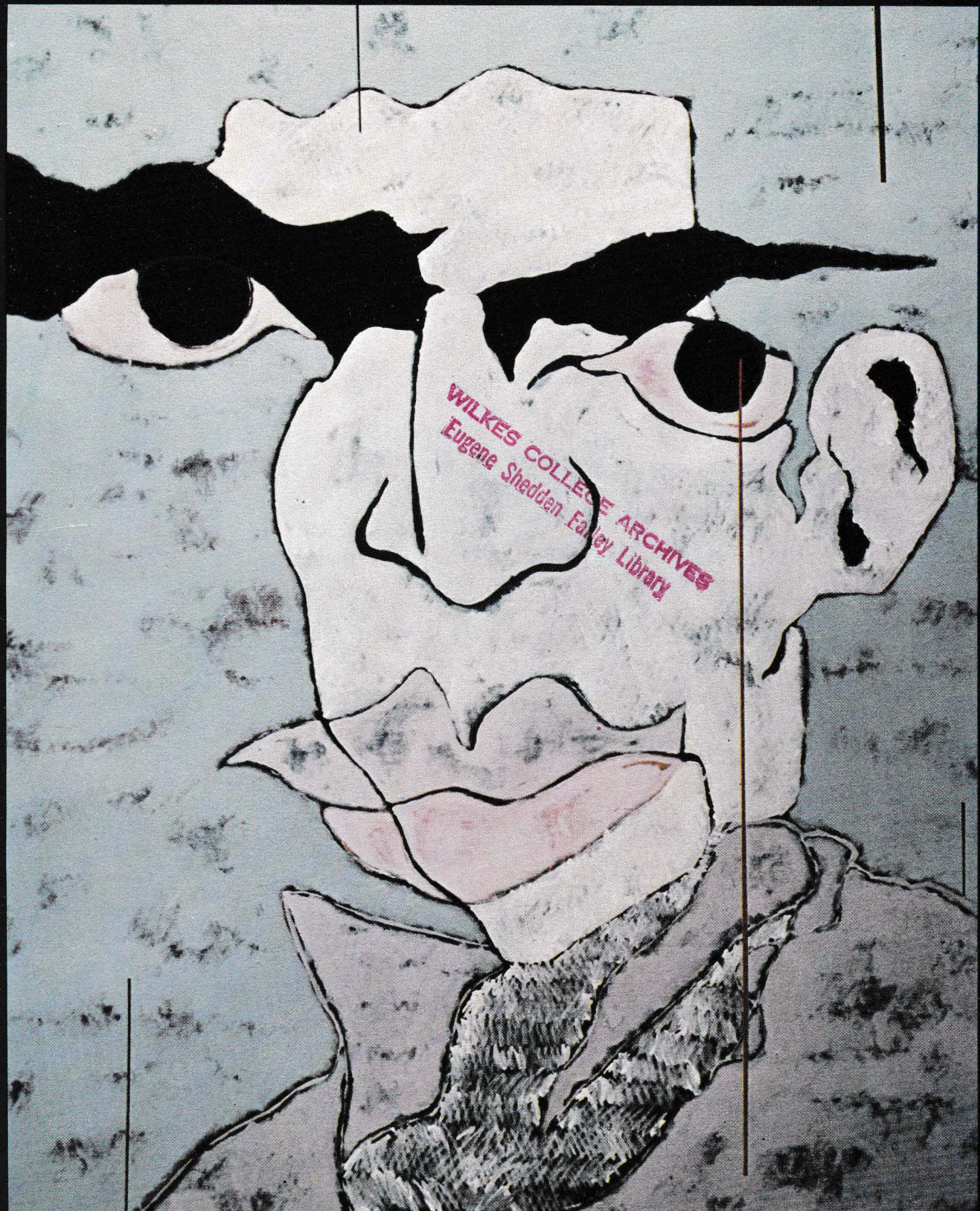


WILKES COLLEGE ARCHIVES
Eugene Shedden-Farley Library



MANUSCRIPT

WILKES COLLEGE ARCHIVES
Eugene Shedden Farley Library

Copyright© 1983 by the Manuscript Society. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher: Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766


Vol. XXXVI
MCMLXXXIII

CONTENTS

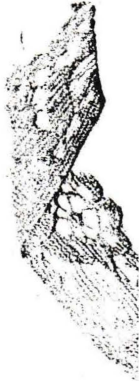
<i>Poem of Silence</i>	Anna Mae Stanley	1
<i>Blackberry Wine</i>	Henry E. Long	2
<i>New Season</i>	Fred Gerhard	2
<i>The Assembly Line</i>	Donna K. Scott	2
<i>I am the Cheese of an Omelet Turnover</i>	Henry E. Long	2
<i>from In the Words I Write</i>	Joanne Dal Sasso	3
<i>Nice Games</i>	Donna K. Scott	4
<i>City Fires</i>	Stephen Badman	4
<i>Profile</i>	Henry E. Long	5
<i>Low Noon of the 20th Century</i>	Laura Garber	6
<i>The Sinners of the Second Circle</i>	Henry E. Long	7
<i>Senility</i>	Henry E. Long	7
<i>Untitled</i>	Jill P. Whitehead	7
<i>Arches</i>	Beth Kaplan	8
<i>The Last Performance of the Amazing Mango</i>	Henry E. Long	9
<i>Blue Period Picasso</i>	Henry E. Long	12
<i>Nude in a Chair</i>	Henry E. Long	13
<i>from In the Words I Write</i>	Joanne Dal Sasso	14
<i>Untitled</i>	Daria Morris	15
<i>Summer of the Flood</i>	Anna Mae Stanley	16
<i>If Only the Dying Awake</i>	Daria Morris	18
<i>Untitled</i>	Daria Morris	19
<i>Untitled</i>	Daria Morris	23
<i>Henry Ford Museum</i>	Henry E. Long	25
<i>Untitled</i>	Beth Kaplan	26
<i>Tracing the Edges</i>	Henry E. Long	26
<i>Curtain Call</i>	Joanne Dal Sasso	26
<i>Study of The Adventure of Silver Blaze</i> by Sydney Paget	Thomas Pilch	27
<i>The Atlantis Generation</i>	Henry E. Long	28
<i>The Carnation</i>	Joanne Dal Sasso	29
<i>Gallery From Three to Six</i>	Belinda Hausenbold	30
<i>Eyeorism</i>	Laura Garber	30
<i>Untitled</i>	Belinda Hausenbold	30
<i>To a Dying Season</i>	Anna Mae Stanley	31
<i>Sock, Tie, and Soul</i>	Henry E. Long	32
<i>Untitled</i>	Terry McCoog	33
<i>"Me Again"</i>	Clyde A. Solt	34
<i>Untitled</i>	Belinda Hausenbold	35
<i>Fall on the River</i>	Belinda Hausenbold	35
<i>The Hand-Illusioned Dog</i>	Henry E. Long	36
<i>"I Never Realized . . ."</i>	Sean P. Connolly	38
<i>Van Gogh 1958</i>	Henry E. Long	39
<i>Cages</i>	Amy Elias	40
<i>For Amy</i>	Henry E. Long	41
<i>Christmas</i>	Henry E. Long	42
<i>River At Sunset</i>	Anna Mae Stanley	43



Poem of Silence



In winter a few trees
hold leaves waving
through slate blue sky,
like bodies of children's hands
untangling knotted wind.



The rain falls as mist
thinly swelling pores
of a softened riverbank,
clinging as a soft tongue
to my mouth,
making no sound
upon street or grass.

Beyond a yellow line of river bank,
a blended strip of russet and ochre trees
flows below the edge of sky
like a fray of lace.

Curled leaves scream
a wash of brown
and faded red
into hardened sky.

I imagine the voices of leaves
as I pick their faded bodies
from branches.

They talk to the silent hollows
we named hands.

One morning in winter
my hands will wander
to a tree of leaves.
The cardinals
within it
silence the words
my throat longs to release.

That morning
my hands will sing
in wind like leaves,
but the song will be unheard.

Anna Mae Stanley

Blackberry Wine

Blackberry Wine,
And the ice kisses like tinsel
The edge of my glass, like
Wind chimes in a Japanese Garden,
Where children laugh quietly,
And older, white haired philosophers
Drink Blackberry Wine.

Henry E. Long.

NEW SEASON

Sound of brown leaves
Scraping the windy curbs
And the sounds of bicycle chains
Changing gears
The smell of a new season
In the clear air.
It's the heartbeat of a day
With nothing to do.

Fred Gerhard

I AM THE CHEESE OF AN OMELET TURNOVER

I heard my father call out in his sleep
From another dream.
He was calling for my mother.
She sleeps with him in the same bed.
"THERESA!" he called out in his sleep,
And it woke him up when he did that.
It woke up my mother, too.
"It's okay, I'm right here,"
She said gently to him in the middle of the night.
I bleed in my sleep for that moment in the middle of the night.

Henry E. Long

the assembly line

one
two
three
name please
take a seat
any questions
blood test
blood pressure
temperature
time
time
time
please strip from the waist down
the doctor will see you now
simple procedure
5 minute cramp
okay that's it
so damn easy
in and out
no scars to see
only to remember

Donna K. Scott

from
IN THE WORDS I WRITE

God, this isn't working. What am I doing here? Nothing, that's what. Obviously. I stared down at the blank page. I stared at the clock. It had been almost two hours. I had been sitting there at that desk for one hour, 43 minutes, and . . .

And daydreaming. Beyond the window, life continued on in a steady, unaltering, maddening stream. There's a loose manhole cover in my road. How many cars have passed over it in the past one hour and 43 . . . 44 minutes? 37. And 16 trucks. Five of those 37 were Volkswagens. They have a distinctive sound. I remember once, in Junior High School, we were supposed to walk around outside the school with tape recorders and record every sound we heard. A music class, wasn't it? Sounds are music, the teacher had told us. Music is art. Art is beautiful.

Volkswagens are beautiful.

Manholes are beautiful.

That girl in fifth period music appreciation class is beautiful. And pregnant.

I want to be pregnant someday. I want to be a stereotype. I want to be boring. Not being boring bores me to tears. I want to be average. I want to marry an average man with an average job. I want to have blue-eyed babies and I want to live in suburbia. I want to drive a station wagon. I want to rotate my tires. I want to shop for groceries.

I want to hate my mother-in-law.

I hate only myself.

No, that's too strong. I pull that page from the typewriter, crumble it, and toss it toward the wastebasket. I miss.

I always seem to miss. I miss a lot. When I was little my mother was a housewife. I came home from school for lunch every day. She'd be there. I miss having someone at home waiting for me. I miss the sound of the washer's spin cycle and the smell of ironing clothes. I don't want to eat whatever I want to eat whenever I want to eat it. I want responsibility. I want to have to feed the cat and wash the dishes. Mow the lawn. Clean your room. Fold the wash. Do your homework.

Ever wonder why I left home?

Yes. Often.

Oh, God. I'm doing it again. I rip that page out as well.

What am I trying to write anyway? What am I trying to say?

Everyone has a story to tell. There are millions of stories in the naked . . .

In the morning, he climbed out of the bed, waking her up as he did.

"You're leaving?" she asked sleepily.

"Have to," he answered, leaning over to kiss her on the forehead. "Some of us have to get to work."

From the bed, she watched as his lean body disappeared into his jeans, a flannel shirt. He sat on the bed to put on his shoes.

"You coming back?"

She knew he was. Not tonight though. Tonight, he would be with his wife. His kids. In his suburban home.

"What do you tell her?" she asked him now. "Your wife."

"Come on. We've been through all that before."

They had. He told his wife the truth. His wife told him the truth. Both were discreet about their affairs. They stayed together for the children.

Not bad. That's really not too bad . . .

It's awful. If there are really millions of stories in this city, why can't I find one? One that doesn't hit so close to home.

I grab the top of the page in one hand, yank it out and crumble it up all in one quick movement. I'm getting very good at it. And my garbage can is getting very full.

Today's Friday. Friday nights are the worst. Tonight, he'll be at a Cub Scouts talent show being a good father and a loving husband. And being laughed at behind his back because everyone knows about me.

Saturday mornings are pretty rough, too. I wake up in no one's arms. But I live such an exciting life. I'm anything but boring. Yet that's what bores me the most. No matter what the routine, it's still routine. Every day, I get up, I go to the bathroom, I exercise. I hate to exercise.

I hate my bathroom mirror. Because every day, I get older.

