



MANUSCRIPT

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Vol. XXXV
MCMLXXXII

Schmitts 

5:37 a.m.
Eggs
Abstracted Brooke S
Returning for Mother
A Song for Emily
Excerpt from Threnos
Boys
Easter Sunday
Untitled
Sisters and the Rain
Untitled
Martyr
The Night Shift Nurse
For a Friend
Boxers and Dancers
Garvey's Point
Veins
Reality and Other Be
Mask
Walpurgis Night
The Fortune Teller
First Snow
Eckley, Pennsylvania
To a Molly's Wife
Untitled
Jumping off the Bridge
The Early Days
Untitled
Alone
Bayville
Currents
Untitled
Rage
Rain and Drum Poem
Untitled
The MacBeths
Untitled
Autumn
Man Transparent
Coffee Spoons
Born Again
Love Poem
Mussels
Roses
The Mailroom Clerk
Untitled
The Tiger
Surrealist Shirley T
and the Assassin
Untitled
Poem for Peter
Untitled
Where the Dead Sit

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5:37 a.m.

I share the dawn
with rain and unsleeping birds
as the moon burns my lips
as she flicks the last ash of night on my tongue
and settles cold and full
solemnly implanted in my belly
my bedsprings call to sleep
and echo pink
crying when whistles of lightning
flashed veined with silver
just as I can't close my eyes
on this unshared beauty
that tumbles alone with me
in my grandmother's nightgown

Rebecca Schmitt

TO GET RID OF THE WIFE WHOSE CONTINUED EXISTENCE BORED HIM, HE INVEIGLED HER INTO A DESERT SPOT, SHOT HER FOUR TIMES, AND THEN, AS SHE LAY ON THE GROUND AND SAID TO HIM, "YOU DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE, DID YOU DEAR?" REPLIED, "NO, I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE," AS HE RAISED A ROCK AND SMASHED HER SKULL.

— William James
from "The Will to Believe."

OR

EGGS

I just couldn't tell her
That I didn't order my eggs
Sunny-side up.
She dashed back to the pick-up window
Before I even had the chance
To mention it.

Well, if I did say something,
She'd probably get upset
And start to cry or something.
She's probably new here.
And the boss would see her crying
Over my eggs
And come over and say,
"What's the problem here?!"
And she'd end up getting fired
Because I'm picky.

Hell. I hate eggs this way.

I really should have said something.
But maybe she woulda gotten angry,
And whip my plate off the table
And 5 minutes later
Throw it back with two little black thingies
Flipped-over
"Just the way you like them, SIR!"

Damn. They're cold now too . . .

"Excuse me, sir. Is everything okay?"
"Oh! yes Miss, everything's just fine.
May I have another cup of coffee?"

BORED HIM, HE
AND THEN, AS
T ON PURPOSE,
AS HE RAISED A

n James
e Will to Believe."



RETURNING FOR MOTHER

This spring morning
looking into the mirror,
my mouth curls
into a firm fist.
I deny resembling you.

My hair doesn't grow
past my waist,
spilling down
into snow.
When you come out
of your Vermont winters,
your ends are twisted tight
with ice.

I am ten,
gripping the cabinet.
You turn,
a black eye swollen,
bruised by your husband.
My hands grasp table edges,
claws clutched rigid.

In the yard
of this crumbled house
from which I've grown
our bush is a broken cage
of branches,
your red mouth gapes
with a trap's teeth.

Anne May

A SONG FOR EMILY

Dear Mr. Pound,
I suppose you've heard it all before
from pubescent little girls
with sapphire eyes of afternoons in winter
and rolling hills of pony-tail gold
as when they're first aware of a stallion's mare
and surrender to a shadowy blur,
an icon that looms in their minds.

But here's another thing Zetetikos,
Those Ptolemaic whispers
can coax even whiskers
from grimy plowmen's faces
that never reveal
but one conscious wheel
and rather seek to conceal
like stone and stained glass
a violence about and within.

What are you looking for?
Whom did you seek
as you trudged through the reek of bones,
of ash strewn bones?
Your very own troubadors found out your fears
in an instant, in a magical age
and sullen though they were
they had never sung
would never sing
a music of the spears.

William Mondlak

Excerpt From Threnody of a Virgin Part III (The Miscarriage)

Glory be to the King
The Queen is Ravished
Death be to the Sinners
All is Red . . . all is red
. . . the blood of babies.

The Birds . . . the blackbirds
Fly over me
The lost souls search the graves
For the songs of dead children.

Donna Kay Scott

BOYS*

When winter comes I see
Old men with make-shift canes,
Straight limbs of trees and
Day-old beards,
Cradling six-packs like
Heavy grandchildren in
Thick brown bags that
Make crackling sounds
As they walk and spit.
They wear thread-dangle black
Overcoats and mumble toothless sadthings.
They do not comb their hair.
Did they really look like
Blonde or freckled
Little schoolboys with
Shiny rubber balls and model airplanes,
Puppies licking their then-smooth faces —
Cool breeze drying each sweaty brow
As they played ball in grassy fields
Of old hometowns —
Dreaming of soldiers,
Cowboys, novelists and
Fathers?
As young men, did they fall into
Sad love with bigeyed girls in
Back seats of cars on Friday nights?
They combed their hair then, I think,
But they must have told those girls
To go away.
Do they wonder where they are right now
Those soft, sad girls?
And what sounds would their own
Mothers make,
To see sons moan and sway,
Careen to supermarket dumpsters
In search of damaged cans and
Rusty lettuce?
What would they think
If they knew their sons
Don't say their prayers at night
anymore?

