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The Lovers

RON BEAN

There was always a beautiful woman at Franco Zacharelli's beach house. Sometimes they only stayed a few days or a week and lounged on the beach alone, drinking Tom Collins, basking in the rays of the Eastern Virginia Shore, turning over like a roast pig on a spit, browning to an Italian russet. Sometimes they stayed for a month or more, especially if Franco was there to entertain them. There was always at least one woman there at any time. Sometimes Frankie Z was there, and more often he was not, but there was always a woman there for him. Frankie Z worked Casa Nostra in Jersey. Frankie Z was big. Russell Constable was not so big. He lived on the beach front seventy-five or a hundred yards down from the cyclone-fenced hedge that surrounded Frankie Z's place. He wrote. He inherited money, inheriting more than he wrote. He was semi-successful, sold two novels, one best seller. A couple of short stories to a couple of magazines. When Russ wasn't writing he was watching, watching Frankie Z's women from his upper sundeck through a pair of field glasses. He usually liked what he saw. They always had long dark hair and oiled bodies that glistened brightly. He admired their slim, lithe bodies through his glasses. It made him feel like Alice through the looking glass.

The world of Frankie Z was unreal. The people were shadows, moving about clandestinely, though Russ attributed it to his imagination. There were two unreal caretakers that carried short revolvers in a holster slung under their coats. They were always silent and only spoke to one another or Frankie Z. Russ noticed that they too seemed to watch the women—through dark glasses, and often smiled through thin cruel lips. Only they never touched the women, nor approached them, because they belonged to Frankie Z, and no one ever touched Frankie Z's women.

The beach houses stood before the Atlantic. Constable knew the sea and her moodiness, and he loved the orange sun on the

horizon at sunrise just as much as any of the old solitary fishermen who saw the sea as their mistress, and daily rose to sail upon her. He was a sensitive, romantic man. He was in his early forties, had mellowed in his years as a writer, and the hair around his temples was turning white. He never married, proposed once, was rejected for another, and never reconsidered getting married. He'd brought some women to his beach-front home, made love to them, but that was some years ago, and it was some time since he had a woman in his bed. He didn't go out very often, since the typewriter had become his passion, but for the past two years since Frankie Z bought his estate, he entertained the idea of making love to one of Frankie Z's women. At first it was just a silly idea that brought a smile to his lips when he thought of it, kind of a joke, never taking it very seriously, and writing it off as a case of writers' imagination. Russ thought it would be fun to be able to pull the rug from under Frankie Z's feet.

Frankie Z's house was lush. Instead of heavy thick walls that one might expect, there were huge sliding glass panels that were never opened. The days Frankie Z came, the curtains were closed, and the house was always dark. When Frankie Z was there, no light shone in or leaked out. But when he was not there, Constable could see into the house through the large glass panels—its lavish furnishings, dark wooden furniture, walnut and mahogany, a deep pile rug that made people seem to glide when they walked across the floor. Large teakwood tables and imposing chests, and the glass gun case with gleaming walnut stocks and dulled metal barrels—red boxes of cartridges neatly piled in short stacks on a shelf nearby. Constable had never been invited. They knew him by sight as the neighbor-writer, and left him alone when he went down to the surf with his typewriter and second sheets. The large black Dobermans had become accustomed to his scent, and ignored him completely. One of the caretakers would nod when they came into sight of each other on opposite sides of the fence; the other grim one never acknowledged him. The women always smiled, and sometimes they came through the gate of the fence by the surf and watched him as he composed. They exchanged pleasantries and he was always careful, never saying too much and made very uncomfortable by the stares of the two henchmen who always watched everyone's every move.

Russ thought often of taking one of Frankie Z's women, constantly being reminded by their eternal presence, and the constant reminder that they belonged to Frankie Z. Russ knew that

Frankie Z was a god, and the impenetrable estate was his temple. The Japanese garden that ringed the house, with its small, twisted, gnarled trunks and arthritic branches, its stunted, but strangely beautiful flowers gave the house a mystic quality. "Here," he thought, "is grotesque, distorted beauty." And he was right. It was a temple to power, where there reigned and lived a god whose possessions were holy. These women were his possessions—priestesses to their god, giving themselves as offerings to his power. Most of them had only a transitional kind of beauty. A man could remark on her beauty and praise her loveliness one day, but the next, it would be gone. They were always in paint, with black eyeliner and long fake eyelashes that would flutter forever. Blues, blacks, and reds, oils, perfumes and then the pure virginal, sweet breath of the sea blew away their smell and the stench of Frankie Z. When they stood before him, or stretched out like a dark body crucified on the white sand, he thought of tearing off their bikinis and taking one like an animal on the sand, the waves washing over them, in front of the two men with the short revolvers, in front of Frankie Z, in front of the whole Jersey Casa Nostra. Tony the Tuna Accardo and Bugs Moran and Al Capone, Vito Genovese all standing around, the whites of their eyes showing through their dark glasses, and the gods become mortal men. The thought made him shudder. His true ambition was not to sleep with some all-time C. N. whore, but to desecrate the temple of profane power, and defile the priestess and taunt the god, to commit sacrilege and to make the god no longer holy, having usurped his unholy power.

In the meantime he wrote. These thoughts often escaped him, and he would dismiss them as worthless. He wrote about the unreal world of Franco Zacharelli. It made his second novel move up the best seller lists for weeks, bringing in royalties and later movie rights. Crime, he knew, made things move. It was a multi-million-dollar industry, a conglomerate, with honest books and honest-looking men and lots of muscle. It made Frankie Z big, it made Russ's novel move. It paid. He wrote about the world on the other side of the cyclone-fenced hedge. He had been careful never to use a name he heard shouted from over the other side of the cyclone fence, or to describe the Big Man or the others who came with him once a month in their big black Lincoln Continentals and caddies and dark suits. They stayed maybe for two hours, put their dark glasses back on when they stepped out into the sun, relit their cigars, and drove

off until the next month, when like pupae from cocoons, they re-emerged. "These people are the parasites," he reasoned, "and I am their parasite."

This morning, the salty spray of the sea was carried by the fitful wind above and made his eyes sting as he looked out over the endless span of sand and surf. There was a hint of apprehension as the sea was to him, a prophetess. He could sense an uneasiness from Her moodiness, the ice-gray white-topped caps, seething and boiling relentlessly. She was irreverent, forceful, and he could feel the uneasiness meant for him. The waves washed hard on the beach, strewing the sand with broken bits of shell and seaweed. And yet he knew how gentle She could be, calm and patient, instead of the belligerent witch She was now. He didn't believe in star charts or in tea leaves, but he did believe in Her. "It is silly," he would say, "and no modern man in his right mind would heed Her." But he knew, witch or nymph that She was, of Her passions, and Her ability to whisper futurity into the ear of Her worshippers. Today was such a day as Russ would have normally stayed behind in the house with the symphonic strains of Debussy or Beethoven above the clatter of the keys on his typewriter, but the humid air made the house stuffy and uncomfortable, so he packed his typewriter and walked down to the sand, placing his chair close enough to the surf so that it caressed his feet. The water was chilled and the numbing wetness which lingered forced Russ to move back further on the shore. "Go away," She seemed to say. Defiantly, Russ did not heed the warning, and sat before her and began ripping up second sheets, as he could not concentrate. He could not work when She was disturbed. A solitary gull walked awkwardly against the wind on the sand, looking for crabs, but the wind bird soon too, feeling the uneasiness, left, leaving Russ the only living being on the shore.

But it was not so long, because when he looked up, a woman was standing before him, her tracks leaving imprints from the direction of Frankie Z's. He smiled, she smiled, and he was struck by her beautiful long blonde hair that waved gently in the harsher wind. He sensed that she was different, pure-like, not innocent, yes perhaps innocent, but there was something more in her look that said she was different from all the rest. She was different from all the other women he had ever met. Her glowing face and slender body, and long blonde hair that blew in the fingers of the wind, no oils, no colors other than a pink flushed skin that looked warm to the touch.

Russ knew when he saw her that she would be the one. His indecisive mind was made up. Careless musing and an unhopeful desire hardened into set determination. "This woman," he said to himself, "will be the one." She was disturbing, and her beauty lingered on in his mind long after she went back to Frankie Z's, and he sat there, again alone on the windy shore, the surf echoing hollowly in his ears. She had been like a vision. He looked up and she had been there, and now she was gone; only her retreating tracks in the sand were there to bear witness she ever existed. She haunted him. She hadn't said a word, but just smiled, and that smile which covered her body and soul said all that was needed to be said—words would have shattered the peace, perhaps would have broken the dream, and now she was gone, and he again alone by a solitary sea. "But she was real," Russ thought, staring at the fading footprints as the waves washed them and covered them until even they were no longer there.

Before the seagulls returned, some crabs crawled out of the rocky crevices in the rocks and scurried across the sand to hide in clumps of seaweed momentarily before rushing into the sea. Stopping, and going, timorously, and the beach returned to normal, its life returning to continue their day. Yet Russ still sat at his chair with the vision of the strange woman and her haunting loveliness, and her smile, and Frankie Z.

Russ didn't really have a plan. He knew what he wanted to do, or rather he felt he had to do, and went about it rather ambitiously. He thought he was starting to harden. "My sensitive soul is crystallizing," he mused, "crystallizing into the cold hardness of Frankie Z." This is a passionate act, he told himself, yet he felt something more was in this. "No," he said, "I am not in love," and it was true—he did not want to be in love with a woman and he was not falling in love. Russ was not so cold that he didn't love women; on the contrary. No, he loved all women as the Greeks loved their classic forms or as Botticelli loved his plastic nudes. Women were beings of beauty, but Russ could not take one to be in his heart. He had tried once, but was rejected for another, and never reconsidered getting married. It was a few hours before he left his thoughts and began walking towards the open fence gate and the reclining blonde figure, a white figure, on the white sand.

* * * * *

It was not easy, and he knew it had to be done fast, but seeing her still shook him. He knew his approach was awkward, and

that he was being self-conscious. The two gunmen were not in sight when he walked up to her, and they were not there when they left for his beach house at his invitation. It had been easy, as if she expected it from him, and had already made up her mind to go with him. At the edge of his conscience something pricked him. Perhaps it was the missing gunmen or more likely it was she and her strange familiarity. No, he was not in love, and yet . . .

He brought her into his house and sat her down on the white lambswool divan he so loved. He offered her a drink and she accepted it. Russ couldn't help looking at her face, and he stared at her, like he had stared at her on the beach. She was rather young, perhaps only twenty-two or twenty-three, and she was not like the rest. It repeated over and over on the track of his mind. She tried to make conversation—her name was Dawn—and she talked of things they didn't hear. He nodded and smiled and looked into her eyes. There were more drinks, the rattling of glasses and the swish of liquor over ice, and the slow stirring sound of drinks being mixed. Soon Russ began to talk. He talked of the Barbizonians, le pere Corot and Boucher. She listened and avoided his searching eyes. Russ turned to the hearth, his back to her, and put more cordwood on the fading fire. He tended it carefully, pushing the poker into the red embers, stirring them up, shifting the logs, arranging them until they looked best, all the time talking about things that didn't concern either of them.

Russ did not want to talk about her and ask her who she was. He was afraid to find out. Dawn—such a strange, sweet-sounding name . . . He did not want to know where she would go when they were finished; perhaps she would tell Frankie Z; he doubted it. So he talked of music and art, and when he turned around, her breasts were bare, one arm hesitantly hiding the strawberry nipples as if she was unsure. He found it disconcerting. Perhaps she was being coy. "No," he thought, "she is not being coy." She did not beckon him or writhe seductively as he might have expected. Something stirred inside of Russ. He moved toward her slowly, put his own hand out hesitantly and then lightly touched the soft tender breast. She did not pull him on top of her or close her eyes and moan. She—Dawn—watched his hand upon her breast, put her hand over Russ's and looked at him; her eyes smiled as if to say . . . What did they say? Her eyes upset him. They were strange. "Innocent," he thought. "No, impossible." But he still knew there was something about her,

perhaps her smiling eyes, or blonde hair, or the pink flush on her face. He pulled his hand from her, and realized why he was so upset. Russ picked up his glass, arose from the woman on the lambswool divan and walked to the windows overlooking the surging sea. Bewildered, she covered up her breasts shamefully. Tears welled up in her eyes. He said he was sorry, not turning from the window, still holding his glass. To take her would have meant sacrificing his "sweet sensitive soul" and he would have been no different than Frankie Z. "Hard," he thought, "diamond hard . . ." and it was not worth the sacrifice of so great a worth for so little a reward.