The only thing I don't like about being alone is the company. I talk to myself a lot. I don't listen very often. I don't like myself very much. I don't like my lifestyle. I don't enjoy what I do for a living.

I was in a library recently. The young girl across the table was reading my latest novel. She paused. She looked up at me. "Boy, this is great," she said. "This woman is some writer. I wish I knew her."

"Yes," I responded. "So do I."

"She writes so well," the girl continued. "It's obvious she loves writing."

It fascinates me sometimes to learn what people see in the words I write. It makes me wonder about William Shakespeare and T.S. Eliot and Alexander Pope. What did they see in their own words? Did they really mean to throw in all those hidden meanings? Or are we just grasping at straws? Products of our own over-imaginative minds?

My mind isn't over-imaginative. I have no imagination at all. I only write what is. I have no concern for what could be. Wishing doesn't make it so.

I wish I could get some of this down on paper . . .

Joanne Dal Sasso

City Fires

Though you say I am reckless
And you watch me take chances
And you see me flirt with danger
And come close to injury
In tight situations,
When you call me on the telephone
I will be at home to answer.
But
When you call your friend
You know, the nice one who
Only goes out with boys who wear ties
And takes no chances
And is very careful
Who goes to work
And then home.
She will be dead
Because some idiot
On the floor below her
Burned down the apartment building.

Stephen Badman

Nice Games

we argued
like bored siamese cats
exchanging empty scratches
never tooth and nail
such considerate lovers

"I want you to tie me to the bed," you
said in a moment of deep passion.

"What?" I laughed.

"Really?" I laughed.

"You aren't kidding."

So . . . I got up

went into the next room

came back with a simple electric cord

tied you very slowly . . . neatly

You smiled

pleased with me

I plugged you into the wall.

nice games

nice games.

Donna K. Scott



HEL

Low Noon of the 20th Century
(A Variation on Ferlinghetti)

Low noon of the 20th century
some dudes get together
and their godfather
who tells 'em all he's boss
is some kind of housepainter
with a weird lipbrush
like Charlie Chaplin
and he wants
and says he's Top Dude
who knows who has the white hats
and who has the black
and that guy
who's in it with him
is some Italian Stallion
But
he had writ
all this stuff down
in some book about his struggles
while some turkeys
kept an eye on him
for a couple of years
and when he got out
he started preaching all his lessons
to anyone
tired and desperate enough
to listen
and they make 6000 thou
shuffle to the showers
but those white sheep
of his flock
still follow.
You're our savior
they tell him
and they ask him to save them
His signature to them is the Pinwheel
and all of them
wore what he wore
that Pinwheel
that graced their biceps
and saluted with his name
while they invited
the world
to jam with them
with him playing King Shit
because without him
their scripts won't cut
but the world didn't learn
their parts
'cause they're going
by their own script
so this King
blows his Pinwheel
away
keeping up his deal to
win
or
die.

Laura Garber

The snow rested lightly on my hat
like an embalmer's hands on my body.
Sucking me in, molding me to the desired form.
My icy tears melted in the snow.
"I never cry!" I shouted.
The snow painted me white with a
Glistening eye and I thought
"I could live like this."
Cocooned in a shroud, I walked,
Sneakers enveloped with snow.
Trees, strong and silent, surround me —
Encouraged me to be as they were.
I stopped to consider a pine,
And slowly, a root twisted and grew in my breast.
I yield growth to security
Forgiveness to doubt.
I once knew a man who saw the world with love,
And then went blind.
"It is finished," I cried, swaying slightly with the wind,
And the snow avoided my gnarled form.

Jill P. Whitehead

THE SINNERS OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

Like Dante beholding his Virgil I stand,
Open mouthed
And one foot in front of me . . .
She is only 6 or 7 years old,
But
She is beautiful
She is the most perfect thing
In my Paradise Lost,
And she has found me!
Between us stands only my foot
And . . .
And if I were 6 again,
I would fill my days in play,
And never fear infernos.

Henry E. Long

Senility

Senility is a Wisk commerical
On every Goddamn channel you turn to.

Henry E. Long



BETH KAPLAN — "ARCHES"

THE LAST PERFORMANCE OF THE AMAZING MANGO

(FOR ANN S.)

“... and now boys and girls, I am pleased to present to you, the one and the only, the Amazing Mango!” announced Sister Carmella, I.H.M., the top nun at Saint Leo’s Catholic Elementary School. Sister Carmella was a tiny, thirty-eight year old woman with a somewhat pretty white face and sparkling blue eyes. Her face would have been a lot prettier if she didn’t have cancer all over the right side of it, but that is what led her to become a nun in the first place.

All the children clapped as the Amazing Mango appeared on the squeaky floored stage in the school’s gym, which was also used as the school’s auditorium. The magician was wearing the usual magician’s clothing, complete with a black top hat, a black velvet cape, and a pair of shiny black shoes. His face was a pale paper bag, and his tiny, too-close-together grey eyes blinked out above his twisted, tightly lipped smile, which peeked out from beneath his Daniel J. Floodish waxed moustache.

He looked like a Slim Whitman clone gone bad.

“Thank you, Sister Carmella,” he said, stepping up to the microphone and magically making a multicolored bouquet of paper flowers appear. He tossed the flowers to the nun. She dropped them. The Amazing Mango then got right into his magic act, performing a series of simple, Uncle Teddish tricks. These included the all-time favorite “Dove from the Handkerchief,” the legendary “Sands of Egypt,” and, of course, Mango’s own unique contribution, “The Flaming Bunny.”

Mostly of the children were amazed.

A few of them were simply bored out of their Catholic Elementary minds.

The magician then continued with more tricks of illusion, until he finally came to the highlight of his show. The act, he had told the audience, was a dangerous one, and he said that he had been perfecting it for the past forty years.

Yes! Now, for the first time, Saint Leo’s Catholic Elementary School would witness the Amazing Mango’s Hypnotic Powers!

“... the power of CONTROLLING PEOPLE’S MINDS,” the magician spoke in an impressive Rod Serlingesque voice, “has interested man for thousands of years. After years and years of disciplined practice, I, the Amazing Mango, have become a MASTER OF HYPNOTISM, and within a few moments, one of you out there WILL BE HYPNOTIZED.”

Wink, the custodian at Saint Leo’s Catholic Elementary School, was now fixing an eerie red light down upon the Amazing from the balcony above the gym. This was for special effects. He was also drinking from a pint of OLD GRANDDAD. This was not for special effects. This was because Wink was also an alcoholic. He enjoyed working at Saint Leo’s because there really wasn’t much work that had to be done, and he also was the type of man who always had to be doing something with his hands.

He also had an uncommon affection for little Catholic girls.

The Magician’s voice grew darker and much more serious as he continued with the introduction, and he told the good Catholic boys and girls that they shouldn’t try this on their own, and that the subconscious mind is a terrible thing to mess around in, and that only a professional such as himself should do this.

Most of the nuns were amazed.

Sister Carmella was standing off to the side of the stage behind a red curtain, smiling and waiting for her cue to go on. It seemed that Mango and the nun had planned earlier that she would be the volunteer for his hypnotism act, and that she would simply fake it. The Amazing Mango could not control anyone’s mind.

Not even his own.

“Let’s see, I’m going to need a volunteer for this . . .,” the magician said.

Just as he was about to say, “No volunteers? Okay, how about YOU, Sister Carmella?” and just as Sister Carmella was about to step out onto the stage and say, “Who, me? Why, I don’t know . . . children, do you think I should?” just as she and the magician had rehearsed, little nine-year-old Billy Benson came running up on stage yelling “ME! ME! I’LL VOLUNTEER! PICK MEEEE!”

Billy was always amazed by magic, and now he would be an honest to goodness MAGICIAN’S ASSISTANT.

The nun and the magician were quite stunned. They hadn’t really expected anyone to come running up on stage like that, and they gave each other the universal sign of, “Shit — what do we do now?” Sister Carmella, realizing that they couldn’t go through with what they had planned, rolled her hand in front of her for Mango to keep on going.

“Well,” Mango nervously twitched, “I see we have a rather eager little volunteer here.” Mango was furious. He hated children. He hated children because he couldn’t trust them, and they always questioned things. He wanted nothing more than to kick the little intruder in the groin and send him back to where he came from. But he was getting paid for all this, and he needed the money, so he continued. “And what is your name, young man?”

“BILLY!” the young man said loudly, reaching his little red-headed, freckled, Howdy Doodyish face into the feed-backing microphone.

“Well, Billy, are you sure you want to go through with this?” said Mango, hoping somehow to discourage the boy.

“YOU BET I DO!” proudly exclaimed Billy.

"Have a seat," the magician said, pointing to a folding chair on stage, "and try to relax. I have to get my Magic Hypnotic Wand."

Billy sat down in the folding chair that was directly behind him and began making funny faces at the audience and playing with his clip-on tie.

Wink was taking another swig of OLD GRANDDAD, and laughing to himself in little chorts. He noticed the bottle was nearly empty.

He also noticed fourth-grade Kathy Little, who had passed by the balcony entrance on the way to the rest rooms. Wink smiled and got up. He set the special effects light on white.

The Amazing Mango ran over to Sister Carmella and asked quietly, "What should I do, Sister?"

"I don't think you have anything to really worry about. That's Billy Benson you have out there — the school's class clown. He'll just go along with whatever you do."

The magician sighed helplessly and returned to the stage wearing a black Mystic Turban on his head, and holding a special Hypnotic Wand.

Billy had already begun to get laughs from the children in the audience, and even from some of the nuns. This was an opportunity for him to act funny and not get slapped for it. The Amazing Mango came over to Billy and said, "Now, Billy, you have to be very serious about this. I will need your total concentration. You must pay close attention to my words, or else the Hypnotic Powers will not work."

The audience was silent, all of their eyes watching the little boy and the magician.

"When I count ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE . . ., you will close your eyes tightly, and you will not be able to open them. Do you understand?"

"Yes," said Billy.

"ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE."

Billy's eyes squeaked shut, and the audience went, "Ohhh!"

Mango smiled, happy that all was going smooth so far. He waved his wand over Billy's head and said, "Now, Billy, try to open your eyes."

"I . . . I can't," Billy said as his eye muscles wrinkled.

"Very good. Now you are beginning to feel very sleepy. You are getting so tired, and you want to go right to bed and fall fast asleep."

". . . very tired . . .," mumbled Billy.

"When I count ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE . . ., you will go into a deep, deep sleep, but you will still be able to hear my words. Do you understand?"

". . . yessss . . .," said Billy, sleepily.

The magician waved his Hypnotic Wand and said, "ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE."

Billy's face went blank, and he slouched over in the folding chair. More "Ohhh's" came from the audience. Sister Carmella shook her head back and forth in a manner which displayed her disapproval with Billy's obvious faking. She did not realize that she would be doing just about the same thing right now.

A gleam entered Mango's eyes. Billy was convincing, and the Magician began to feel in control again. He looked at the hunched-over little boy, and touching the red ruby in the center of his black Mystic Turban said, "Billy, when I count ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE . . ., you will wake from your deep sleep. But you will not awake as the person you think you are . . . you will awake as a DOG!"

"Oh, Jesus," Sister Carmella said aloud, knowing that Billy would take this one as far as he could go.

"ONE . . . TWO . . . THREE . . ."

Billy jumped off his folding chair and onto the stage floor on his hands and knees. His red-haired head arched up, and out of his mouth came a very convincing "BARK!" He then strutted about the stage sniffing and barking just like a dog.

The audience was laughing hysterically.

Kathy Little was not laughing. She was not in the audience, but she was in the girl's lavatory and could hear all the laughter. She was upset that she was missing it all, but she really had to go bad.

She heard a noise outside the bathroom and the sound of laughter grew louder as the bathroom door was opened.

Sister Carmella had the urge to run up behind Billy and slap him severely on the back of the head and scream, "Mister Benson! What do you think you're doing?!" but she remembered that it was all an act, and no harm was really being done.

Mango was excited over his new accomplishment, and for a moment, actually believed that he did hypnotize Billy. "Billy!" he said, "You see a fuzzy kitten running across the stage! ONE! TWO! THREE!"

Billy immediately sprang up, and with wide eyes and a tilted head, stared intently at the suggested kitten. He opened wide his mouth, exposing all of his little white teeth, and growled just like a dog. He then bolted across the stage with sharp twists and turns that were simply amazing, even to Mango.