Steve Corcoran

*Honorable Mention



UNTITLED

The half-light of early morning filtered through the scrap of curtain at the one window, casting a pall over the single-room hut. Maura stirred into wakefulness but didn't open her eyes. She was accustomed to the constant gnawing in her stomach, knew the pain as an old enemy, and the cold, too, was becoming familiar since they'd sold the last of their blankets but one, to buy food. As she lay on the straw tick she struggled against the hunger-induced lethargy, pulling the thin blanket closer about her. Something in her head was trying to become a thought. Something was different, somehow. What, what was it? Cold. Something cold. Where was Ian? Gone for fuel? Yes, he'd build a turf fire and then slip under the blanket and warm her with his strong, hard body. Ian. Oh, God, she knew. Without opening her eyes she knew and the unformed thought crashed into full truth, unbearable reality.

Ian lay still beside her, cold and emaciated. Maura stretched out her fingers to touch him, but she knew he was dead. Her gesture ended in clutching the blanket closer to her.

"Soon, then, for me, too," she thought. She didn't open her eyes, didn't want to look at Ian. She couldn't bear to see that pathetic head with its thick, dead auburn curls. She didn't want to see the barren room that had once been warm and bright. It hurt her head to think of it . . . every stick of furniture, every dish and pot, everything they possessed, sold for food. Costly food, that wasn't enough to save their little ones. First one, then the other, shriveling to nothing almost as she watched. Oh, gracious Father, bless my little Ann, and Timmy. And my Ian.

Soon, soon she would follow. Nothing could be done. She would just lie here and wait for death to come to her. It was suddenly a pleasant thought. She tried to say a "Hail Mary" but was asleep again before she finished. "Blessed is the fruit . . ." She dreamed of great baskets of apples and pears in her mother's kitchen. Mama was there, her face red and moist from the heat of her cook stove. And Ian was sitting smoking his favorite clay pipe, his legs stretched out to the warmth of the fire, his feet resting on a three-legged stool on the hearth. And there were her two brothers . . . Toby and Stephen . . . it was all so clear. They were all there, laughing at one of Pa's yarns. A thick potato soup bubbled on the stove and there were biscuits as big as saucers and a tub of sweet butter.

Maura was slicing fruit into a bowl, thick juicy crescents tumbling from her hands. As they fell into the bowl they became tiny white babies, growing, climbing out of the bowl and into her lap. "Oh, mama, I'm going to have lots of babies," she said and she began to eat them, one by one and they were sweet and the juice rolled down her chin and over her fingers and her father roared with laughter and blew away, while her mother shriveled up and disappeared in the smoke from the cookstove. Her brothers yelled at her and the room changed shape, filled with smoke, burned her throat. She awoke. This time she opened her eyes.

The sun was streaming into the room now, dust motes sparkling and dancing in the light. The hearth was cold and ashes were spread across the floor by the downdraft from the chimney. She could still taste the smoke from her dream. She thought she heard a thrush singing and tried to think what month it was. She tried to remember when it was that they had lain down to die. There was no discussion, no decision, simply an end to food and money and nothing else to sell. And then the fire burned out and neither of them had the strength to go out looking for fuel. When was it that the fire went out? It seemed important that she remembered. She couldn't. Did Ian talk to her last night? She was sure he had. There was a sickening odor in the air, familiar and disgusting. She tried to think, what is it? What is it? Then she realized, it was the potatoes. The rotten, rotting, failed potatoes. She remembered looking out over the fields . . . when? Surely it was only two or three days ago . . . they were usually deep, bright green at this time, promising a rich harvest. But not this year. Nor last year either. She was remembering now and

wishing she could
blackened with de
stench. She'd neve
knew she was awa

Yes, there was th
She was shaken by
plague was greater
the dead into the s
come and burn eve
God, it wasn't my f
did. Holy Mary, sav
could hear the fire
let me burn." She

She was outside

"Help me, help
Someone running
"My god, Jack, the
Come on woman, v

Maura looked at
but the words wou
her away from the
wrapped her in bla
to cry. No sobs now
stop.

wishing she could stop. But the images came and she saw again the potato fields blackened with decayed plants . . . it looked like a fire had swept over the land. And the stench. She'd never have believed anything could smell so foul, nor . . . smoke again. She knew she was awake, but it was like her dream. How could there be smoke?

Yes, there was thick smoke now, and she thought she could hear fire crackling nearby. She was shaken by a series of convulsions. The "burners" were there. Of course. Fear of plague was greater than fear of starvation. So many died, and the living too weak to move the dead into the street. When the hungry times were bad like this, the burners would come and burn everything . . . houses, bodies, all. "Oh, God, am I going to burn? Please, God, it wasn't my fault the children died. I did the best I could. And Ian, Lord, he tried, he did. Holy Mary, save me, give me strength to get up, to get out of here." She was sure she could hear the fire in the thatch above her head. "Mother of God, help me, please, don't let me burn." She was crawling now, sobbing a tearless litany, "help me, help me."

She was outside. Smoke and fire . . . men's voices . . . yelling . . .

"Help me, help me." She kept crawling, over the dirt and stones, toward the men. Someone running toward her.

"My god, Jack, there's one here that's alive yet. I thought you said they was all dead? Come on woman, we'll see to ye'. Here now, it's goin' to be all right."

