

SYMPOSIUM







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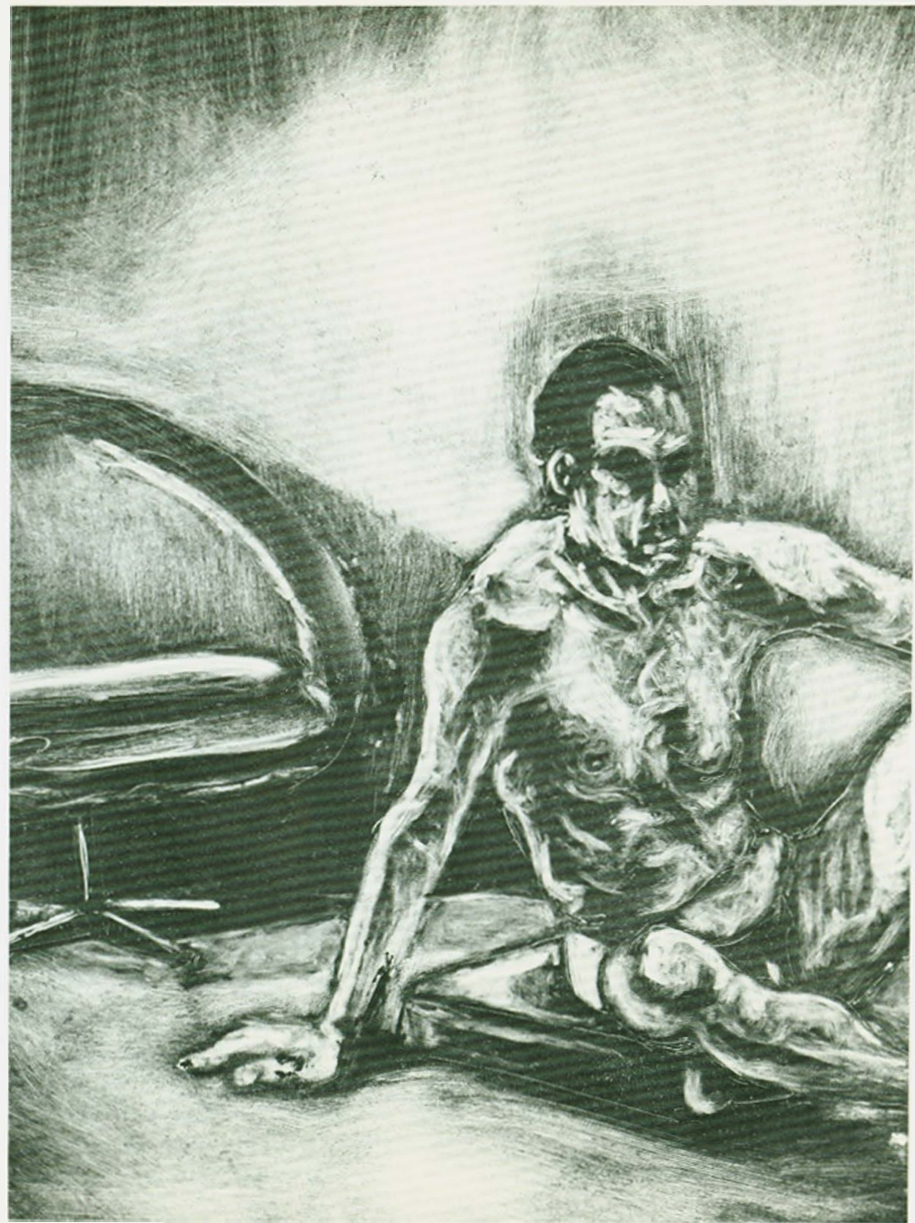
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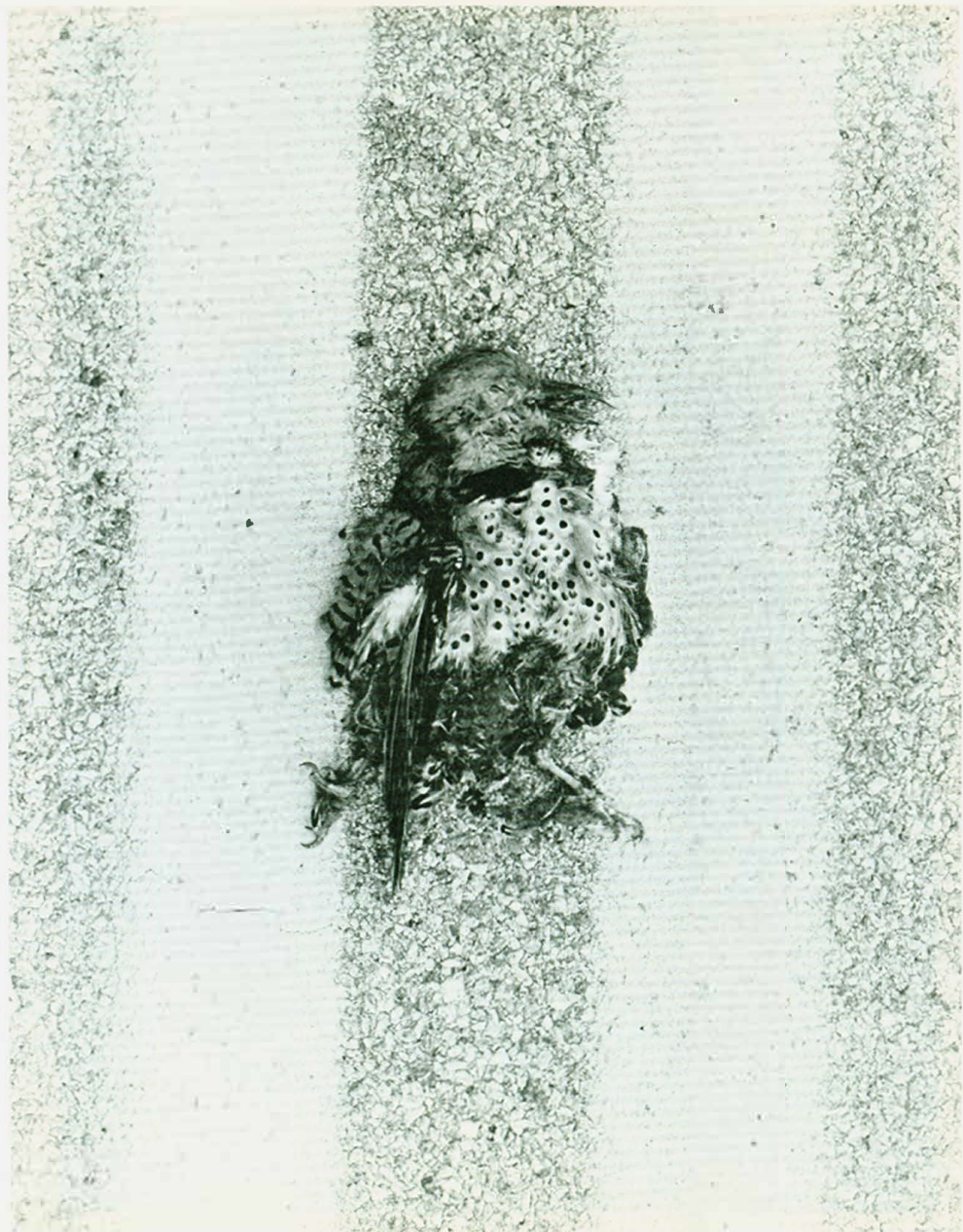
Karen Lauben *p. 32*



UNTITLED

Through the frozen concrete fluorescent night
I creep silently back to my own bed,
I hate deception yet I shake with dread
Of my loss, if her wishes I dare slight.
I've come to despise this cold morning flight
That brings back my hunger and makes me shed
My blanket of tender warmth. Dreams she fed
Me in darkness, I'm empty in the light
Of my lonely room and stark sterile sheets.
I smell her body in my hair and taste
Her salty sweat with my lips that cover
Clenched teeth struggling to hold back the sharp sleet
That slashes my skin. Through desolate space
I curse the dawn that denies me a lover.

—*John Vallancourt*



RITUAL

She's dead.

She's been dead for four years now.

I've gotta put her out of my mind, all of these memories.

Memories of all the times we had together. Good times. Intimate times. Bad times.

Memories of all the people we thought were assholes. Getting caught sunbathing nude on the roof. Watching some guy screw his girlfriend at the Grateful Dead concert.

Crying on her shoulder for three days straight when my brother was killed. Because I drove the car too fast.

How about the time we put the red Easter egg dye tablet in the shower head, and my mom thought she was hemorrhaging?

Then it came.

She got leukemia.

And she started writing this letter.

The letter that brings as many tears now as it did four years ago.

The letter that spilled out all of her feelings and emotions. It hurts to read them. Because she felt so much, and now she can feel no more.

She wrote about Life.

She wrote about Death.

And she put all those memories inbetween.

Well, one of those memories is about how we had hurt each other. I don't want to remember that. I hate to think how I hurt her by lying to her, yelling at her, saying things that I didn't mean. Just being a plain old bastard.

Her actions from the past don't hurt me anymore. It doesn't matter. 'Cause she's dead. I'm alive. And that's what hurts. Well Goddamnit. Get rid of the fucking letter. It tears at the heart. It screws up the mind. It turns on the water works, puts a lump in my throat. So what does that accomplish?

Feeling like shit.

If I throw it away, it'll still be there. Someone might find it. worms might crawl on it. Dogs might piss on it.

If I bury it, it'll still be there. Someone might find it. It will decay into fragile, yellow paper.

If I burn it, it will become a pile of ugly ashes. It won't be there anymore. No one could ever read it.

I think I know how to get rid of her letter so no one will ever find it, but it will be there. Between her and I. We'll share it.

I stood there for a long time.

I prayed alot. I talked alot. I talked to God. I talked to her. I talked to myself.

I looked down at her grave where she was buried. There was fresh grass over the grave. At the head of the grave a fresh bouquet of flowers had been planted.

I read her name and her date of birth and death on the tombstone. It was just a simple, small, very plain tombstone. But it brought a smile to my lips that made me feel warm all over.

It was a brand new tombstone. But it was special. Not because she didn't have one before.

