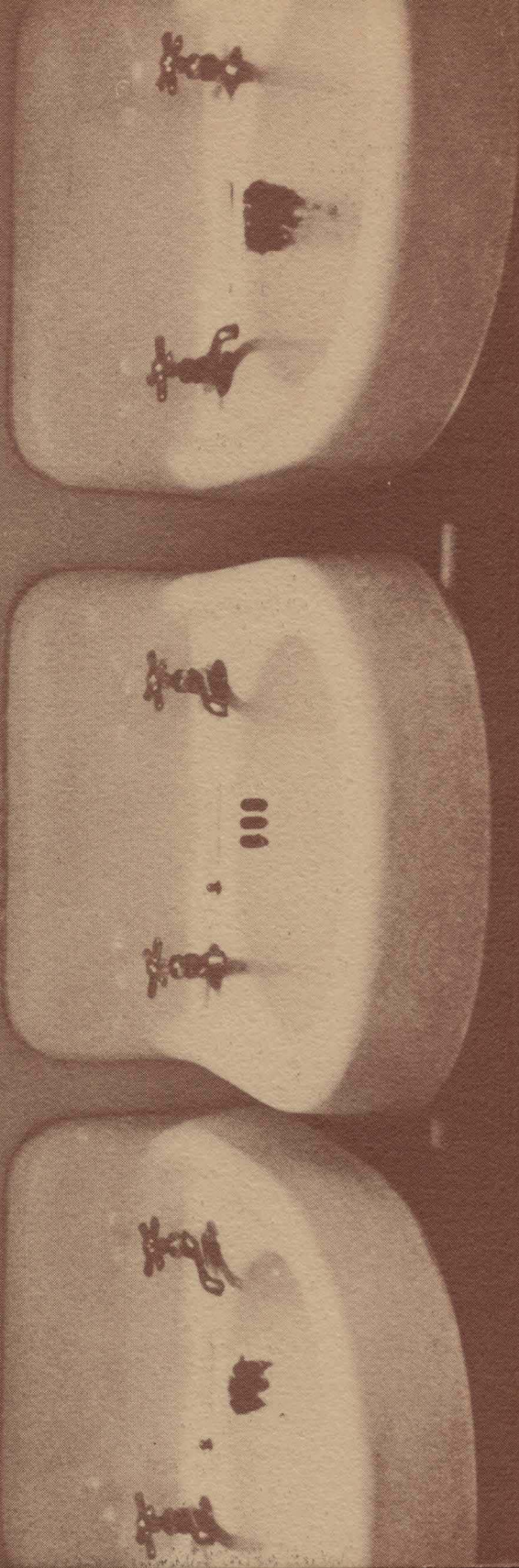
Spring 1973

et cetera

Marshall University

ETCETERA



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Staff

Claire Smith, John Tipper, Rhoda Morris, Barbara Sussman, Anne Watson, Pam Anderson, Pat Bryan, Cassie Hoffman, and a host of others.

Us

when you
walked
into the
night
and found
me
did you
not say
to yourself
i feel a
close
affinity
with her
and am
i really
so near
to you
in thought
i have
found a
part of
me in
you.

Anne Watson

Her eyes were
making rainbows
As she sat upon a rock.

"The old ways are a changing fast"
She said

And in the sky
the morning moon
sat, eating every star

And laughing at the wooden tears
she shed.

Rhoda Morris

Everyone Will be Gone

When I can't see things clearly
I see them without color.
What will become of subtleties
If everyone sees only black and white?

When I can't hear things clearly
I hear them without pitch.
What will become of the artist
If everyone hears monotones?

just pass out and everyone will be gone
I promise you.

Jeff Smith

To Roddy M.

You and I
Alone
On a deserted
Beach

Each
Holding our own

You said softly
"I love you."

I replied
"Me too."

Time stopped.

I thought
of the time

You made me
Peanut butter [and jelly]
Sandwiches,

In bed.

And I knew
It to be true.