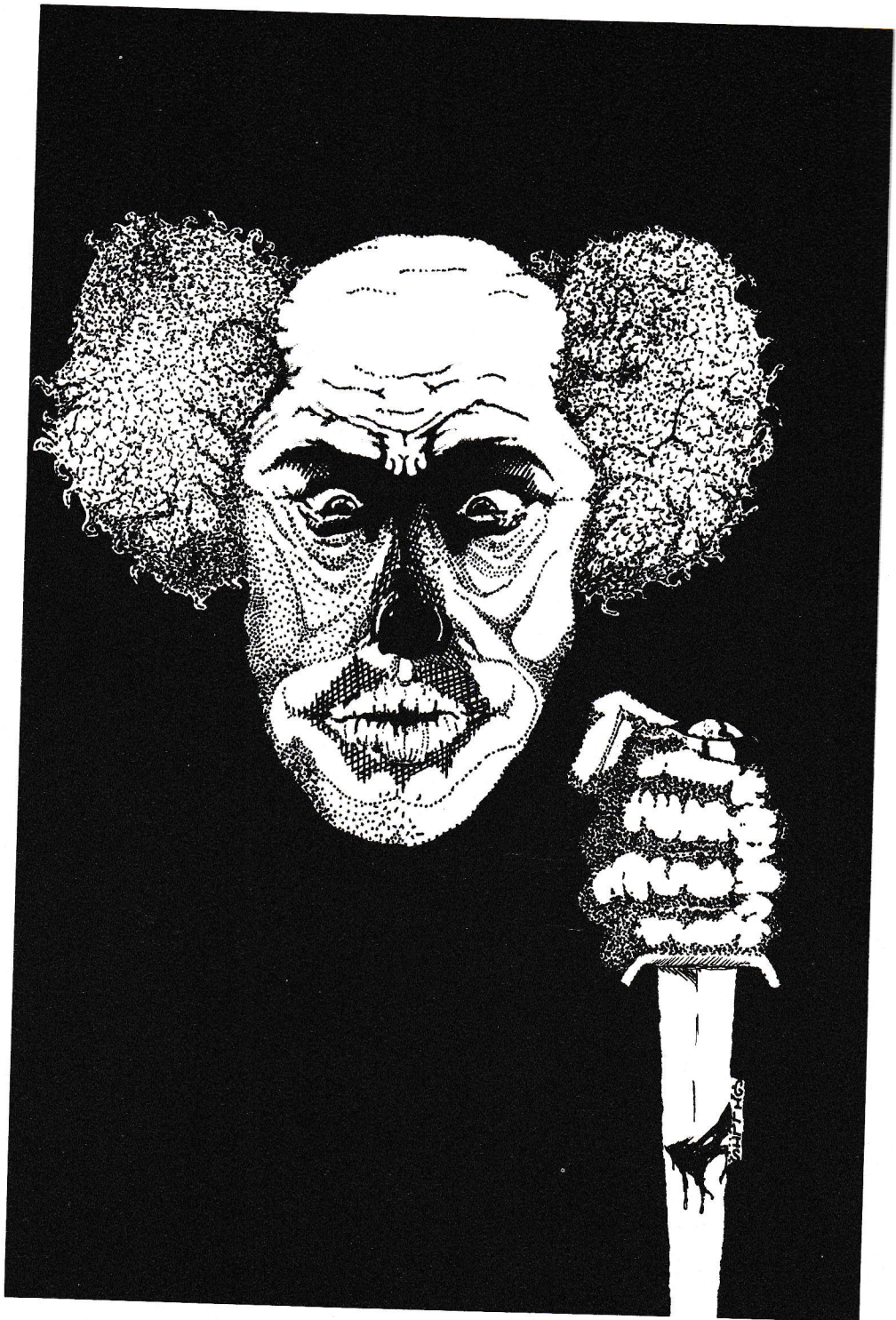
Maura looked at the man's face. She didn't know him. He was saying something to her but the words wouldn't come together in her head. And then he was lifting her, carrying her away from the fire, talking to her like she was a child. He set her down in a wagon, wrapped her in blankets, gave her some tea from a flask under the seat. Then she began to cry. No sobs now, no sound at all came from her, but the tears flowed and would not stop.

Nancy Deisroth

SISTERS AND THE RAIN

I remember summers ago, years ago
When my sisters in their shorts
Would sit on the sidewalk
When the afternoon showers came.
They would get up later
And see the dry outlines
Of their legs on the ground
And become amused.

Mark James



MARTYR

To see where the dots
Of light
Were reflected from,
The fish surfaces onto the shore,
And smiling
At the stars
Realizes the penalty for truth,
And dies.

Henry E. Long

THE NIGHT SHIFT NURSE

The nurse
In tight-white clothes
Clacking her Doctor Scholled heels
Down a checkerboard hallway
At 3 o'clock in the morning.
It took her 4 years
To get her B.S. in Nursing,
And another 19 to get where she is now,
Which is at 3 o'clock in the morning,
Clacking towards a blinking red light
Above room 334
In which an 89-year-old woman
Has just shit her guts out
In her bed
And would like the sheets changed.

Henry E. Long

FOR A FRIEND

The house is silent
heavy with breathing and the echo of rain,
noiseless sound, muted and ripe
like a hollowed pumpkin or a dimpled,
purple-black eggplant in Autumn.
The raindrops run from the sky, eager
to meet the open-armed embrace of the delicate grass;
on my back, eyes to the clouds,
the ground is sky and the inverted rain
falls up to meet it,
wet kisses for the dripping grass, which stands quivering,
open-mouthed, black humus giving off the smell
of unused graves to the heavy air.