The letter. I felt good. I felt free. It was there. Inside the tombstone, mixed in with the cement. I turned around and walked home.

—Ellen Tompkins



Drawing Male 1951

In each issue of Symposium we feature the work of one person whose writing, in the opinion of the editors, stands out among the others. The Feature Poet for the winter issue submitted her work under the nom de plume of Honorine Ninling, and was unanimously chosen as the feature poet. Intrigued with the challenge of uncovering who the mystery writer was, we compared some of the artwork submitted to Honorine's poems, and made some fruitful discoveries. We have a hunch as to her true identity, tho' telling would be unfair.

J-TOWN IN SPRINGTIME

First night

Down the stairs
And a filing cabinet maker mistakes our woman
For Loose in his colorblindness.
The teutonic kisses leave
Her to bite his lip
And analogize about the stiffness
Of his tractor hat brim.
He is left under where the car had been unparked
With his best there ever was lips.
Mexican food and motorcycles.
Still she goes back to cakeman's to
Sleep coldly on his bed of air,
In the morning he raises them to breakfast on
His name and a beer.

Second night

Through the lobby
And nothing worth mentioning.
She wondered a lot if cakeman's
Bowtie would tickle between her legs.
No one appreciated her private patron understanding
Of the sex and death symbolism inherent
In the casket that was in the first bar.
Keeping half-awake just for the impossible
Arrival of Man Ray.
There are no memories of breakfast
His last morning and a beer.

—Honorine Ninling

MYNIS

Once upon a night I sometimes still come to you,
Sleeping and solitude do not keep me from finding your side,
Nor the guilt of friendship's walls.
I lie with you until my sleep breaks apart.
Inspired, unresistant, taking love from you.
There is no envy in my heart,
My night dreams know no shame.

I enter into your room without you noticing,
Alone, without your marriage, you greet me.
I know awake that I do not sleep by your side,
But night upon a night I pursue your scarred mouth.
Feeling again the tremble that can come from a friendship kiss.
I cannot control the weakness of my sleep.

If I ever see the distance between us disappear
Will you see your image in my lyrical eyes?
There is a bond somewhere deep inside me that keeps me
returning,
And returning at night when the bond deepens,
And we toast the future of dreams.
It is dreaming that keeps me tied to you,
And waiting on your unknown dreams.

THE SLEEP OF HONORINE (a prose poem)

The nightly stomach sleep displays her blond ribbon-hairs between spread Botticelli legs that touch bed edges to ankles. The heavy breasts comfortably crushed into sheets as if against another chest. Her solidness in sleep, languid tension and the dreaming hips rock-a-bye forward. Her hands tucked into the sleep woven hair are clenched, yet unprotective of her body barebacked under comforters waiting in unconscious tactile pleasure. Dreaming I arise out and stand at the foot of her bed seeing how she looks asleep. All the things so hidden by light can no longer be kept inside even by the rose quilt. She sleeps, she sees and reveals herself to her own sleeping eyes.

NANO, CASTRONE AND ANDROGYNO
(a portrait poem in 3 parts)

1. Honey-Hoo

You who know me so well.
You practice all the peeves,
Especially Ernie Kovacs.
Yet you are such a doll-face-bunny-hun.
Formerly of New York,
At 22 you've just broken the dream of feminine virtue.
Wonderlust and a broken nose.
She's a million dollar baby from Miami's silvery shores.
Indifference and intrigue:
The woman was born without an attention span.
She will never dance like Gene Kelly since the
Forks landed in her feet.
Flamboyant daughter of Hector the Defector,
Dutchess of Rubee.
She knows me too well, too bad, so sad.

2. Bijouette

M-heads the bread-bunny.
Hoarsly in her incredulous tone she asks:
Do I look like a bunny?
The manic depressive sits in her blue room
And goes out for buckwheat pancakes,
There she collects a bizarre reputation
And little rubber animals.
She writes she earns my respect even if she doesn't know it.
I miss her and she looks out over her burnt out church.
Her collages,
And bedroom collection of an entire streaming cast.
Toast's on the wall — breakfast.
Languishing over cocoanutoil and George Benson nights.
Q: What is the difference between men and worms?
A: Men have zippers.
I know that she knows that she is the bread-bunny
Her pillow is the dead give away.

3. Jobaby

I watch you shimmering dully
In your yesterdays clothing,
Only the faint shadow of what
You could be lies around you.
In a trance you glance at the
Dimness of your shadow and destructively solicit
Darkness for it by being:
Lady Death, or a Russian princess, or the thieving mother
Who gave away her devil to the Dunnyboy, or even an
Unfuckable Faye Dunnaway.
Sometimes I think that if you breathed very deeply
That you might dissipate with the greatest of ease.
Our engaged Jobaby
Who floats on a breeze.



RITUAL DISPOSAL OF A TOOTHBRUSH

All is dark, but for one piercing hole
Of white light. The air is heavy. He walks
To the small drum table where on it lay
Your used instrument of plastic and pig's hair,
Next to those delicate tools used for its destruction.
The light reflects off of a smooth glistening, rock-hard
Chest, rising and falling to the rhythm of his breathing.
The stillness . . . heart pounding . . .
A shaking, sweat-ridden hand reaches for
The pair of long stemmed scissors that will sever the life
From each bristle. The ritual is about to begin.
A Gregorian chant emerges from within the sea
Of black. The scissors in place, the muscular
Forearm flexes, a flash of light, a cry from the
Darkness, and a bristle floats to an untellable future.
Again, and again, those murderous fingers of
Sharpened metal squeeze merciless together. Beads of sweat caress
His chest in rivers of their own kind. The chant grows
Louder, the final thread is cut—SILENCE!—
He exhales.
He raises the final tool and folds his fingers,
One by one, around the handle gripping it tightly, his sweat
Bubbling by the curl of his little finger. An arrowhead
Of razor sharp metal awaits its duty at the
Tip of the instrument. Suspense permeates through
Every pore of his god-like body. He lowers it to the head of
The plastic and thrusts it deep within the outer skin.
He pulls the tool toward him as the plastic writhes and curls
Like waves from its wound. The slice continues
To the other tip, ripping the last ounce of usefulness
From existence. He lays the tool down, stained with
Polymers of the life it just ceased. A female hand
Appears in the light and lays to rest on His wrist.
The ritual is over.

—Robin Torcello

- I. They flow to Dream City.
Minds in the vacuum.
All being sucked to Dream City.
There is no distance.
The distance is null.
There is no race to Dream City.
Blue. Blue is the color.
Dream City colored blue with big white teeth.
Blue colored. Dream city.
Blue colored city dream.
They flow to Dream City.
Into the tubes and they're off.
Off on the stick.
- II. All people are there.
They all came for a purpose.
People are all there.
They are watching the woman.
The woman in the center.
She puts the stick in her mouth.
She disposes of all her thoughts.
She continues until she passes out.
Lizards are thrown on her limp body, without mind.
- III. A lone woman meditates.
Her mind is free floating.
She has no body.
During her third day a crowd formed.
They knew it was time.
Her mind is floating free.
No one will grab it.
Woman alone.
Being a body, she took the stick.
She is mad, end of ceremony.

—Ronald Wilcocks



THE NINTH WEEK

Action, shot
run for the woods
suck it dry

Divergence field intensity
 $e^{2\text{Arc}(x/2)} \text{Log } T$
Common mode rejection ratio

HESITATE

INTEGRATE

MASTURBATE

FORMULATE

Time, age
just one page
the poet's heart

$\bar{D} = \text{Sin } xy + \text{Cos } Z^2$
Volume charge density
For $J = 1$ to 9

Smoking a number

times the square root of two

lovers in silence

Morning, dreams
smooth satin wonder
can I touch you?

END PROGRAM RUN

—G. Carlson

THE LAST ACT OF RESPECT

Barney Rubble was beginning to annoy Fred Flintstone. This had lost its humor over the past few months, because my roommate Jack and I always watched "The Flintstones" in the dormitory after we returned from dinner.

The phone rang as it has a thousand times before.

"It's for you. It's your father," Jack said, throwing the receiver to me.

"What the hell does he want?" I said as Jack laughed.

He often heard me complain about my father. He could not understand how a father and son could not get along, for his relationship with his father was wonderful. But mine was far from it.

The voice on the phone began: "John, your grandfather is dead. You've got to come home tomorrow night. I have plane tickets for you, your mother and your brother. I'm leaving tonight with your sisters by car. We'll meet you there."

I hung up the phone. My first reaction was anger. I did not want to go to a funeral in Canada. I could not feel any grief, because my grandfather has been an invalid for the past six years. His death had been just a matter of time.

I arrived home and was reunited with my only brother whom I had not seen in three months.

As we talked he revealed his feelings. "The whole thing is a big joke. They wheel him in, everybody cries, and the funeral director gets rich. When I die, there won't be any of this nonsense. I'll leave my organs to science, that way something

useful will happen."

I was disillusioned. My brother was always one cut above me. He was always right and I was wrong. He was always smarter, always happier, and always a year older. His blunt words made me wonder about him. I did not want to think about what the learned and scholarly David G. Vallancourt had just said, because I didn't want to wonder if he was right again.

As I showered the next morning, my mother was frantically scampering around the house selecting the precise shirts, jackets, pants and ties that would match perfectly for my brother and I to wear to the funeral. She was in a frenzy, because she knew my father wanted everything to be perfect. My grandfather demanded respect from his only child. He was not denied it. My father's arrangements and preparations would be his last act of respect.

We arrived at the airport thirty minutes early, so Dave and I left my mother at the gate and went to the candy store. As we returned, we saw that something had happened to my mother. She was crying bitterly.

"Everything! All of them!" she sobbed. "I left all your clothes at home. What's your father going to say? He wanted this to be so perfect. He'll never understand!"

We boarded flight 45 to Toronto, with just the clothes on our backs.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have a problem," Captain Stevenson said as we approached Toronto International Airport. "Down below has been hit with a tremendous storm. Winds are gusting to ninety miles an hour. There may be trouble, but there is no immediate cause for alarm.

I grew worried and angry. I thought to myself, "This is just great. Two days ago I was lying on my bed at college listening to "Crazy Little Thing Called Love" and drinking beer; now I'm going to die in a plane crash."

