin' 'bout, boy?"

"Whah, yore t'one that axed met' meet you out hare," Hobert remonstrated, fixing his eyes (which Margaret thought to be the cutest, ones in the whole holler) intently on the girl. "You dee-cide jest what you all wanna do."

What, thought Margaret, could be more gallant than that? So often is indifference mistaken for disinterestedness in love. At length however, Margaret did decide on a course of action.

"Wahl, I wanna play rope-run."

"It's jest plain simple, Hobert," she said, with just the slightest gleam in her innocent eyes. "I'll lam ya good and proper. Now ya set yerself agin that-thare elm tree over yonder, an' close up yore eyes real tight. Oh- one mo' thing - grab hold o' mah jump rope, an' doan ya never lit go. That's (and she winked) so's you kin always tell whar I am."

So Hobert ambled over to the elm tree with all the misgivings his pappy's razor backed hog felt when they turned him into the sty to feed for the table. There he stood, holding one end of the rope, and gazing wistfully at Margaret, whose grubby little fingers clutched the other. Then, by a supreme act of surrender, he closed



his eyes. Like a hound let out in the morning, Margaret was off and running around and around the tree, a pigtailed centrifuge, whirling ever closer to the seat of her desires. Before Hobert could draw a breath, he was tied too tight to exhale it.

"Margaret! You cut this out! I doan like this hare game a-tall."

"Ma Maw larned me this hare game," Margaret answered, more to the tree than to Hobert. "She always said it'd be fun - least-ways till this knot comes undone."

"Margrit!" -

"What?"

"Wha' fo' have you tied me up?"

"So ya cant move, ya big dummy. I sware, yore bout as smart as a cloth covered button."

Hobert stopped to consider this statement for a moment. The schoolhouse was out of earshot, hidden by a high hill that curled up and to his left; he saw that he must either make peace with Margaret-or else.

"But wha' fo' have you tied me up?"

"Wha' fo' do you ride over top o' me wiffen yore dad-burned by-cycle ever' blessed day?" she interposed, artfully putting him on the defensive. Hobert tried another tact:

"Margrit! You untie me this second or I'll whomp you!"

"You ain't a-gonna whomp nobody." The truth of this was only too apparent to the boy, and with more humnility he accepted his position and tried to come to come to trms "1th lt

"So what," he said with some weariness, "are you a-fixin' to do?"

"I doan rathly know. But I'm a-gonna start," she said, licking the peanut butter off her lips, "by kissin' ya."

"You ain't a-gonna kiss me." If Hobert weren't all of six-and-a-half he wouldn't have been able to keep from bursting into tears. In th full flower of his maturity, however, the only indication of his distress was the snot which ran profusely from his nose.

"If'n ya kiss me", he finally ventured, "I-I won't kiss ya back."

"Ya cain't. If I kiss ya, ya haft' kiss me back."

"I can too not kiss back."

"Ya cain't neither."

"Cai.r."

"Cain't."

"Jest try."

And under such circumstances, Hobert received his inltat'On into the games of ladies and gentlemen. But he remained firm, and after the ordeal, Margaret had to admit that he was as good as his word.

"I tole ya I warn't gonna kiss back!"

"Yes ya will!" Cried Margaret in frustration, and delivered a few short kicks with her patent leather shoes to his shins. For a while she was desperate, wondering how her plan could have failed - and then she hit on the perfect scheme for revenge.

"If'n ya doan kiss me back, I'll steal yer britches 'an throw 'em up in th' tree."

"I ain't a-kissin' back," said Hobert, with honor - and,

needless to say, stupidity. "An' I jest dare ya t' try an' steal mah - britches?" But with a zip and a pop, Margaret had already loose:ed them and was in the process of wrenching them off his struggling legs. When she had gained the prize, the little girl thrw :Hobert's jeans into the highest branches, where even the mot agile six- and-a- half year old would have trouble finding them. Just then, the schoolbell began to ring, signaling the end of recess.

"Whal I reckon I kin untie you now," drawled Margaret, who could not supress a grin at the goose-bumps on Hober's leg.

"Durn yore hide, Margrit, what am I gonna do like this?"

"Ya kin hear the bell good 'nuff - the 'Marm'll expect ya t' come in wif the rest." And she skipped away, down the path to her waiting playmates.

Once again, Hobert had to stop and consider his posit'On. It didn't take him long to determine what to do. Instead of going to the school to get help, threby causing a minimum of trouble\_ and seeing Margaret get punished; not to mention tr'ing to explain to the Marro why his patched britches were de orating a tree in stead of his backside- he chose to walk over the hill, through the village and home to get another pair of pants. And f anyone thiks this ws odd it might also be added that it was consistent with his later declsiod, as a young man, to remain in the holler and work in the coal mines.