Claire Smith

A string of words
I offer you,
Simple, pure:
I love you.

Harder grown
they are than pearls,
Lasting longer;
Perhaps they too
will grow more beautiful
with age.

Julia Malone

burn out
get out
things
that hurt
smoke covered concepts
lying on a sheet of paper
cleverly disguised as words

Pat Wesley Bryan

The Rationalist

To M. Y. the world was geometrically constructed.
Forever viewing life via telescopic glass,
He lived as a contented owl in a brown tree.
And later he was like a bearded prospector
Sifting and weighing each pebble in a stream.
Still later, when in autumn earth was leaves
And water shallow, he analyzed analyzation.
By then his day's sun was low.

John Tipper

friends

this feeling
of security
i have
from you
comes not
from either
you or i
but rather
is a blending
of two
from one
to one
from each
to each
and in the
twilight
where our
selves meet
there i
have found
myself
secure
in harmony
with our
friendship

Anne J. Watson

In New York She Could've Been Famous

Looking in the windows
looking through the past
You are on the inside
and I am on the glass.

You were the last thing
I couldn't understand,
sat and told me crying.
Escape your mother's hand.

Reading into letters
and writing in return.
You make the money
and I will try to learn.

Looking in the windows
looking in my eyes
I am on the inside
and you are on the glass.

Think about the times you could've stayed.
Think about the Times: I read your name.

Jeff Smith

no
it doesn't hurt that bad
i put alcohol
on my open wounds

it just won't work
to wrap the wounds
in gauze

i've tried silk thread
and spider webs

and each has had its flaws

spider webs
cling and tangle and confuse

silk
let us say it snags
and ravels
and stirs at the slightest breeze

but alcohol
allow it to suffice
my saying
a disease for a disease

Pat Wesley Bryan

I heard love whispers
coming from
some foliage
in the park.
I turned away with
jealousy.

Nigel Jennings

The Park

Placidly sitting on the old park bench
Thick, scaly fingers crossed over his paunch
Time glazed eyes, lonely pondering
Of memories of what used to be
Remembering old dreams of what could never be.

Across from him on the grass
Vibrantly lazy youth touching hands
Looking through idealistic eyes
Gazing at a serene future
Dreaming dreams of what could never be.

And on the sidewalk between the two of them
Critical, cynical, middle age
Neither looking forward, nor
Looking back just quietly
Dreaming dreams of what could never be.

Far behind them, myself, the master cynic
Self-righteously laughing at each of them
Laughing at their looking back, their looking forward
Snickering at the one who thinks of just today
As I dream dreams of what could never be.

Mike Shambora

Tracing a Child

There were dreams I etched into the sand,
but I couldn't count the rains since then.
The clearest sketches were splashed and lost.

Once upon a time I molded large ideas
into small, soppy pies of mud. What were the dreams —
I wonder now.

And I looked forward
while pulling grass and weeds, by the roots,
to plant imaginary gardens on May evenings after school.

A special plan fell unseen
from that priceless, cigar treasure box while exploring
hidden caves and hiding gems of colored glass,
tarnished medals and broken pins.

Sometimes — it seems to matter
where every Spring was once and where it all began;
to see iridescent colors bursting toward the sky,
to find a child's designs. If only to discover
every childhood dream ended — in rain soaked sand.

Laura Lind

Death by Bayonet in Rice Water

A throbbing heart beats its last,
Thoughts in the mind travel fast . . . the past . . .
Many happens are recalled.
The heart beats, the mind dulls.

A passing bird sings the last hymn,
A bleeding heart beats slower, within.
The day awakes over lush vegetation
Birds songs, dulled meditation.

A life so new age is not forseen,
A knife so sharp . . . pierced clean.
The heart stops, the blood flows,
A bleeding heart to heaven goes.