Stevenson began again: "I'm sorry, but just to be on the safe side, we'll have to land in Guelph, a small city about a hundred miles from Toronto. The airport is officially closed."

Arriving in Guelph, we desperately thought of an answer to our predicament. The roads were closed. We had no clothes. We had two hours.

We called my father and informed him about the clothes situation. He made arrangements to have clothes brought to the funeral home. Meanwhile, I chartered a plane. Time was of the essence. We took off into the blinding sky for a small airport outside of Toronto.

Thirty-seven minutes remained as our wheels hit the runway. By this time, the roads were passable, but dangerous. We had no choice but to rent a car and drive the last six miles.

For the first time in hours, we were feeling some degree of relief. Dave was cautiously driving down the strange Canadian roads, while my mother sat depressed in the backseat and I read directions.

But then the back right tire blew out.

Dave headed toward a nearby gas station. As we jumped out of the car to fix the tire, we realized that our aunt and uncle, who were headed to the funeral, were getting gas at the pumps. I walked over to their car, stuck my head in and said, "Hi there."

"What do you want?" my uncle replied.

"It's me John. John Vallancourt, your nephew, remember?"

"John," he said, "I'm sorry. It's been five years. I have some clothes for you and Dave."

My mother was now out of the car. She began to talk with them, explaining the problems we had encountered. Meanwhile, Dave and I were quickly changing the tire.

Having successfully completed our task, we began to change in the backseat, as my mother drove to the funeral home. We had ten minutes to get there and it appeared that we would.

We finally arrived. I looked around at all the strange people. I approached my grandfather.

I stared at him. His skin was discolored. He lay there motionless, as if he was a symbol of what he used to be. He was always happy, always thrilled to see me. But I knew he would not exclaim, "Hi ya, John!" He would say nothing at all. I did not know this man. He was not familiar to me. When I looked at him, I could only substitute his memory for the corpse that lay there before me.

At this point, all others in the room seemed to have vanished. There was only myself and this facsimile of Medore Vallancourt who was once my grandfather.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Vallancourt, but we're running behind schedule," a voice said. Turning around, I realized that the haunting church bells had filled the air and it was time for the funeral. I turned away from my grandfather for the last time, tasting the tears which by this time had passed my nose and entered my mouth.

The church was old and worn. My family, which had not been together for months, filled a pew. As the mourners filled the church, I noticed that elderly people, who had never met my grandfather, had quietly gathered in the back. I was happy to see them. But at this time, it would have been impossible to smile.

It was a short ceremony. I swore to myself I would not cry. There was no reason to. He had lived a prosperous life. He was never hungry. He had a decent home. His name would continue. His family loved him very much. All of these facts seemed not to matter, as I buried my face in my hands.

When the funeral ended, my family tearfully left the church. Dave and I entered the car first. "Looks like the funeral guy is making out pretty well today," he said. "I'll be glad when this nonsense is over."

I turned to him. I could not feel any admiration for him at all now. "Why don't you shut the hell up?" I said. He just looked out the window. He was silent.

Through the windshield, I looked at my father who was crying. For the first time in my life, I felt a deep feeling of love and respect for him. He was a good son, and trying to be a good father. I watched him cry. It made me cry. I wanted to go over to him and talk. I wanted to put my arm around him and comfort him. But I couldn't do that. I felt as if I wasn't allowed.

We went back to my grandmothers's house, where I was transformed back into reality. I watched the New York Yankees play the Boston Red Sox on NBC, drank Molson beer (which was only \$1.80 a six pack because it was not imported) and ate potato chips. It was there where I learned of the party that was to take place that night to celebrate my grandfather's life.

I was overwhelmed that night. People that had been crying hysterically were suddenly dancing and singing. My father grabbed Dave and me for the first time in twelve years and began to sing and dance.

As I sat drunk in the corner of the room, I thought of my grandfather. He was the cause of all this celebration. He was why there was a party. We were celebrating his life. I was happy.

The next morning, the streets were cleared, the party was over and we had buried Medore Vallancourt. We returned the car to the agency, and Dave, my mother, and I were driven to the airport by my father. This time there was no incident. There was no pressure.

The following evening, I went back to school. Jack was asleep. He often got tired after dinner. Fred and Barney had resolved their differences, but were fighting again.

—John Vallancourt

THE PAPER CROWN

Wooden guns and paper crown
send your son to save the ground
that you fought for yesterday.

Give him guns and ammunition
Gold and silver for his deeds
then pray that he's ok.

I beat the rain, but it's not the roof you made
so please remember,
I'm not the same boy that you saved
who's wearing a paper crown?

With a modern education
and a poem in his pocket
that he wrote there on the line.

It's a musical expression
on of wit and not confession
There's a difference you know.

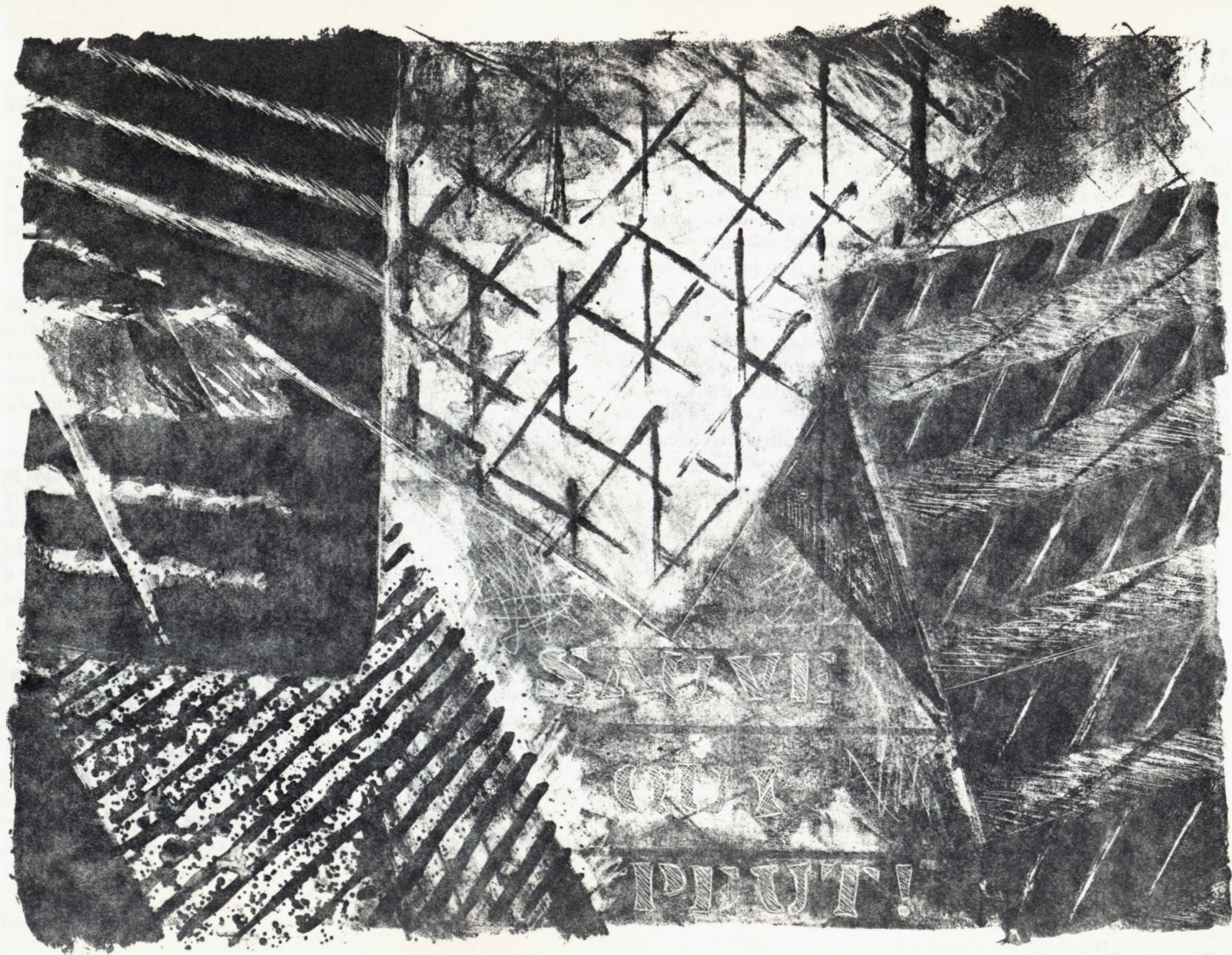
TWO SLICES FROM THE LIFE OF MY NEIGHBOR AND HIS GIRLFRIEND

She sat at a table with her legs crossed and kept shaking her foot up and down. She held her lighted cigarette from a propped left elbow and nibbled at her little finger of her free hand. He sat next to her, his eyes staring blankly at the wall behind them. Then his head tilted to one side and for a moment their eyes met and the corners of her mouth lifted slightly. She took the cigarette and tapped the ashes from it. She put it to her lips and inhaled slowly before blowing the smoke carefully out of the side of her mouth. He shifts in his seat and reaches down to pull up a falling sock. She takes a sip from her drink and swirls the liquid and ice in a circle in her glass before setting it down. He looks at his watch as though he is in a hurry to get somewhere. He then looks at her and asks, "Are you ready to go yet?" "In a minute," she said with a heavy sigh and turned her head and stared at her drink. He put both hands on the Miller bottle in front of him and started to stroke it up and down removing the sweat that had gathered on it.

They walked through the security door of his apartment building and turned to his door. She stood behind him and leaned on the stairway railing swinging her purse up and on her shoulder. He fumbled with his key ring and inserted the key into the door knob. He started to shake the key in the door and kept trying to turn it. She looked up the stairs then turned toward the security door and pushed some hair from in front of her face in response to what she saw in her reflection from the glass in the door. He put his left hand on the door frame and continued to shake the key. She crossed her arms and moved to the wall across from the stairs and leaned against it. "Fucking key," he muttered. She yawned and leaned her head on the wall. He grabbed the door knob with his left hand and violently shook it with the key in his right hand. "Jesus Christ, why don't you call the manager?" she said impatiently. He stopped and stared at her.

She sighed and leaned against the wall and opened her purse to take out a cigarette as he continued to shake the key in the door knob.