"RUFF! RUFF! RUFF! RUFF!" said Billy.

Some of the audience believed that Billy was under the Magician's hypnotic control. Most of the audience believed that Billy was a wonderful actor for a fourth-grader. Sister Carmella had noticed the white rabbit from Mango's Flaming Bunny act, which had somehow gotten loose and was now atop the Magician's prop table.

Billy noticed it, too.

He suddenly leaped up onto the table, and with a gaping mouth and wolf-like howl, sunk his jaws into the white furry flesh of the little bunny rabbit. He picked it up with his mouth and violently shook it back and forth, splattering pieces of bunny organs and blood all over the place.

"Oh, my God!" said the Amazing Mango, looking on in disbelief, "I have the Power! I HAVE THE POWER!"

Sister Carmella rushed over screaming, "That's Enough! THAT'S ENOUGH!"

Everybody in the audience was saying things like, "yeech!" and "yweewh!" and "bleeck!" A few of the people in the audience, mostly the sixth-graders from Sister Charlene's homeroom, were saying things like "Fake! Fake!" and "Who's he trying to kid? — It's all FAKE!"

"You've gone too far this time, Mister Benson!" screamed Sister Carmella, who was about to strike him severely on the back of the head. Billy opened his bloody mouth, letting the still-quivering bunny plop onto the table, and then onto the floor with a shredded splat. He lunged out at the nun, and bit her Catholic Elementary hand.

Sister Carmella screamed.

So did the Audience.

So did Kathy Little, as Wink ripped open the bathroom stall door behind which she was sitting, with his pants down around his ankles and a screw-driver in his hand.

Billy spit out the nun's middle finger and angrily growled with a bubbling, spurting-red mouth of white fur. The good sister fainted on the stage, and a few nuns in the audience took off to call an ambulance. On the way to the phone, they were saying "Hail Marys" and "Oh, Jesus Christs".

The sixth-graders were now all shouting, "FAKE! FAKE! FAKE!" at the disillusioned Mango, who had by now separated himself from the scene and was concentrating on his hypnotic powers. "What!? I'm no fake, you little BASTARDS! I AM THE AMAZING MANGO!" The sixth-graders were joined by the fifth-graders, and soon, most of the audience was making a mockery of the poor magician.

"WHAT A FAKE! WHAT A PHONY!!!"

Kathy Little wasn't screaming. She had Wink's hand over her tiny mouth, and Wink's heavy, fifty-seven-year-old fat body on top of hers. She was also crying. She had never been raped before, and she was very very frightened. The booming noises and screaming from the gym made it seem like a terrible dream, and the pain of the screw-driver pressing against her neck was making her pass out.

During all the mass havoc on the stage, Billy, still on his hands and knees, made his way off the back stage and out the school gym by way of a fire escape. He ran on all fours away from Saint Leo's Catholic Elementary School.

"Call me a fake, will you?" the magician yelled back at the near-rioting audience. "I'll show you! I'LL SHOW YOU ALL!!!" He raised his hands in the air and rolled his eyes back into their sockets. With incredible concentration and a trembling, sweating body, he screamed, "YOU ARE ALL A BUNCH OF FILTHY, STINKING, RABID RATS! ONE-TWO-THREE!!!!!!!"

Instantly the audience stood still, with everyone just looking at one another. Within seconds, the gym was full of children and Sisters biting and chewing each other to death, just like a bunch of rats.

Kathy Little heard Mango's command as well, and with bulging brown eyes and opened mouth, dug her jaws into the fat neck of the drunken Wink, ripping apart his jugular vein and voice box in one mighty chomp. Wink didn't even get a chance to scream.

The Catholic boys and girls had now jumped up on the stage and were devouring the Amazing Mango. All the Sisters were suffering the same fate. Sister Carmella was in the stomachs of her students.

The Ashley ambulance whizzed around the corner on two wheels. At that moment, the drivers heard a "BUMP! THUDDA-THUDDA BUMP!!!" from beneath the vehicle.

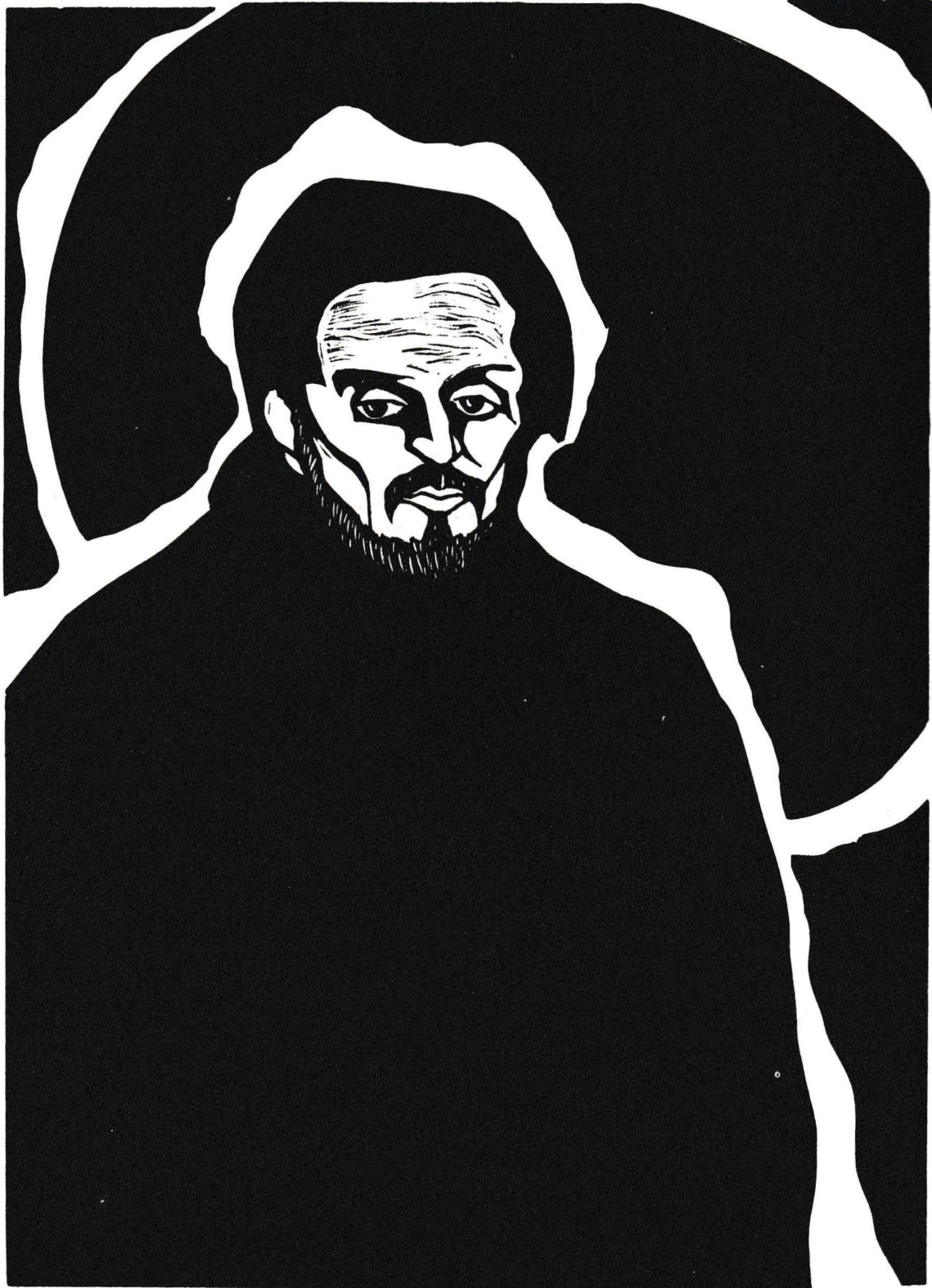
"DAMN! I think we hitta dog!" said one of the volunteer ambulance men.

"Don't worry about it now — we'll take care of it when we're through at Saint Leo's. They've got a real mess on their hands — one of the students bit a nun's finger off, and then he went on a rampage!" said the other man.

"That's nuts! A nun getting her finger bit off by a student! JEEZ! That's the whole trouble with kids today — lack of discipline!" said the driver as he pulled up at Saint Leo's Catholic Elementary School.

THE END

Henry E. Long



HENRY E. LONG — "BLUE PERIOD PICASSO"



"NUDE IN A CHAIR"

from
IN THE WORDS I WRITE

It was so typical. Cliched, in fact. So why did it make me cry? It must have been the look on the girl's face. Obviously, they were lovers. Maybe something just didn't work out. I watched them hug; he spoke softly to her for a moment, stared into her eyes for another moment, kissed her on the cheek.

He boarded the bus. Found his place in the stream of people waiting to leave, handed his ticket to the driver, and climbed the steep steps to take his seat. She stood back, away from the rest of the well-wishers, alone. Probably, she couldn't even see him through the tinted windows. She didn't even try, just stared straight ahead.

She didn't cry.

I did.

It's little things like that that knock me for a loop. That's my weak point. My Achilles' heel. Just when I finally think I have it all together, something like this happens and I start to think about all of life's unfairness and miseries. Sitting in a painfully plastic Greyhound-terminal chair waiting for my bus to wherever I'm going, I often find myself reaching for my pen and notebook to capture some of the pain in a girl's eyes or some of the raindrops that, of course, had to fall on this day after a two-week-long dry spell. But just as often, I stop and close the pen, the notebook. Scenes like this just can't be done justice to from my impersonal distance. Even more often, just as I bring out my monogrammed, Christmas present pen, a voice announces that my bus is about to leave and would I please have my ticket ready when I board. It's just as well. There's really no story to write here.

And as I watch him ride away, watch her turn to go home, I realize that that's the biggest shame of all. That there's nothing left to say.

Where does one go when there's nothing left? What do I write when I have no more to write? How did it all come to an end without my even noticing? All writers have their little tricks to keep the story moving and keep their characters from lapsing into boredom and having to leave town or turn to crime or pass away. I employ no tricks. Except maybe that I write in fragments. Sometimes. It keeps me moving on to the next idea without having to commit myself to a whole new sentence. Just one more word. Or two. And another after that. But someday, I fear that I'm going to run out of words. And rather than risk being repetitious or boring, I fear that I will have to leave town or turn to crime. Or pass away.

We'll all die someday. I once told someone that I'm not as young as I used to be. He said, "But you're not as old as you're going to be." He was a real funny guy. And he was right. And he's the one who started me taking risks, fighting to get what I want.

"When are you going to take a chance?"

"Maybe never."

He's the one who said that was crazy. And he's the one who died when his chute didn't open.

It's all the same. Either you grow older and older until you accept the fact that you can't live much longer or you grab every challenge that comes your way and accept the consequences when you're twenty-four years old. Or twenty-five. Or forty-five. Or sixty-two.

Or ten.

Or four.