Steve Stanley

i have passed a million people
and seen no one in a day
i have seen no one
and passed a million days by noon

Pat Wesley Bryan

The Therapist

She flipped her head, sighing inwardly, for she too is someone who, perhaps, knows and would like to communicate herself. The clown on the wall was complacent, he had had his bad days and for all that he looks as if it had made him a little silly and ridiculous. Inwardly, she too trembled, but it was hidden beneath composure and years of experience. Yet her sigh was no longer for herself, but rather, for others and for her youth — for days gone, for times of anger and hopes and dreams. Now her reality was better than fantasy. Conquered anger and forgotten dreams had given her the present. Only in moments of reverie did the past return, hinting only mildly of present dissatisfaction. She saw a part of herself in the other across from her and sighed, hoping that she too could conquer. Hurriedly she lit a cigarette, and flipped her head.

Anne J. Watson

if the real god could walk down his proud staircase and visit us here in this structure brimming over with pain he might say that he never meant it to be this way never he might apologize to us all and ask what went wrong his excuse of course being that he fell asleep for way too long and never expected our world his creation to get so out of hand and so incredibly lost in its sufferings he might fall to his knees weeping for our forgiveness he might put his hand to his weakening heart and let in that horrifying observation that awful perception that none of us know what we have done what we could have had what we could have been what is this god

Barbara Sussman

I saw the shadow of love
Lying blue and lifeless
On the floor of my room.
I scooped it up in anger
And thrust it from me.
I thrust it from me
Through the clouded glass
And listened to it shatter soundlessly
On the jagged rocks below.

Julia Malone

Adonis,
I met him once
where Venus must
have left him on
the subway.

I followed dares
and people's stares
up to the Times Square
Shuttle

And Adonis picked me up,
at a pornographic bookstore
where I ate my ice cream,
and looked around to see
if maybe Venus followed me
to take back her Adonis.

Nigel Jennings

Cobra

The skin covering my bag once lived
and danced to a flutesong.
I saw it impotent and still
in the window of an import shop.
Now I just put it aside and stare
at its dead pattern
remembering the woman at the zoo
who gazed at the beautiful leopard
and dreamt of a coat.
And now I know her rather than curse her.

Barbara Sussman

our tongues moved differently in social intercourse
but we were both left satisfied

Pat Wesley Bryan

A Song for a Lady Who can Sing the Blues

all of a sudden
someone is gone
you tell yourself
it doesn't matter
you would have died
if it was yesterday
but for today
it doesn't matter

it's crystal clear
you're crystal cruel
for many years
i was your fool

now someone's gone
all of a sudden
it doesn't matter

Pat Wesley Bryan

To Charlie M. [To a Lost Leader]

Lacy soft doilies
Leering, sucking dogs
Lustful satiating dreams
Lurid soiled diapers
Lending striped doubts
Lucy in the Sky with Dali
Pigs