—Robin Torcello



SUBURBAN GIRLS

Note: X = Suburban Girls

X make my heart stand still. X hold meetings. X make me want to take my clothes off. X make me want to love them. X when they're smart say cutting things.

X I want you, maybe just to show you who you are. X I need you, maybe just to see what I can do.

X are nervous. X get their strength from things they know are right. X know what love is. X know what boats are. X know what lawns mean.

X just maybe, you're the same trip Stuart Randall was. X you could be a way of winning battles from the past.

X sweep the pool. X throw parties. X show their anger. X go to church. X are wild things.

—*Michael Neff*

LINE SONG

You can only think in straight arrows, that's all you ever do. Judging things by time and money is not what I choose to do. No matter how much I talk, I doubt you'll ever understand me. No matter how hard I try, I doubt you'll even care.

I don't want to live my life through your eyes, everything you know is wrong. you think you can understand my mind, just by saying I'll learn.

To look at things as graphs and charts, with plug in calculations. Seems like such a silly way to choose how to live. Did you ever stop to think, this might all be a mistake? Whenever will you realize that there's more to life than time?

I'm sorry, but I'll probably never change, but look, I'm not trying to change you.

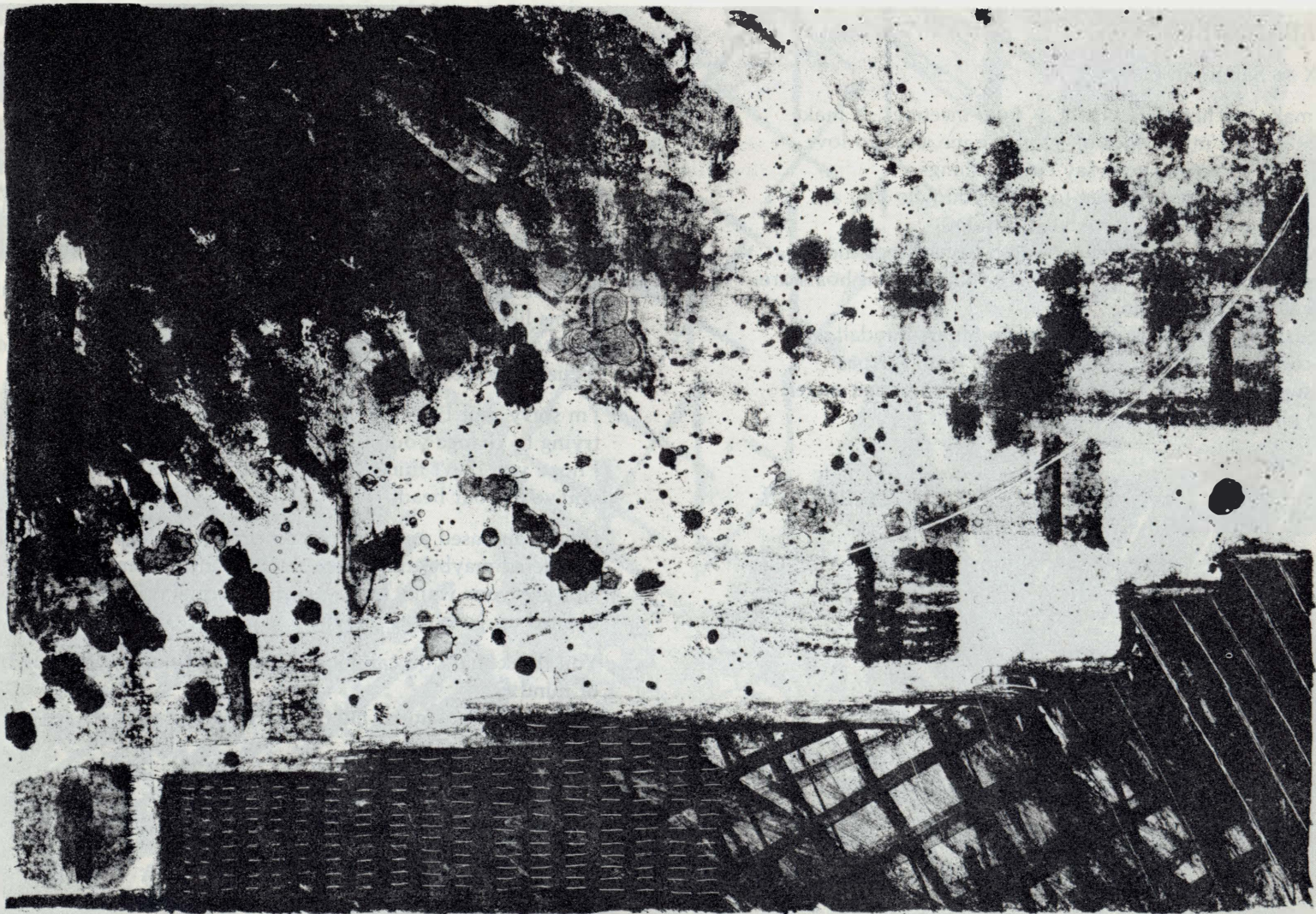
I hope you don't think you've failed because I'm not the image you've in your head.

Have you based your life on someone else's idea? Have you ever wondered maybe, they knew nothing more than you? Not everyone wants to lead such a normal normal life. If you opened up your eyes, maybe you'd see it, too.

You think that you can look at me with your engineering frame of mind.

If you keep looking at me this way, you may never see me at all.

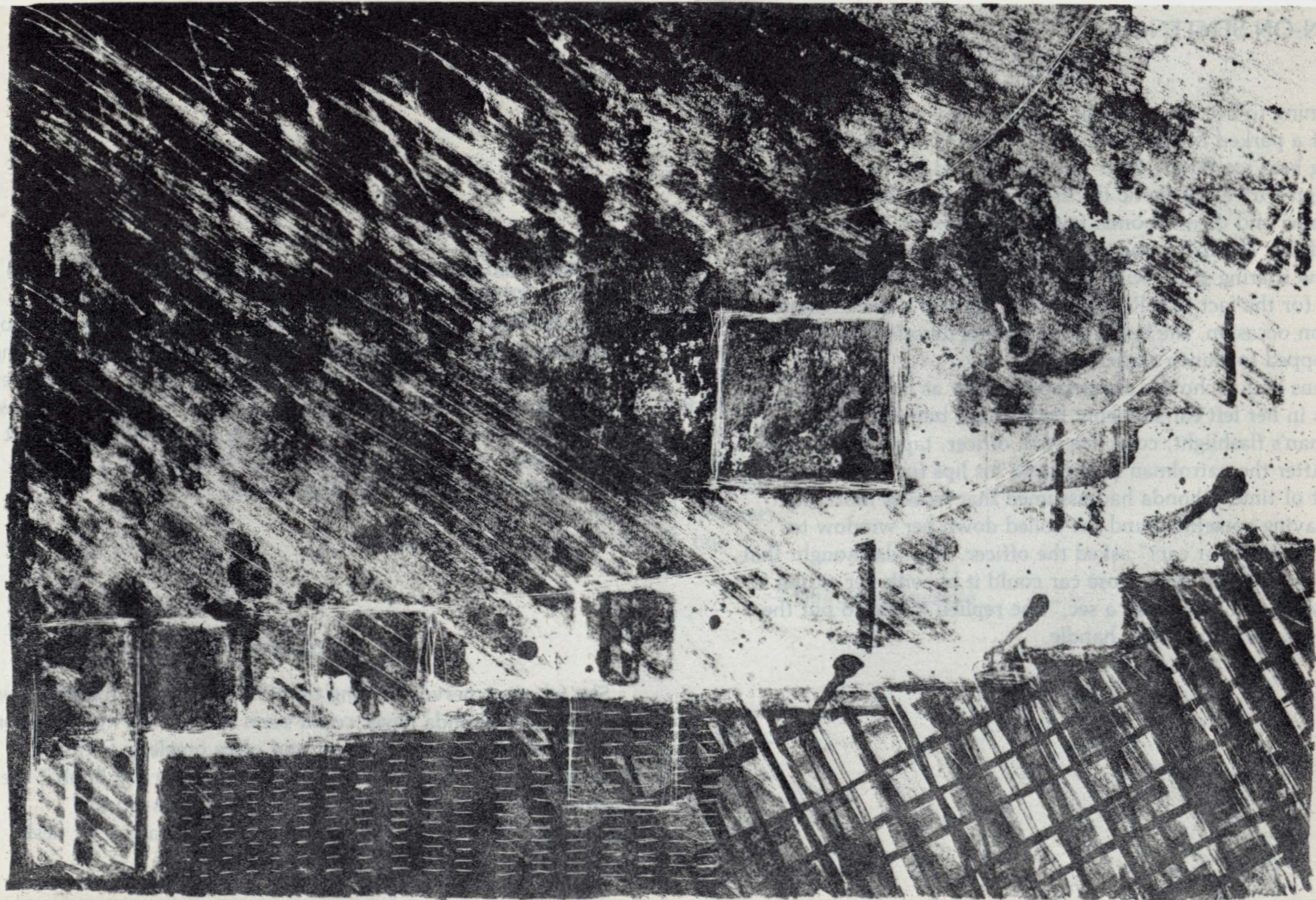
—*Michael Neff*



TOUGH DAY AT THE OFFICE, PART ONE

15

Glenn Tolson '81



TOUGH DAY AT THE OFFICE, PART TWO

4/5

Glenn T. Gustin '81

A RUN-ON SENTENCE

Slice 1

Listening to her eyes blink as she smoothly accelerated into the back of a parked Monte Carlo (1977 coupe) with flashers, once keeping beat for Buddy Rich — now reduced to the flicker of a neon sign with an epileptic transformer spewing shiny black tar every now and then, Rhonda felt slightly box-headed as she realized that she had come to a rest. Expecting the owner of the car, now sharing space with hers, to be somewhat annoyed, mostly for the fact that Rhonda really enjoyed a good Monte Carlo on occasion, she belched, reminding herself that she had in fact stopped for lunch earlier.

Onions and anchovies dancing before her as the African rhythm in her left ear suddenly became the butt end of a policeman's flashlight, complete with officer, tapping on her window. After the patrolman had moved his lips for a considerable amount of time, Rhonda had assumed that he was more than likely saying something and she rolled down her window to listen: "Is this your car?" asked the officer. Rhonda thought that was a foolish question, whose car could it be with her sitting in the driver's seat. "Hold on a sec," she replied trying to put the knob back on her window handle.