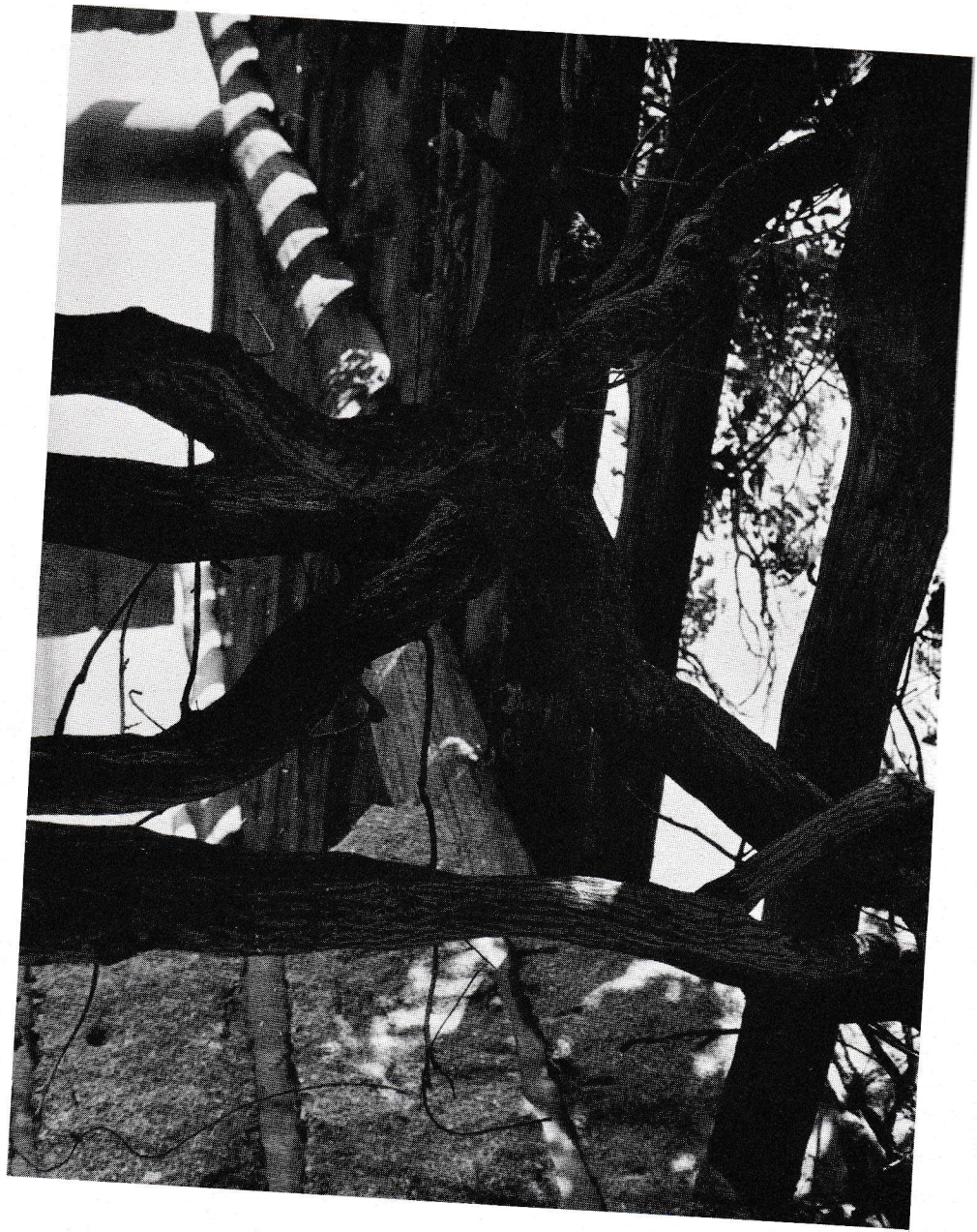
Cool grey rocks - a throne
covered with a tapestry of green and edged with
fallen sticks instead of ermine;
above these, piled to the bottom of the sun,
other rocks fit awkwardly together
like the arthritic fingers of an old woman,
and in one of the crevices
sleeps a soggy pack of Marlboros.
Civilization had crept into the fissures.
Darting in amongst those rocks we laughed
as they dared us to climb;
a violet, plucked from the stream's bank,
shouted from the whiteness of your breast pocket and
tried to make the field nearby hear purple,
as dandelion fuzz blew in a careless snowstorm
across the whispering grass.
I smelled the blue sky
in the snowdrop in your hand;
I laughed,
my back a luscious shade of warm —
gratis from the setting sun.
I don't know you at all in crowds.
It is only when you walk among the silent rocks
that you smile carelessly and talk without self-censure.
I wish to walk there again with you
so that I can understand your quiet
like the darkness of the fissures
or the heavy richness
of the deep green water.