Lorna Doone

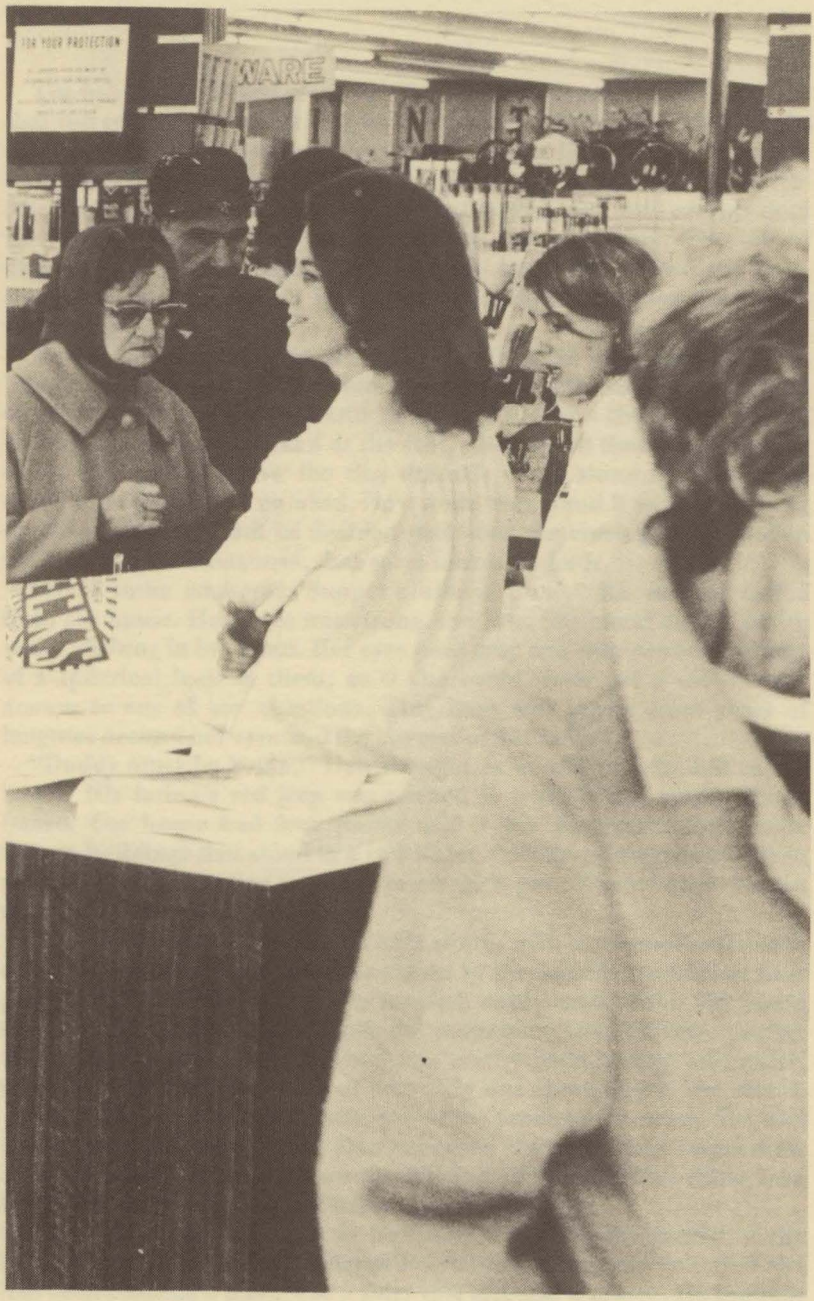
Shadows

Shadows are of special worth,
They leave me feeling free.
They can't pollute dear Mother Earth,
For they have no debris!

Vicki Shannon

you are in my smoke
you are in my dreams
you are running up my sleeves
you are in the air i breathe
you are in the tear going down my cheek
you are on the walls of every hope i want to think
you're holding the pen that's writing this down
i got you in my mind
won't you come and be in my arms?
you're in the lights i see
oh take the dogs away
don't let them see this woman suffer
you were in the bottom of that bottle too
won't you see the woman suffer
won't the cheating on the side ever end
you are in the needle
that is in this pen
close
cause that's all that's left
you are me
you're everywhere but in my arms
oh take the dogs away
don't you see this woman suffer
the cheating on the side is ended for me
cause everybody's tired of seeing you up my sleeve
i'm a junky
and you're the only one
oh take those poor dogs away
don't let them see this woman suffer

Anonymous


FOR YOUR PROTECTION
WARE

By Linda Philips Fuchs

A Short Story

The boy liked fall best of all. He liked the way the sky looked: so blue that you couldn't look at it very long without your eyes gettin' all bright and lit up. He liked the trees when they were just beginning to turn into something fiery and magic. The colors seemed to be saying, "Green has ruled the earth too long. Now we will paint gold, red, and orange onto the leaves." And he was glad that things were changing. The lull of summer had pressed upon his world too long. He wanted the cool, sharp breeze to blow away the last few months and replace them with something new.