Slice 2

"Well", said Rhonda after it was all over, "you certainly do things well." They both began putting their clothes back on when the officer noticed that he couldn't unhook his badge from Rhonda's yellow and chartreuse bikini underwear. "I knew when you put my knob on, you could handle anything." Meanwhile the highway patrolman was frantically tugging at her shorts as Rhonda continued: "What do you think we should say to that other officer in the car?" "There is no other officer, I work alone", "Not anymore," Rhonda replied.

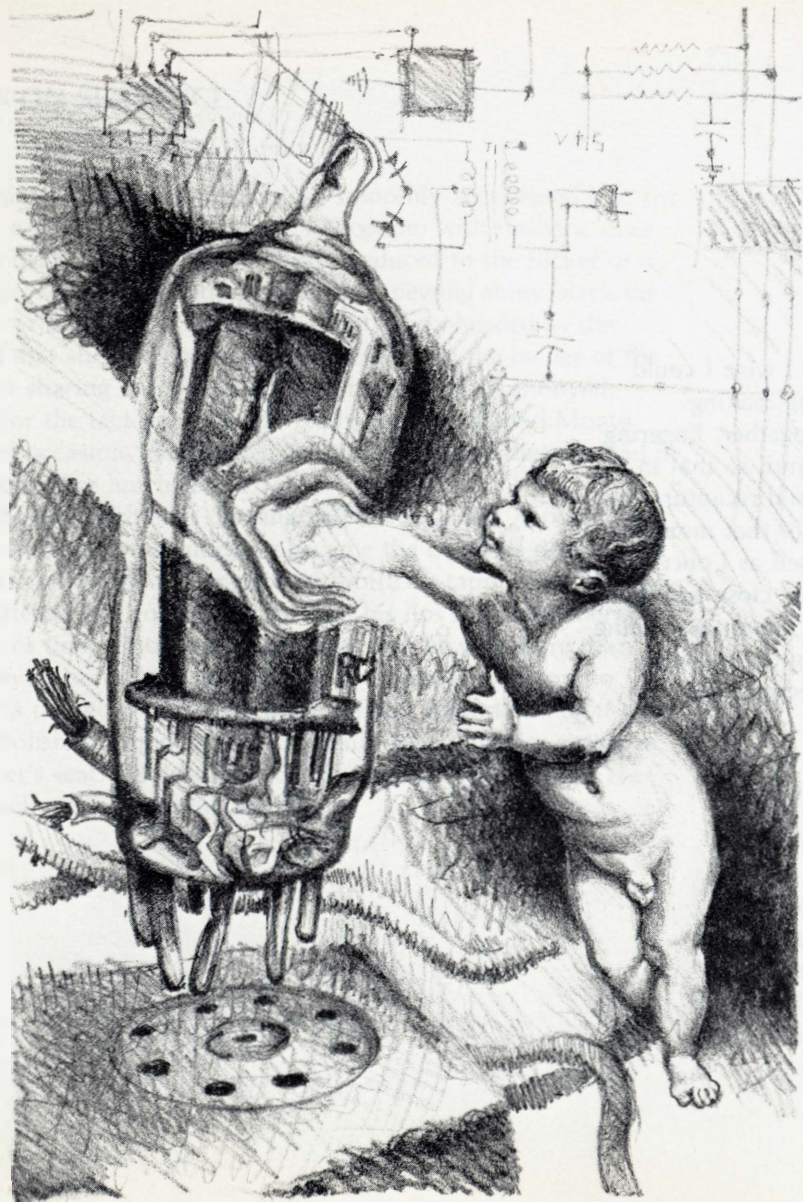
Slice 3

She felt very nervous sitting there in the hearing room's heavy oaken chair; Rhonda never could seem to hide her hypertension as she recalled her green pepper and olive omelette with a somber gargle of the throat. "He was just fixing my knob", the laughter slowly faded into a mull of jungle cries led by His Honor The African rhythm section accompanied by desk and mallet.

—Mark Kara

Sometimes I wish I could
just write on and on, everything making
sense, fitting together, lingering
into the dark recesses of my mind, so that in
the future I could recapture that
once intricate train of thought of that moment
and know myself as I once was.
If only I could close my eyes
and let my hand float over the paper, explaining
life, condensing the universe,
expanding the atom until all become one.

—*Alan Montanarello*



EACH MAN A GOD

The walls of this room grow close. This small urban cubicle confines me, and I need air, I need a change. Slipping into a fresh jumpsuit, I prepare to leave. With the pass of my hand across the appropriate sensor, the blank wall in front of me shimmers, and then begins to reflect light. In the mirror, I check my appearance: clothes trim and neat, face properly shaved, my hair properly groomed. As I turn my head, I see a glimmer of light reflecting from the cover of the cerebral servo unit that was implanted behind my ear at birth. It connects me, it protects me, it creates for me.

Approaching the door, I again wave my hand in front of a sensor, and the graphite-construct before me appears to fade to nothing; and I walk through it. A slight blast of sour air assaults my nostrils, and the technological perversion of this urban setting makes its presence known to me. The filtered atmosphere and the clean and crisp walls of my cubicle had allowed me to forget this reality. As I said, it's time for a change.

Perhaps what I really need is a time long gone, a time when Man had not overdeveloped his world, a time where the earth was green and forested, and the air was clean and smelled of flower blossoms. Closing my eyes, I dreamed of such a world.

I returned to the door of my cubicle and went through it. Gone were the crisp white walls, gone was the filtered air. A light fragrant breeze was blowing and I breathed it in deeply. My eyes were half closed in a squint due to the bright overhead sun, but I could still easily make out the dark green grove of pine trees a hundred yards to my left, and the gently rolling meadow to my right. No where could I see the buildings of Man. Nowhere could I see Man himself. Directly in front of me was a patch of wild flowers deep in saturated colors. I lay back amongst them facing the warm sun.

God how I needed this. Even with my eyes closed, I could "know" the presence of the sun. I could see it as a red-yellow bright spot through my eye lids, I could feel its warmth soaking into my bones, I could feel and hear the winds and breezes that it drove. And the air . . . the sweet, light, crispness of the air! With each breath I grew more and more relaxed and at peace. The scent of the pine needles, the scent of the sun warmed me, and the smell of the earth itself, intoxicates me, and I sleep.

I don't know how long I actually slept, all I know is how good I feel right now. I have been rejuvenated. I feel fit, happy, and very content.

Stretching my legs, I decide to walk through the pine forest. Here, it is cooler, the sun no longer beats down upon me, but filters down through the pine needles in warm shafts of yellow. The dark green of the silhouetted trees above me, and the light brown carpet of fallen needles below now constitute my world.

As I walk, I realize that I feel alone. Now that I am rested and refreshed, I feel the need for companionship. But this world is special, and I do not wish to share it with just anyone. I would like to have someone special here with me. I crave for conversation, but not small talk. I desire mutual respect but not affection. Someone with penetrating insight, someone with wisdom and experience—someone who is simple, yet complex.

As I was thinking along these lines, I walked past a large outcropping of rock. Behind it, I spied the figure of an old man. He must have been in his seventies at least. His gaunt face was written with years of experience, and covered with a growth of long white whiskers. He wore a simple robe of white-gray woven cloth, and carried a tall walking stick. When he looked at me, his eyes leaked trust and compassion. Yet there was a sharpness to his gaze that betrayed a strong mind.

"Young man," said he, "may I walk with you a short way?"

"Please do," I replied.

We walked quite a ways without saying anything further.

Occasionally, I would venture a look at him walking at my side, and he at me. Finally, the silence began to grow awkward, and since he had made no further attempt at communication, I decided to take the first step.

"It is really beautiful here," I offered.

He turned his head and stared at me for a moment, and said finally, "An interesting statement, but is it? I should not deny to any man that this is indeed a beautiful place, but is its beauty real?"

"I mean, is this place a construction of objective reality? Is it fact? Does it exist for all men, or just for you and me?" Upon saying this he turned his head and lifted his white hair so that I was able to see the shiny black surface of the cerebral servo-unit that was implanted behind his ear, just as it was behind my own. He continued, "when a man has such a device as this implanted in his brain, as all men do, how can he know for certain?"

This was something that I really had never considered before, in fact never cared about.

"What does it matter," I replied, "so long as we can both enjoy it."

"But it does matter. Mankind has just ceased to be concerned by the question. What is reality anyway? Each man is, to himself, a separate universe. All he can know about the outside world is what his poor, imperfect senses are able to tell him, and how his mind and his own perceptions choose to interpret this information. Change the sensory input to an individual, and you have effectively changed that person's personal reality. The cerebral servo-unit connects each man to a huge central computer. If he wishes that his reality was something other than it is, the mere act of wishing sends a signal to this huge machine which then overrides that person's reality, and reconstructs it. It changes the sensory inputs that enters the brain, and affects how that person perceives his world. You say that you find this place beautiful, and you seem to be enjoying it. Doesn't the thought

that it may not be a real place bother you?"

"Not particularly," I said, "but I should think that it would bother you, since if this place was not real, you too would only be a figment of my imagination!"

It was a moment before he said anything. He looked off into space with sad eyes.

"Mankind has absorbed itself in a fantasy world, every thought, every action, every reaction, is based upon a stimulus which has no basis in objective reality. You perhaps are all too typical. Let me ask you, what is your true reality? It seems obvious to me that this world, and perhaps even myself only exist because of a desire you had for a change of atmosphere. Man, to know himself, must know where he has come from. From where have you come?"

This question really bothered me. I came here from my urban cubicle. But before I was there, I was a scientist in an underwater city, before that — a king in ancient Greece, before that — before that — I was a woman living in a space colony, and before that — I was many, many, many other things. I went from one world to another. I had to start somewhere, but where that somewhere was, I don't know. I have known many people, have had many friends. Were they real people or shadows? My friends, were they friends because they truly like the person I was, or because they had no choice in the realities that I was constructing. I did not know. I did not know who or what I was. With the old man's question, a cloud had formed over my carefree life.

"Old man, I do not know." I stated sadly.