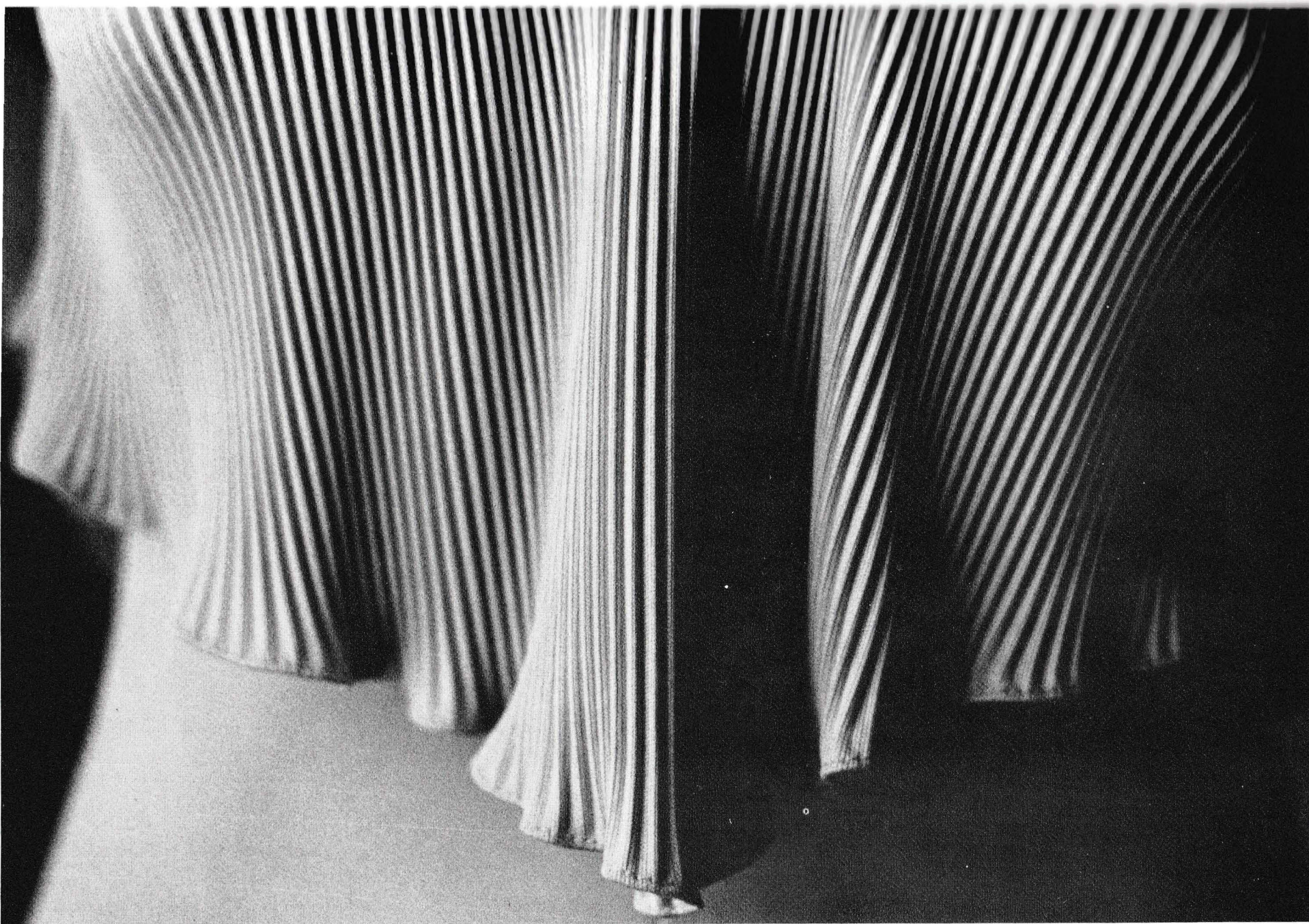
"I've told her not to play with matches! I've told her so often! I can't understand . . .!"

"We did everything we could, Mrs. Smith. I'm sorry."

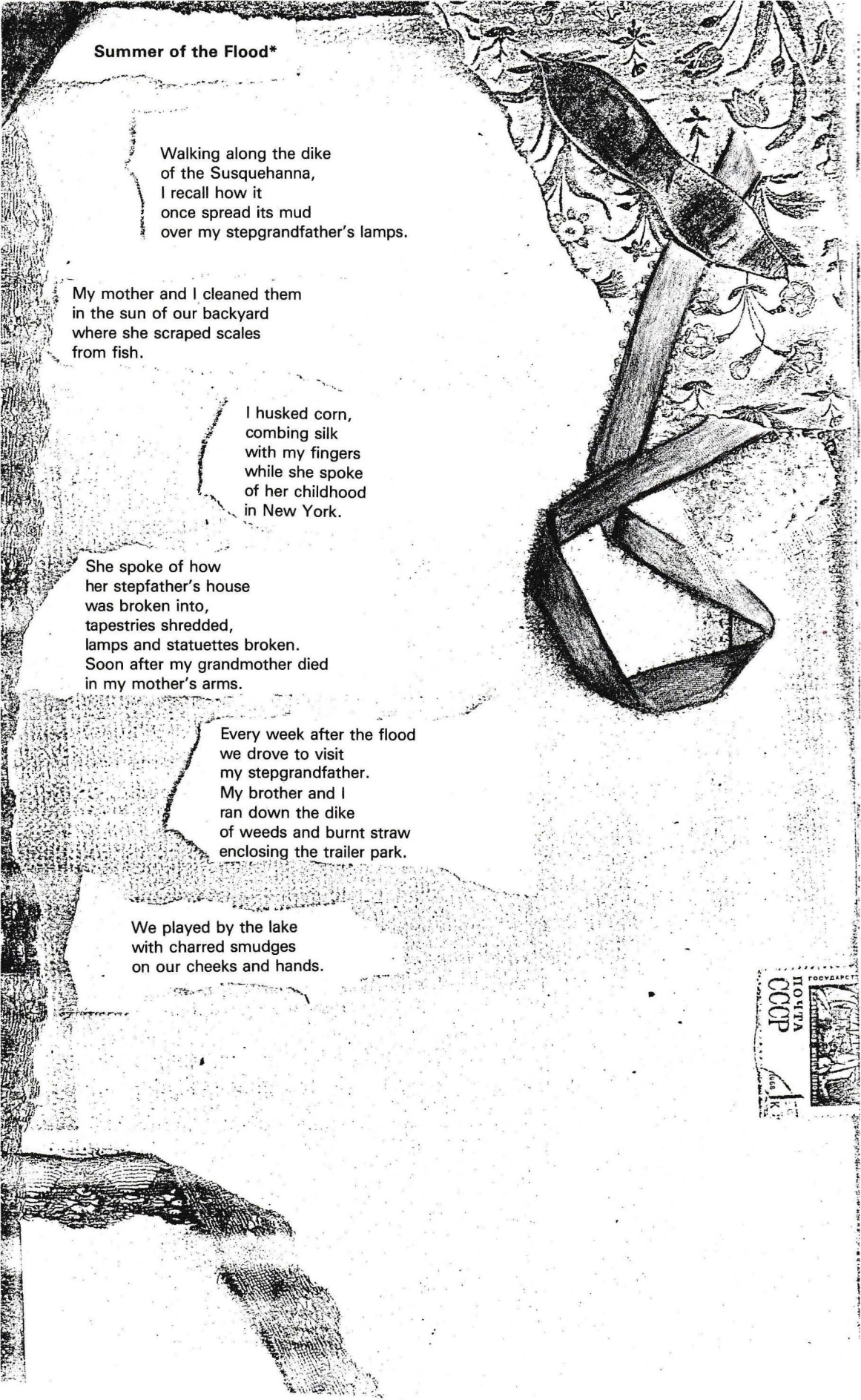
And another cliched day has arrived at the hospital. And more grieving relatives and friends are left behind to "make the arrangements." We'll all die someday. We'll all lose someone someday. Either we'll ride away on a rainy Greyhound bus or we'll be left standing in the terminal.

Without an umbrella.

Joanne Dal Sasso



DARIA MORRIS — UNTITLED
*Honorable Mention



Summer of the Flood*

Walking along the dike
of the Susquehanna,
I recall how it
once spread its mud
over my stepgrandfather's lamps.

My mother and I cleaned them
in the sun of our backyard
where she scraped scales
from fish.

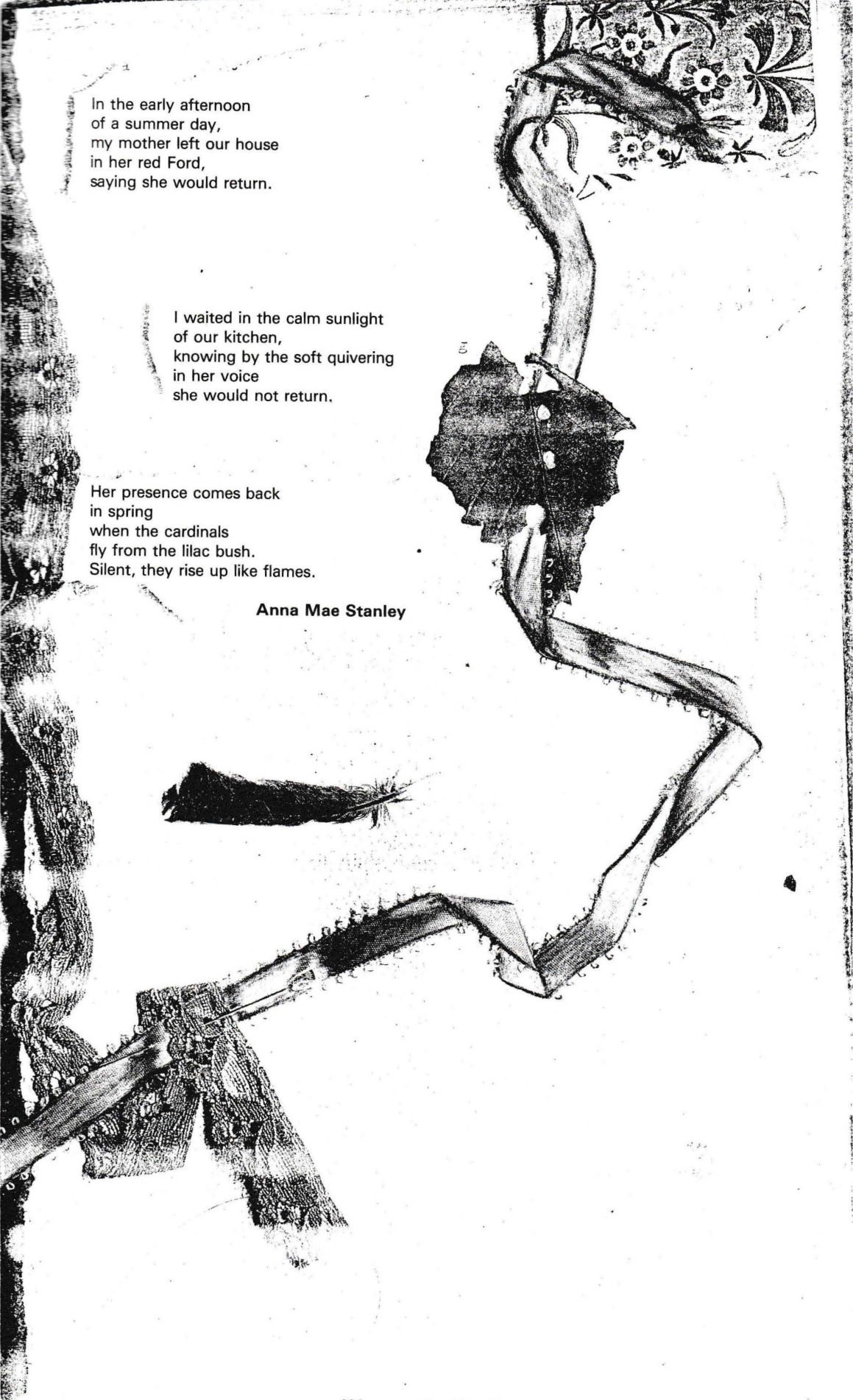
I husked corn,
combing silk
with my fingers
while she spoke
of her childhood
in New York.

She spoke of how
her stepfather's house
was broken into,
tapestries shredded,
lamps and statuettes broken.
Soon after my grandmother died
in my mother's arms.

Every week after the flood
we drove to visit
my stepgrandfather.
My brother and I
ran down the dike
of weeds and burnt straw
enclosing the trailer park.

We played by the lake
with charred smudges
on our cheeks and hands.





In the early afternoon
of a summer day,
my mother left our house
in her red Ford,
saying she would return.

I waited in the calm sunlight
of our kitchen,
knowing by the soft quivering
in her voice
she would not return.

Her presence comes back
in spring
when the cardinals
fly from the lilac bush.
Silent, they rise up like flames.

Anna Mae Stanley

***Honorable Mention**

If Only the Dying Awake

It should be easy to assign words to a time that changes the sight of one's eyes. But words come with pain, gathering in the back of my throat until the salt from tears too often shed makes them burn. My tongue is a flame, and because it is a flame, I cry out in a voice I did not know existed. These words fly like sparks from inside me. Indeed, I am all aflame. Please do not misunderstand and try to put me out. I cannot be put out, now. I generate this fire from within and let it, in all its ferocity, overtake me. My words flickering outward bear its light. My pages may, in truth, burn the fingers that hold them. And my voice, spread like fire in ears that listen. And my story, bring hot tears to the eyes that read it.

I

I was leaning against the wall, thinking.