Margaret, of course, forgot all about her reveng the next day, and was content to see poor Hobert whipped for playing hooky. But as she put it:

"Mah, doan the time pass quick when yore a-having fun?"

- Dana Daugherty

#### LIBERA

Unexplainable, linavoidable love,  
Thunder in the soul but no rain to  
Follow in silent floods.  
Conspiracy flows blood, not tears,  
I looked high and the liquid green of the  
Seven hills was blurred. Pain is not forgotten;  
I remember all - even the red.  
And how my toga, my clean scarlet toga  
Swept the dust.

Veni, Vidi, Vici.  
But they could not hear and I could not  
Hear- and I kept walking and  
I knew.  
And still walking I knew.  
And my toga  
Swept  
the  
bloody  
dust  
supreme.

- Lyla Pittenger

elderly

And now being elderly  
I've become a piece of mildew  
On a blade of grass.  
And I sit waiting for a sun ray  
And a breeze. It captures me  
And carries me safely to some cloud  
A million feet in the air.  
I feel so light-  
Like a goldfish in a balloon-  
And oh god, the feeling is fantastic.

-michael adkins

#### OLD AGE

Old man -

Bent near to the ground  
With humped back and knotty spine.  
With your small patch of wirey white hair,  
and your face disfigured with the blemish of age.

Old man -

Once alive with laughter -  
Now shrunken with pitted, wrinkling skin,  
thickened earlobes, and tobacco-stained teeth.

I have seen you -

Stumbling about in the park,  
As though one small gust of wind might  
blow those crackling bones back into dust.

-Colleen Lipscomb

#### THE SECOND TIME AROUND

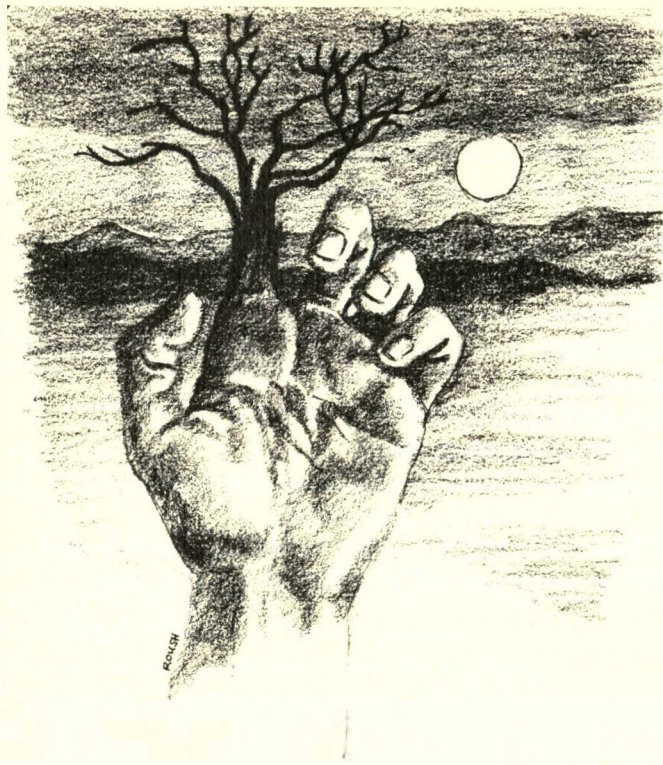
This crumpled, weary man;  
Sore from nerves strained, broken and restrung  
Stands waiting in a hallway for recognition.

The lost loves anchored on his bureau dresser  
Remind him of the dreams  
He dresses for every morning.  
Searching for happiness in a barren self-hating  
intellect,  
He goes through cycles of illusion,  
Cycles of unmade beds,  
Cycles of tedious conversations with his past.

I find close guarded eyes revealing wounds and  
battle scars normally reserved for the dead.

-Linda Nelson





My father's face  
is carved from green and golden  
forest trees.

I found out  
one afternoon  
when I was eleven  
We were building a bookcase  
in the back yard.

And as he drove  
the steel nails  
hard into the heart  
of the oak boards

I noticed how  
the grain  
matched his forehead  
and  
his fingers  
grew into  
what he built.

-Rhoda Morris

titanic

our relationship  
is that of an old steamship  
and we each have our separate jobs