"There is a way to find out. The cerebral servo-unit can be temporarily disabled, though few people know it. Once done you will learn who and what you are . . . Do you dare do what few men have done?"

The cloud darkened with each moment. I wished to know who I was. I was tired of constructing reality. I was tired of being God over my own existence.

"How is this done old man? I wish to meet myself."

"Concentrate. Use your mind as a switch. Wish with all your might that the cerebral servo-unit would no longer actively control your existence."

This I did. I closed my eyes, and I concentrated. I wished to know who and what I was. I wished to know where I came from. I began to feel a slight change in myself. At any moment I expected the old man and the trees to vanish. But this was not to be. I realized who and what I was!! They did not vanish!!!! It is I . . .

The old man sat on the ground and watched the youth concentrate. The trees formed an amphitheatre, and on the stage was a taut upright figure of a youth, deep inside himself. Suddenly the youth opened his eyes in surprise, and an instant later, blinked out of existence.

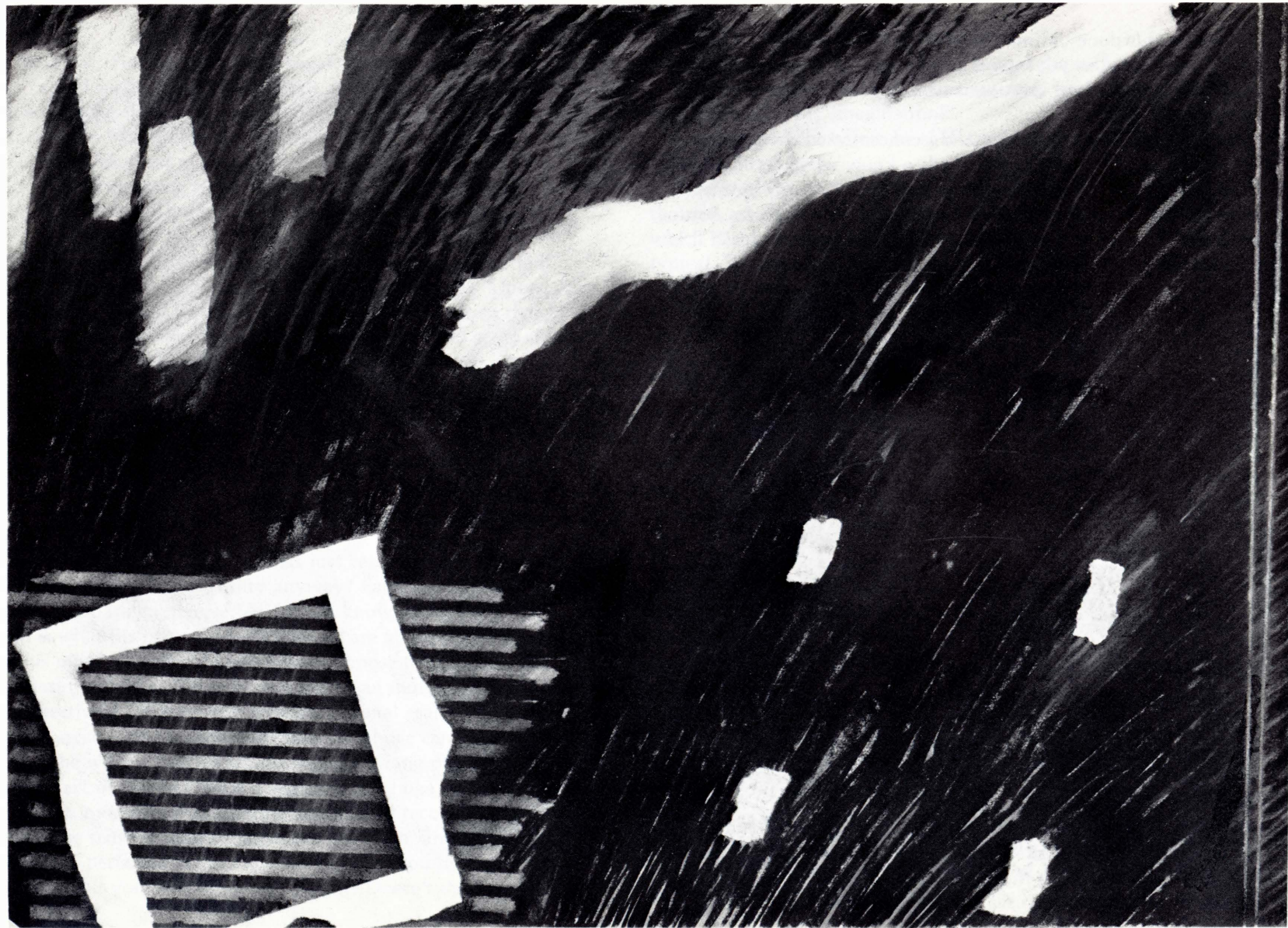
The old man shook his head, as if sad to see something completed, and sat a moment longer. The trees, the fresh air, and the pine needle carpet faded, and was replaced by a filthy room in the upper stories of a decaying building. The old man was now dressed in rags and was on a bed that consisted of an old cot, and an even older mattress.

"That was just fine," said the old man to himself, "though the boy was only a construction of my desires, following the course of his existence provided for an excellent source of diversion!"

He casually rubbed the smooth black surface of the cerebral servo-unit.

"Imagine, being able to turn off the device that makes the existence of Man bearable! Well, he believed it, and it was enough to show him that he really didn't exist by his own right. Well now, what should I do, be, create next?" muttered the old man.

As he was laying there, a thought occurred to the old man which surprised him at first, then amused him. He got out of bed, and walked over to the window and stared blankly out of it. He rubbed his chin and said, "I wonder whose fantasy am I".



THE RETURNS OF JULY

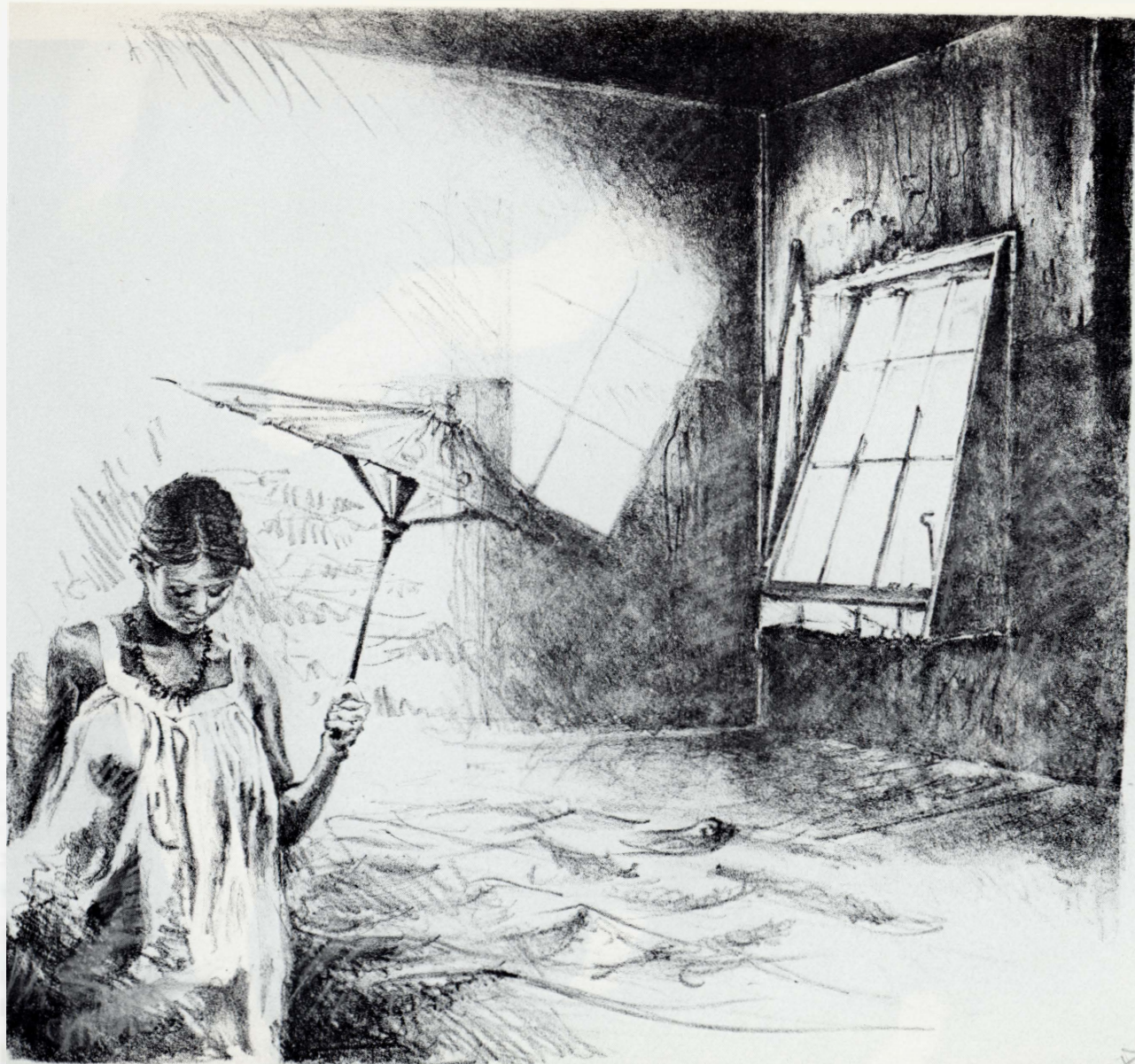
Corn and Wheat. These are July.

They
whisper dark secrets
in the heavy breeze
that steal
 into your heart.

Corn and Wheat, heavy and dark.
Your Righteous eyes search
the horizon's haze,
darkly.
 (For what is there?)

Corn and Wheat. The returns of July.
Wielding ripe blades,
They
whisper your guilt
to the heavy breeze,
 with the voice of a broken lover.

—*Teresa Drilling*



TINTED LITHOGRAPH

"MEMORY"

STEVE GURY '81

IMAGES

In the course of conjecture
we will style our adventure
beyond the hills, around a time.
Images, a morning rainbow
close to knowing, almost showing
the silent share brings no applause.