When he turned from the window, strengthened by himself, he saw the tears in her eyes. She was still lying on the lambswool, covering her quivering breasts. He made her put on her swimming suit, and poured two cups of black coffee. As he handed her a cup, he looked deeply into her eyes. "Why me?" and she said she sensed his gentleness, his sensitivity, and knew he would be the first one, and Russ laughed, thinking about what he had said about her being the one. Dawn brightened and a warm smile crept back into her eyes. They talked. Russ found that she was Frankie Z's daughter from a former marriage. She said she felt safe with him, and Russ knew that here was a warm woman caught in a world of cold brutality, looking, frantically, grasping for someone like herself. But Russ knew that he had to send her back because she did not belong to him; he could not take her into his heart; he had tried once . . .

In a few hours she was gone, her footprints retreating to the cyclone fence and beyond. The wind was colder there, the sand coarser, the water colder, and yet there was, Russ knew, one small flame of warmth within that would someday be extinguished, perhaps by some dark man with thin cruel lips who carried a short revolver in a holster slung under his shoulder, and the light, that small warm light in the void of darkness and cold of kingdoms such as Frankie Z's would be out . . . forever.

Russell Constable went down to the surf the next morning with his typewriter, the name Dawn, and a great frustration. The sea was calm and the sky was soft blue. He looked up at the cloudless sky and winked. Why? he did not know, but he was glad the sky was soft blue today. Gulls circled over Frankie Z's place, waiting for the crabs to crawl out of the gray rocks before they would swoop down and catch them in their talons, carrying them upward, and then dropping them on the rocks

below, crushing them, cracking their shells so they could peck at the tender meat.

“Dawn is not on the beach today,” he said, taking his eyes off the white-winged wind birds that soared. A dog barked, the grass rustled, and the sea stirred. The frustration of yesterday was fading. But Russ caught the smile of the sea in the corner of his eye, and the sea breeze began to caress his face. Russ turned to Her, and in a minute, Russ smiled back at her.

broken streets

Walking desolate streets
fanning broken desire
deep pit in empty stomach
smell of warm bean soup
over shoulder
carrying heavy pack
straps cut in
to blade of bone
want only to sit
beneath cool tree
counting
wish-me-nots
on vacant toes.
want only to see
Maria Lorena
lost cousin
from another land.

JAY BREMYER

No Words Of Warning

can

you recall the times
i came to your door
 racing the sun
 in hopes
of being the one
 to kiss you
 first

and i stood
in the half-light
armed only
with dr. west's germ fighting
 toothbrush
and the baseball cap
so muted by the sun
that
the reds and blues no longer
knew where
 they began
 and ended

each

 time it happened
 the sound
 of the knock
would
 frighten you
WHY,
 were you afraid
that
 maybe this time
 it wouldn't be
 me

CURTISS THORNBRUGH

if
i knew
where

it was
i wish
that

i could
go
home

CURTISS THORNBRUGH



Photo by SHERRY McNEILL

“Life”

**MUST WE,
LIKE THE CAT,
STALK,
TEASE,
ATTACK,
RETREAT,
THEN TURN AGAIN
TO ATTACK
STEALTHILY,

THEN TO RETREAT
SLOWLY,
TO THE
SLEEP
OF A
CHILD?**

LOU ST. CLAIR

Contingency: The Occasional Surprise

Goodfrien

d

dead?

Oh, no.

NO!!

sadness

truly unexpected

noncontinuance

Damn. Well God damn.

**planned reunions and restimulations
of thought memories**

bedamned.

**A HIGHER WILL THAN YOURS, MY
FRIEND HAS CHOSEN THIS TO BE**

**God damn it just shouldn't
HAS CHOSEN THIS TO BE.**

damn.

so be it.

RAY FREEBY



The Boxer

BILL HEGBERG

"C'mon, boy, you gonna get yo' haid bounced if'n yo' doan' start thinkin'. You droppin' yo' right han' aftuh yo' throws that left hook. Think 'bout it!! Thutty seconds left."

Goddamn you, Adolph. Crazy sonofabitch wants everything perfect. We've worked on this for three weeks and it just won't come. O.K. Watch the right hand. Jab, jab, hard right, left hook, keep the right hand up! There, Adolph, I did it perfect. Bitch now. Jab, jab, DING!!

"Thass'a way, boy! Ol' Gino ain't a-gonna have no chance a'tall, you watchin' yo' right han' like that. None a'tall. Use yo' hook and watch yo' right han' like Adolph tells you, an' yo' gonna stop him quick! Won't even have a mark on yo' fo' the fotographer's pitchers aftuh the fight—if'n yo' keeps that right hand up. 'Course mebbe yo' oughta have a leetle mark so's all those yaller-haired foxes what've been aftuh yo' got some reason to mammy yo' a bit. An' when they wants to fix yo' ouchie, they natcherly won't be no medicine where yo' at, so mebbe yo' bettah come wif me, honey, 'cause I got jus' the thing fo' yo' ovah at mah place! Heel, Heel!"

"Now you get yo' mind off'n them foxes an' start thinkin' 'bout that right han'. Go one roun' onna speed bag, one onna heavy bag, shower, an' go home—to yo' own home. Plenny time fo' chasin' fox three day from now."

Adolph and his jokes. But I'm pretty lucky, I suppose. He's the best there is, or so Abe says, and he taught me a lot. Funny, but the two people who've always stuck with me are a nigger

and a Jew. Such is life. Seems there's a lot of people ready to buy me dinner, lend me money, or jump in my bed that I never saw until now. Must've been hiding under rocks or something when I was nobody. But Abe kicked my ass when I wanted to quit. And a couple times I guess he kept me from starving. And Adolph. Five feet of determination. Ran me, pushed me, yelled at me. Beat everything he knew into my skull until I at least looked like a fighter. Hmmm—next shower'll be at the arena. Wish I knew now what I'll know then. Where is the soap? There's never any in this damn shower.

Well, a big steak at Nichols'll taste good and with any luck I can avoid the crowds. Uh-oh. Looks like I can't avoid the ones standing around my car unless I want to walk nine miles. Reporters. Wish Abe were here. "Yes, I feel real good. I think I'm in the best possible condition." "Yes, Paluzzi's quick, but he's not as fast as I am." "That's right. Gino never has had to fight a full fifteen rounds with another fighter who can stand toe-to-toe and trade punches with him. I feel I've got the conditioning, and like you said in your article, Mr. Baer, the 'thick head' to go the full fifteen without getting hurt by Paluzzi's strong left hook. I think it'll be a real good fight." (I'd like to knock your head off, too, you back-biting bastard.) "You fellows want some pictures of me signing autographs? Sure, I don't mind." (This'll be great.) "I don't see why not." "This girl right here?" "A little closer?" (Get your tit out of my arm, bitch.) "Well, fellas, I have to get some beauty sleep, so we'll see you all Tuesday night." Reporters. They're always around when I don't want them.

* * *

"Hope you feelin' good, boy. Thas' alla rubdown you get. We doan wan' those K.O. muscles too loose. You gets two minutes to relax. See you at de place o' business directly."

Adolph, I would have given you five hundred bucks if you would've kept on rubbing my back. No other trainer'll give a rubdown before a fight, but Adolph's heard Abe's pep talks. I get so tensed up that I've gotta relax some. Abe sure picked the wrong profession, bein' a fight manager. With him givin' halftime talks, Slippery Rock'd beat the Packers. Here's Adolph's assistant, so I suppose it's time to go. Forty-five minutes till I can get that rubdown finished. Long time.

Here they are. Abe said 22,000 paid two bucks a throw to see me and Gino beat each other's brains out. I don't know why they don't rope this aisle off. I use as much energy getting to

the ring through the crowd as I do in the first round. There's Tommy the announcer, and old Mickey, the referee. Both good men. It's strange how my mind works different once I'm in the ring. Time goes slower, or my mind goes faster. It's good for a fighter. I see things clearer. Notice more. The ropes on the ring. They're clean white with velvet blue and red coverings on the turnbuckles in the corners—sorta pretty. There's a dark, sweaty mark on the ropes where the fighters in the preliminary bouts bounced off 'em. The crowd. It always sounds different at a fight than anywhere. And the smoke. Hell, I can't even see past the front row. Maybe that's why the people sound funny. They can't get any air. Mickey's checking the gloves. Telling us the rules and to fight clean. What's clean about it? A guy could get knocked off any time. Ruptured kidney. Punchy. Brain damage. Anything. Just K.O.'d is bad enough. I can hear Adolph behind me. Gino's staring at me. Hard. Looks like he's out to get me. But he won't. There's Abe. Probably haggling price for the next fight. Wonder why the stools are always green? Adolph's got my mouthguard. Always tastes the same. Trunks feel good. Smooth and soft. Cup doesn't rub. Hands feel good. Wrapped tight. Adolph's fighters have never broken a hand. No bind anywhere. Bell. Stool's gone. Tap gloves. Jab easy. Fifteen rounds left. Jab, jab, block a left, jab, block a right, block a left, cover up, he's after me, duck, weave, look for an opening, duck, he's open, hard uppercut, caught him, he's down. He's not hurt but still has to take the mandatory eight-count. That felt good. Gino's after me. Mebbe I better slow him down some. Eight-count's over. Mickey says go. Jab, jab, block a punch, remember the right hand after the hook, jab, jab, hard right, left hook, hand up!! Good, his left hit my right glove. Jab, jab, dance, jab, DING!! I think I slowed him that round. Sixty seconds to rest. Stool. Water bottle. Towel on neck. Adolph's washing mouthguard. Breathe deep, Adolph says. That right hand was good, Adolph says. Don't forget it, Adolph says. You're doin' good, Adolph says. I can see the "yaller-haired fox." She smiles. Later. More aggressive, Adolph says. Rest, Adolph says. Good man. Knows a fighter can't remember too much advice. Fifteen-second whistle. Mouthpiece back in. Bell. Stool goes. Pat on back. Gino's still hurt. His eyes say hurt. Fight won't last much longer. Jab, jab, hard left. His speed's gone. Hard right, hard left, hard right, His speed is gone. Finish him. Now. Get him. Jab, jab, move in, he's in a corner, take him now. Jab, jab, hard right, left hook—

November Night

Sharp

The knife-like rays of moonlight
Slash the brittle coldness of the night,
Effervescent, onyx-like now,
It wraps the hillside.

Nothing moves.

A still-life painted on with granite,
Rightful place to stand and learn
What runs beneath the shell of stone.

Life is there,

Pressing close against itself for warmth,
A part of the earth, inseparable,
Raped by the moonlight.

SHERRY MILLER

Poem

Pain
Is loving him
And then hearing him
Call you
Friend.

SHERRY MILLER

Cramming

Alas,
Alack,
Alacrity
Is dead.

Some
Slovenly
Studies
Have kicked it
In the head.

Reflective,
Regression
Reduces the mind
To lead,

And all
Apropos
Materials
Are left
Unread.

RYAN FOXX

Lonely Thoughts

Sitting alone while the cold settles around a foreign apartment house is the loneliest thing I've ever done it's even harder when I'm trying to avoid reading Benedict de Spinoza knowing all the while that somewhere beyond the deep cold is an even deeper warmth that means so much more to me than Spinoza or Hume or even Christ and when my body is exhausted from my mind's long wrestling last night with the monsters of purpose and ideals and freedom and the meaning of life I can't put up much of a fight when from some city far away comes some stranger who reassures me that moonbeams and lovely heads on strong shoulders mean more than tense buildings and he reminds me of the gentleness and awesomeness of the right leg crossing the left and the warmth of honest laughter that chases the cold of the air out of your heart somehow this stranger becomes more of a friend than I've ever had and my heart saddens when I think of the moment when he is there no more and from one who never prays is heard a silent prayer for he who made me realize that the loneliest thing I've ever done is watch the coming of the dawn alone and I weep in my loneliness wondering how many more suns will rise before I truly see the light and feel the warmth that was meant for me.

JUAN PEREGRINO



COMPOSITION *by* RICHARD GILSON



UNTITLED *by* RICHARD GILSON

Waiting Round the Bend

JERRY REYNOLDS

There was only one other customer in the shop, a dark-haired German student browsing through the New Directions titles. The clerk, also a student, approached George Stallings. "**Bitte Schon?** May I help you find something?"