Amy Elias

BOXERS AND DANCERS

Boxers and
Dancers
Tighten and relax
Smooth muscles
Back and
Forth
Like ropes
On sails
On ships.
Like lovers
Back and forth,
They are perfect.
Both so thick with concentration
As if they played chess
With the thickness of their bodies.
Thighs like horses' thighs,
Faces Blank
Because they do not paint pictures
With their faces.
They are not actors.
They are alone and
Have learned to love their loneliness,
Like a gold-star-sticker
Floating above their heads.
They do not care
If you watch them.
My father dreamed
That I would dance-in-the-box but
I boxed the dream
And watched instead.
That's where poets come from because,
I can tell you,
When I see them pulling up their sails
My heart beats and
Flutters in my throat like
The wings of a bird
In a tiny chimney.

Steve Corcoran



VEINS

From the smeared bus window
I watch a woman
with cheeks
the color of blood
turn away.

In a large room
of wooden tables
and dim light,
unwrapping the bandage
of a hat
from my head,
winter becomes the desolate wait
for ice-veins
to thaw.
Sitting down
I press back hairs
dangling like limp fingers.

Walking up to my house
at night
I count remaining ice-veins.
Sunlight could not dissolve
this road's ice.

Cold air
from the roof
floats down
and hovers below
my room's ceiling.
I wait for the angel
of pillars,
or the angel of cleft hooves.
Both speak my name.

Anne May

REALITY AND OTHER BAD TRANSLATIONS*

I

Here cometh again that brave Ulysses
to be popped, hard-boiled, on this craggy lee,
Bifurcation, sex and soul, but gives him twice the pieces
bringing him back, wan, world-weary, from Thee
Who sings ever Queen Esther's dervish lay:
"ni plus, ni moins, realite'."

II

What am I to think, to realize?
"And down from thennes I wolde avyse
this little spot of erthe . . ."
Witches. I tremble as the clee;
"Come away! Away the hearth!"
and in fearful reverence, fall to my knees.

III

Impassive sky, crisp and clear
weighs heavily, emptily rings
with brilliant smiles. And tearful
mists come murmuring,
as echoes from the shore.
They swell and rush, swing back, sway forth.

IV

Shall we attempt a mummer's mime
to amuse ourselves above the slime,
Or weigh the odds and snip the sac
Inflate it and float upon our backs?
Weep, for perhaps no chorus will weep
lacking words in ghoulish homeopathy.

V

Fish eyes blur the truth of things
every tight sharp edge
each bullet and ledge
to a shadowy blot, a hollow ring
animate, bleak, and drawing near
a frozen face like a searing salt tear.

VI

But goodman fear sends most, like mud-veined carp,
to feed off-shore and to dream of blessed wood
longing to hear linnet, thrush and that blasted harp
rupturing themselves to grow legs if they could.

William Mondlak

*Honorable Mention

eces



WALPURGIS NIGHT

O spirits of the world, arise,
Ye have until the sun doth rise!
The moon is shining full and bright,
It is Walpurgis Night tonight.

The fiddler strikes a tune of old
Amid the tombstones bleak and cold;
Moonlight shining cool and chilling
Makes the spirit quick and thrilling.

Sentries guard the graveyard door
As phantoms from the days of yore
Begin to dance the night away
Until the dawning of the day.

The specters leap upon their graves,
The goblins sing within the caves,
A jackal howls amid the shade,
A bat flies in a forest glade.

The wind is blowing through the trees,
The tempest rages o'er the seas,
Walpurgis Night is here at last!
Its terror setting men aghast.

A vampire creeps about the bog,
The marsh king travels in the fog,
Ghostly sounds make children shiver
Causing even knights to quiver!

Skeletons in the graveyard dance
While satyrs in the moonlight prance;
A phantom floats about the gloom,
A witch rides freely on her broom.

A-haunting we will go tonight
To give the men of earth a fright,
For when the morning comes at last
We are but mem'ries of the past!

Yet while Walpurgis Night is here
Our job is but to make men fear;
So join ye spirits one and all
And look beyond the graveyard wall!

A young boy lies in bed awake:
His room is dark, the boy doth quake —
His face is white with fear and fright
He knows it is Walpurgis Night!