i work in the stokehole  
supplying the labour & sweat  
that makes the ship run

while you are the captain  
deciding in' which direction we head

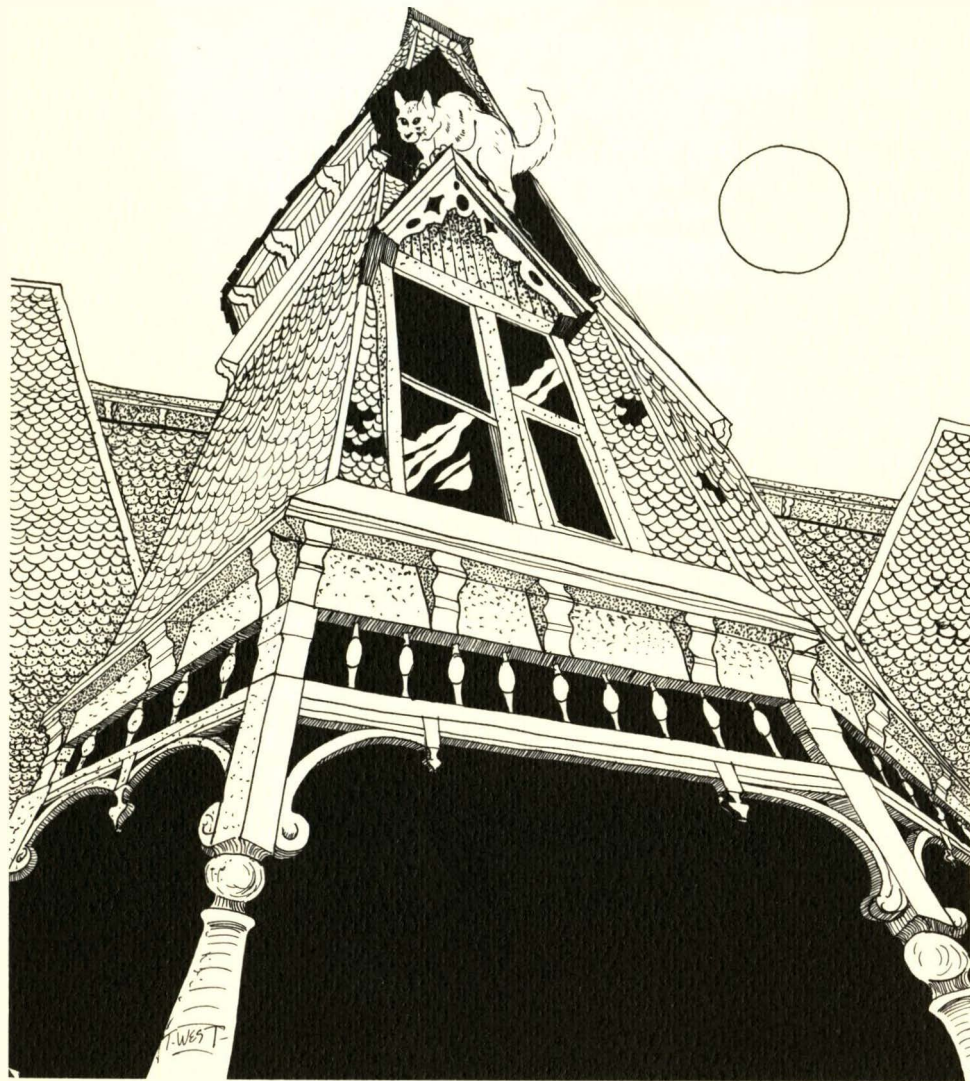
-amos perin

### IMPOTENT

With the eyes of a  
jealous lover  
I watch the music  
caress you.

Wishing that I could  
get an erection in  
stereo.

-Dennis Savage



POEM NO. 1

Ariel dreams  
says Sister Lynn  
going down unnaturally  
the wastepaper basket  
suffices as support  
in a slow blurring of nausea  
Saturday afternoon yellow shadows  
and Victorian gingerbread house  
a white cat perches  
on a gable  
as I  
pardon the pun  
trip on by

-Sue Chafin



hatpins ...

Thomas left with his new bride today  
She was my friend sometimes  
Once he gave me a love note  
I never asked him to,  
I wonder if they will be happy  
Down in Texas  
I wonder if I could be happy  
With Frank in Georgia.

-Joanna D. Sexton

SEWRI FISH MART  
BOMBAY

Under the mild Indian sun  
on my back I carried a large  
gunny sack of dried Waquti  
fish peeking down the small  
brown black nipples breasts  
of a hermit woman sitting  
along the roadside. I was  
thinking of the old ice cream  
days in America.

-Raj Malholtra

RESTAURANT GARBAGE

Tuna gray as gravel,  
Greasy, gregarious gravy,  
Whole pots of potatoes tossed to the trash  
Macaroni, ravioli, pizza,  
Molds, flies, spoiled meat  
Turned-over pie  
With blackened crust,  
Crumbling like dried mud  
Each piece in a fallen form;  
everything collapsed  
But one green bean on top,  
One faltering pole  
Over the rotting, the newly decayed.

-Randy Foster

ROOM NO. 1

Somewhere in a room  
sits a man  
with a forty pound pumpkin  
on his head.  
He wears  
a brown rubber wet-suit  
under purple gauze  
and calls out  
"I am liberal"  
eighty times every night  
at the tone  
of the striking stars.