. . . her house was always full of wonderful smells. Like the scent of Easter lilies, or fresh strawberries for homemade preserves. Or bread, freshly baked, with a glaze of honey on top. And I would go down and sit on her swing and play in her yard. Sometimes I would eat some of that bread with the preserves, and she would get angry at me when the topping dripped on my skirts and shoes, though she knew it was her own fault for piling it on much too high. And there were other times when everybody would come over to see her, and I'd play with the other children while she baked great meals out of the simplest things. Or when I would make her laugh. She laughed very quietly, mostly with her eyes. She made almost no sound at all. Her lips would purse together in a big silly grin, and her whole body would shake until her cheeks turned a warm pink. I liked her for her laughter especially, because, then, I could imagine how she must have looked when she was young.

Her house was always warm and full of life even when no one came to see her . . .

Here, she lay before me. The smell of antiseptic in the air. There was not the faintest sign of laughter in her eyes. Her consciousness was already buried. Deep inside her. It happened fast. It took long in coming.

Her children sat around her counting each passing moment as one more that brought them closer to replenished lives. With each labored breath, they were reminded that, very soon, they'd no longer have to bother. Their anxious feelings rang through the whispers and the nervous coughing. I slid away from the doorway when the nurse came in and stopped to exchange a few words with my uncle, the eldest of the boys. He mumbled something about having it "all arranged for when the time comes," and how "everyone has a fair share coming."

"I'm sorry," she returned after a pause. Then, she left swiftly with her head bowed low. I watched her expression change as she sped around the corner at the end of the hall. She lifted her head and smiled at another patient who was slowly pacing the floor, and the memory of this room was gone from her mind.

The doctor didn't say anything anymore. My uncle simply nodded as he came into the room and stood at the foot of the bed humming and looking at his clipboard. My uncle shifted his weight and watched him until he left. I watched my uncle as he leaned back against the wall on the far side of the room and stuffed his hand into his pants pocket to finger its contents.

My aunt powdered her nose. She was sweating; it was an uncomfortable situation for her. "I just can't believe it," she said, startling me out of my blank stare. "All these years I've been away, and I feel as close to her as ever." My grandmother, all yellow and shriveled, wheezed out another breath, and my aunt's voice cracked as she turned away from the now hollow figure of her mother. She held the puff up under her eyes as if to wipe away a tear, and then she touched her nose again and excused herself. She stole out of the room but recovered herself, brushing lint off her coat, as she followed a nurse around the corner. I could hear her heels screeching on the hospital floor long after she disappeared. After that, there was only the sound of the door which led to the stairs that led to the street, slamming behind her.

My other aunt was the only one who ever really talked to me. She was the one I was more familiar with, so I slipped across the room and took a seat at her side. Now, I could see my mother, sitting on the bed, holding her mother's hand.

"I'm just thinking, you know, with all that rain out there! I don't know how I'll get home," my aunt said as I took her hand.

"We'll give you a ride. My God, don't worry about that," I whispered. "You know you can ask us anytime."

"Well, if it isn't too much bother, you say?"

"No, no bother," I answered.

She sighed with relief, and we sat quietly for a moment. I watched my mother as she stroked **her** mother's hair.

"I remember when I was little," my aunt began, drawing my attention, "how they used to bury you from the house. How everybody would come over, and they'd put you right out in the living room. Uncle Mitro was buried like that. Well, 'course you don't remember that. He was your great uncle on your grandma's side. That was a long time ago, like I said. Oh yes, I was young still, just married, when they pretty much stopped that."

I looked down at the floor and counted the gray squares of tile leading up to the bed. In my mind, I arranged them in pairs and imagined them to be flowers and figures. My eyes began tracing an hourglass that was perfectly formed by the scuffed tiles in the middle of the room.

"And they always put the flowers in the same room with you. Made you look pretty there, but I have an allergy and can't get too close to them. It was terrible then, especially, but even now, with them all around, how my eyes water! And I have to sneeze and cough. At Elsie's funeral, they had to take me right out of the church on account of my allergy."



DARIA MORRIS — UNTITLED

"I remember that," I said impatiently.

She looked at me with surprise. I remained silent, staring down at the floor and sliding my loose watch up and down my wrist. After glaring at me for a few seconds, she turned away, a bit embarrassed, a bit indignant.

"How dark it's turning outside! And that rain! I hope I can get my car fixed tomorrow. You can't be giving me rides; it's too much bother." She patted my shoulder with a wilting hand.

"It's no trouble at all," I replied and reached for her hand only to brush it lightly against my palm as she withdrew it.

I watched my mother sitting on the bed, unafraid to be near and touching her mother. She leaned over her, whispering softly as though her words would bring back the light of recognition to my grandmother's eyes. She spoke in a soothing voice, "Mother . . . Mother . . ." Time and time again, I heard only that word from those quiet conversations.

Rain was pouring down in greater intensity, but I could hear it only faintly where I sat. The voices in the room continued. Words fluttered in the crowded room like flecks of dust and ash that rise as one stirs a dying fire. I moved quietly to the window and tried to imagine myself outside, looking in. Seeing that scene without having to hear its sounds seemed much less frightening to me. But I knew I was inside and could only **look** out to escape it.

The evening rain made the smooth glass difficult to see through. Nothing was stable in it. Violent splashes contorted the houses lining the streets, and weak car headlights bent and twisted on the pane. The streetlights cast a dim haze over it all. *What a maimed little town this is.* The alleys were melting into giant pools, which were, in turn, growing to flood the streets and the homes. Then, it occurred to me that I was looking at the glass rather than through it. Those images I saw were simply pasted there on the glass, and it seemed, on that night, that nothing existed beyond it. I realized that I could not escape that room.

II

I was looking for a way out at work the next day when she came and dropped a folder on my desk and said, "Do this."

I looked up with my eyes, keeping my head low, and asked, "What do you want me to do with it?"

She smiled and replied as if the question had no significance, "Why don't you read it and see what you think?"

I knew I'd be sorry for agreeing because I rarely thought the way she did, but I nodded my head.

"By the way, there's a luncheon tomorrow with several officials from the main office. See if you can get over there sometime. I think it'd be a great experience to meet them and . . ." she rambled on as though she were reading a list of statistics. Her form was swaying before me with her head set solidly on her shoulders. Her eyes, squinting and blinking with a great deal of effort, were drawn to something behind me that I didn't dare turn to see. She looked past me or up at the ceiling and went on, ". . . BI---'s going to be there and he's going to tell all about the . . . there are 365 days in a year . . . 63% of the population . . ."

There is no truth in this. Jesus, God, help me. I can't stand it anymore! What is that you say, "I am the truth . . ."? No, no. "I am the way . . ." "O.K., let's see. "I am the—

" . . . way they handle the big operation. So, you know, get up there'n get with it!" She laughed out loud at this, and I smiled to conceal my distraction.

"Fine," I replied and thought of all the things I needed to do, but I knew she wouldn't understand.

Later, she came and watched me from behind as I typed the last page of the report. She stood quietly dunking a teabag into a cup of hot water. My hands were shaking. I cranked the page out and began reading it silently to myself. She nonchalantly pointed out some errors before I'd finished reading the first paragraph.

Then she walked to the door and, as an afterthought, added, "You know I need that by the end of the day."

I looked up in surprise because she hadn't mentioned that earlier.

We stared at each other.

"Look," she blurted after noticing my confusion, "just get it in to me and I'll clean it up."

I turned my face back to the page because I was embarrassed. Tears were beginning to well up in my eyes, and the pain in the pit of my stomach grew sharper. It generated heat right up into my throat and mouth, but I swallowed hard and swallowed and swallowed so it wouldn't come out.

III

That night, I awoke abruptly from my sleep. Sweat had gathered on my skin and made the bed cold and damp. I pulled my robe over my shoulders and shivered under the fabric as I got out of bed. The chair at the window was warm and dry so I tucked myself in it for comfort.

Outside, no lights were on in any of the houses along the street. Only the coffeehouse spread a dim crescent of orange light onto the pavement. I watched where a young man wandered through the dark alley across the street. As he emerged onto the main stretch, his body blocked out the coffeehouse light. He stood long in silhouette. Something shined on his jacket as he

turned toward the light and slowly back again. He peered down the street carefully inspecting the empty doorways. **There's no need to worry. No one will see you. Go ahead! Do what you came to do!** God, how I wanted him to do it.

Again he turned, and I saw it. The badge on his chest flashed clearly and the reflected light crashed against the building before it died. I sat back in my chair, cold and disappointed.

I had hoped that he was drunk, maybe lost, maybe that he had plans to break that coffeehouse window and steal whatever was inside. He was not like me. I had that pain inside me. That burning sensation, and I was suffering with it. It hurt most when I thought it, as I always did, but it was especially bad at night as I sat awake looking out my window.

My eyes drifted back to the room and sleepily observed the dark figure in my bed. He was surely more relaxed than the man outside. His comfort, in truth, was complete. I envied him momentarily for resting well, feeling at ease, being able to sleep. Then, I felt a deep sense of pity for him. **He is too much asleep. He is a shadow. A dark image cast by something else.**

I glanced at the man outside, now cupping a flame with his hand to light a cigarette. I watched the flame's glow spread across his face. His features seemed like black holes cut out in a gray skull. His eyes were deep caverns wherein the noiseless street seemed to stretch on in infinite emptiness. As he straightened his head, his face went blank and black as slate. **He is a shadow, too.**

His badge, as he turned back into the alley, struck my eyes with a bolt of reflected light, and I jerked my head away with a pained expression.

My vision returned when morning came. The figure in my bed was gone. And, in the light of dawn, I saw the jumbled covers scattered across the sheets. They had little more life when they were filled with sleep. **My God, how empty.**

I pulled myself to my feet and remembered the day that was to follow the night. **No difference.**

IV

I was on my knees trying to pick up the paper clips that fell from the supply shelf as I was reaching for paper. Behind me, I heard the tapping of a very expensive shoe against the cold tiled floor.

"Oh, you're so clumsy," she said with a kidding, yet meaningful tone. She squeezed past me, stepping on the paper clips that I was so frantically trying to retrieve. While deftly reaching for the paper I'd missed, she said in a strained voice, "Better hurry up! We can't be having you showing up late for our luncheons!" She laughed again.

"You're going!? I mean, with me. Aren't you?" I uttered in panic as I scrambled to my feet.

"I'll be joining you there. Just go in and mingle, and when I get there, I'll show you the ropes."

The dining room was crowded and filled with smoke from cigars and pipes. The people were chattering and standing close together in little huddles like separate teams whispering the game plans that would win them the game ball. Layers of heads bobbed incessantly and voices rose in great clouds, but no one said anything of any consequence. The big men laughed, and puffs of smoke billowed upward in the air.

I tried to find a place to stand where I would not be noticed until she arrived. I waited in the doorway for a long time. **She isn't coming. Oh, God, oh, God. Where is she? Jesus! Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee . . . she's dying, and she's taking it all with her. Get here! For Christ's sake, get here! I know she's going to die. Whose yard am I going to play in? Who's going to feed me the bread? Her house is getting colder, now. Blessed art thou among women . . . If she doesn't show up, by God, I'm going to say . . . I'll tell her . . . she's going to hear what I have to say! Help. Help, God, please!** She never came in. I sat down among unfamiliar faces that looked past me if I spoke so I lowered my voice until I said nothing at all. After the speaker finished, I quietly removed myself from the scene and walked to the door where I found her talking flirtatiously with a man about my age. I gently interrupted their conversation and asked if I should return to the office.

"Just go in and mingle and I'll be in in a minute."

I stood open-mouthed, waiting to say . . . My face flushed; my eyes watered.

Just go mingle and I'll be in in a minute.

She was swimming in my eyes as she began chatting and laughing playfully again. I directed myself toward the exit and the cool air outside. Before I reached a point where I could no longer hear her voice, she said to the young man, who had apparently questioned her about my identity, "Oh, she's just a trainee." She swept her hand through the air as if she needed to physically dismiss the question.

I didn't go back to the dining room. I went instead back to the office where I sought refuge in the ladies' room. I stood gagger over the sink and splashing water on my face to stop the fever from erupting.

On the bus ride home, I scrawled these words across the back of an envelope:

My youth is dying faster all the time, and now, I hesitate to do things when before I claimed everything for my own. I try to ask myself, "Why am I so easily broken?" I can only say, "Why am I?" There is no air here. I can't breathe. Everywhere is a smoke-filled room. I choke on all my words — never sure if I said the right thing — said what they wanted to hear. I am defined not by what I contain, but rather by what contains me. I, too, am being rolled out like a piece of dough in order to be shaped and moulded into something people can swallow. But I crumble at the edges and easily fall apart . . .