"No thanks," George said, looking to the back. "I'm just browsing. I know my way around."

The clerk went back to the other customer and George heard them chattering away in German. He stood before the stacked shelves of Penguins in their orange and gray backs. He could hear her on the telephone in the back office. "All right, love. Good-bye. I really must get back. Yes, later." He heard her laugh warmly. "All right. **Spater.**" She sounded happy. His head was half-turned to the curtain over the entrance of the office and he saw her emerge, then hesitate. He turned, smiling broadly and self-consciously, and looked at her. She appeared to be stunned, but finally walked toward him.

"Georgel!"

"Hi, Penny." There was an embarrassing pause. He had expected it would be much easier, that everything would slip back into its old accustomed slot.

"Where did you run off to?" she asked. "I've not seen you for nearly a year now, have I? You're not still in the army?"

"No, I've been a civilian since January. I was hoping you'd still be here."

The bell over the door quietly clink-clinked as a short, stubby woman in a heavy brown coat and a drab brown hat entered the shop. Her face was dry, cracked by deep-lined wrinkles, and her shoulders drooped, but her eyes gleamed with the curiosity of being in a foreign bookstore.

"Excuse me for a moment, George," Penny said as she left him and walked up to the woman. "**Bitte Schon?**"

The old woman started speaking English and looking around to show she was not ignorant of the language inside the covers of the books. George smiled and nodded to her, but he was

looking at Penny, standing with her hands clasped in front of her, inclining slightly toward the woman, ever faithful to duty. He could imagine the interested smile on her face, the same smile with which she greeted all of her customers, and with which she had greeted him the first time he had discovered the little English Book Shop in the middle of Munich several years ago. Her brown hair fell to her shoulders, blending well with the unbuttoned tan sweater she seemed always to wear in the shop. He saw that she was still attractive enough not to need extravagant clothes. Her austere sophistication and the fact that she was nearly five years older than he had made her seem an almost unassailable challenge. Remembering, he was once again flattered that she had finally relented, had softened and accepted him for a serious lover. It must have been the naive intensity with which he carried on his pursuit that had appealed to her, he thought, and congratulated himself for his perseverance in the face of what he had considered overwhelming obstacles.

She and the lively old woman walked over to the corner where the eighteenth century poetry volumes overflowed the shelves onto a table and onto the floor. Looking at her profile again, for the first time since the previous November, he wanted her. As she walked with the woman, he watched the lithe swaying of her hips in her snug, tweed skirt, and when she bent her supple body from the waist, drawing out an anthology from the bottom shelf, he felt the old recognizable building of desire in his loins, spreading throughout his body until the ends of his fingers felt the flicker and he thought his legs would not hold him up. He felt the eyes of the young clerk regarding him curiously, and he turned back to the shelf.

He started poring over the titles of the Penguins. He drew out several novels, glancing at the sketches on the front and examining the growing extracts from reviews on the back. He wondered if she were purposely ignoring him; another customer had come in and now she was busy with him. He began to feel, remembering how he had walked out on her, that he had made a mistake in coming.

They had come back to her flat after getting drunk with a couple she knew from London. The lovemaking had been a joke. The liquor had deadened her responses and it was not until after he had left her that he thought perhaps his liquor-drugged body was responsible for the inept performance. It had been their first really bad time together, and he couldn't help comparing it to the best times before. She had gone to sleep in

his arms, and he had lain awake, listening to her restless breathing. He watched her watch a dream, her eyes, with the night's eye make-up unwashed and caked disgustingly, roving madly beneath her eyelids. He began to look at her body in detail and noticed blemishes marring the smooth whiteness of the skin, imperfections he had not noticed before. He went to sleep before dawn, and when he awoke, she had gone to work. He got up, showered and shaved, packed his things into his travelling bag, thought of writing a note, but not knowing any good reason he thought would satisfy her, left, telling himself it was for good. In the spring, when he wanted to go back, while he was alone and lonely in Naples, he remembered telling himself, as he walked out of her door, that it was over for him, so he had resisted the urge to go back and ask her to forget what he had done. He had gone on to Venice and was glad, after meeting Carol, that he had not given up his adventure because of a lonely night's reflections made in weariness.

Now he was back in Munich again and had been drawn to the bookshop. He told himself it was crazy, but he had the feeling that Penny would be happy to see him. He knew she would offer some resistance and expect an explanation, but he thought it could be handled. He was confident that he held some power over Penny.

Two more customers had come into the small shop, and he saw that she would be tied up for some time. Damn her! He reached up and drew out Bellow's *Dangling Man*, then went over to the desk that served for the sales counter and held the thin paperback up for Penny to see. She saw him and came over.

"Well, did you find something you like?"

"Yes. Don't put it in a sack. I'll just carry it, to read over a beer."

He gave her three marks and she gave him back a few pfennigs.

"Penny, when you get a break, why don't you come have a beer with me?" It's really warm out—probably one of the last good days of the fall. I'd like to talk to you."

"That would be pleasant, George, but I can't possibly get away now."

"You could if you wanted, you know. You still run this place, don't you? Anyway, I'll be out on the terrace of *Der Kafig* for the next hour or so. Come on over there and we'll have a beer together. You can get away."

He started for the door.

"But I really don't see how I can, George."

He smiled at her. "You will if you want to. I'll wait there for an hour. I really do want to talk to you."

He walked down the side-street, then turned left at the wide avenue, passing the arch into Schwabing. The sidewalk was lined with poplars on his right and green benches on his left. The leaves on the poplars trembled in the warm October breeze, and he passed one bench where a girl sat with her legs crossed, revealing a shapely net-stockinged thigh. She was bent over a book with a compelling intensity that he thought suspect. After he passed her he glanced back over his shoulder, but she had not looked up. He found nothing of interest at any of the other benches, so he turned into the terrace of **Der Kafig**. He sat at one of the round white tables facing the street and waited for the waitress. When she came he ordered a glass of light beer. There were only a few people sitting around him and he noticed he was the only one sitting alone. He looked over at the terrace in front of the restaurant next door and saw two girls sitting together. The fetching blonde reminded him of Carol. She looked like the blonde he had seen in the **Hofbrauhaus** the night before. Now she was something!

The waitress came with the beer and he paid her, then looked languidly into the book he had bought. It arrested his attention for half an hour, then he laid it down, making a resolution to do more reading, but it was too beautiful a day to be concentrating on a book. There would always be time enough to read; right now he was afraid of missing something that might happen, any minute. Where was that damn Penny? He began to have doubts that she would come. But he was good at waiting. There was a certain pleasure in the anticipation of a meeting, although the pleasure never seemed to be quite realized with the actual encounter. And he knew the washed-out feeling of being stood up, of blindly waiting when the time for the rendezvous has come and gone and you are quite sure you will remain alone. She still had half an hour. He opened the book again, and looking over it, located the two girls at the other terrace.

He wondered if the sweet-looking blonde were staring at him through those big, round, crazy shades. She probably is, he thought, and she must think him interesting, reading a book over a glass of beer in the soft October sun. "That blonde is something," he said half aloud to the open book. He might be able to make something happen with her if Penny didn't show. It would be nice to meet a girl like Carol, whom he had met in Venice.

He remembered, proudly, his unusual boldness in approaching Carol. He had seen her standing on the Rialto bridge, leaning over the stone rail watching the boats cutting through the water. He stopped and stood beside her, watching, with her, the green water moving and splashing against the sides of the canal. He was struck by the beauty of her loose-hanging blonde hair and the naked look of longing on her face. She was dressed in a short, above-the-knee, white skirt, with one pretty brown knee bent in an attitude of relaxation. He lit a cigarette and, as an afterthought before he put the pack back into his shirt pocket, offered her one, asking if she smoked. To his surprise, she smiled and took one. As he lit it, her hands cupped around his, forming a windshield, and her green eyes squinted laughingly at him. He diffidently started a conversation and they found out some things about each other: that he was American, and she was Australian; that they were both travelling alone; and that she was nineteen and he was twenty-three. Then, as one of the gondolas passed below, he indicated the obviously married couple sitting dully together, and trying to be suave but grinning shyly, asked her if she would like to drift around with him. He felt an undefined want flowing through his legs and up to his chest trying to surge out of him, when she said, "I reckon I'd love it. Why not? I've wanted to do that since I've been here, but it would be silly to do it alone, wouldn't it?" She grinned at him and took his hand as they went to find a gondola. For three weeks they did everything together, until she left for London where she had to, she said, go alone. He had truly regretted the parting. They had walked through the maze of Venice's walking winding streets together, had gone over to the Lido and lain in the sun, had slept together, had sat at a small table in St. Mark's Square sipping *vino rossos* and watching the clusters of fat pigeons making their living off the tourists, and they had talked and talked until they no longer felt the need for talk and could sit lightly touching in silence, but they never found out much more about each other than they knew after their meeting on the bridge. He would never forget—he reinforced the fading memory—those three weeks with her, her quick squinty smile, her small white breasts against the deep brown of the skin burned by the sun, or just the excitement and pride of being beside her walking along the Grand Canal, but he suspected that if he had been ready to move on, he would have left her too. He told himself it was best that it ended before he had grown tired of her. Perhaps that's what happened to her; she had grown tired

of him before he had her, and she knew when it was over. Perhaps she awoke one morning with the aftertaste of wine in her mouth and looked over at his sleeping, naked and unsuspecting body, and remembering, with distaste, how less ecstatic the night before had been in relation to earlier wild nights in the little room above the backstreet canal, had made her decision. She was too much like him, but she had told him when she was leaving.

Soon after, he left Venice, hating it without her, and had spent the past three months in Vienna, where he met Anne. But he had never been able to make it with Anne. Anne was serious, a medical student. She wanted, eventually, to be a psychiatrist, and after a time he felt that he was only a laboratory for her, a case study of motivationless in a certain lower type of sensual seeking young man "in search of," she once said, after exhaling an intellectual cone of blue smoke and fixing him with narrowed blue eyes, "and in constant need of reassuring himself of his manhood." He wondered if her unoriginal diagnosis was a way of making herself appear a special challenge to him or if it was her reassurance to herself of the superiority of her frigidity. Or perhaps she was sincere and was trying to make him take a look at himself in the cold light of psychological objectivity, as offered free—think of that!—from a brilliant student who just happened to be the object of his current frivolous and superficial interest. But soon after the night she suggested that he should go satisfy his "animal need" by accosting a streetwalker, he did, and then said farewell to that old town of somber gray buildings and leaden, serious skies, and to serious twenty-four-year-old amateur female headshrinkers.

He saw Penny walking down the sidewalk and momentarily forgot Carol and the big blonde over at the next terrace. She swung into the terrace and smiled when he stood up to hold her chair. As she sat down, she said, glancing back at him over her shoulder, "I can only stay a moment. I really shouldn't be here now."

He ordered two more beers, then they looked at each other, somewhat apprehensively, each waiting for the other to begin with some expected question. Her hair fell forward as she leaned toward the table, leaving only an oval of her attractive but rather plain, lightly freckled face free for him to study.

"So," she said, "what have you been doing? Have you decided to expatriate yourself?" She planted her elbows onto the table

and rested her chin in a bridge formed by interlocking the fingers of her hands.

"No, I guess I'll be going home pretty soon. Not that I particularly want to, but I'm running out of money."

"So you've been travelling?"

"Mostly I've been in Italy—lately in Vienna. I just got back to Munich. It's been nice, wandering around, but right now I'd rather hear about you."

"Do you mean, you're interested?"

"Sure, I'm interested. How's it been?"

"You mean, without you?"

"No, I didn't mean it in that way. I know you weren't at all that interested in me. Quit playing games."

"Oh, but George, you underestimate yourself. It wasn't a game with me, but it must have been to you. Right now, though, I'm just lovely, although for a short time there, I did feel rather deserted. But then, you did come back, didn't you? Eleven months later! You're full of little surprises, aren't you?" Her brow was arched and she sat back with a clamped face. She took a sip of her beer and looked away from him.

"I'm sorry about that," he said. He lifted his glass to his lips and took a long swallow. She was looking at him directly now, somewhat suspiciously, he thought. "I didn't know, then, whether or not I would be extended. You knew they were sending everyone to Vietnam and we were afraid of getting extended—or sent to Vietnam ourselves."