And under his hat  
in the corner  
is five pounds  
of modeling clay  
shaped  
like a weeping child.

ROOM NO. 2

The man  
in room number 2  
nods into a dream  
every night  
at 7:45  
after eating  
his cottage cheese.

He dreams of  
Billy Graham's Texas Crusade  
and 592 hollow-eyed  
humming birds  
singing Baptist Hymns.

The birds sing  
for one hour and  
twenty three minutes.

Then their heads  
pop off  
and land in  
a red and yellow  
hand-painted saucer.

They chirp.  
They chirp.

ROOM NO. 3

There is a man  
who sits in a well-lit room  
speaking in nouns  
piled too high for dancing verbs.

His fingers twine together  
sending his touch  
back to his beveled glass-heart.  
And every time

someone asks about children  
He opens his palms  
and reveals  
seven thumbtacks  
growing there.

ROOM ND. 4

Face trown  
she kneels in the corner.  
Azure light shines  
from her forehead  
And every tear she sheds  
evaporates  
into the breath  
of a stillborn child.

"My fingertips  
have run away."  
She says.

And when  
she tries to rise  
the dust-feathered falcon  
perched on her back  
blinks four more times.

-Rhoda Morris



No one in Harveytown  
gives a shit  
about anything  
you could say:  
Neither do I  
cos you're a thief,  
stealing lives  
for your pride  
and speaking  
of higher ideals.  
I vomit dead men  
in your castle moat  
but nothing  
seems to summon  
any kind of  
emotion from you.  
Reason escapes  
your plotting mind.  
You're listening  
only to yourself  
think of a way  
to take me.  
So I am retreating  
to Harveytown.  
There are people there  
who'll blow your head off  
if they find out  
how you're using us.

- J e f f S m i t h



SWIMMING

My feet ka thud  
against the ground  
the leaves crinkle  
the grass bends  
twists mingles and flattens

I love the earth sinking  
separating and springing back.  
Soil, this multitude of particles  
forms the ground  
I grasp with anxious toes.

I must step hard  
on this one short path  
Soon the earth **will** suck  
sprinkle and fall across my face  
until it has trampled hard my form.

-Joanna D. Sexton

THE LONELINESS OF STANDING ON A MOUNTAINTOP  
(A POEM)

There once was a girl ... \* \* \*

Except for freedom. Everything else. Except for the talk, behind the back, circling around and hitting you in the face. Twenty three. Twenty three years of living in a body more open to punches than to puncture. Except for that, it had been fine. Except for the punches, it had been fine.

\* \* \*

"There will be wars and rumors of wars," he said, not knowing where the real death lies.

\* \* \*

There was an artificial ring to her talk, a metallic reluctance to give into her feelings.

"I try to believe in myself," was what she seemed to be saying, but he heard her lips pronounce:

"I don't know what to do."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I mean, is it all so bad now, that I can't even see when things will be alright again? Nothing was better than ... than just lying beside him. I felt so comfortable. Like a baby or something."

"Of course. He was so - so intelligent ... how else could you feel?"

No, he didn't say it. It was in his brain.

"What do you think?" Her eyes flashed - no - not flashing - no - still, still, he thought. They were blue.

What did it matter. He put his drink upon the table.

There were what seemed to be ten thousand people walking around in the restaurant. He wanted to be with them all, just not here, at this table.

The restaurant lights faded into a soft, comforting blur.

\* \* \*

The sum total of all things, at all times, is pretty near a big mass of inevitable and inconclusive nothing.

He smiled, as he put it down on a piece of notebook paper, very much like you would write a storr upon. I was cynical. Hell yes, it was cynical. Every man has a right to his few moments of "cynicalness", he smiled. Another drink of that cold coffee.

\* \* \*

His hands were large, like oak leaves, and he wrapped them around any mass of ski that he could. They were glad hands, sad hands hands that could do nothing, hands that could do anything. Sometimes the muscles wouldn't respond to the brain waves, sometimes they would. But they were real hands, his hands, hands that no one else could use.

\* \* \*

What do you do when the world has lost its glory.

Then what kind of story do you tell?

What do you do when the feelings have gone under.

When there isn't a thunder in the bell?

And you feel like slowly

Slowly

Slowly

Slowly

Going down.

And you feel like slowly

Slowly

Slowly

Going down.

It is the death in all of us, that slow dying feeling, when there's no one to reach to, no one to hold to, no one to die for. That slow, agonizing, stupid death, and no one's around, no one's around.

The pen lifted from the page, the poem and the paragraph lay open before his eyes.

It didn't say it.

It was a disgust within him, within his very stomach. It centered like a balloon that kept inflating, pressuring the sides.

There was nothing that would say it. There was nothing that would say he just wanted to die.\* \* \*

There once was a girl, a fine girl, with blue eyes and a smile of silver. And when they fell together, and fell in love, she was his world, and he spun around her like a moon around a planet. It was like he was young again, flying toy airplanes, circling around him on a thin silver string that he rotated in his hand.