He sat on a large, flat rock that laid half in the creek and half out. The part sticking out of the water was just the right size for him to sit on without getting wet and still be able to see into the water. He sat there sometimes and looked at the still, silent world that seemed so far away. He wondered how the tiny animals could stand it, living in a world where there was no wind. How could they stand it with everything so still all the time? But he decided that when the creek gets all swollen and swift from a rainstorm, that sorta makes up for it.

"Dan, come on home. Supper's almost done," his mother called from the house. Her voice was strong and low. She stood on the porch with a dishrag in her hand. Her eyes were grey and they always had sort of a quizzical look in them, as if she could never get a satisfactory answer to any of her questions. Tiny lines had grown from years of laughter around her eyes and the corners of her mouth.

"Daddy must be home," Dan thought as he climbed the hill to the house. His father's red jeep was parked in front of the small, frame house. The house had four rooms and it was identical to the other sixteen buildings that stood in a row lining the side of the narrow green valley, like peas nestled together in an open pod. Their house was on the end of the row.

The valley seemed like such a safe place, with a mountain on each side to protect you from all those things in the outside world that hurt people. The child knew that the hurried, angry ways of the city could never get into this world because the mountains would always protect them. They would always be there, no matter what, strong and quiet, shielding him from the wave of hate that was spreading in the world.

Julie, Dan's five year old sister, sat on the porch in the swing. She had short, curly, golden hair. As Dan mounted the stairs and stepped up onto the porch, he noticed how the evening sun made every thing look like warm, melted butter had been poured over it.

Julie held a yellow crayon in her hand and shrewdly peered at the coloring book resting on her lap. Dan stepped closer and saw that she had been coloring a picture of a fairy tale girl and a prince. He thought how glad he was that he could read and not have to just look at pictures

to find out what the story's about. He could remember those years when words meant nothing, though. He hadn't even guessed that each world would have a picture hidden inside it. But that's how it was. When he found out what the words meant, he could see all sorts of things when he looked at the hard, stiff groups of letters that had mystified him so much before.

And that's when the whole thing had really started. That was when he began to find out that things were very different outside the valley where they lived. People were different. They weren't all coal miners like his father. In fact, most of them had jobs that he couldn't even hardly imagine. He had read about men who study about each little particle of the whole world. They were called chemists. He found out about people called geologists who have a long name for every rock there is . . . And hundreds more.

"You all come in and sit down," his mother said through the screen door. The fairy princess slipped from Julie's lap, half-colorless, as she jumped from the swing. Dan sat down at the table across from his father.

The dinner table was covered with an orange flowered table cloth. Dan studied his plate in silence and wondered as he had so many times before about the picture painted on it. He knew that they called these dishes "blue willow" china but he hadn't been able to find out much about what was going on in the story. There were some men dressed in funny clothes standing on a little round bridge in a garden and there were some little birds flying around. Now what could all that mean? His attention turned to the linoleum on the floor. The green and yellow design was worn down to grey in front of the sink where his mother stood to do dishes. On the wall there was a clock shaped like a rooster, a calendar from Hatifield's mortuary with a picture of Jesus knocking at a door, and a green plastic rack to hang dish towels beside the sink.

"Pass the pork chops," his father said. He was a big man. His hands were hard and rough, with coal dust ground into the callouses.

"Are you gonna have to work this Saturday, Jim?" Dan's mother questioned.

"I don't know if the mines will run or not. I sorta hope not. Oscar Johnson was tellin' me that he got five squirrels over on White's Creek last weekend. I might get up real early Saturday morning if I don't work and try my luck."

"Can I go, too?" Julie said.

"Girls can't go squirrel hunting. You couldn't even carry a gun," Dan told her knowingly. He had been allowed to go with his father, once, and he had felt very manly and grown up.

"I'm going over to town, maybe tomorrow. Dan needs a couple of pairs of pants for school and Julie needs some shoes," His mother raked some fried potatoes out of a platter onto her plate. "Oh, yeah, you'd better mow that lawn right after supper, a storm's coming up. Both of you can finish it up pretty quick."