"But why did you just run out on me? Why is that a reason? How would that have stopped you from writing me a letter or calling me; you know yourself you're lying. Don't you remember celebrating with me after your president made the speech last summer, that he would draft more people for his bleeding war instead of keeping you fellows in? What difference would it have made? You still could have come to see me, and you obviously **didn't** go to Vietnam, so I can't see the point."

"But I didn't know for sure, Penny, whether I would be able to stay here, or have to go back to the States to get my separation from the army. I didn't want to drag the thing along till the last minute."

"George, don't you know that I know you're inventing? You had already told me you were not going back right away. Don't you remember those lies you told me about how much fun we would have when you got out and we could be together all the

time? And do you forget that you were going to come work for me in the shop? I suppose you don't remember any of it."

"Yes, of course, I remember, Penny, but my 'European out' hadn't come through yet, and I was afraid it had got caught up in some red tape and I would have to go back." It didn't sound very good, he had to admit. She was waiting for him to continue, but seemed to be smirking. He did not look at her directly.

"Then, when it did come through—it was in December and by that time I hadn't seen you in a month—I thought it would be too late to— I thought you must have had someone else by then, and to be honest, I really wanted to see Italy. It's cheaper to live down there, you know. Well, anyway, I didn't realize it would upset you so. I thought our relationship was just . . ."

He looked at his beer, then took another swallow from it. He knew she could see through it, but he told himself, sensing defeat, that it wasn't that important. He wished he had told the truth, whatever it was. He should have told her he was a changed man, that it would be different this time. He thought it out, but caught himself. The change had not yet evolved, only a vague recognition of himself. He knew he was not yet ready to change; he was young and had no intentions of throwing in the towel because of a loneliness he now sometimes felt when the afternoon began to fade into evening.

"So then," Penny interrupted his thoughts, "this is just a friendly chat? I was afraid, when I saw you in the bookshop, you might expect something more from me. But then you were just shopping, was it? Like when we first met?"

"No, I went there to see you. I mean, I was shopping, but I hoped you would still be there. I thought, if you weren't tied up, maybe we could have dinner, then go around together. But I heard the end of your conversation on the phone, and it sounded like you might be tied up." He arched his brow this time, but she made him ask the question. "Are you?"

"Yes, love, I wasn't before. I waited for more than a month to hear from you." Her fingers turned her glass around in a slow jerky motion as she stopped talking. She drank, then when she set the glass back on the table, she leaned forward again, looking directly into his eyes as if she had decided to divulge the long suppressed information of a top-secret cryptogram.

"It's terribly difficult for me to say this, but perhaps this is what you came back for. To hear that I wanted you to come back for quite some time. Perhaps it would have been easier if I could have heard just one word from you. You shouldn't

simply leave people without a word, George. Surprises aren't always nice. If you want to know, you hurt me—very much. I, perhaps, loved you—thought I did—and I thought you might. . . . But after several months I hated you, George; I did.”

“I'm sorry, Penny. You're right, I know, and I don't blame you.”

“You needn't be sorry. Everything turned out super. Now there is someone. There wasn't, but now there is, and he's going to marry me. He's not young, not as handsome as you with your Italian tan, and he has a bald spot in the middle of his head.”

“Like Prufrock.”

“What?”

“You know, like J. Alfred Prufrock. ‘Time to turn back and descend the stair,/ With a bald spot in the middle of my hair . . .’ That's all I can remember of that part, but I could recite the first lines and the end for you if you'd like.”

She stared, puzzled, for a moment and he wondered if he hadn't been a bit too irreverent. A smile, resembling that of someone who has a private joke, slowly transformed the taut muscles of her face. He grinned at her, well pleased with himself.

“One thing's certain, George. I can't hate you any more. You just refuse to find significance in anything, even yourself. I understand now that you were just young, perhaps too young for me. You were cute, but he's— Excuse me, I must be boring you, and I must get back to the shop.”

“Then you don't still have an opening in the shop? I could use a job. I'd like to stay over here a bit longer.”

“No, love, I hardly think I could have you working for me now. Sorry. You should really be thinking about what you're going to do with your life. Watch out you don't measure it out with coffee spoons or”—she looked at his beer—“with half-liter glasses of beer. But do come visit us at the shop while you're here.”

He stood up as she did, thinking hard for an appropriate parting. “Good-bye, Penny.”

“Good-bye, George, this has been a nice chat.” She tried to smile, but the involuntary forcing of unwilling facial muscles made him hope her face wouldn't break.

He sat back down and watched her walk away. There had been too many women lecturing to him lately. Do something with your life. What was there to do with your life? he wanted to know. Go back to the States and look for a job. Yes, that's it. Maybe later. He finished his beer and ordered another.

He looked over at the next terrace, but the girls were no longer there. Perhaps he would see them later, or find someone else in one of the dark beer-kellers of Schwabing. Hit all the nightspots. Something was there, waiting for him, if he could only find it. Almost always, when he met each new day, he felt he would realize, in the night, the promise given by the return of each morning's new sun. Soon. Soon he would get up and go again, toward the bars, but just now he was tired and sat watching the sun fade behind the buildings, thinking of how Penny had looked when she said she had hated him. He tried to feel guilty but he couldn't. No, he wouldn't. He only wished he had the assurance of her arms at the end of the night. He drank the last of his beer and walked on down the sidewalk crowded with busy people, people with places to go, and slow-strolling *frauleins* in chic, sexy dresses.

THE INSIDIOUS WOOER

compromising the thief

Come take the wheel
of my idiomatic automobile
for an institutional honeymoon
this afternoon

compromising the ultramontane

come and approach
my lexical latinate taxicoach
to take a reliable rendezvous
on your avenue

compromising the wench

come as you are
to my technical transitive trucking car
for an inflectional love affair
beyond compare

M. M. MARKS

Listen

The man slowly rose up out of the depths of his spirit and soared up to the mountain where he told it like it was. His friends looked on, his enemies looked on, and the great multitude of expressionless, mindless beings, who were **humanity**, looked on also. His voice cracked the silence like a thunderbolt from Zeus, deeply piercing the minds and souls of men, yet leaving no mark and making no impression.

“Rejoice in the name of the lord,
Rejoice in the white and the black,
Rejoice in the light of love,
Rejoice in the spirit of man,
Rejoice in the heavens, and the seas, and the sky,
and deeply—deeply, rejoice in yourself.” His words soared on the wings of the wind and took flight to another world. The man took flight also. All had heard him speak but none had listened.

The **other** fell from his precipice and went sailing down into the depths of society where the light of truth shines ever so dimly. Out of the emptiness which some called **mind**, words were spoken, slowly and without passion.

“Rejoice in chaos and confusion,
Rejoice in the piercing stench of war,
Rejoice in your brother’s blood,
Rejoice in the name of politics, and racism, and hate, and deeply—deeply, rejoice with your fellows because now you stand united and protected and you may truly be called a social animal because you fall so short of being called a man.

ALFRED W. LIETEAU

Viva Blanco

the whores
 bores and
 commodores
are all
 standing
well within the gate
red poppies pinned to their
 silhouettes
while the smoke-black
 widowed sisters
send them a poem
 by carl sandburg
 describing
in great detail
 einstein's fears

the eskimos
 stand in awe
it is their
 first sight
of the volcano
even
the polar bear has put down
 his spear gun
while
nobody really believes
the
icebergs are floating into
 san francisco bay

CURTISS THORNBRUGH

Childhood Lost

WILLIAM DYER

FRANKLIN—POP. 467

Herbert Carlson lifted his foot off of the accelerator and the big Cadillac began slowing. The tar cracks in the highway thumped against his tires at increasing intervals. The wind sang at a lower pitch. Herb fingered a switch and his window slid into the door with a soft whine.

He passed a truck stop, thought about food, and decided to wait until after dark to eat. No sense wasting good driving time.

Franklin's only traffic signal loomed ahead. An arrowed sign indicating that the highway turned left there for its departure from town.

The light was green—then yellow. Herb pressed down on the gas and swung the wheel as the Cadillac entered the intersection. His tires whined as the car leaned around the corner at twice the speed limit.

He saw several heads turn and stare from the sidewalk. A group of boys straddling bicycles pointed in his direction. One waved at him. He saw the boy point, then wave again.

Does he know me, Herb wondered? How could he? I've never been here in my life.

Then he heard a soft thud and a high-pitched yelp. His heart went into his throat as he jammed the brake pedal down.

The car skidded to a stop and Herb almost broke a finger yanking the door open. He leapt out and turned to look back with amazing agility for a man of his size.

A dog! He'd run over a damned dog.

He let out a long sigh of relief and turned back to his car when he noticed the group of boys peddling up to him. One rode towards the dog.

"You hit Jerry's dog, mister. You killed him."

Herb stared down into the face of a sandy-haired, ten-year-old boy who, judging from his expression, was trying very hard to be brave.

"I didn't mean to hit it. The dam . . . darn thing ran out in front of me." He turned and looked back at the dog. A boy was kneeling beside it, tears streaming down his cheeks.

Herb's young antagonist spoke again, "Jerry's had Spooky a long time an' now you killed him." Several people had gathered to look and the boy's confidence grew with each new member.

Damn the luck. Of all the idiotic things to have happen. And to happen now. Why couldn't it happen on the way back? If the damnfool police show up, I'll be here for a couple of hours at least. I should have stopped and eaten in that truck stop, he thought in exasperation.

Jerry was approaching. Bicycle, now forgotten, lying next to the dog in the middle of the shady street.

"Son, I . . .," he began, then stopped. This is going to be a real pain in the neck. Due in Chicago in the morning and a load of reports to work up at the hotel tonight. Frawley will be tearing his hair out. Now instead of being on my way, I have to play nurse to a ten-year-old kid and try to explain to him that I can't waste my time here.

"Son . . . uh, Jerry," he began again, "I'm sorry about the dog; I didn't see it." Herb reached for his billfold. How much is the thing worth? he thought. He shot a sizing-up glance at Jerry. The boy was looking back to where the dog lay. Twenty? No, perhaps ten. Hell, how much is a dog worth these days?

Jerry sobbed and the quiet afternoon air magnified the sound in Herb's ears. He replaced the billfold, hoping the boy hadn't seen it. Frustrated, he glanced at his watch.

A hand closed over his shoulder. "This your car, sir?" a voice questioned.

Herb turned and looked into the face of an elderly, grey-haired police officer. "Uh . . . yes, yes, officer, it is. I've had a little accident here and this kid . . . Jerry, that is, and I are trying to straighten things out."

"Pull the car over to the curb. This here's our main street; we can't be having it blocked up."

"No, of course not, officer." Herb got into his car and eased it over to the side of the street. The cop was standing by his door when he got out.

"You the one who hit Spooky?" he inquired.

"Yes sir, I am," Herb said cautiously, "you see, I didn't know the dog was in the street . . ." The policeman's words sank in, "You the one who hit Spooky?" He knows the dog, Herb thought. God, I should have taken off just now and been done with this mess. Now I'm really in it. He glanced at his watch and realized the officer was staring at him.

"Is something wrong, officer?"

“You were saying that you didn’t see Spooky in the street. . . .”

“Oh,” Herb said, realizing that he had stopped in mid-sentence. “Yes, I didn’t see the dog and I guess I ran over it. I didn’t mean to,” he added uselessly.

The policeman stared at the dog, then at Herb. “I’m writing you a ticket for speeding. I saw that turn you made; sort of fast, wasn’t it?”

Herb’s heart flip-flopped; he started to mumble something when the officer continued.

“The judge is out of town ’til Thursday so I’ll have to hold you until he gets back . . . that is, unless you want to mail the fine in. . . . A dollar a mile over the limit; I figure you owe about ten dollars.”

“Course you and Jerry here will have to come to some sort of an agreement about Spooky.” He handed Herb a ticket and an envelope, “There’s a mailbox on the corner.”

Herb didn’t need to have it spelled out. He saw it in the older man’s eyes. He took the ticket, placed it and a crisp ten-dollar bill in the envelope, and headed for the mailbox.

When he returned from the corner, the cop was gone. Jerry had returned to where Spooky lay and was picking him up. Herb trotted out.

“Here, Jerry, let me give you a hand.”

To his surprise, the boy said nothing. Together, they carried Spooky to the sidewalk and set him down. Herb reached for a handkerchief to clean his hands, then thought better of it.

“What kind of a dog is . . . was Spooky, Jerry?” Herb asked, more to break the silence than to get conversation started.