There once was a girl, and she was the pilot, he was the plane.

But it was love. It was the way you feel, not the strings, but the spinning.

She left him, telling him what a very kind person he was, and how she only wished she was like him and they could live together.

She left him, standing, in the middle of a sidewalk, with a tear building in his eye and a sickness in his heart.

It was the way it was now. He was on a beach, and the water was coming around. And again, he was being made into an island.

He looked at the photograph, the one just made, and thought it funny. He wasn't that bad looking, you know. Not that bad.

\* \* \*

There was no one in the world that could define for him what it was to love. He just sat, thinking and thinking, and it never, ever, came.

\* \* \*

People had said he had done all types of things, had left his women, had run with thieves - those thieves of the soul.

All he had ever tried to do was have someone love him. No thefts.

But the rumor goes round and round and round

\* \* \*

Guns and barrels and triggers and stocks. Guns and barrels and triggers and stocks. Guns and barrels and barrels and triggers and stocks.

No, he mustn't really dwell there. On that.

Sanity. Sanity varies. Sanity - the level that is - fluctuates with the number of times you think about guns and barrels and triggers and stocks. A few times a year, you're okay. More, you watch



it. More, you start to shake a little in your shoes and your hands get a little tired.

He thought about her and how she wouldn't listen at times and how he didn't look in his eyes anymore and how she felt so sorry for the self she didn't believe in, really, and how all the rest of them, all the rest of them, just stared, glassy eyed, into foggy, uncontrollable mirrors.

Maybe his hands felt tired.  
\* \* \*

A dusk settled behind a cluster of hills. Sunset. The rainbow held out, changing, for a few more silent, gentle, holy moments.

He let out his breath, as if he had been watching a slow motion circus and a highwire act that had just swung into the sky. A perfect catch. A perfect swing.

No one's face, no one's, seemed to hold the sunshine anymore, no one's the way, the way that sunset was.

Why is it, why is it, that the only way to save your soul is to save your soul with love?  
\* \* \*

On the edge of a mountaintop. He imagined it, the breeze whipping his face, the breeze circling from around his back, moving slowly over his cheeks. He would stand, straight, tall, spread his arms, and fall - a bird he could never be.  
\* \* \*

There were ways he was, ways that no one else could quite understand. Ways of life, of a style, that consisted in constantly giving, yet possibly not enough to ever see a return. And sometimes, the frustration would build up until he was on fire - not a fire to purify, but a fire to burn away his skin.

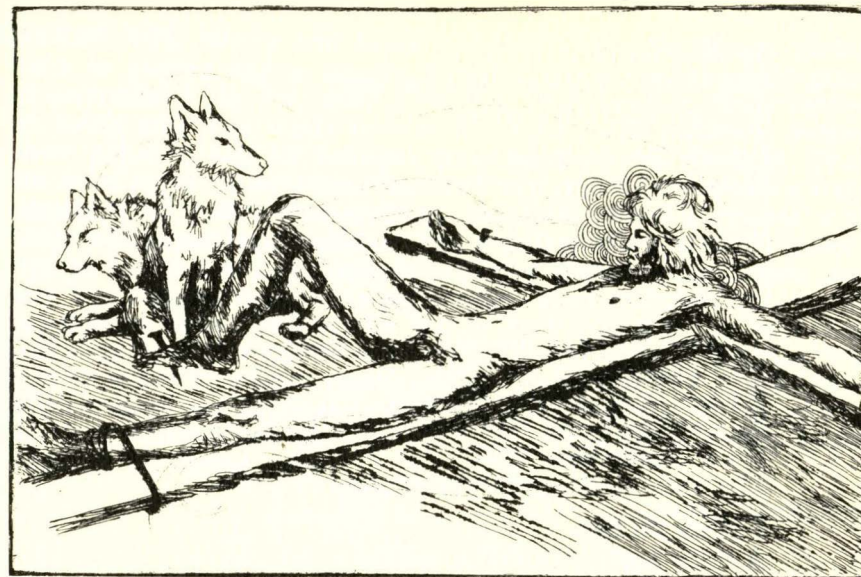
And then rumors, and wars, and the misunderstanding of giving. No return. No reply. Just still night air - still mountain air.

He stood in a void, his hands feeling tired, and he wondered, in the slow moment of a dream, if the loving would come in the fall.

### IMPRESSION

Life is written  
On a magic slate.  
Lift the cellophane  
And it is gone,  
Save for the scratches  
Left on the black waxy backing  
When the stylus was pressed too hard.

-Roger D. Burdette



### CONFESSIONS OF A MONGOOSE

I am having trouble with my homework -  
It's all this new math, you know,  
Where two plus two equals four,  
And there's five blocks in a square.  
But I never have trouble making grades -  
My parents are always urging me on.