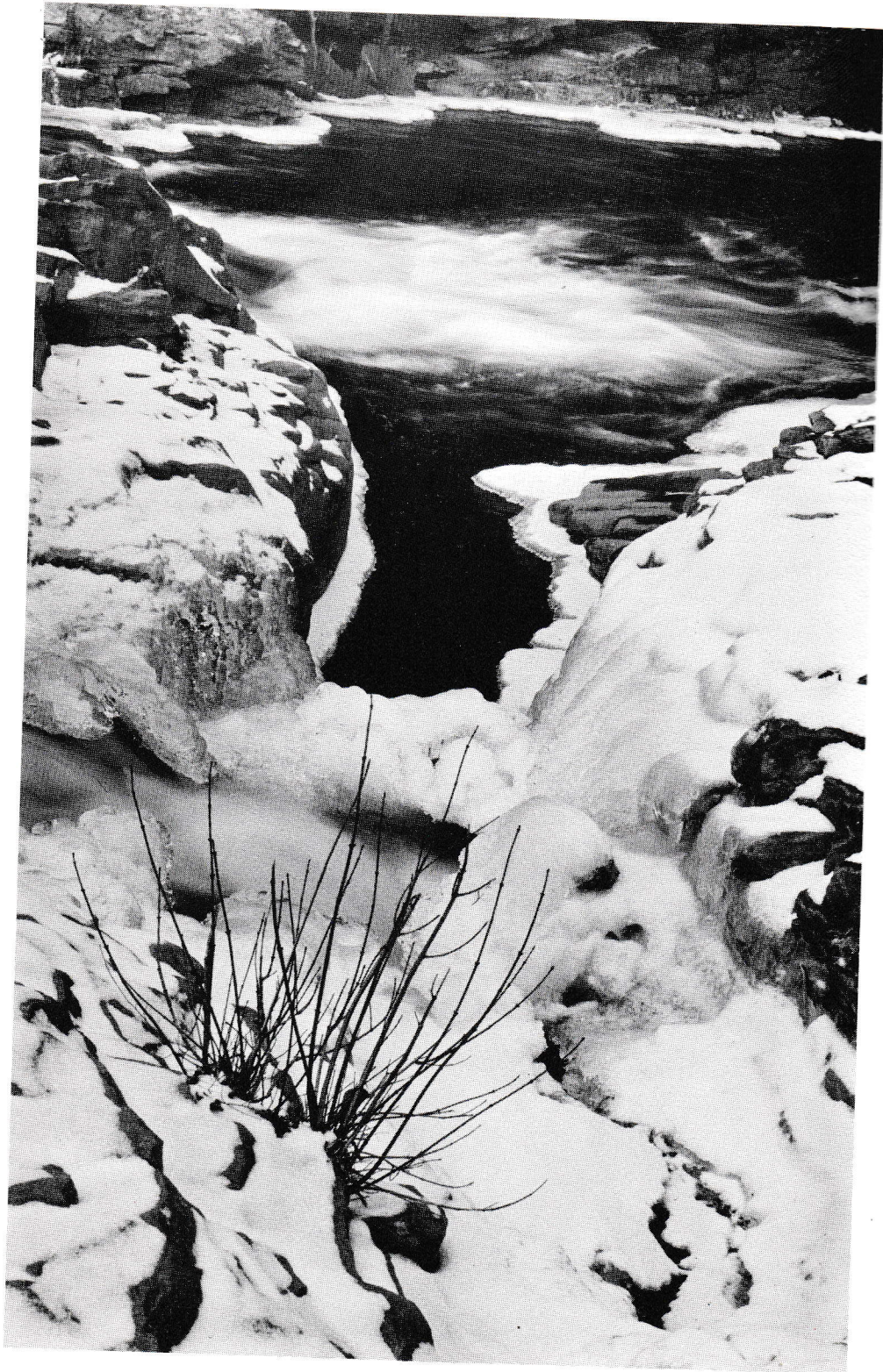
And so it is with many more,
This night of old they all deplore.
But listen now and hear my cry:
The sun is rising in the sky!

We must return unto our graves,
To death once more we shall be slaves!
But on this eve again next year
Walpurgis Night is once more here!

So wait we must until that time
To hear the toll of midnight chime,
And then we come about once more
To haunt the earth from shore to shore.

Larsen Orehotsky





TO A M

Upon
That w
The s
Wither
And
While M
Thro
In her
Below
That lo
When
In abse
Betw
That fro
Moist
That se
As wi

ECKLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

Near the broken picket fence
Where once swung the graveyard gate
Above the stained-glass windows
Where widows wept
In the agony of their wisdom
That always came too late,
The churchbell rings atop the belfry tower
Breaking the silence of the icy November morning,
Echoing along the empty earthen street
Where dormant stands the company store
Faltering,
Torn relentlessly by the wind
That moves among the tiny clumps of grass
And whistles past houses
To sear its rotting timbers
And strip another board
From the vigilance
Of square, rusted nails.

Bernie Martz

TO A MOLLY'S WIFE

Upon the moss that greens the path
That winds beyond the courtyard wall
The shadows cast
Wither in the silence of their grasp.
And there the nightbird calls
While Katheriné wanders
Through the early evening billows
In her tattered dress and shawl
Below the upcast wooden steeple
That looms below the light
Where sometimes swallows whisper
In absence of their flight
Between the rows of orchids
That from passing currents pressed
Moisten in beds of fresh-turned earth
That settle in the turbid mist . . .
As winds smooth sides of granite stones.

Bernie Martz



JUMPING OFF THE BRIDGE

I lie in my bed,
In my beer drunkenness,
And fall at first
 like a slow anchor, unconcerned,
Into octopus inky black depths
Of feathery water or
A corner in space where there are no stars and
 think of weepy things
 like unattended lovers and
 poetry.
My eyes feel thick like
Beaten boxers' eyes, as if
There were paperweights on them
To keep my novels from escaping.
Now on the blank bed-sheet canvas
I have become the painting:
 an abstract arm-angel in the snow,
I curl my hands
 close to my face,
Perform the fetal alphabet like a
Horizontal dancer and
 reach the starfish ochre,
The softly liquid
Bottom.

Steve Corcoran

THE EARLY DAYS

In spring mornings
Gusty winds and schoolroom blues
Find laughing boys in corduroy
Pursuing flocks of grumbling pigeons
With wooden guns
Across the ancient loading platform
That stretches the length
Of Livingston Station.

There, with untainted hopes,
Shiny copper pennies are placed
On weathered rails
While brown eyes strain to greet
Trains that seldom come
And peer through dirty windows
At empty desks and yellow ledgers
Where against the glass
With noses pressed
They dream of war and glory
And ways to break inside.

Bernie Martz

The Early Days by Bernie Martz and **Untitled**, a photograph by Marian T. Koviack (opposite), were awarded the Manuscript Society Literary and Art Prizes.

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e), were
and Art



Marian T. Koviack

ALONE

Something knocks
upon my kitchen door.
I stare at it
imagining
a blonde edge of moustache,
soft on-key humming,
a head turning
to cough out cold breath.