Respond, beware
knowing we dare.
Compare, commend
the images send hope.

—*G. Carlson*

UNOBTRUSIVE BEAUTY

Even in the brightest night
I've never seen someone like you
Determined curiosity, promiscuity
Emits from your eyes as hazel light

Your beauty you show
Without obtrusive poise
Hints so subtle they seem fragile
True and ready to flow

I hope time never touches your hair
Both will soon flow
With warm invisible breezes
Bringing me to you; joyfully there

—*John Raindust*

YOU AND I
WE SIT INSIDE
FROM THE WIND AND RAIN
WE HIDE.

—*Gary St. John*

THE BALLAD OF TWO-FIFTY ONE

A wonderful morning it could have been,
a grand sunrise from the east.
Cruisin' down route two-fifty one,
at the wheel of a green metal beast.

A coffee and danish to go at MacDonald's,
eggs, ham, and cheese on a bun.
We didn't know what lay before us that morning,
cruisin' down two-fifty one.

We honked at the girl who was jogging,
she waved, hiding her blush.
We didn't know what lie before us that morning,
down that road two miles past Rush.

From the rear of the beast came terrible noises,
it sounded like cats in a fight.
My friend and I just shrugged our shoulders,
and said, "We'll check it tonight".

Just then a jolt and a lurching sensation,
the fighting cats stopped with a cough.
As both of us yelled, "OH SHIT, THERE IT GOES!",
the rear wheel and axle fell off.

Screaching and screaming a green metal warcry
the beast filled up with smoke.
Cried my friend, "HIT THE ROAD, SHE'S GOING TO
EXPLODE!",

I was on my way out when he spoke.

We watched from the side as the flames shot up high,
the gas tank explodes with a sound.
The tires all melted and ran down the road,
as the beast burned to the ground.

Some people said it must have been frightening,
lucky we knew when to run.
A wonderful morning it could have been
cruisin' down two-fifty one.

—Gordon Carlson

I

you can stay at home
talk to the gardner
and appease your mother
by being in on time

or be an armchair militant
on a street corner
parading your wares
about you like tight pants

"mom, he's so slim and muscular
couldn't we have him over for dinner
served hot, quick fried, toasted, double
boiled and roasted till crisp around the edges"

even there you have options
within four walls on a dead river
but all your choices are just
different ways to keep yourself busy

II

you can be a book
prove them all wrong
get your grades on the street
roast in the sun

go golden brown
wear your skin as a poster
laugh at oils and lotions
kiss the salt and choke on the sand

and when the snowbirds fly down
watch them and bum around
like a freak but be clean for
mom's sake take along a beach blanket

and eight volumes of poetry
to exercise in public
write every memory of growing up
if only to get rid of them

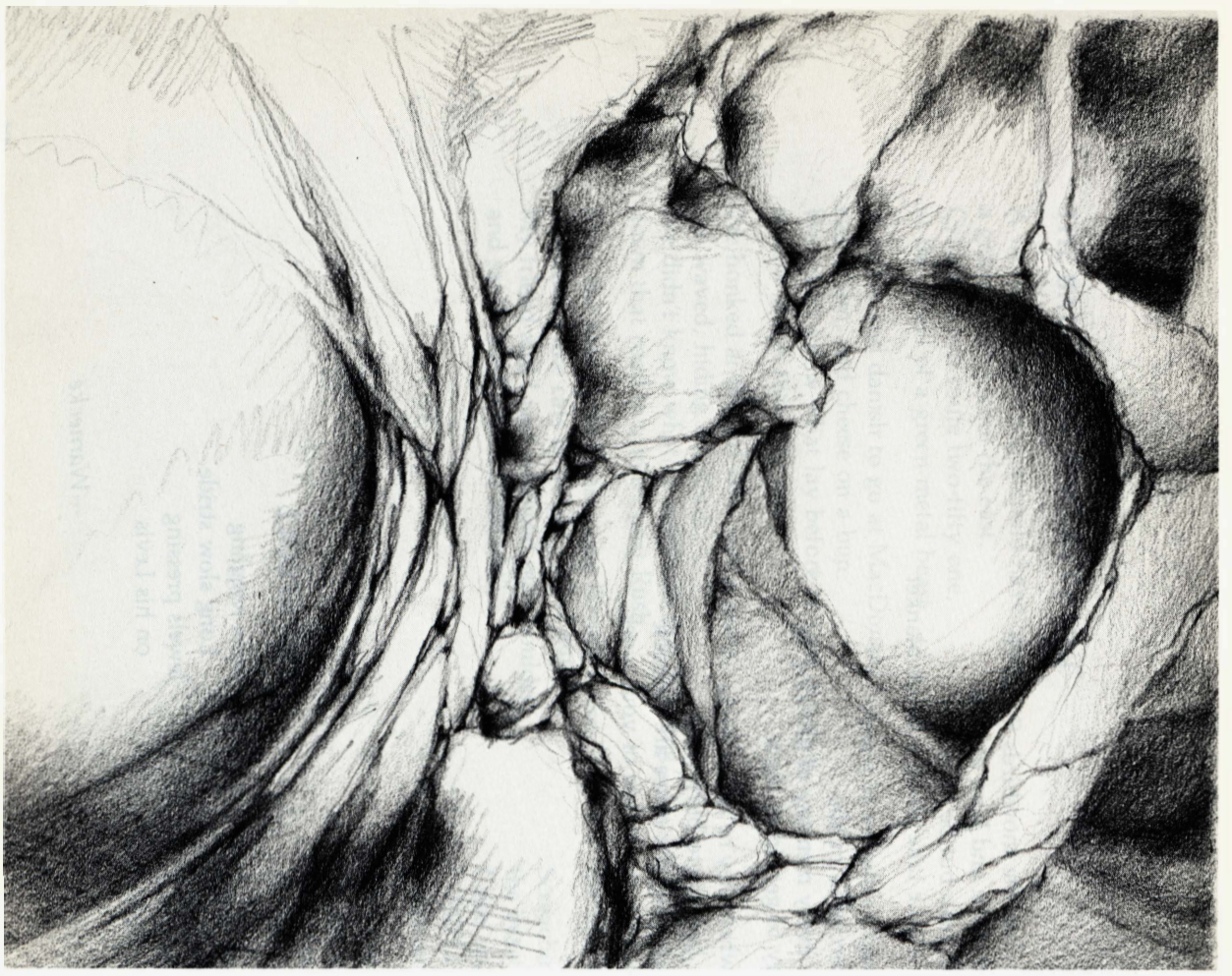
and when they're all on paper
don't hesitate to burn them
because only the ashes are valuable
to the next generation of your work

—Dave Leifer

THE STROLL

Buns wiggling
Long slow stride
Jewels pressing
on his Levis

—Warnecke



OXYGEN

oxygen
acid former

genes — former
oxys — acid

sustained by a spector
a flame's searing heat

life from a hemoglobin cage
oozing red richness

by a broken circle
a circle upon two pillars supported
red haze
I could see through an invisible
but distinctly in 1715
between 1700 and 1730

a flash of light and sound
disturbing instability

fog
fuzzy tethers from an unseen
function
giddy from an alcoholic

few know their functionality
and are transformed
together they transform
titans bound by twin forces

mad gallop across a plain
relieve hot skin
crawl, brush, caress
stagnant when it lays

will'o wisp dream
cannot be held
cannot be seen
cannot be smelled

fill me with phantoms
sweet expansion never fail
nothing rushes past moist lips
breathe in deeply

for we are mostly you
yet retain your dignity
yield and be drawn
fill the earth's pocket

paramagnetism!
multiplicity of anomalies
the sentence declared on this
Hund's ruling
an atmosphere electric with
-incomplete cover
layer upon layer forming an

ah, hydrogen bonding
outward reach, tenuous hold
share
unpaired pair seeking to
bonds to slake thirst

slither along the path of least resistance
more beads gather and coalesce
a clear bead appears and plunges
frigid mantle yields to the sun

soon to be jagged shards
but barring our passage
cruel boundary revealing the world
water frozen in time

such immutable laws
depends on these numbers
all the difference there is
eight, eight, sometimes eight

and all we see is orange dust
cohesion is broken
stealing the sea's currents
enemy to the metal form

silicate reference
boundaries created and made
substantial and real
hard surface which we walk upon

↑
E
N
E
R
G
Y
↑

THE LAST GOODBYE

OFFICE SCENE

INTERIOR, REAL ESTATE OFFICE, NIGHT

There is a desk in the middle of the medium size room. The desk is neat and orderly. On the desk is a neat pile of papers and a telephone. In the middle of the desk is a tape-recorder and a small microphone. Behind the desk next to the wall is a long table. It is messy and disorderly. It has on it an assortment of things; small coffee machine, coffee mugs, papers, magazines and books. Next to the table is a filing cabinet. Above them both, hanging on the wall, is a neat display of drawings and photographs of houses. To the left of the desk is a double hung window. Jack Banyard is dressed in a suit but the jacket is on the back of the chair, his tie has been loosened and the top button of his shirt has been undone. He is thirty-four years old and average build. He is seated at the desk and turns on the tape recorder. He is smoking. He reaches down and pulls out a bottle of liquor from one of the drawers. He pours himself a large straight drink. He continues to smoke and drink.

JACK
(calmly)

Karen, this is my last will and testament as prescribed by law. The date is April twenty fifth at quarter to six in the evening. I'd like to say I am of sound mind and of sound body. I specifically request, by verbal agreement, that my car go to you, Karen, and when your daughter, Jill, turns, sixteen, that one third of my monies remaining go to her. Unless overriding con-

cerns, moneywise, dictate that the car be sold or monies distributed early. I also request that any monies derived from the sale of my personal belongings or anything else I own, ah, go to Ann, meaning Ann, my ex-wife, and my mother. If they need anything my monies should go to them. You will have to be the best judge of that. I think it is important to repeat that I am of sound mind, ah, I am of course ah, very upset and concerned. This is not a happy time for me or a happy decision.

But I do know what I'm doing and only ask that you carry out my will.

Karen, as a postscript to what I just said as I have been able to calm myself a bit, ah, in conjunction with what I signed with my lawyer, that my body be donated for what ever good use it can be put to. Ah, also I ah, I have never told you this before but I love you, Karen. You've always been supportive and helpful and, ah, I'm, ah, I'm going to miss you.