And at the dinner table I choke on  
The fine and gracious foods that my  
Mother took time from her schedule  
To prepare because I had to work late.  
And I cough with emalcamated pride  
As my father declares my ingratitude.

His laboring fingers putting me through school  
So I can avoid the draft and stay happy.  
And he screams at my constant desire  
To do things he would never do.  
I smell of envy as he gets to read  
My mail first. And he can tell me  
Where I am one evening before I get there.  
And his fingers brush against my face in the  
name of God -  
His power and glory forever amen.

I am dying,  
I tell the psychiatrist,  
So here's to my health.  
C'est la vie, he retorts.  
They all meant well, you know.  
Do something worthy, he suggests.  
I think I'll join the army

At Fort Benning, America  
And then maybe get shipped out  
And get my legs shot off.

I think I'll do drugs today -  
Wonder if it'll get on their nerves.  
I wonder how he'll find me out -  
Perhaps write a memo to the police department  
Perhaps put on a wig and join me and mine  
Perhaps hand out commie papers on the street.

To see if I'll take one and read it -  
He'd really have me then.  
My son, the pervert, he yells  
As neighbors tell him where I've been.  
It's a classic case of  
The do-something-worthy illness.

I think I'll be  
A navy boy  
And go out to sea  
With the sharks  
And whales.

Beggars are but poor people who can't  
Make it to the bank to cash their  
Welfare checks, doctor, and I'm not that choosy.  
I take what I can and leave the rest  
In my suitcase with the other stolen merchandise.  
I feel so flippy when I get away with things.

But then some neighbor steps to the door  
And says oh by the way, guess where I saw ...  
And then my father calls me worthless -  
I think I shall live in an alley  
And be a jerk.

Oh mongoose who hunts out  
The spotted snake,  
Hide your head under a hat.  
The snake is on the patio  
And the neighbors are out -  
Beware of dog signs line their fences.

But what ever you do,  
Get that snake.  
Then go read a poem by e. e cummir.igs.  
I think I'll be a poem by e. e cummmgs  
So that mother and father  
Can read me. Then I can\_sit at them.

But they would never understand that either.

-michael adkins

SAILBOATS. White and black enveloping plants. Things giving birth to gliding eagles. Sharks roaming the home sea. Who gazes at sailboats? I do. You may. Cow goat and monkey skulls settled on sands and rock walls look at the dead black seashore: within their polished sockets sunlight threads and sews the mist. They too have light for sailboats. Sailboats are popes for centuries wandering blind under oceans. They are giant ribbed carcasses with broken Chinese partitions. Sleeping erections waiting at the ocean's lips at low tide. Sailboats are pulsating cheeks of my quiet and shy but not melancholic village love. Ebony haired. Of twelve sea-washed suns. With serene brown eyes. Her body no less flexible than deer. Her naked legs batter my heart, flesh, and ribs. She carries water in copper vessels which jangle like fire in my brain. With ancient sea hands she clasps the water vessels moving up and down in dance about the uneven earth as her earth brown breast peeks at my dying eyes.

- R a j Malholtra

#### SWEET SWAMP

Faces arise  
From trackless nothing  
Out of mists  
Which hang like  
Winding sheets  
Over this calm and  
Sleepy swamp.  
One of them is mine

-Michael D. Hall

I

thinking of m

thanks  
i'm pregnant  
thought i knew how to  
experience you  
in a prophylactic style  
being acquainted with condoms  
coils and cycles all the while  
all superlative:v effective  
pleasure enhancing  
multi-erective  
but all those are belated  
notions  
the fetus is in contracted  
motions  
i think i'm having a  
poem

-Dennis Savage



POST-NATAL BATH

A woman at Laidley sinks  
down into warm green flows  
of faucet streams  
and lays her flesh  
in a pure white enamel womb.  
Her violet dreams  
reflect the star  
in gigantic divisions  
of the shining prism  
glass window and thoughts  
of president desks  
and hungry children  
with large eyes and global bellies  
and of Grecian urns and wars  
of past and wonders  
of gills now gone  
that breathed from gentle  
white caps and lay  
with soft green seaweed  
making smooth pillows  
for her head during time between  
alerting alarms and forgetfulness  
of deep slumber  
within cold enamel coated dreams.

-Viola Sue Woods

HAIKU

Walking down dusty walls, my  
wet feet making minature mud puddles  
to go to watch you sleep

-Claire Smith

GOING TO BED POEM

Going to bed  
feeling stringy and  
rubbery  
(Like warm celery),  
I awake in the morning  
in perfect form with  
my surrounding  
(Like water lying  
in a bowl).