Honestly, he speaks to me. Love, it is. I produced a stuffed animal magically from behind my back. He laughed with delight and ran toward me. I caught him as he fell against my legs. *He knows I'll catch him. "Bless the little children."* I lifted him, outstretching my arms, and he tossed his head back in laughter. I carried him to the old wooden rocker where he gazed through the window at the clouds dancing past in the shapes of lions and bears. He giggled at them when I could only smile. *He sees what I cannot.*

We kept on until his head began to droop, and, finally, he fell asleep.

For a long time, I sat rocking with the child's head resting lightly against my shoulder.

My uncle's feet were heavy on the wooden steps outside; I could hear him coming up from the sidewalk, groaning with each breath.

The child curled peacefully against me as I rocked, and I was careful not to wake him as I gently waved my uncle into the house.

"Upstairs," I whispered. "She'll be down in a minute." He wanted my mother.

For a long time I sat rocking with the child's head resting lightly against my shoulder.

My uncle fumbled with his watch. "I want to get everything taken care of right away. We'll have the house to sell and the costs of the funeral to consider . . ."

My mother sat across from him at the kitchen table.

". . . we'll each get an equal share of the estate . . ."

My mother looked tired and dazed.

I closed my eyes.

He grunted once. "Look, I know this is a difficult thing for you, but, believe me, you'll thank me for taking care of it before hand like this . . ."

The child and I began drifting away from the scene, carried by the motion of the chair. In the region to which we traveled, it was quiet and restful. The voices of those around us, talking of money and death, seemed to grow soft and mild — like music. I didn't think then. I only sensed and breathed lightly with the rocking and the hushed respiration of the child. All was one, and all moved in a singular motion. The rocking, the breathing, the muffled tones like music, gently penetrating to where we were. I saw things on the inside of my resting eyes. Perhaps they were images of things too soon wiped away in the wakings and sleepings of everyday. A soft light was there, burning, emanating a warmth unknown to me, and I kept my eyes closed because I could sense the existence of something real in it, something having greater substance than anything I could touch. My attention seemed to be everywhere at once. The light, the soft voices, the child — not comprehending any of it, but being a part of it — with it. The child was asleep and breathing gently against my neck. His body was pressed so closely to mine that there seemed to be no ending or beginning to either of us. I knew, then, that feeling called **love**. The total reliance of one being upon another. Each depending on the other for fulfillment, completion. For it was only in him that I was complete, and; for him, I provided the motion for a perfect slumber. It seemed strange to me that a child could make me feel that way for I had never felt so with any man . . .

Seconds turned to moments, moments to hours, we drifted unaware of passing time.

Suddenly, it crashed to the floor with enough force to penetrate to where we were, and we plunged down. My eyes fluttered open, and the flow of breathing and rocking broke like a calm sea suddenly rising and breaking against the rocks. The child shifted impatiently, loosening my hold around him until his arms fell away from me, and he awoke. I knew that someday there would be a hollow in all his embraces, and each step toward me would be filled with hesitation. Then, even with him enclosed in my arms in sleep, there would be distance.

My uncle staggered and stepped clumsily on the gold timepiece that was spinning in a frenzy across the wooden floor. Laughing, he picked it up and put it back in his pants pocket and fingered it there. Clinking it against keys and jingling it among the coins. His hand moved slowly up and down, and the rattling noise came more clearly to my ears than the sound of his voice. He made me nervous as he clenched his teeth in a smile. I felt relieved when he motioned to the door with his free hand. My senses surfaced, and I could hear his goodbye.

We watched through the window as he walked to his car.

I watched through a different window, and instead of looking at him, I faced the hill where years before trees and fields blazed like fire.

There wasn't anything as dramatic as fire out there anymore. The wearied hill hunched over the valley like an aged man, mourning the loss of his youth. Blotches of houses and apartments spread across the face of it. Streets wrinkled the terrain and were dimly lit with gray and sagging streetlights. They were just coming on in the evening haze. Farther to the left, a patch of forest burst through, green and vital. At one time, the entire hill thrived. Woods had then consumed everything instead of themselves being devoured. Nearby, the crusty colm banks formed black mounds in commemoration of the hardships of those no longer alive to see the changes. Their monuments were out there as well, growing out of their dust as if the dead



DARIA MORRIS — UNTITLED

immortalized themselves that way. ***That is not how they are to be remembered — in mounds of dust grown solid rock.*** **No.** The cemetery grew each day, spreading into rows of houses and stores. I looked more intently at the scattered crosses and headstones, marking past lives of vague importance. My eyes swelled with moisture. I could feel a spirit like theirs inside me. There was peace for me in thinking I could somehow preserve their vitality.

"Are you all right?" my mother asked from behind.

I turned and answered, "I'm tired. Just tired."

When I peered through the glass again, peace had flown. I looked to the fields and trees and saw how they were being chipped at and sawed away until soon there would be none. The descending darkness was falsely lit by the cars and the streetlights, and the porchlights, both for welcoming and scaring away. The stones of the dead were gently retreating into the night, being buried like the dead, in darkness. This time, I wept freely for those extinguished spirits. ***There is little playground left. The bread is wasting. Only dust lies beneath the rock pile, so the fire has surely gone out.***

VI

I watched the second hand on the clock. 4:22. I felt good because all my work was done and I knew she had to be satisfied. I looked at it again; it was a perfect copy. As I stapled it all together, I could hear her in the office with the other directors and secretaries, laughing and talking playfully. I thought perhaps I could slip in and set it on her desk. So, I cut through the hall. Every desk was empty. I realized that I had been the only one left working. ***You deserve it. Better start living up to expectations!*** When I looked at the crowd from the doorway, I knew I couldn't slip in unnoticed. Instead, I stood there smiling, pretending I understood the joke they were laughing at though I hadn't heard a word of it. At the peak of loud laughter, she saw me in the door and quickly composed herself. All laughter died, and I alone stood smiling. ***My God, this is funny! Strange and unreal to me. Why am I here?*** Suddenly I felt the need to make an excuse or apologize for intruding. I coughed to wipe my ignorant smile away, and from shaking hands, delivered my completed report.

She jerked her head up from the paper. "Where's the title?" ***Silence. Dead, dead silence.***

I apologized for my neglect.

"Never mind," she replied and tossed it aside. "I'll have it typed over." ***The room is hollow. Silence echoes again.***

I apologized again and suggested that she read it. I was sure it was clean and need only have the title typed across the top.

"You didn't leave much room there." It sounded like an accusation. ***Silence, empty silence.***

I apologized.

At that point, it became obvious to others in the room that my distress had reached a crippling point. Someone mumbled something funny, and I escaped as they chattered and broke into laughter.

Ha, ha, ha! And she's going to die. And she's taking all of it with her. Ha, ha, ha! I weep with open eyes.

I was not accustomed to that kind of laughter. I never went back to hear it again.

VII

On the day my grandmother died, I woke earlier than everyone else. I went to the mass that only the old people attended. It was dark and quiet in the church. I sat toward the front on the side nearest the statue of Jesus. The Prince of all creation. Supreme exemplar of being. Eternal life embodied. He stood majestically with one hand cupping His heart in a flame against His chest. His other hand was reaching out above several flickering candles.

I looked where His eyes reflected mine and His in mine in His and on . . . And then more, in His eyes, I saw all the flames burning as one brilliant fire. I saw my own heart burning in His eyes also, but it was only for a moment.

My eyes filled with tears and when I wiped them away, I saw nothing in His eyes. Even more than that, I envisioned a desperate man, leaning toward and reaching for a people too hesitant to grasp His hand. ***Why is His such a difficult love?***

The organist played softly in the loft above the confessional and the baptismal font. And the music came to me over and over from the organ pipes that reached to the top of the church.

"Ave Maria, gratia plena . . ."

The music poured out as from heaven itself.

"fructus ventris, O tui, Jesu . . ."

Oh, Jesus, I am torn between loving You for having come into the world and cursing You for having left so little of Yourself behind!

I almost spoke these words aloud, but no one would have heard me there. There was nothing in His eyes. I left the church.

Walking home, I remembered my grandmother's yard. And recalled her standing by the back porch swing, as she did so often, all aproned and jiggling with laughter at my play. Sometimes, I'd run to her and grab the hem of her skirts and hang on for a smile or comfort or protection in the face of trouble. Then, I recalled how she looked the last time I saw her. I realized at that moment that even as a child I was hanging on to the same frail, almost breathless woman I'd seen a few hours before. I

reflected on those last hours and recognized that she, too, saw that she was hanging on to something frail. She gave it up with ease. It was finished.

And so it all ends, and we face our final hours. After years, and an incomprehensible number of expressions, we slip away — leaving this world where we give ourselves names. Where names are all important. I realized how inevitably we give back to the world all that it gives us. It was then that I gathered together all I had and set those things aside that were tying me to life. Retaining this and casting that back into the world, I went forth carrying everything I needed inside me. And, thus, began my season . . .

I speak more today. I no longer swallow my words. I say, "How sorrowful it is, if only the dying awake. We must open our eyes and recognize the recklessness of our pursuits. They have no end or purpose."

Often on these nights, I scream to break the deadly, dark silence of the street. And somewhere down the road a light comes on and then another and another. Then, the place is burning bright with human concern. But soon after, all is consumed by darkness again. And I head home alone by the light of the stars and the warmth that is inside me.

Daria Morris

"If Only the Dying Awake," a short story by Daria Morris, is the winner of the Manuscript Society Literary Prize.

The Henry Ford Museum

(FOR ASHLEY, PA)

Forty years ago,
The farm was sold for one-fifth
Of what they could have got for it. Then
Everyone went forth
And was fruitful
And multiplied,
Except for Uncle Frank,
Because he got kicked in the head by a horse
And died.
But that was way back then.
Now, the family which remains
Loves to sit and talk about the good days
Back on the farm;
When people would give each other whole
Bushel baskets of apples,
And milk tasted like Real milk,
And horses knew their way back home.

Henry E. Long

Looking out side
 I see you.
 Your fall crown of now, wet after the morning
 rain.
 And every time the wind blows, one, 2, III,
 maybe several
 shining topaz and rubies flutter to the ground.
 They lay there scattered on the gravel
 path.
 Reflecting the sun as the droplets
 of water
 s
 p
 l
 a
 s
 h
 from the fountain.
 And yet, how can it be that
 so many mistake you for leaves?

Beth Kaplan

Tracing The Edges
 (FOR JOEY)

He stares at dinner;
 Not at any food, or the people, or anything —
 But at the air,
 As if his eyes behind his thick glasses
 Were the finger of a blind man
 Tracing the edges
 Of a braille album,
 Another heap of cucumbers
 Put on his plate
 By his 82-year-old sister
 Interrupts his tracing,
 And he silently passes the photo album to her.

Henry E. Long

CURTAIN CALL

And all the world's a stage.
 I am not a player.
 I am simply a speck of dust
 napping on the proscenium.
 Playwright,
 Write me a gust of wind,
 And blow me away
 To join with other dust specks
 On your poor yellowing page.

Joanne Dal Sasso



THOMAS PILCH — "STUDY OF 'THE ADVENTURE OF SILVER BLAZE' BY SYDNEY PAGET"

THE ATLANTIS GENERATION
(FOR ALL OF US)

I. The Atlantis Generation —

Buried like some slow death by a cancer
From which you were created.

She holds herself with folded arms and unfolding smile

As I pass her, hardly looking.

White-haired, white frailness but once

Quite attractive,

She is a sales clerk

In the Children's section

Of Bergmans clothing store,

And she watches me pass through.

Her eyes watching me are now ghosts

in my house of Usher.

Her watching is a dull blue neon sign

Hung in a dirty-glassed window

Of an empty dark room,

With paint chipping off its interiors.

The neon sign flashes over and over:

make me young . . . make me necessary . . . make me young . . . make me necessary . . . make me young

II. Will they go home? Must they

To daughters and sons-in-law

Who are quick to lose their patience?

Will they go back to old-fart husbands

In thick, sweaty necks,

In thick, sweaty men

Who never tasted their sweet,

Who never touched the softness of their

Eucharistic fuzz,

And who are now grey, cold gravestones

Marking their own plot?

Do they miss having breasts caressed,

And the hard, hairy chest substance

Pressing against in awe?

Do they miss the delicate curves once smoothed

By the side of a younger lover's cheek

Like some Pentecostal breeze?

Do they still look at themselves in the mirror?