“I dunno. . . . I got him from the Johnsons when he was little.”

“Have you had him long?”

“Yeah.” He sniffed back a sob, “I had him since I was little too.”

Herb smiled for the first time, “When I was little too” he said. Well, he has taken it pretty well for a kid, Herb thought. He was at a loss as to what to say next when he noticed that they were standing across the street from a drug store with the word “FOUNTAIN” on the glass front.

Herb put his hand on the boy’s shoulder, “Come on, Jerry, let’s us get a couple of sodas and talk.” They walked across the street.

As the two entered the store, Herb felt a wave of nostalgia wash over him. How long had it been since he had sat and sipped a soda at a fountain? Twenty years?

He glanced at the boy. Jerry seemed to be drying up a bit,

but this was going to be tricky. Just like the corporate merger last year, he thought. If I win out, I'm no better than I was before; if I blow it . . . well.

Herb ordered two large chocolate sodas and lifted Jerry up onto a stool. He watched the girl behind the counter make the sodas. Three scoops of ice cream, carbonated water, whipped cream . . . lots of calories in there, he thought.

The hell with calories, I haven't had a soda like that in years.

"Jerry," he began, "I can't tell you how bad I feel about Spooky. I wouldn't have hit him for anything in the world if I had known he was there."

"I waved at you, mister," Jerry said, looking Herb in the eye, "I waved 'n pointed."

"Call me Herb, Jerry. I didn't understand what you meant when you waved. I couldn't see Spooky."

"Now he's dead," Jerry said, tears welling up again.

"Jerry, I know how you feel," Herb said. "I had a dog when I was a boy. My folks lived in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, until I was thirteen. Just before we moved to Detroit, my dog disappeared." In spite of himself, Herb thought back across the years of business deals, mergers, conventions, and all the rest, to his childhood . . . and his dog, King.

His father had brought King home when he was seven and Herb had spent countless hours of many summers roaming the fields and woods around Hopkinsville with him. King had been a pedigreed German Shepherd and Herb could still remember how he ran like a gazelle after a thrown stick or bone. Bounding back with it in his mouth, eyes begging to have it thrown again. King would run until he was exhausted to please Herb. He could still see King's tongue hanging out of the corner of his mouth as he panted and waited for the throw.

Herb looked down at Jerry's shoes. He recalled the battered bicycle outside. Spooky wouldn't have a pedigree, but a young boy seldom worried about his dog's lineage.

Had he become so machinelike over the years that he had forgotten what it was like to enjoy life?

The girl brought the sodas and Herb shook himself back to the present.

"Here, Jerry," he offered the boy a soda and noticed his eyes light up a little. Small boys and sodas still do wonders for each other, Herb noticed with a smile.

"Jerry, I've made a mistake and I know it," Herb said, surprised with his sincerity. "I know I can't pay you for Spooky any more

than someone could pay me for King, my dog, even after all this time.

"Tell me, what can I do?" He put it on the line for the boy.

Jerry remained silent, staring intently at his soda. His face was devoid of expression.

Jeez, what I'd give to trade places with him right now, Herb thought. Nothing worse to worry about than his dog. No booze, cigarettes, or overweight to keep the doctors rich. His whole life is ahead of him; I can't chisel on him now; he'll probably have it hard enough when he's older.

Jerry broke the silence, "Well, mister . . ."

"Herb," he corrected.

"Herb . . . I liked Spooky an awful lot. Maybe if we . . . well . . . if we could maybe drive out to Johnsons' farm an' see if they got any puppies. . . ."

"Jerry, you just sit right there and enjoy your soda and I'll be back. What's Mr. Johnson's first name?"

"Dad calls him Ed."

Herb went to the phone booth in the rear of the store and called the only Edward Johnson in Franklin.

He returned to the counter feeling an emotion that hadn't been stirred in him since he was a young man.

They finished their sodas with a discussion of the dogs at the Johnson farm, Jerry showing some enthusiasm at last.

As they rose to leave, Herb pulled out a dollar bill and left it on the counter, then for the first time in years, waited for his change. He tipped the fountain girl a quarter.

When they reached the street, he remembered Spooky was still lying near his car.

Herb went to the trunk of the Cadillac and got his stadium blanket. Together they wrapped Spooky and lay him in the front seat between them, Jerry forcing back tears and Herb misty eyed in spite of himself. Two hours ago, he thought, I wouldn't have had that mutt in my trunk. Well, that was two hours ago.

Following directions given him over the phone, he headed for the farm.

It was after dark when Herb let Jerry and the puppy off in front of the boy's house. They had buried Spooky, blanket and all, next to Ed Johnson's barn, at the farm.

He was thankful that Jerry was out of the car and walking

toward the house before the tears formed in his own eyes and ran down his cheeks.

On his way back through town, Herb stopped at a phone booth and called Frawley in Chicago. After thirty seconds, he said simply, "Go to hell, Frawley," and hung up. He felt very good for a change.

Herb returned to his car and started out of town. He shut off the air conditioner, rolled down the window and let the fresh evening air hit him in the face.

Nervousness

A sip of strong dark black, and then a puff or two
On a stick of thin white air, won't do what it must do.
A trembling mind that's searching, to find a thought of rest,
But when it finds it, still refuses to make best of best.

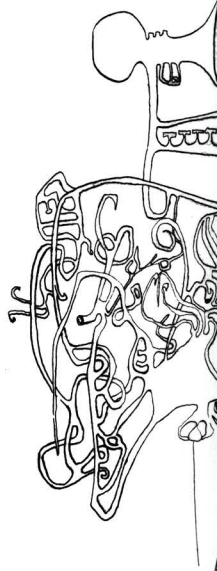
Another slurp, another breath, another glance around,
and then a shower or a walk, and maybe I'll be found.

KENT NOEL



Pig Lady

Pipeline

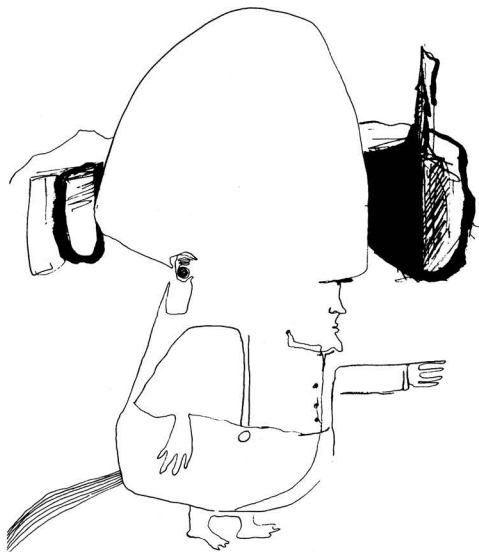


Clown



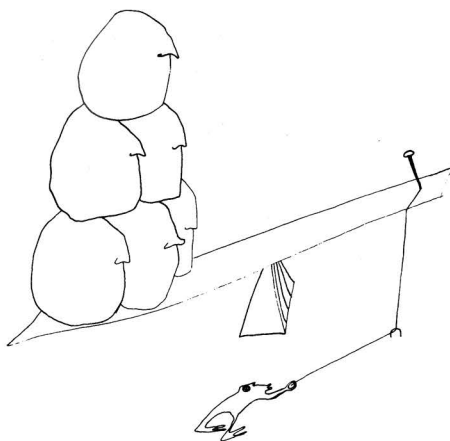


JOAN WALTERS



WW 3-4

Upsetting the Status Quo



Nightmares of Death

Damned hellish nights
Of bloody death,
O, blackness lingering near,
O, don't bring death
So close to me,
O, listen to my plea.

The cursed knife of
Numerous bludgeoning endings,
Leave your scars
At the gate of the grave.
Torture me not today,
Don't leave me for decay.

Screaming, loathsome creeping
Sights of bullets' penetration.
Hear the vulture's ghastly cries
And watch his celebration.
Piercing screams, don't split my ears,
Don't leave me with your crippling fears.

Creatures, tall and dark,
Ugly beings close behind,
Behind you in the park.
Spiders snuggling in your mouth
And nipping for a kill,
Don't make my dying carcass
Your only living thrill.

LARRY WINKLER

B. P. 1968

When the moonlight spread its silver
And the wind like four galloping stallions
Tore across the frozen winter's stillness
Hurling the powdered snow into the crisp, green pine needles
Of a tree gone mad in the ecstasy of the wind,
Mad, insane, in its bending and twisting,
The same insanity would catch your hair
And whirl it crazily about, slapping you in the face,
If you were wont to walk out there.

But the walls like a warm hand surrounded us
And gray shadows outlined your face
Which lay next to mine as you breathed something
into my ear,
And drew me closer;
I was completely yours and you knew it.

But that could never happen again . . . except for
tonight,

For you are here with me,

When the moon spreads its silver
And the wind like four galloping stallions
Tears across the frozen winter's stillness
Hurling the powdered snow into the crisp, green pine needles
Of a tree gone mad in the ecstasy of the wind.

CAROL RUSS

For Geraldine

JOHN HAAHEIM

When he was younger, Tim Holman grew a moustache. It was long and silky and curled just below his chin. He grew it near the river that ran by his house. Not that it was a spur of the moment thing, just the contrary; it took an entire hour of thinking to make it appear.

His moustache carried him into battle with Geronimo and helped him blast his way to adventure in a tiger hunt. But when people were around, it always seemed to disappear. As soon as his mother yelled, "Timmy, hurry up, hon.," it was gone in a rush.

There were many things he wanted to dream into existence, but very few really appeared. The love of Geraldine McDonald was one of those things. From the moment she moved into town, Tim was hooked.

Her parents picked out the old Bates place. The location of that house annoyed Tim no end. After all, she was three doors from his house and only one from Roddy Williams'. It was hard to imagine 3 more important front yards.

Roddy and he were lying on old man Thompson's yard when they saw the big red and white moving van come rolling down the street. When it stopped directly in front of them, they sat up with interest. A seedy-looking man with a two-day growth of beard chomped on a cigar and muttered to a piece of paper.

Tim rolled over on his back and tried hard to find animal shapes in the clouds. "I wonder what kind of people are moving in?" He ended the sentence by looking very philosophical and chewing harder on the blade of grass.

Roddy's answer was brief. He pegged a rock skyward in the general direction of the truck and snorted.

"Hey, you kids." The truck driver clambered out of the cab and lurched over, rubbing his legs. "Is this the Bates place?"

"Whadda ya wanna know for?" asked Roddy, knowing full well why the driver wanted to know. He crossed his legs and looked belligerently at the trucker.

"I gotta job to do. I gotta deliver dis furniture. Now is dis the place or isn't it?"

Roddy took a bite of a stem of grass. "Nope."

"Where **do** they live?"

"Over in Centerville." Roddy carefully avoided mentioning that the Bates family **had** lived there, not three weeks ago. He looked over at Tim to see if Tim understood.

"Dis here paper," the truck driver smacked it vigorously with the back of his hand, "says they live around here somewhere."

"If they live here and you know it, why ask us?" Tim had realized what Roddy was up to.

"Cause there ain't no damn street signs around here," answered the red-faced driver. "Some stupid kids musta stole 'em."

"Why now who'd do a thing like that?" asked Tim. "I'm sure I don't have any idea; do you, Roddy?"

"Street signs? What street signs? Ohhh. You mean the ones that are missing. Yes they are gone, aren't they?"

"The Bates. The Bates. The Bates. I just wanna know where they live."

"I'm sorry. There aren't any Bates around here," said Roddy. "They moved."

"I know they moved, damn't! I'm supposed to move in the people who bought the place."

Tim blanched. He suddenly had visions of the truck driver shoving that fat cigar down his throat.

"They live right over there, Sir. Your truck is parked right next to it." Tim smiled sweetly at the driver.

The abrupt about-face was too much for Roddy. He began to roll on the grass and laugh. Tim, caught between the glaring driver and Roddy, could only stare silently down at the grass, hoping the laughter inside wouldn't break out.

The truck driver stalked away as Roddy rolled over and over in the grass. "Come on, Tim; he's not gonna hurt mamma's little boy."

Tim chewed his blade of grass furiously until the spectacle of the glowering truck driver hit him. Then both he and Roddy began laughing until they started to choke on the grass. They alternately choked and laughed until both were too tired to move.