But it is late,
I am tired.
It is the wind pounding
its hard fists
demanding me
to release it
into each room
where it can explore
with frozen fingers.

Every log burning
in the stove softly whistles
a monotonous tune,
loyal soldiers travelling
to war.

My dark-haired friend
who travels the countryside
as if it is water
and he a dolphin,
has gone to hear
the ocean's weightless singing.

A drunken ex-lover does not hum
outside my door.
I boil water
to wash dishes
and round light cups.
I measure the thickness
of frost
inside all windows
with one fingertip.

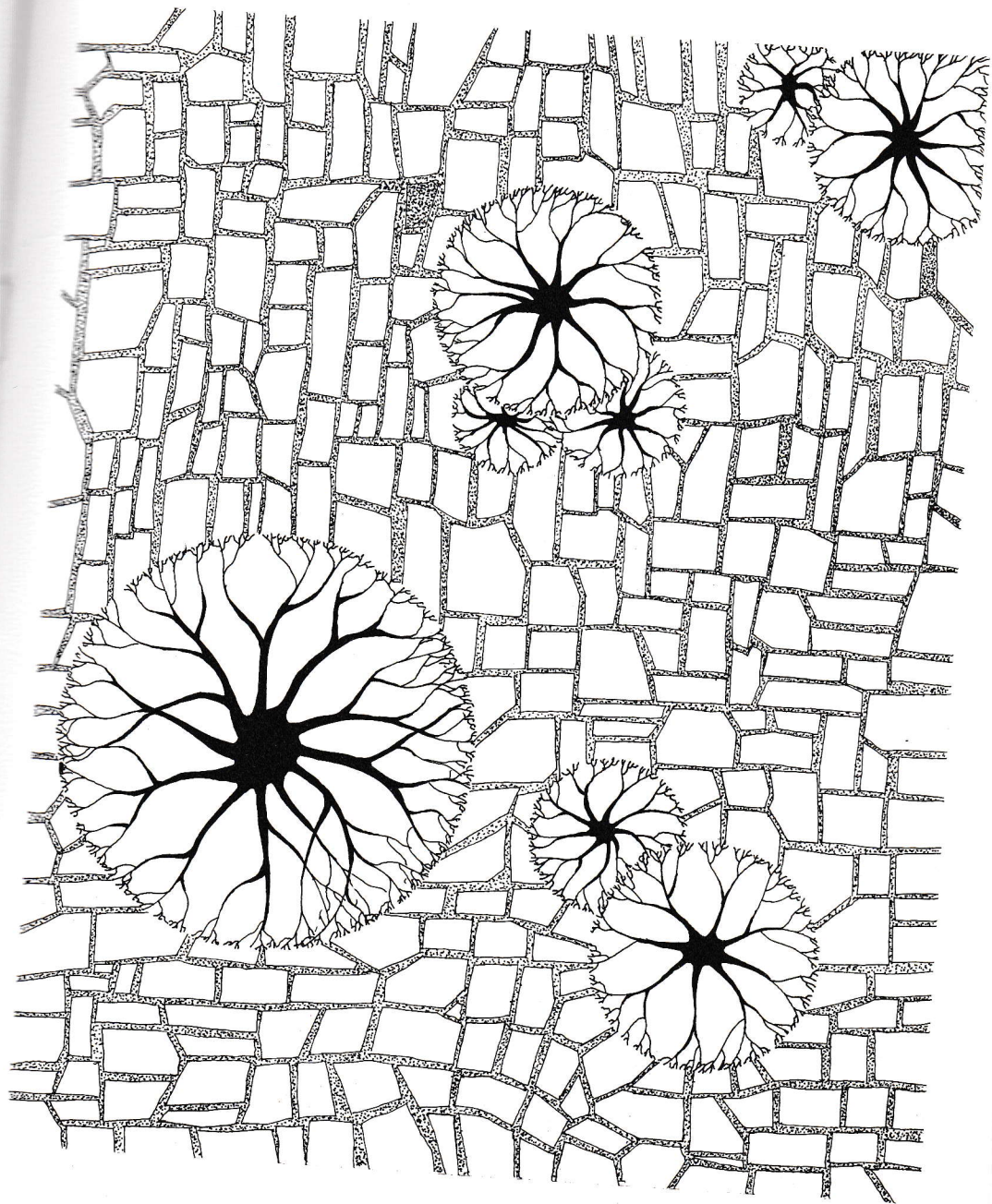
Anne May



CURRENTS

James Dean, your blue eyes twinkle
From the depths of the road that winds ahead,
Finding its way to a somber moon
Which floats above the glen
Where tossed from the Copernican Sea
Moonbeams glance off unsuspecting bumpers
And fireflies pass in bursting waves of gold
To ebb in swirling fields of fresh-steeped grain
Shimmering in their fragrance hungry for the cutting
While locusts speak in tongues
And bleat from trees which moan with empty limbs
That once savored the sweetness of another time
When the earth wondered in the splendor of its harvest.

Bernie Martz



RAGE

These are times of rage, again, for man lives
In a cage called time. Seldom he who gives
His soul to time can catch it back and keep
It safe from this machine, and gently sleep.
His dreams tick. His hopes sleep. His breathing counts
The veiled goals grasped too quickly in great amounts
To ever extend man's reach beyond his
Circled self, his hands reaching first his head,
Then side, then feet, round and round until dread
Fills his soul for he knows that his own hand
Formed the cage that keeps him like grains of sand
Within a glass: he makes the hour fall
Then fall again. Yet he would give his all
To break the cage, release the rage, in bliss.