III. This sales clerk at Bergmans

In a department that no one goes to anymore

Because people can buy baby clothes at K-mart

For less . . .

Somewhere,

This woman shines

And is beautiful,

And is a passion wet with the womanness within.

But, here,

She is my chest rising and falling in breath,

In heart-orchestrated movement.

She is my pen, and my hand, and these lines.

She is the hours I have spent

Trying to make all of this work . . .

And I am the youthful twenty-year-old,

Who takes pills to stay up

and who takes pills to come down.

IV. I will pass through your department again

Someday,

My Lady,

I will smile at you

As you see if there is anything you can do for me.

I will buy a set of little pajamas,

And two little girl dresses,

And perhaps whatever you'd suggest.

And then,

Before I am done buying clothes for a baby

I do not have,

I will smile

And I will kiss you on the lips.

Your eyes are really not all that old,

And I am really not that young.

Henry E. Long

THE CARNATION

It is shredded.

Once red,

Blood red

Is now withered

Rusted

Pink.

Green's faded.

She turns it over in her hand,

Presses its

Once scented

Top

To her nose.

Acrid.

No more pleasure here

Except memories

Faded

Folded

Pressed

Into a book.

Joanne Dal Sasso

Eeyorism

My sign? you ask.
Let's take to task
An answer not so drab
as inside softfish, outside skeletish: aha! the crab.
But, now, signs of birth let us ignore,
and instead, my sign of person, let be Eeyore.
With ears of fuzzy grey that loop his face,
so guilt and grief and joy show not a trace.
And he, dismantling by one button, may discard
a part of him that, at times, may seem hard
to admit as his before eyes none too lenient.
His squat grey legs come in a set most convenient;
with four, his foothold's anchored down to earth,
and thus, he's tempted less by wordly mirth.
His eyes gaze soft and sullen where he's heading,
always taking note upon what he's treading.
Yes, let us set this forth for man's next war:
The God to worship now? of course, Eeyore!

Laura Garber

Gallery From Three to Six

The Jazz is playing,
Coltrane on the brass.
Blue floods the sky now,
and the night begins here.
Pouring Pouring rain
soothes me,
as I am alone.
In the gallery
color caresses
me,
form wraps around
me,
entertains me.
White stillness
and light
intercourse with wood
and clay and
Earth,
and there is softness
here.
In the gallery.

Belinda Housenbold

They can't be counted
don't try to define
these that have
just been born
just watch the
softly falling
snow
begin.

Belinda Housenbold



To a Dying Season

Now as cold sky and air
move autumn toward winter,
I gather the lace and ribbon
of my girlhood together.

The luminous pink
of these strands
once pressed through sunset
like pale blood.

The sunsets no longer scream,
the ribbons fall
from my hands and fade
like leaves dissolving
from red to brown
muddying sidewalks.

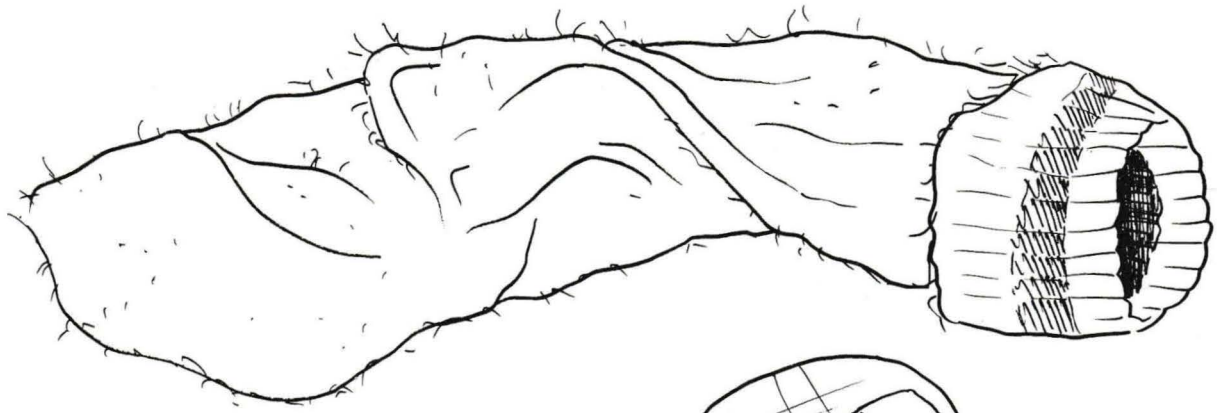
Some point beyond my vision,
the colors of sky and concrete blend
and melt like snow.

I am learning
the pressured screams
of winter winds.
They gnaw more deeply
than teeth.

I search through my piles
of ribbons and blades.
Light pierces them,
forces gleaming.

I focus on autumn's sunless sky.
I believe my breath is gray
and everything I have given
to autumn still remains.

Anna Mae Stanley



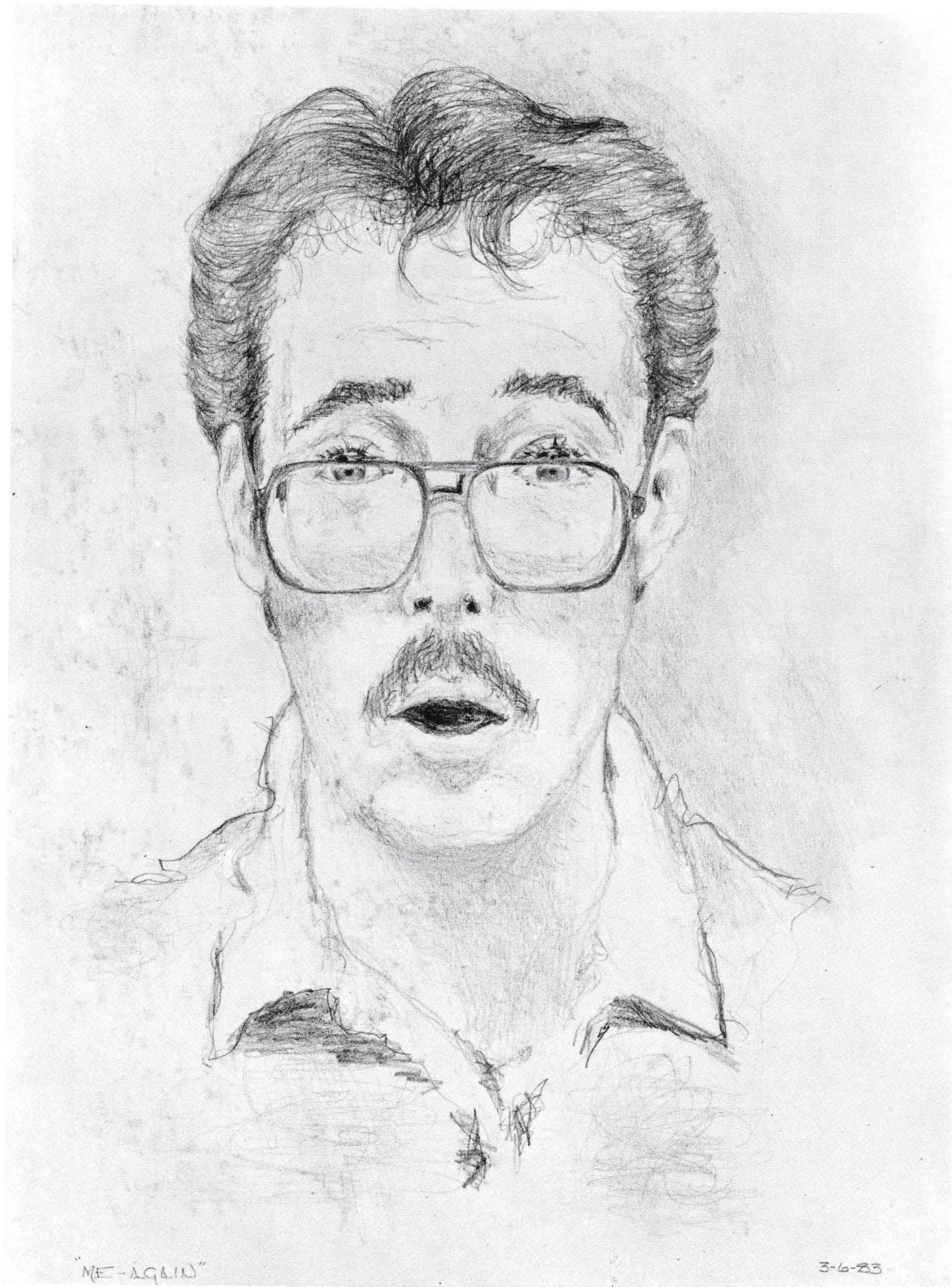
HWK 4

JEANES. J. 81

"SOCK, TIE, AND SOUL"



TERRY McCOOG — UNTITLED



"ME-AGLIN"

3-6-83

CLYDE SOLT

Untitled

I want a peach and
grey mood
soft, touching me
slowly.
I want mist and
smoke
and melodrama.
I want silken skin
that smells
like a person,
that accepts realness.
I want that
moment when
lips are as magnets
only seconds apart
before they are one.
I want days to walk in,
fingers of both,
a completed puzzle then.
I want him
with eyes that tell
a story to me
in silence
to hold me.

Belinda Housenbold

Fall on the River

So it's fall I say.
There's a fireball sun,
and blood and mustard
mingle on the leaves.
And some are red and
some are brown.
Do you remember
when you could see?
There's a river here
where I go to school,
today it's peach and
grey and blue.
Your eyes are blue
I remember.
And you are silent
in my head.
The sun is red, red now,
and only partly there.
I've been here a while
looking at the sun and
sky and river.
Now I close my eyes
and think of how
you have gone blind
by now
I guess.
And blue and peach and
grey are brown.

Belinda Housenbold

THE HAND-ILLUSIONED DOG.*

(FOR DARIA)

- I. Lying dead
 Like damned dalmations
 In some Spanish town,
His clothes are neatly arranged
 On the bed for him
 In suspended restoration
Mommy sits a' watching
 In her rocking chair of wait
 of want
 of dread.
- My period is of mental flow.
 My blood is an ant networking underground
 In sinew and in cells.
 My blood is the living organism which I call ant.
- Her eyes are not ants,
 But your breasts are,
 Your bosom and your buttocks both
 Are Milky way measure ants,
 And my pants are ants
 And my hand is ants.
- Her would say that my hand is death and my hand is lust.
 And lust is in the palm of the beholder;
 Dismembered and disnerved,
 And kept secret in a box
 By some chief constable Maddox.
- (This boy is not a man!
 This boy just needs a hand . . .)
- Grasp it like your final come!

- IV. Around 3 a.m.,
His clothes still on the unmaden bed,
 And he is in and out and then in them again.
 SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR . . .
The door's detente is broken,
 And the door is bigger than the entrance into itself.
 I breathe like yeast in bread dough rising,
 My eyes transfix themselves solid
 In some Edgar Allan zombieness.

- II. A stately desire to grab your breasts,
 Pleasure Domes decree
 My lust,
 My hands,
 My ants circumcising your globes
 Like maggots to a dying field mouse.
- I am animal reconstitution!
 I am Camel cigarettes an I am John Holmes!
 At night I cannot pull away from you.
 At night I cannot sleep.

- III. The bed is Hieronymus Bosch's.
 I pull beneath it and all its massiveness
 Alert upon my back,
 Like some Herculean mastodon
 And the ants of its rigidness.

The laser-slicing of vertical light falls down upon me
Like a man.

IT IS A MAN . . .

A real man!

The kind who wears a suit,
The kind who wears a hat,
And throws things in anger,
And grabs his women
And has a humongous . . .

All I can do in and out of my clothing
In a piss-filled rubber-bed-sheet darkness
Is pelican-prayer,
Is pelican sweat,

Like that which had been at hand

Only eight years ago

When a boy was trying to dictate his ants to act like a man.

The door is opened and then the door is closed.

V. Sorry, forever sorry,

You shake your head back and forth

As if you are sorry.

I'll fade away in solitude

Beneath your nipples bullets.

No more grasping for your breasts

(Or even shoulder

For would I come . . .)

Now, like screaming underwater black,

I gasp in painful breath.

Nails perforate against

Your delicate skin

Like raven's claws,

As I collapse in upon my earthen doorway

To a critical little death . . .

(Carry me out and away,

Lustful parade of men!)