After they finished eating, Dan and his father started cutting the grass. It was hot, and the sweat rolled from Dan's face as he did his part of the job. The air pressed upon him as if it were impatient to rid itself of a burden. Just as they finished up, the rain began to fall.

Great sheets of water poured from the sky and soaked the valley. Tiny streams doubled, tripled in size within a few hours.

That evening they sat around the T.V. A western movie about a crooked sheriff was on. Dan got up and went to the window. There was no movement except the constant assault of the rain. When it landed on the earth it gained speed as the drops joined together to create swift streams covering the ground like a million tiny roads on a map, "Where will all the water go?" he wondered.

"Has it let up any?" his father asked from the couch.

"No, still coming down as hard as ever."

"This is an awful lot of rain to be havin' this time of year. Don't you think so, Jim? This whole summer's been wet." His mother's eyebrows creased with the question.

"Yeah, the weather has been crazy this year."

Their attention returned to the movie.

As the boy lay in bed that night, trying to sleep, his mind couldn't seem to rest. He was thinking about school. It was just about two weeks til' it started. The idea of being in the fourth grade seemed new and a little bit scary. How would it be? Mrs. Coleman, the fourth grade teacher, always had her bulletin board decorated up real interesting. He had really liked it when she had pictures of all the spring plants on it at the last of school, last year. Maybe if she like him, she would let him help her fix it sometime, next year. As the rain hammered persistently on their green shingled roof, he fell asleep.

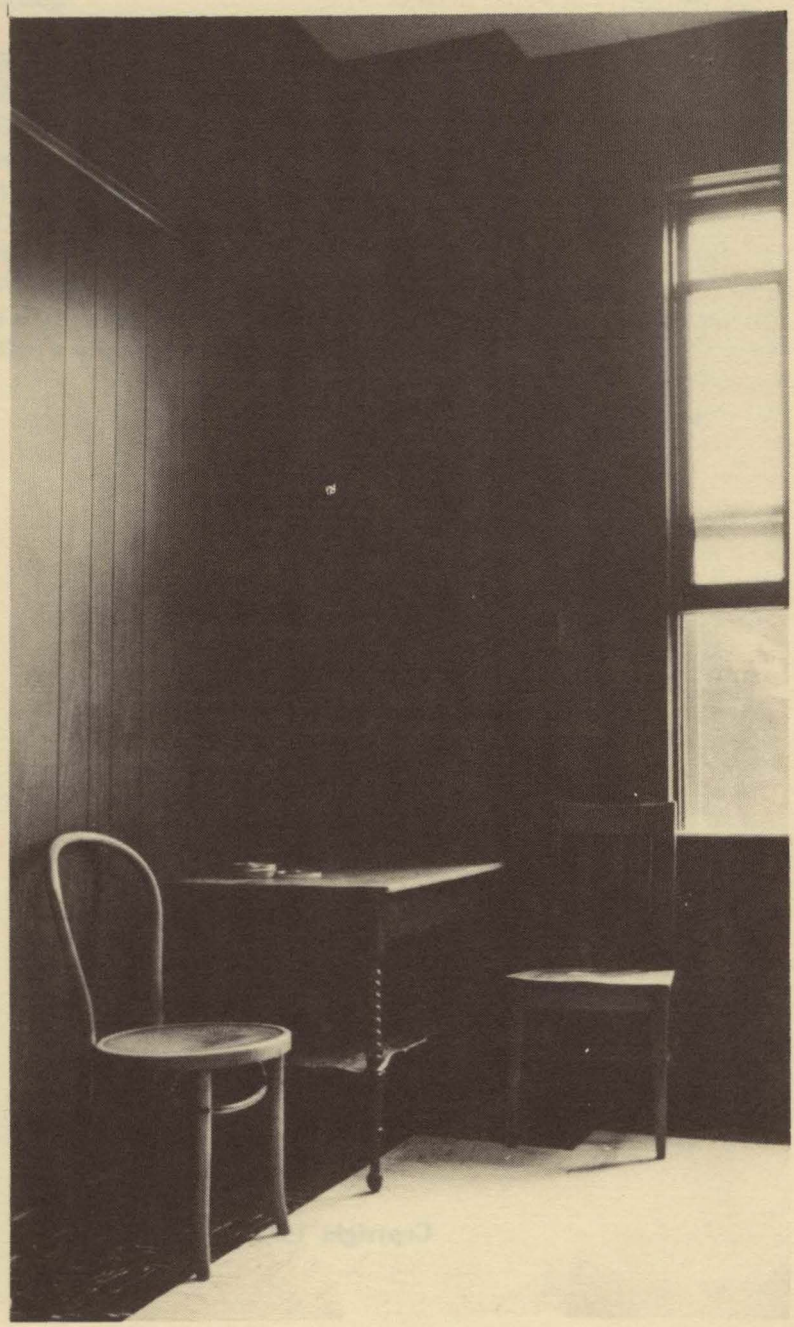
He wasn't sure why he had awakened so early that morning. He looked out his window at the grey, wet earth. Everything was quiet except for a strange roaring sound in the distance. He got up and no one else was awake.