I really want this stuff carried out.

I don't know, how can I leave you? I can't, I can't. I just wish you could help me. Help me put an end to what is going on. I wish you could get rid of this bottle. God knows I've tried. You know you should have stopped me, kept me from drinking, kept me from becoming what I am now. I'm not blaming you Karen, not at all. It's just that something should have

been done. But it's not your fault, it's all me. I don't want Mom to blame you either. I brought it on myself. I know Mom will blame somebody else, she won't think it's me, but she is wrong, it's me.

You know, I think I was a pretty good writer, no, I was a damn good writer, at least I could have been, but it's gone. I should have kept writing. I still have ideas, good ideas. I should be writing. Instead I'm drinking and drinking alot.

You know I'm an alcoholic; a bad one. It just got the better of me. I want the message to get out to alcoholics, they ought to fight back, get help before it's too late.

The bottle has courted me as a friend, it comforted me when I was anxious, it was tranquil, but the damn bottom line is that it suddenly became my owner. It owns me and I hate it. It's the devil in liquid form, nothing else, it's a killer. It's a killer and people ought to know about it and seek help. It got the better of me.

I thought it was important that a public statement be made to that effect and I authorize you to please, please release this to the print media, to the radio media, to whomever will accept it, because I had all the bright prospects in the world, but they're all gone now. I lost a beautiful wife, I lost a career, and I've lost you, Karen.

Alcohol has beaten me. I didn't even know I had a problem. I just thought I could work around it. No way, forget it. It's a master it owns me, it owns me. I just wish it would stop.

INTERIOR, REAL ESTATE OFFICE, DAY

Same office. Jack is seated at the desk. He turns on the tape recorder. He gets up and walks to the filing cabinet. Opens it up and pulls out a bottle of liquor. He walks back to the desk and begins to drink. He is smoking. He gets up and walks to the window for a moment and then walks back and sits down.

JACK

(Calmly)

Karen, it's April twenty-sixth at approximately four o'clock. Um, I guess this is not an easy thing to do or an easy process. Um, but I have hung on this long.

I hope what I have done in terms of contributions, in terms of suggestions to other alcoholics will at least make my presence on this planet worthwhile.

Karen, I need a drink. Karen, I love you and please relate to your daughter I love her too.

You said something not too long ago, almost prophetically, that no matter what happens, I will always be with you. I feel the same way. We've talked about ghosts before, ah, I'm not going to haunt anyone. If I can help somewhere I will and by the way, if you would call Gail Sullivan, she is

a psychic. She knows me well. If she could somehow work with me or through me or whatever she does, that would be fine. I would like that and tell her I have been thinking about Dr. Anderson. She'll know what I mean. Dr. Anderson.

I just received in the mail this morning, a bill from him for three hundred and some odd dollars. He can chase me into the twilight zone for that money. He is the man that told me if I took Vitamin B1, I should continue to drink and see how things went. Any doctor that would prescribe that kind of so-called treatment ought to lose his license if he ever does it again. I did take the Vitamin B1 and I continue to drink, very heavily. Uh, I'm not blaming him specifically but he encouraged my drinking, and it's not right. So please tell Gail, she is aware of Dr. Anderson as a matter of fact, she, ah, told me to stay away from him. I'm not blaming him, I'm not blaming anybody but myself, but to suggest to somebody with an alcohol problem that they take a Vitamin and continue to drink; it's not the best therapy in the world.

Oh, tell Ann, I want her to know she really was a good wife, she was good to me. She left because she had to. It was my drinking she was getting away from. I remember when she left, I felt so angry, she had walked out on me. She didn't understand what was going on. So what

did I do, I got drunk. It was a new excuse, I guess. She kept telling me I drank too much. Well just tell her I still think of her.

You know, there was something I read somewhere or heard somewhere that people that are thinking about ending it all are at peace I don't know if that's true. I think I might do it. My friend the bottle is at bay right now like a wolf ready to pounce. Oh God, do I have any other alternative? I am weary, I am tired and I have to go. Good bye.

He turns off the tape recorder.

INTERIOR, REAL ESTATE OFFICE, NIGHT

Same office. Jack is seated at the desk. He turns on the tape recorder. On the desk is a bottle of liquor half empty and a glass. He remains seated.

JACK

(Calmly a little drunk)

April twenty-seven, five twenty-five, Karen, the agony continues. I can't believe that an hour ago, before I had another drink, or two or three that I would even keep saying that I have. Ah, I am intending to turn the car motor on in the garage tonight, leaving the windows open in the kitchen and pray to God the fumes won't affect you, Karen. Uh, I have thought of everything. It's so frustrating, so frustrating, I regret the day I found the bottle.

Uh, tell Dad that I do care about him

and love him, I forgot to include him in the other tape. Ask Dad why he left. Well you'd better not, Mom will blame Dad. Mom is always blaming somebody else. Um, maybe that's why Dad left. I'm not angry at Dad for leaving, I'm sure he had his reasons. But I wish he had told me why. He never said a word, not one word. And Mom went on as if nothing had happened, business as usual. Don't get me wrong, I really care about my mother, but you know how she is. She couldn't keep this business going by herself. I guess she really needed me to fill in after Dad left. It just took too much time, I couldn't keep writing.

Maybe it won't be tonight I don't know. Good bye.

INTERIOR, REAL ESTATE OFFICE, DAY

Jack is seated on the window sill. He turns on the tape recorder that is in his lap. He walks back to the desk and dials the telephone. He puts it back down on the receiver and it falls over. Jack does not notice. The telephone starts to beep loudly. Jack picks up the phone and puts it down on the receiver gently.

JACK

(somewhat nervous)

Karen, it's now two o'clock on the twenty-eighth. Mom just left for her vacation. That doesn't make matters easier, she should be here. Maybe you could remind her of Rose Kennedy, she has always

admired her, look at all she lost in a very short time and kept on.

I know I need help. Gail gave me this phone number to call to help alcoholics. I don't know, I think I need peace not a phone number. Maybe I'll call them and tell them about this tape, make sure they get the message I want to leave.

I, uh, I got the wrong number. I'm so tired of this. I can't believe I've had almost a quart of booze and it's only 2:00. It's sucking me in.

He turns off the tape recorder.

INTERIOR, LIVING ROOM, DAY

The tape recorder is sitting in the middle of a wooden coffee table in the middle of the living room. It is a middle class, somewhat formal living area. Jack is seated on a couch with a painting behind him. There are chairs around him to either side. There is a large picture window in front of him. It all looks new and contemporary. Jack is dressed casually with a flannel shirt, jeans and boots. Jack remains seated on the couch. He is smoking steadily.

JACK

(peaceful)

It is April Twenty-nine at 1:15 p.m. I can't believe that after waking up this morning how very ill I got from withdrawal. Uh, that I'm still rationally discussing anything.

I've had a couple of business transactions over the telephone. Um, what really amazes me is that I nearly com-

mitted suicide by turning on the car last night. I almost did it, and you know my mind is still alive and alert and I'm still functioning.

You know I almost think that for some reason there is a purpose in everyone's life and death.

It is unbelievable, I'm sitting in your living room calm and at rest, Jill is in the backyard with a friend, everything seems O.K. I almost feel good. But I can think of nothing but this problem. It is on my mind continuously, I can think of nothing else. Yet I have not snapped. I am still very lucid, very frightened, but very lucid.

Jack turns off the tape recorder.

INTERIOR, LIVING ROOM, DAY

Same living room. Jack is seated in the middle of the couch with a full glass sitting next to the tape recorder. He is smoking steadily. He gets up and walks around the living room for a moment then walks out into another room, comes back and sits down.

JACK
(nervously)

It's about four fifteen. You'll be home soon, I hope this is my last entry because I'm so tired. I don't get it, Karen. What is this life all about? I've spent thirty-four years trying to figure it out. I mean, it must be purgatory, it has to be a purgatory. Why would millions of Jews be thrown into ovens? I don't understand the

pain, the suffering. I read today, you know in the paper where a teenager suffocated on alcohol. Jesus I mean, what the hell is going on here? Oh, my God. It can't go on. Karen, I've decided I have to end it now. I can't believe but I'm going to kill myself.

Karen, I forgot that Jill and her friend are still out back they would hear the car start up and avert what must be done now. So I guess I must resort to razor blades. I don't know, I just don't want to end up in some looney bin somewhere, a vegetable. But I don't want to be here. I need peace. I need peace. I don't want to be on this earth anymore.

Karen, my options are closed. I've got to do this once and for all. I don't think I want to do it, but I have to. I've opted for razor blades, there are too many people floating around on a nice day like today. God willing, this will be a new beginning for me. I am so beat, so beat. God have mercy on my soul, I only want peace. I'm sorry to lay all this heavy stuff on you, but I know you will accept it in the spirit that it is presented. I hope this is the last goodbye and I'm sorry to do all this to you.

CUT TO:

BLACK
MTC OUT!

—Mark Spitzer

symptoms and signs of the disease.

The following table shows the results of the

investigation conducted in the year 1910.

After a period of 10 days the results were

and compared with the results of the

which were in the year 1909.

The results of the investigation in the

year 1910 are as follows:

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year 1910 are as follows:

sym-po-sium /sim-po'-ze-əm n, pl **sia** [l, fr. Gk *symposion*, fr. *sympinein* to drink together, fr. *syn* + *pinein* to drink] **1a**: a convivial party (as after a banquet in ancient Greece) with music and conversation **b**: a social gathering at which there is free interchange of ideas.

Final Word

We were pleased with the quality of writing, and art work in this issue and would like to thank all those who submitted work to Symposium, and apologize for not being able to publish everything.

If you write, draw, or take pictures; if you're beginning to feel reddish and rectangular, and want to express yourself; if you would like to have your work published, then let us know about it. We are beginning to take submissions for the spring issue—which is guaranteed to be a blast, no kidding—and you can submit your work through the Symposium mail folder in the Student Directorate office. The deadline for the spring issue is Friday April 9th.

A special thanks to John Pask, Editor of Techmila, and the Techmila staff for their continuing support of Symposium.





Winter, 1982

This issue of Symposium is dedicated to Solidarity and the captive people of Poland.