VI. Love me at the seashore, baby.

You know of how standing all day

As the waves rush through your legs —

At night, in bed, you can feel the motion still,

And the ocean seems so real?

THAT IS HOW YOU FEEL!

She kisses me with her mouth open.

This beach was hard against my bare feet . . .

Broken bottles of the broken withdrawal

From a time at one's past

When there was a gradual becoming.

My clothing is all layed about the sand

In decomposing state,

Like dead dalmations or ancient moth wings,

Like stained and crusty sheets,

Kept saven in a special striped box.

I do not need to wear these articles no more

Mommy, mommy, mother . . .

Look at me in my naked truth!

Look at me in my fertility!

Kiss that which has come from you

Like Apostle Judas dear . . .

And look at what's your come.

I throw the box back out to sea

To be devoured by salt water ants.

My hands are warm,

My hands are clean.

Your body is so beautiful,

And I think I see it's Spring.

"I NEVER REALIZED . . ."

I never realized how dull my life has been until I tried to write my obituary. Actually it was a suicide note. I'm very suicidal sometimes but I never go through with it. That's me. A dull coward.

It was last year when I tried to kill myself for the first time. There I was sitting in my room with a small candle flickering and my father's .38 caliber revolver in my hand. My father won the lousy gun in a poker game. He's lost thousands of dollars but he'll never let you forget that he won a goddamned gun once. Anyway, I sat there for three hours pointing the gun at my head, putting it down, and taking a drag from a cigarette. When I smoked two packs I gave the idea up.

I really am a coward. I can remember about three years ago, when I was 13, I almost got into my first real fight. I've been in fights before, but they've always been someone punching me first and then beating the crap out of me. Anyway, I was sitting in French Class bored to death, when this kid started talking to me. Hell, I didn't even know this jerk and all he wanted to do was tell me about his horse in some goddamn stable. I hate kids who own horses. They think everyone's life revolves around their stupid horse. I was dying of a massive headache so I said to the kid politely, "Why don't you shut the hell up. I couldn't give a shit about your damn horse." I really have a filthy mouth. Obviously the kid got pissed so he made a reference about his horse being with my mother or something like that. Suddenly, just like in the movies, a little voice in the back of my head shouted, "Nobody talks about **my** mother that way! You're dead, sucker!" Well, I didn't hit him. I didn't do anything. I just stared at my French book. The kid called me a fag and started talking with someone else. I wanted to hit him, I really did. I just couldn't. I guess I am a fag. I'm so mixed up I wouldn't doubt it.

I plan on growing out of being a coward. I plan on growing out of a lot of things. I guess that's why I never went through with killing myself because I plan on outgrowing suicide, too. One thing I hope I outgrow soon is puberty. God, I hate puberty. Why was it invented anyway? What I really hate about it is when people notice you're going through it. My prehistoric Aunt Dorothy always says, "Oh, Joseph, something beautiful is happening to you. Even though it might be difficult at times, you're becoming a man. It's something you'll never forget." I guess I won't. She must have gone through it at the turn of the century. Anyway, she's about as sexless as you can get. I guess puberty was the only sexy part of her life. She's probably still washing her hands.

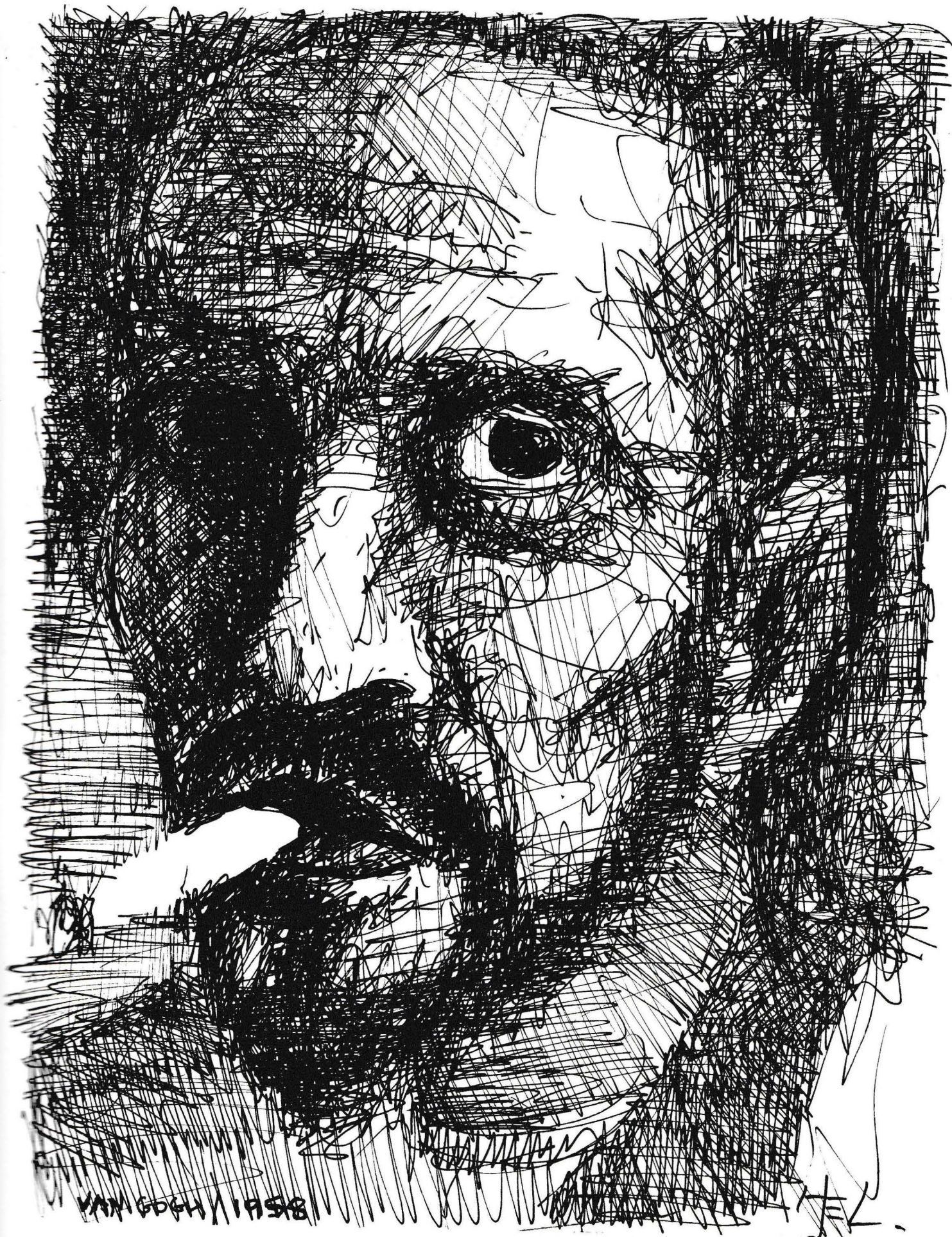
My parents want me to have a "man to man" talk with their homosexual doctor friend. He's a psychiatrist. I should talk to him, but I keep having this dream that I'm talking with him and he presses a button under his desk and a cage falls from the ceiling trapping me. Then he presses another button on his intercom and tells his nurse to send my parents in. My father has his arm around my mother as he leads her into the office. She's weeping hysterically. My father looks at the doctor sorrowfully and says, "Well, you tried, Jack." Then with a scary grin on his face he pulls his .38 out of his coat and shoots me. I guess I am sick. Normal people don't dream like that.

Actually my parents aren't that bad. I'm the youngest of four children. My brothers are successful businessmen in New York, and my sister is married to an engineer in Chicago. My parents didn't want me. I never heard them say it, but I just know it. I think everyone knows it. My parents will talk about the other three until they're blue in the face, but if someone asks how I'm doing they look nervous as hell and say, "Oh, he's . . . fine. Just fine." It's not their fault I'm so screwed up.

I'd run away from home, but with my luck I'd get run over by a truck hitch-hiking.

Sean P. Connolly

"Van Gogh 1958," an original drawing by Henry E. Long, is the winner of the Manuscript Society Art Prize.



Cages*

Tired eyes blur the world like rain
on car windshields.

The clothespins perch like domestic birds,
clipped-winged and silent on the swaying line.
She sits, watching them watch her,
while baby throws jelly from her high-chair throne,
watches them bounce in the rough breeze
and cling with resignation to the twine perch —
a once-infinite line, suspended, tied with double knots
to the tired, rotting beams.
Dulled and predictable, the clothespins cannot fly.
She wishes them nests,
then wings,
then laughs at mind-pictures of wild, fecund clothespins
whizzing in the air to meet in passionate
love consummation, clicking wooden feather kisses
beneath the drying undershorts.

Her smile turns wry as the washer blasts
its end-cycle proclamation.
The baby has thrown jelly onto the dog,
who resigns himself to a crown of wobbling purple.
She hears the driveway crunch with the mailtruck's weight
and watches the postman hunch toward the door,
stooped with the weight of a thousand voices,
and yearns, with a twinge of perversity,
to fly to him like Scarlet O'Hara in pink fuzzy slippers,
clutch him desperately to her pounding heart,
and cry out to him
that her clothespins were mating.

She wondered, as she washed her small daughter,
at the tiny toenails, pink, soft, and pliant,
attached to fat little toe stubs,
like disjointed beings, singleminded,
five times a modicum of life
wiggling at the end of a formless fishhook.
She watched the laughing water play
a game of tag around the child's fingers,
eluding capture by the tiny grasp, and
She smiled at the smile in the child's eyes.

Later, in the red light of evening,
Baptized dishes resting on the countertop,
She saw again the clothespins on the empty line,
and, saddened, felt a kinship
to the tethered bits of vapid wood
swinging without reflection
in the dance of the sunset's colored light.

Amy Elias

*Honorable Mention



"FOR AMY"

christmas
(FOR DORA)

With the snow comes winter.
And I see my grandmother entering her own winter.
I see grandma . . .
Her eyes, confused behind thick glasses,
Are dusty,
Like handed down Christmas balls
We save in tissue paper
Only because they are old.
When I was little, I used to peer into the oven
To watch her wonderful breads and pies browning.
I was small enough then to sit down on the floor
And look in,
And I was small enough to be concerned with them.
Her hands contorted unset wrinkled,
Dry skin
No longer knead the dough
Or make the crusts;
They only fold in prayer to uncomfortable fists
As she folds into herself.
I see Jesus.
Jesu Kho Homnie; Jesus and my grandma . . .
At Christmas they would sit together on the sofa
And smile at the Christmas tree's twinkle
In their own silent conversation.
Grandma would ask him if he wanted
Another piece of nutroll, or poppyseed or wine;
She always made sure that everyone had enough to eat.
And although he was full,
Jesus would take another piece of food,
Just to hold it in His hand.
She is a child of herself now,
And she is the shadow of that child.
My grandmother's winter is cold,
And with the cold comes submission.
I see myself shiver.
I see Jesus and my grandma . . .
He is an orange bulb, and she is a green one
In a set of Christmas lights
Kept wrapped in a plastic bread bag down the cellar.
Our tree is plastic,
Our food is store-bought,
And we haven't put up our Christmas lights
Since I was five,
Nor have we turned them on.

Henry E. Long



River at Sunset

The music of crickets soothe
a woman quiet as stones held still
by the sun's pressing breath.
The river moves on
like wind-filled hair,
its flow escapes my vision.

Each breeze flowers open
Like the first breeze of morning
that glided through my kitchen doorway,
opening my red robe.
I laughed seeing my small breast,
pale and unexpected.

I arch my back into a breeze.
Again I hear the moist breathing
from heart-shaped leaves
twining breath with the sun —
breath within breath.

I recline into a stone's hollow,
that pulses with my chest.
It curves itself against my body back.

Asleep I dream the river's water-hair
weaves between my fingers
its thin strands.

Anna Mae Stanley

EDITOR

Stephen Badman

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Karen Mason

ART EDITOR

Henry E. Long

STAFF

Joanne Dal Sasso

Ann Devlin

Amy Elias

Belinda Housenbold

Beth Kaplan

Cheryl Kashuba

Rob Marshall

Daria Morris

Shannon Bridget Murphy

Larsen Orehotsky

Dorothy Price

Katherine Randall

Rebecca Schmitt

Denise Selner

Yvette Simmons

Clyde A. Soltz

Maggie Vojtko

Anna Mae Stanley

Jill P. Whitehead

ADVISORS

Patricia Heaman

Robert Heaman

COVER

Henry E. Long