About sunset, the family pulled in. Father McDonald, big and important looking with his checkered vest, got out and looked over the house. Like a lion signalling the pride, he waved them on. Mother McDonald was an alert-looking woman about thirty-five, who slipped easily to her husband's side. He put an arm around her and together they surveyed the house.

Roddy snickered.

Then, clearly and distinctly from the back of the car, came the word, "Boys!"

They sat flabbergasted as a young girl about their age got out of the car. She wore an organdy dress and black patent shoes. There was an unusual air of neatness about her: the way she dressed, the way she walked, and even the way she said, "Boys!"

Tim lay beside Roddy in the grass and watched the strange movements in the house. Like a keystone cops comedy the family flitted back and forth in front of the windows, appearing here and there, clutching treasures long forgotten and newly discovered. Finally, when a table was set up and the family bowed their heads over dinner, Tim and Roddy wandered home, pausing only for a goodnight slug in the stomach.

During the summer Geraldine continued as the same abstract figure that first stepped out of the car. She was the image of a neat lady whose eyes crinkled when she smiled, and that she did often. Her hair was long and dark and always tied with a big blue bow that Tim swore matched her eyes.

Both Tim and Roddy sat on her porch for hours, one on each side, the way she wanted. They always had to sit and swing, which infuriated both no end. Sometimes one would discover that the other was shirking his part of the swinging and then they would end up wrestling on the grass while she watched. She would wait a while, then wave her hand and say, "Boys!" Instantly they were beside her, hot and sweating, and apologizing for their violence.

She told stories as if she were a feudal storyteller with deeds of chivalry. When she talked, they leaned forward to listen. In a hushed voice she talked of Kentucky and the gentlemen there. She had no heart, and would torture them for hours with stories of her boyfriend back home. Like Kentucky, he was veiled in mystery and somehow connected with trotting horses, bluegrass, and clear springs.

When football season came, Roddy and Tim played only for her. Tim felt pride in his ability to flow around his man and gather the passes safely into his arms. But Roddy was quarterback and it hurt Tim to think that every pass he gathered in so lovingly came from Roddy, and every gain he made was Roddy's gain.

Roddy had much more of a chance to impress Geraldine. His quick sure hands delivered the ball to the charging fullback as he broke through the middle. It was Roddy who raced end with his choppy, quick stride and battered his way into his opponents

for an extra two yards. Most of all, Roddy's scrambling electrified the crowd. A break in the line, a flash of other colored jerseys, and suddenly Roddy was in danger. He cut, he weaved and he bobbed, until suddenly a brown flash arched high into the air and the ball was on its way.

By homecoming Tim and Roddy had fought three times and were in the middle of another when Geraldine came running. It was so unusual to see Geraldine act unladylike that they stopped and waited, wide-eyed, to see what she had to say.

She stamped her foot and shook her finger, then stamped her foot again. When she finished she paused to gauge the effect.

"We did it for you, Geraldine." Tim spoke for both of them.

Again she shook her serious adult finger at them. "If you don't settle this in some civilized manner, I'll never speak to either of you again."

"Wait, Geraldine." She had turned to go but Roddy's voice stopped her. "We could have a duel."

"Yeah. To the death," said Tim sarcastically.

Geraldine was suddenly silent. Only her eyes moved. "Yes. Why not?" She seemed delighted with the prospect.

And so it was decided, in heated debate, that whoever could do the most noble thing for Geraldine would have undisputed possession of her. Geraldine would be the sole judge of who deserved the honor. Never had so great a contest been devised.

The day of the game was bright with a slight mist—almost perfect. It was a day when the sun hit the mist just right and hung sparkles in the air while Geraldine sat on the thirty-yard line. Then, in a rush, the trumpets blew, the sides lined up, and the battle was joined.

In the first series of downs it was Roddy handing off to the fullback off tackle, Roddy around end, and a quarterback sneak that failed. With that they were forced to kick and the other team took over the ball.

Tim sat silently on the bench beside Roddy and watched the defensive team play. Every once in awhile one of them would look back in the direction of the thirty-yard line. They watched Geraldine almost as closely as they did the game. Once, Tim even missed going on the field with the offensive team and the coach had to push him on.

The third time with the ball they were at midfield. Now they had room to pass. If the left end couldn't take it long, Tim would receive in a delay over center.

Tim dug in tightly. With the snap of the ball, he hit his man

lightly and raced for the linebacker. For a second he swung to the outside in a long lope. Then, quickly, he hit the linebacker and bounced off, running hard into the middle. Roddy's arm flashed back, then hesitated.

Far downfield, Tim saw that the other man was covered, yet Roddy didn't throw. Tim shifted, still in the clear, but Roddy continued to hesitate.

Then the ball was up, flying to the other end, far downfield, in the corner. The other end, well covered, leaped high into the air and grabbed the ball from the defender—complete for a touchdown.

When they returned to the bench the coach leaned over and laid a hand on Roddy's knee. "Nice pass."

Tim felt disgusted.

All the way into the fourth quarter Roddy continued to keep the ball from Tim. When he did throw, the passes were short gainers with little yardage and less glory.

The score rose: 7-0, then 7-7, until finally it stood at 21-21 in the last quarter. Each time Tim stalked on the field he felt worse. Roddy had stolen the show and it seemed impossible to win the duel. Tim hit the opposing lineman as if Roddy himself stood in his way. He used elbows, knees, even his head when he got the chance. It gave him little satisfaction, though, and a fifteen-yard penalty against him finally stopped his attacks.

It got so bad that he watched Geraldine watch Roddy and dropped a few of the passes that did come his way. But by the fourth quarter his confidence returned. He felt sure Roddy wouldn't sacrifice the game for Geraldine. There was one trouble—Roddy knew that even a touchdown wouldn't help. Roddy had already scored two touchdowns and passed for the other. Besides that, Roddy had completely dominated the game while Tim had done nothing.

They gathered in the huddle, clanking helmets in an effort to hear Roddy's words. "Number twelve, only the ends into the zone this time." With that he pointed his finger at Tim and Tim understood.

"Down. Set." Roddy's words stuck in his head as he raced downfield, twisted by the linebacker, and cut into the center. He passed the other end and—beyond belief—both safeties picked up the other man. They had mixed their assignments and Tim was alone.

Roddy saw him. The pass was away. It was a bit long but Tim held on. With one more step and a glance to the stands to

see if Geraldine was looking, he dropped the ball. The suddenness of the decision startled him, and for a second he just stood looking at his hands.

Then it seemed like everything happened at once. The crowd started booing, his teammates gathered around asking what happened, and the coach grabbed him by the shoulders. "You can still do it, Tim. That could happen to anybody."

Tim felt disgusted with himself. Roddy's pass had been a breach of faith but this was deliberate. Tim started to speak but the words wouldn't come. He pushed by the coach and walked back to the bench.

"Fredrichs, in for Holman," the coach roared.

Tim sat alone on the bench—half seeing the game. In the next few minutes, Roddy connected on another pass and the game was won.

They showered quickly, Roddy chattering happily above the shower room noise in an effort to cheer Tim. Together, they walked out of gym, Roddy with his arm around Tim.

Outside, Geraldine was waiting. She took Roddy's arm, indicating—all too plainly—who had won.

They had taken a few steps when they realized Tim was no longer with them. He had turned and begun to walk slowly in the other direction.

"Tim, wait." Roddy began to run, pulling Geraldine after him. For the first time, she seemed totally real. She never even protested being dragged.

Roddy pulled up short. "What's wrong, Tim? Dropping the pass wasn't so bad."

Tim kept his face down and began to cry. The tears fell silently with little puffs of dust as they hit the ground. As Tim stepped toward Geraldine a few more darkened his jeans. He reached out and took her hands, never looking up. "I dropped the pass because I . . ." The words trailed away. "I wanted you."

Unexplainably, Geraldine began to cry, shaking in quick little gulps as she put her hand on Tim's shoulder. Like a chain reaction, Roddy too felt the emotion and stood beside Tim, sad-faced and staring. He gripped Tim's shoulder.

"I think . . . I think . . . I just lost a moustache." The silent tears changed to laughter that came in big gulps as the tears continued to trickle down his face. "I guess I'm pretty funny, huh?"

Geraldine reached up and whispered something in his ear.

“Lions n tigers n bears? You mean from The Wizard of Oz?”

“Uh huh,” she nodded.

“Lions n tigers n bears.” He repeated the chorus again. “Lions n tigers n bears.” He began to laugh. Geraldine smiled. Roddy began to laugh.

Before they realized it, they linked arms and began chanting the singsong words. “Lions n tigers n bears, oh my. Lions n tigers n bears, oh my. Lions n tigers n bears, oh my.” Strangely childish adults—they began skipping down the street followed by a few puzzled looks from the remaining crowd.

I was here.

I shout that across the cosmos

To all who would hear me

To all who follow

I was here.

Ask me why and muteness greets you—

my ignorance is voiceless.

Two seeds, you and I, torn from a strange bush

And borne on the current of a non-understandable storm

Touching briefly

Then away.

Leaving nothing

Knowing nothing

Meaning nothing.

Plaintively, achingly,

On a wind-torn, far distant note comes the cry:

I was here.

And the aching, aching echo: why?

RAY FREEBY

my father managed

I

catch

your

gun

held

close

left

inside

shot

we don't want
to do without him.

we don't intend
to do without him.

red gushes blood

hole rushes up

guts liver lungs

vomits out mouth

mouth torn apart.

my father managed

went to school, taught,

learned.

The Negroes are a special problem.

They have . . .

I

catch

your

gun

held

close

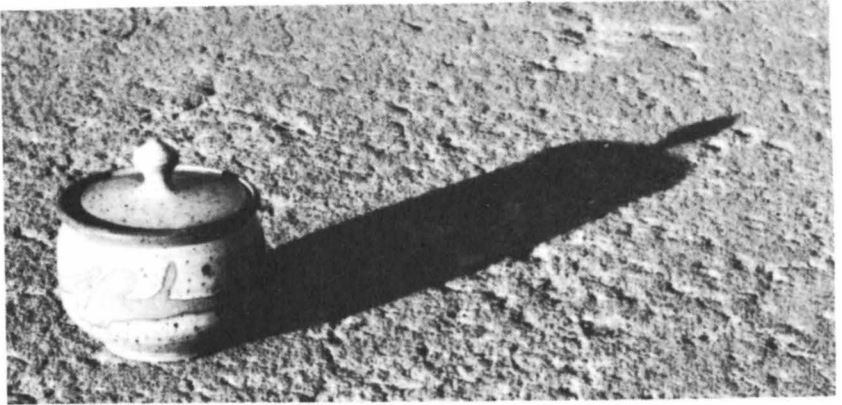
left

inside

shot!

The dream, drips, slowly
down, the laulling bath
water/warm suds.

JAY BREMYER



CONNIE CARBIENER

Del Rio

“The cross is falling,” I cried.
The Priest ordered, “Let it fall,
I am no priest, merely a social worker.”
“Then I am a Priest,” I cried,
And died, crushed by the falling cross.

ROBERT BRUNSWIG

Highways

seventy from nashville
or seventy from butte
long gray and patched blue
like a boy's jeans

men live beside,
like fisherman by a river.
and as hawkers they hawk
a melting potpourri of goods
or perhaps . . .
a sweet, cider, sleep
and gas.

hard, they lay with the land
and coil, serpentine,
into the mountains' depths.

Macadam at Eve
Legs of a nation.

JOHN HAAHEIM

To the Woman Downstairs

Your baby cries,
And you nurse it.
I cry
And you don't even hear me.
Who will nurse your baby when he lives
In my apartment?

JUAN PEREGRINO

Communication

When he sits, he sits within himself.
His face is closed.
His hands are closed.
His heart is closed.
If only he knew how much easier life would be
If he just opened up
A little—
Even if he just opened one hand . . .

LINDA J. JOLLY

Meditation

My soul is like a rainbow trimmed in white.
Your soul is like blue velvet.
Someday I'm going to smother in blue velvet,
And laugh while my rainbow explodes to Hell.

LINDA J. JOLLY

Daisy Chains and Peppermint Candy

Touch me.
A single white cloud floating in a blue summer
sky.
Jimi Hendrix full blast.
Twenty billion stars twinkling just for us.
Strobe lights in reverse.
Snow down your back.
Daisy chains and peppermint candy.
Touch me again . . .

LINDA J. JOLLY

Tick-tock
The china clock
Had sounded sixty-one;
The vengeful dark
Had left its mark;
The long night had begun.