-Linda Fuchs

I wish I had a dime for every time it rains in Monterey.  
And for every night I spent by the bay  
When even the seagulls knew better.  
It always seems to be those little things  
That make me want to die  
Before I've even been around long enough to make some sense of  
it all.  
Like the times when all I have in the world  
Is half of a pack of cigarettes,  
But no matches.  
Morning would find me shaking the sand  
From my tattered Army blanket,  
Hitching a ride north to San Francisco,  
And wondering how many of those swollen eyes and sleepy faces  
Knew it rained in Monterey.

-Joe Walters

## THE LIFE OF AN ELASTIC RUBBERBAND

From Saint Mary's Hospital one afternoon  
Ran a very happy man into the street -  
Jumping, clapping his hands, stamping his feet  
And singing, "A king is born unto this world!  
A King is born! A King is born!  
Oh peace unto the world, Melchizedek,  
Eor unto this day is born my son!"  
A car drove by and looked at the man -  
My father.  
The King was me.  
August 23, 1951 - A Day To Be Remembered!  
My father burst into the nearest store  
And, falling to the floor,  
Ordered crates of King Edward's.  
He ran into the streets  
Throwing millions of King Edward's  
Into the sky.

How did you celebrate my birth?  
Nothing too extravagant, I hope -  
Maybe just a small 3-tiered cake -  
With coconut and chocolate and cherries  
And a few pecans -  
Put in a pretty white box  
With a nice green ribbon.  
Perhaps a few balloons.  
Perhaps a pretty poem  
Or perhaps even a song.  
You could sing my song seven times  
Before the sun set.

But then you might not have realized  
What was going on -  
What with all the fanfare in the streets.  
You probably thought it was  
The Fourth of July.  
Thousands of people lined the street  
As my limousine cradled me to my new home  
In the sun-kist ruin of some back-alley castle.  
Ticker-tape filled the air  
And roars more breath-taking than  
Kennedy airway at six p.m.  
Formed clouds for my halo.  
I loved it. I raised up in my mother's arm

And waved at the masses.  
I cooed joyously at the millions of smiles  
And I threw kisses to the hundreds  
Of jumping little children who lined the curb.

But then I finally reached home  
And you know - my limousine  
Turned into a pumpkin.  
The ticker-tape became rain  
Which made me cold  
And I got sick.  
I had a headache and I coughed.  
And the King Edward's that my dad gave out  
Were never returned.  
And the songs you wrote for me -  
I never heard them playing,  
And those poems were never published.  
All the people on the streets turned away  
And their smiles turned into sneers.  
The children jumped up and down, still -  
They were laughing at me -  
The freak with the elastic rubberband  
Around his wrist with his name on  
It. Michael.  
How Short.  
How simple.  
Did I ever tell you that I had  
A very lonely childhood?

-michael adkins

## HAIKU

Sing to me again.  
my comfort and your blessing  
in your crooked voice.

-Claire Smith



### THE SHATTERED NIGHT

In the carcass of night  
your voice  
echoes down the  
hollows of my mind.  
An unreal, screeching sound —  
deafening the cat calls  
of lonesome nights.  
Faltering not; stranger to hesitation,  
in one moment's  
silence I first heard  
the beckoning wildness of you.  
The last silence I knew.

-Linda Nelson

### ISABELLA'S LAMENT

no letter, friday, saturday ...  
laugh with sunshine, cry with rain,  
someday i'll go out  
and live again.  
today was sunday, i found myself,  
cleaning out an empty shelf,  
staring at a silent phone,  
listening for voices on the stairs,  
i never wanted to live alone.  
i live on dreams and borrowed prayers.

-Theresa McCune

### TRAVELING THROUGH

I am temporary here,-  
as here in time while jumping from wooden seats of swings  
past crooked marks drawn in the dust.  
And with every dipping sun after school  
at the swings, I never thought about the crooked marks  
of yesterday being gone. I didn't think  
until a thousand calendars were changed  
upon a thousand painted and plastered walls -  
until I realized how full moonlit were the run-down roads  
I often walked at 2 a.m.,  
until thinking across wide flat plains  
I would certainly collide with the black star-splattered sky  
that touched the land as dark walls touch a floor.  
But I left no footprints there.

And how many times within the world  
it seems were rooms I roamed from corridors of roads  
and seldom stopped except now and then,  
when the tangled fragrance of honeysuckle,  
heavy in the air would slow my feet  
while passing through small, uncomplicated towns,  
with welcome mats at many doors of houses freshly white.  
And upon several porches were resting enormous women -  
each awaiting a child of spring;-  
where the roots of every tree run deep, and the green  
of backyard corn was touched by its first sun.