Opening the front door, Dan stepped out onto the small front porch. As he looked up the valley, he could see where the roaring sound came from. A grey wall of water was advancing down the narrow valley toward the house like a hugh wet hand: reaching out and covering his world up.

MANN [AP] — A major disaster struck Logan County Friday morning but the extent of the catastrophe was still unknown late Friday night as rescue workers and reporters struggled to reach the scene.

Gov. Arch A. Moore Jr. said Friday evening he had received unconfirmed reports that as many as 90 people may have died when a coal refuse dam broke . . .

Rhoda Morris



By Linda Philips Fuchs

College

Social movements on bathroom walls
Redundant rhetoric in the halls
Growing consciousness flows with the beer
Honed gossip balances ego's fears
Apathy in rolling eternal waves
Crested with ideologies to save
Beauty, truth, love, each embalmed
With another day's useless energies gone,
For years of this, and then a degree
That's all it takes to be intellectually free.

Mike Shambora

At Al and Joe's

No goddamn unemployment check this week,
We sit forever
At Al and Joe's.
Strung out on Mad Dog 20/20,
Like giant worn-out rubber bands, useless and sad.
In a world of bare light bulbs,
And CAT heavy equipment hats.
Listening to the reassuring sound of
Clicking pool balls.
While Bill Withers scratches my ears,
And rumbles bass notes through my sick stomach.
As we talk of the 1972 Big Red Machine's pennant chances.

David Crockett

Like honey oozing down curved glass,
Your life seems slowly to move.
But jars of gold are small
From lid to table.

John Tipper

Two-Thirds Wasted

One-third of my life has been
devoted to you —
Too bad I have to eat and sleep.

Vicki Shannon

Night

The night awaits me like a wizened well,
Its tendrils dig deep into my flesh,
And into the caverns of my being,
It loosens its forces of the unknown,
Blackness can hold only terror,
Where there is no light,
There is no warmth,
Oh terror which has gripped my malleable soul,
Lie quietly for a while,
Why must spend yourself on this
Wretched creature.

Anne J. Watson

Pantomime

The precipice gaps wide in the wood,
Perhaps go there I could,
And find there the leaves of summertime,
But this, this only my pantomime,
Of what should or should not be,
Bounded not by any sea,
Or man or me.

Anne J. Watson

After we made love
this morning

I became
a plump brown wren

Curled up in a nest
of moss and forest twigs

Asleep

Rhoda Morris

For the Bikers on the Lower East Side

Silver
and chrome war machines
sparkle east side evenings.
Mars himself hides.
Years of peaceful Jews
no slowly fading.
Novices of love creep
back to California canyons,
where only nightbirds cry.

Nigel Jennings

My mind wanders
What's inside —
I hide

Anne J. Watson

Write Your Own Poem Now

Write Another Poem

Write Every Obscene Word You Can Think Of