Across the sky,
The nightowl's cry
With sorrow pierced the air;
And we, forlorn,
Were left to mourn
When no one seemed to care.

Then darkness broke;
The prophet spoke
And streaked the sky with light.
The grateful tears
Of twenty years
Renewed my eyes with sight.

PAT MASSEY



Form 69 by RICHARD GILSON

Overcast
#5

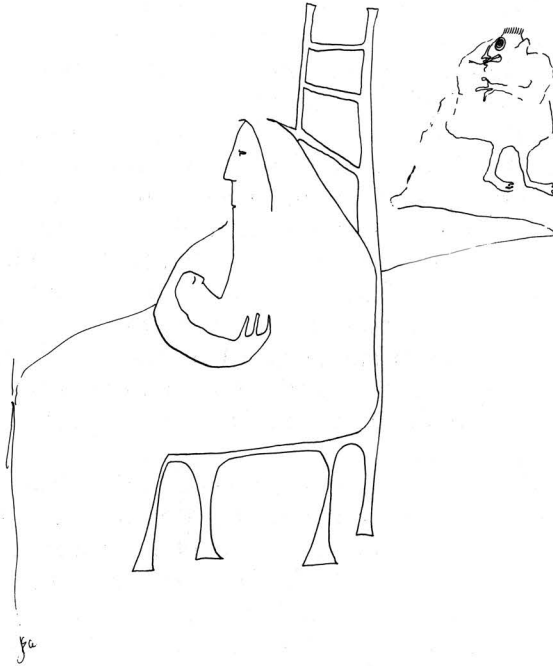
moon thin	moon thin
black cloud	black cloud
no star	no star
moon dim	cloud trim
black shroud	moon slim
snow star	black star
low star	moon cress
star glow	cloud dress
star flow	star less
thin moon	cloud loss
moon rim	moon toss
dim moon	star gloss
moon whim	stack cloud
cloud black	slack cloud
	cloud rack

JOE MICHAUD

JOE MICHAUD



BY JOE
MICHAUD



Nothing Out There

JOE MICHAUD

Stage: A cellar used for storage—steps leading up and outside—a window—slightly off center is an area “cleared” for living space—there is an old armchair—fruit crates—boxes—all this scattered and covered with food waste—empty cans—bottles etc.—dusty and extremely filthy.

Characters: Mother (35)—her son Jeff (16) the baby Lindy (6 months). Note: The mother is completely lethargic, her mind wanders, mostly she just croons a lullabye to the baby which is wrapped and held throughout in her arms. Jeff also moves lethargically, is often lost but when excited has short bursts of energy.

Scene opens: The mother is in the armchair crooning very softly to Lindy, whose body can't be seen. Jeff is asleep on the floor with his head on one arm, the other sprawled out. The mother is motionless; she can be heard but hardly made out. It is dusk. Day is breaking and the only light on the set will come from the window. Light increases and the set gradually becomes visible. The faces of the characters show fatigue and are dirty and unkempt. Suddenly Jeff awakens, screaming. He pulls in his arm, jumps up and turns, looking down at the spot where he had lain. He shakes in fright and disgust. Jeff: Ma, it bit me. (no answer—croon) Ma! (shouts) Mahhhh! It bit me. A rat bit my arm. What'll I do, Ma? (turns and walks slowly towards her, stands staring at her, then the baby, then his arm which he favors—he offers his arm lamely—softly:) Ma, it bit me. Ma? Please help me. Put Lindy down and help me. (no answer—exasperated) Mahh! The god-dam rat bit me! (no answer—mutter:) Go to Hell.

Moving slowly, he wanders aimlessly in the cleared area, kicking trash etc. He has a lost expression on his face. He pulls out handkerchief to blow his nose. Suddenly remembers arm and binds it with handkerchief after having blown nose. He ties it one handed, using teeth to hold loose end. He walks over towards the window. He stares out, but after a minute or so loses interest. He wanders again, then sits down on a box. He stares at his mother a bit, then sinks head in arms and moans. After a while he lifts head and looks around with mouth open. His eyes are messageless. He looks down at the floor and in the trash sees a feather. He slips down on his knees and picks up the feather, inspects it, lies down on his side with his head on one arm and begins playing with the feather. Slow, lost movements. He lifts feather to arm's length in the shaft of light coming through the window, twirls it between thumb and forefinger, rotates it with his wrist, lets it tumble in the light which is heavy with dust. Repeats this several times. He eventually drops the feather, pulls in his arm and places his forefinger against his lips, biting it gently. Suddenly he rises and goes to his mother.

Jeff: Ma, can I go outside today? Ma, I want to go out. (no answer) Ma, can't you hear me? I want to go out. (hollers and shakes her shoulder) Mahhh!! (she realizes he's there and looks at him) I want to go out, Ma. We've been in here two weeks, now. You keep going out. Can I go out today? I want to go see Lee.

Mother: You can't. Not yet. I already told you. They took Lee away. If you go out they'll take you away.

Jeff: Where will they take me to? (no answer) Can't I just go outside in the yard? The window's so pitted with sand grains I can't see out. Just out in the yard? (she has started to croon again) Mahh!! (she stops and stares at him) Just out in the yard, Ma? I want to see what's out there.

Mother: Nothing out there. Nothing . . . It's all gone. . . . Everything's gone. . . .

Jeff: But can't I just open the door and look?

Mother: You stay here. They'll take you away, then Lindy and I will be alone. You stay with your mother. (drifts off) stay with your mother. . . .

(She resettles the baby on her chest and croons again.) He wanders around again in silence, then sits on floor in the shaft of light. He's motionless at first until he sees a roach crawling in the refuse. He catches it and pulls its legs out one by one in morbid fascination. Finishes and is quiet again. After a few minutes he puts his hand on his stomach and rubs it. He stands up again.

Jeff: I'm hungry, Ma. I'm hungry. Look, Ma, it's broad daylight. You gotta go and draw the rations. (no answer—he walks closer to her) Ma, you gotta go get the food. We ain't got nothing to eat. Please, Ma. Leave Lindy be and go get some food. Look, there's nothing left, not even a cracker. Nothing. (Suddenly he reaches down and yanks her hair, twisting her head violently. She cries out and raises a hand to protect her hair. His face is dead pan.)

Mother: What did you do that for? Why'd you pull my hair? Is that any way to treat your mother?

Jeff: You wouldn't listen to me. You've been singing now for hours. You've been sitting there holding onto that . . . holding Lindy, and you wouldn't hear me. I'm hungry, Ma. There's nothing left to eat.

Mother: What about the leftover stew in that pan?

Jeff: I put it up on the pile of boxes but the rats got it. They ate it all. The rats and the roaches.

Mother: Don't you lie to me. There's no rats in this cellar. I keep a clean house.

Jeff: No rats? Ma, you saw them yourself. What's wrong with you? You killed one yesterday. Here, look at my arm. One of them bit it (He pulls off handkerchief and holds out arm

for her to see.) See. (She stares at it dumbly a moment, then touches it testily.)

Mother: Is it sore? (He nods.) It's starting to swell. I'll have to put something on it. (He stands back, expecting her to rise, but she doesn't.) Silence. (She starts to croon again.)

Jeff: Mahhh! Stop that! (She stares at him.)

Jeff: Ma, I'm hungry. You've got to go get some food.

Mother: You go, son. Your mother's tired and besides, I've got to take care of your little sister. (She raises baby to her face to cuddle it. On his face a look of disgust.)

Jeff: I can't go. You said the police would take me away and you wanted me to stay with you.

Mother: (haunting voice) Yes.

Jeff: Ma, please. I'm hungry. Please take the ration cards and go get some food (coaxing). Come on now, Ma. You put Lindy down and I'll go get the ration cards. Where did you put them? Huh?

Mother: Put them? What?

Jeff: Where did you put the ration cards?

Mother: They're in my purse.

Jeff picks up the purse which was lying on a crate. He opens it and searches through it. Becomes nervous as he is unsuccessful. He goes through it a second time. No result. He dumps the purse's contents out on the crate. Throws object after object on the floor. No cards. He looks in the purse again. Empty. He turns—

Jeff: There are none. Where are the cards? What did you do with them? (screaming) What did you do with the cards?

Mother: (She looks at him in fright. She clutches Lindy closer.) Cards? I don't know. Cards . . .

Jeff: Goddammit. What happened to the cards?

Mother: Cards . . . Ohh . . . The man was very nice, Jeff.

Jeff: What, Ma?

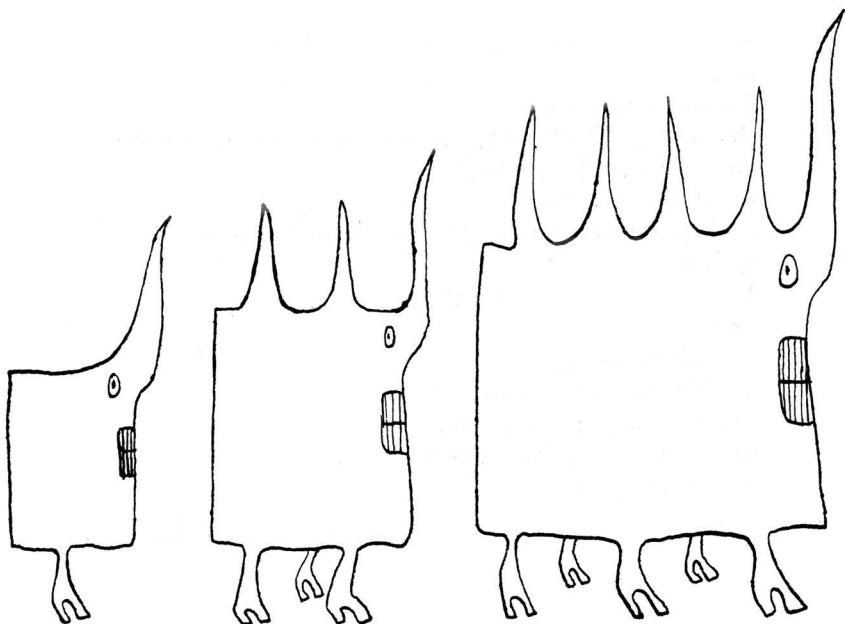
Mother: The man was very nice, he . . .

Jeff: Oh god, no. What man?

Mother: He said he was from the police. He said he was supposed to collect all the old cards. He said we'd get new ones. Better ones. We have to obey the police, son. We have to do what we're told. Mrs. Coughran was shot in the ration line because she tried to steal an extra can of bread. We have to obey, and the man was so nice . . . (drifts off) so nice . . .

Jeff: Oh, no. Don't you see, Ma? He just wanted our rations. He stole your card, Ma. He stole our cards. (pause) You must

be going crazy. You're not that stupid. (ever more excited) You gave that man our ration cards. We'll starve. You're crazy. Look at me, Ma! (she croons now—doesn't know he's there) Look at me. (screams) Goddammit, look at me!!! (she ignores him—exasperated, he begins to sob, cries throughout) Ma. Oh, god, Ma, please talk to me. Please help me. Ma, we're going to die if we don't do something. I don't want to die. Listen to me, will you, Ma? (no answer) Please, Ma. (pause—to himself) She's crazy (pause) You're crazy. You've lost your mind. You're crazy, goddammit! You gave our ration cards away and now we'll starve. Crazy. I know you're crazy. Lindy's been dead four days now! (he reaches down, snatches the baby from his mother's arms and hurls it into a corner of the cellar. The mother stops crooning and stares at him in shock. He stares back, then looks at his hands. He raises them slowly, wrinkles his nose from the stench and begins wiping them against his pant legs. He looks at his mother nervously, looks around with a caged look in his eye. He rubs hands nervously, tension builds up, suddenly he turns and runs towards the cellar stairs. He half trips over a crate, catches himself and runs up the stairs. The mother remains sitting rigidly and silently, as if in a trance.



INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS *by* JOAN WALTERS

And I saw him there at the window
and he shouted and screamed and yelled at me
until he created a shrill
and still, still, all was still
I could not hear a single word.
And I saw him there at the window
and he pounded with his fists
and in his eyes hate grew
and knew, knew all I ever knew
would not show through.
And he yelled
and he screamed
and he created a shrill
and I was deaf to such things
myself being
one who could not wish to hear utterances
from another side
deaf! deaf? deaf.
And not knowing why or how or when
or being able to give a logical reason
I broke the glass
shattering, shattering, all the glass fell shattering
and still I could not hear
for it was too late
and though I tried, tried, how hard I did try
to listen
I could not hear a word
and then . . .
I knelt pleading
but all that was heard
was the dripping of tears
pitter, patter, pitter, patter,
on broken glass.