And I rested in rooms of mountains,  
watched rippling colors of second rainbows  
mirrored in their streams, and dreamed the dreams  
of all impossible romantics who feel like butterflies  
pinned temporarily upon this earth.  
Perhaps I should have stayed -  
beneath the mountain pines and redwood where moss  
and mushrooms grow in the delicate harmony  
of every living thing, and where dreams  
are as if something to be held, warm and real,  
upon an open hand. Or perhaps -  
I should have left the illusive rainbows  
where they have always been in changing streams  
and in the sky - as transitory as I am.  
But with the rising sun I silently arose,  
and together with rainbows wandered on to find  
not only mountains, but mountains by the sea.

Now I am temporary here, beginning the forth cycle

of seven years, wondering where I am after all the rooms  
were known, and wanting to return to my favorite room  
in the mountains by the sea; where upon wet and ancient sands  
the shadow of myself reached very long - as now it does -  
a darkness in my mind, a threat, a promise,  
and a dare that I shall do what I must  
to leave a footprint in the sea-brushed sand  
while I am temporary here.

-Laura Lind

#### HAIKU

Leaves driven by the wind,  
At the lakes edge a fleet forms,  
Autumn colors.

-Steve Stanley

#### MARRIAGE

Clouds gather like messages  
of smoke ...  
the sky spreads its body  
above me

I bore a child by the sun, but  
the eagle swept down  
and took it away.

-Luane Olson

#### ORGANIC TRANSACTION

I granted my ex-wife and  
her husband permission  
to adopt my daughter  
today.  
The decision grew like  
a slow miscarriage.  
Signing those papers  
was like  
monogramming  
a  
turd.

-Dennis Savage

#### SURREALISM

the  
Sky gave me some blue  
to borrow. My eyes are  
bluer.  
My hair is longer than  
the breeze  
I throw shells and bottles  
at the ocean  
and erase names from the sand.  
Sea gull cracks the shell open  
to eat the birth before its  
born.  
All my dreams are sinking in  
the distance.  
I am standing in the sunlight.  
Come touch me one last time  
before I disappear.

-Luane Olson

#### THE EASTER CHICK

The little chick, dyed  
Softly blue by some million-dollar corporation  
With its main office in New York  
And its chick-dyeing plant in Pennsylvania  
And outlets in every state (except Alaska and Hawaii,  
Because, of course, of the cost of shipping them there)  
Lay under a brick in a pool of its own blood  
Which turned the lue black on the feathers,  
While the little boy, jumping gleefully  
To see what once could do,  
Picked up the brick to see  
What twice could do  
To a soft, blue-once, black-now chick  
From a million-dollar corporation.

-Roger D. Burdette

#### THE WAKE

Edith looked into the mirror in front of her, seeing in its reflection what time and lots of hard liquor can do to an old broad.  
So what the hell, she thought, the booze was great and if the next twenty years were anything like the last, they can cork me up and sell me for Old Crow. Her hearty grin vanished as she caught a glimpse of Russet Brown that had begun to turn Cinnamon Gray just over the right ear. That damned Myrtle had used that lousy Colorsilk shit again. Edith puffed out her cheeks in childish pout and decided she'd change salons next time.



"Heaven help you, Edith. It's two in the afternoon and you're still in your slip." It was Maggie.

Edith turned from her mirror to the portable bar beside it.

"Drinks are on me, Doll," she said as she poured two dixie cups of Kentucky Gentleman. "Rocks?"

"No, keep it warm, I've got a toothache." Maggie pulled the long crimson ribbon at the back of her head and freed the long thick Natural Black mass that Edith always envied when it covered her shoulders that way. Maggie was twenty-four, really, and very good looking. She removed a red pump.

"I would have been here sooner, but you know how bitchy Sheila can be. She's positive you're playing John on her playground."

"She's a dyke and a half ... money can't be that dear to you."

"Oh, Edie, she's not always bad. In fact she's better than most of the real Johns in this town. Besides, money pays the bills."

"Yeah, but God, what a roommate."

"Did you call about the building? Are you sure we can get it?"

"Don't worry, lamb, mama's already paid the rent. We had to sign a lease. Jennifer's out right now getting Fione and Meredith ready to move in."

"I don't really worry, Edith. I guess you've thought of everything. Charlie must have been pretty nuts about you to make you his beneficiary."

"Well, there was a little hassle with Stella after she'd found out the conditions of the will. She was going to have him change it as soon as they were married."

"Why didn't she?"

"Be sensible, doll. Stella and I had the same plans for Charlie's money, so we had a little girl-to-girl and compromised."

"Why should she compromise when she might have had it all?"

"Look, Maggie. Stel doesn't get around much. I know the girls, so I make a better business manager. Stella took care of Charlie's end."

"You mean he didn't really fall ... "

"You're learning. Besides, I deserved the money and Stel knew it. God knows I worked for it." The hearty grin was back.

"But what does Stella really hope to gain?"

"Fifty per cent of our annual intake."

Maggie looked into the mirror and raised her dixie cup with a smile on her face.

"To Charlie," she said.

"Amen."

-Mike Morrison

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