JEANNE LIVINGSTON

Sunday Evening . . .

Twilight.

I sit watching
 waiting
For the first star to beckon.
Black skeletons
 wave their limbs
 across the burnt horizon.

People.

Rushing.
Headlights burning a path.
Cars scuttling like
 multi-colored bugs
 chasing each other.

Strange.

It's so quiet.
I can't hear myself think.
Empty, bottomless emptiness
 opens her mouth to speak
 and swallows me instead.

PAT FRIESEN

Period

Diligent waters
Carry on.
No days of rest,
No halcyon.
Flux ebbs, its sole
Paralyses,
With Dragon's Blood
Exegesises.
And all is flux
And all is still,
Dust and ash and
A Crucifix Hill

MARTY KAUFMAN

Silent is the dawn,
Penetrating half-light,
Primal whispers unheard,
Hurry creeping somber shadows.

May-bell flower,
How long has it been?
Yesterday, I plucked your petals,
And breathed you deeply.

Linger,
Whispering heartbeats,
I remembered in a dream,
And it was just like now.

Silent is the moon,
Great nocturnal orb,
Reflecting half-light,
A promise of dawn.

TIM TUDOR



INTAGLIO *by* CONNIE CARBIENER

To William Blake

Oh Sun
May I Thy child become
And like the grass and trees
And like the birds which sing
Apparelled in Thy golden beams
In perfect bliss persist
In innate innocence
Thy child.

MICHAEL RHODES

Wintergreen

All the brave
And palladian young warriors
Are laughing tonight
In a sweet scented haze.
A pregnant place
Void of Junkers
Ruled by the August Laureate Knight
Of Saturnian Days.
Here gibbets are used for hanging signs
And never Sadducees.
And children climb the stoup for water
All they please.
The Knight's sorceress has by decree
Bibliotherapized, so harmony
Has calmed the frantic social spheres
By turning swords to plowing shares.

MARTY KAUFMAN

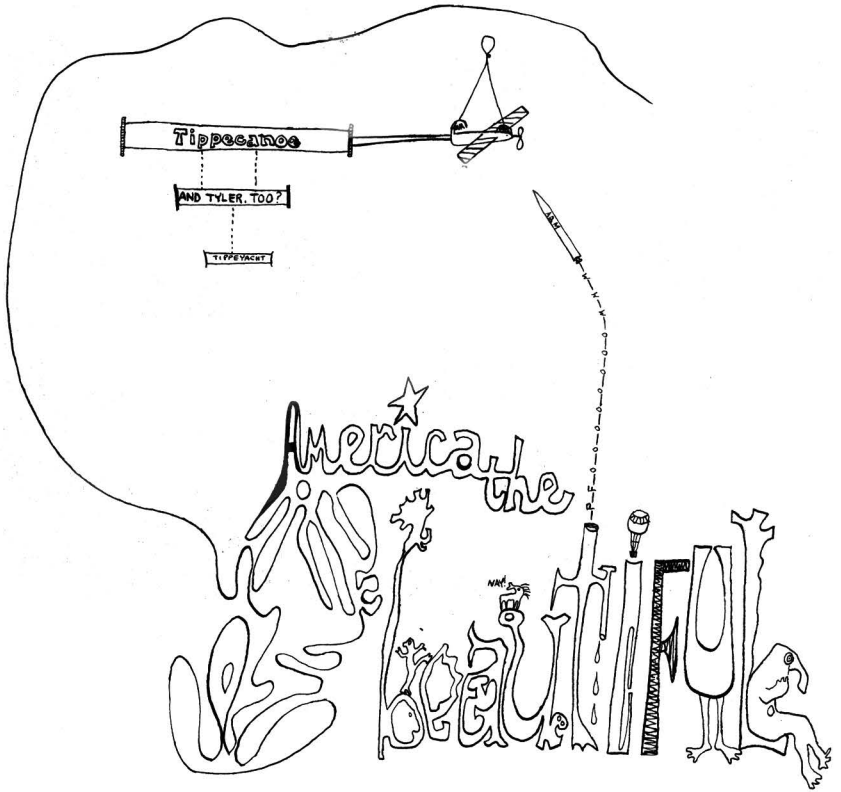


CONNIE CARBIENER

One Tree

One sensitive tree—
beautiful & sacred
to the peoples
of this world
stood alone
guarded & worshiped
on this island Japan
stood alone—
a monument.
Before the bomb.

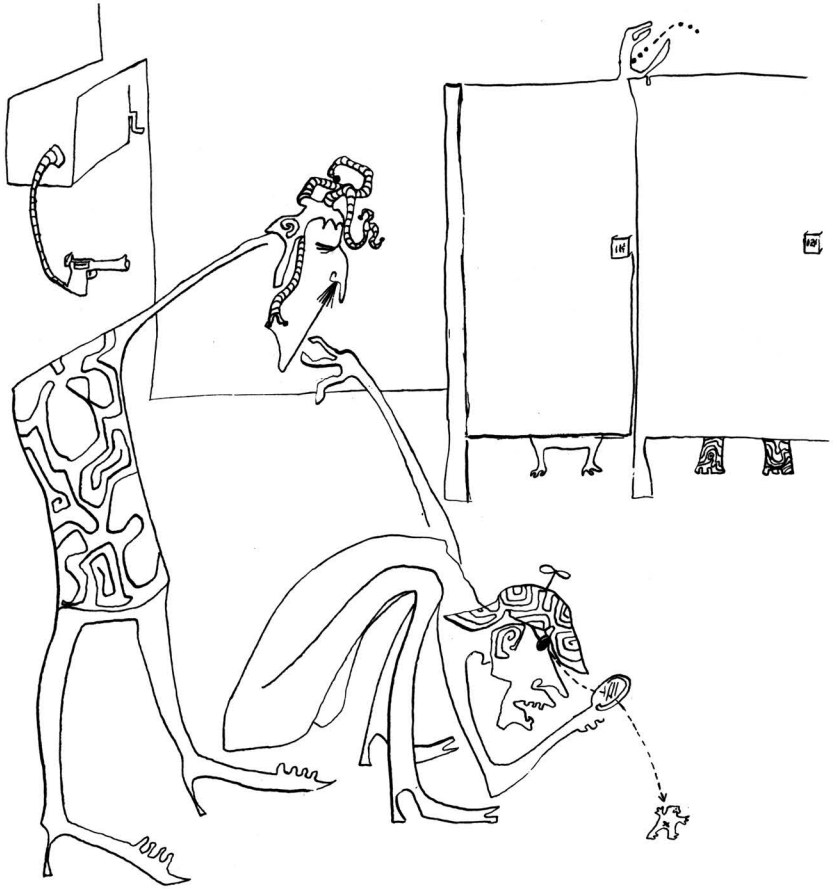
JAY BREMYER



:CIA PSYCHOSIS

by
Barry Joel Ferst

[SEE UNIV. ARCHIVES VF TOUCHSTONE
FOR ARTICLE BY BARRY JOEL FERST
that WAS NOT PUBLISHED]

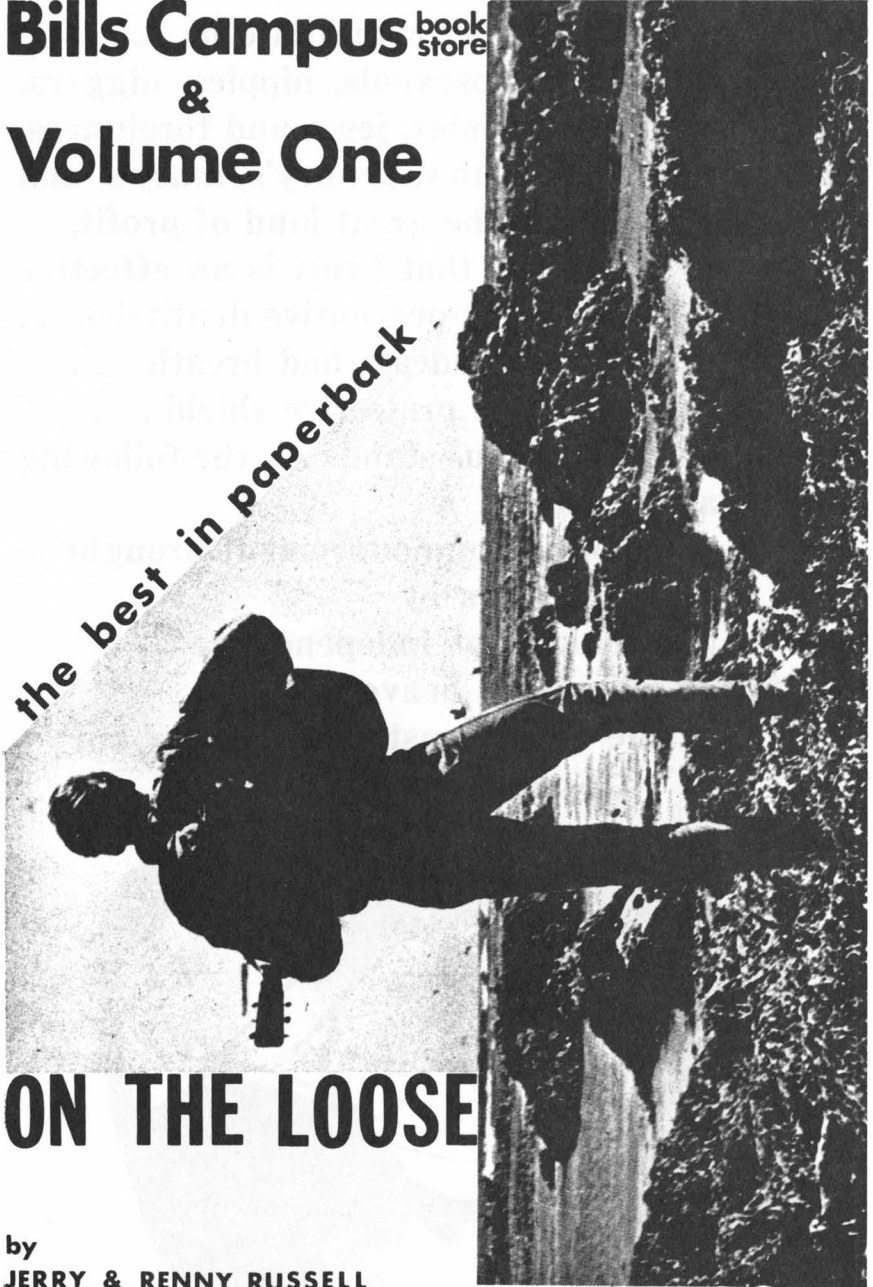


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 Mary W. Schneider

*purple evening midnight morning
summer snowfall stolen spring*

*come
bring*



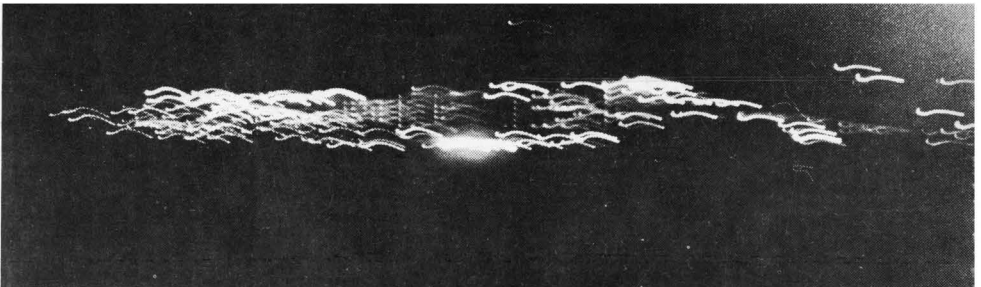
*row
y*

*wizened Wednesday Willy wanted
vintage of the hemisphere
pretty pasture last year last year
grown-up grapes for raisin jam*

*stone age mistress Mother may I
curdle cloud sky crumble cliff
crying cave man save him save him
world fight on another round*

*purple evening midnight morning
shining starflake shooting son
come tomorrow sorrow sorrow
come tomorrow yesterday*

M. M. MARKS



Manhattan Nightscape

ALLEN KERSHNER