Lisa Cobb

RAIN AND DRUM POEM

Drops of rain are
Kamikaze dancers or
Bullets
Forming bullseye echoes
In puddles on the road.
They speak in code,
Rhythm languages against
my windows,
Little dots and dashes that are
Sweet slow drizzle
Not obnoxious thunder
Buddy Rich-rain.
This wednesday morning drips
In intricate delicacy,
Like Louis Belson
Brushing
with
the
Duke.

Steve Corcoran



"The MacBETHs"

a parody

Scene I: *A barber shop, somewhere in Scotland. Three very effeminate barbers are talking to each other.*

1st Barber: Double Bubble chews like rubble,
Toothaches, fillings, denture trouble.

2nd Barber: Hearken! I hear someone.

3rd Barber: It might be a customer. What say we look?
(Outside the shop, Mr. MacBeth and his friend Banquo watch the barbers through a window.)

Banquo: Are you sure we can trust these guys? They look like Weird Sisters.

MacBeth: All they're going to do is cut our hair, Banquo. After all, we're not trusting them with our futures!

2nd Barber: *(as MacBeth and Banquo enter the shop)* Hearken unto thee, MacBeth!

MacBeth: *(paying no attention)* Cut and shave. *(He sits in one of the chairs.)*

3rd Barber: *(to Banquo)* Pray thee, sit here. And wilt thou have thine hair cut as well, cute one?

Banquo: *(nervously)* I haven't decided yet.

1st Barber: *(persuasive)* I'll throw in a free fortune.

MacBeth: *(interrupting)* You teil fortunes, too? I thought this was a barber shop.

2nd Barber: *(insulted)* A Tonsorial Parlor!

MacBeth: Whatever. *(a pause)* Is there any reason for such a combination? I mean, a *(exaggerating words for the 2nd Barber's benefit)* Tonsorial Parlor and Crystal Ball Palace all in one?

1st Barber: Where have you been lately, silly? No one goes to a Barber Shop anymore.

Banquo: *(shrugs)* Oh, boy.

3rd Barber: *(to Banquo)* So, what about it, blue eyes?

Banquo: *(backing off)* Nothing for me, thank you.

MacBeth: I'll have a fortune along with the cut and shave.

2nd Barber: *(overjoyed)* Good! It'll just take a second to prepare. *(He turns his back toward MacBeth. The 1st and 3rd Barber start to shave and cut MacBeth's hair.)*

MacBeth: *(after a few seconds)* Does this take long?

2nd Barber: *(abruptly turns around and points a finger at MacBeth)* Hearken unto me, MacBeth. *(MacBeth jumps, which scares the two Barbers who are attending him)*

1st Barber: *(in a frenzy)* There's no telling how it'll turn out, if you don't sit still.

2nd Barber: *(still pointing at MacBeth)* By the time this day is out, thou shalt loose an argument with thy wife. Thou shalt have guests for dinner, and thou shalt lose a piece of cutlery. *(seemingly exhausted, he hurries out)*

Banquo: *(excited)* Wow, this is interesting. What about mine?

3rd Barber: *(considering)* Your future looks a bit hazy. Maybe if you come over to my place for a few drinks tonight, we could work something out.

Banquo: *(backing off again)* I don't think so.

3rd Barber: *(offended)* You had your chance, blue eyes!

1st Barber: *(brushing off MacBeth's shoulders)* All done, fella.

MacBeth: (*rising*) Well, that was quick! (*reaching into his pocket*) What do I owe you?

1st Barber: (*thinking*) Shave and a cut? Two bits.

MacBeth: (*as he pays the barber*) Thanks a bunch. (*to Banquo*) Let's go.

2nd Barber: (*entering*) Wait! (*He walks over to the 1st and 3rd Barber and they form a line*)

Barbers: Harken unto we, MacBeth! Remember the cutlery!

Banquo: (*hushed to MacBeth as they cross at the door*) Those are the weirdest sisters I've ever met.

(Exit)

Scene II: *MacBeth's house, the dining room. Mrs. MacBeth is setting the table.*

Mrs. MacBeth: Were it not so, I would not be worried. Yet, the clock is past its prime, and he isn't here. (*She fumbles around the table, nervously setting it*) Oh, the foul pain of it all. I am sick with worry. Where is my husband? It's late. The clock has struck. Where is my husband with my Kentucky Fried Chicken? (*Scott, the MacBeth's young son, enters*)

Scott: (*sing song*) Mommy look. I found a book!

Mrs. MacBeth: (*pretending to care*) Very good, son. (*The boy starts to suck his thumb; Mrs. MacBeth sees this and is angry*) How many times must I tell you about that? I'll teach you to suck your thumb! Get that finger out of your mouth before I pluck it out and bash your head against that wall until your brains fly out! I didn't raise you to suck your thumb!

Scott: (*not phased a bit*) Don't be caddy. Where is daddy?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*placing her hand on her forehead*) Wouldst that knowledge only be mine. Oh, such foul torture I must endure . . . (*Scott looks at her, confused*) He's not home yet.

Scott: I hate this play being done this way.
You're not given a start if you've got a small part.
All the time you talk in rhyme! (*exit*)

(*MacBeth's voice is heard from another room*)

MacBeth: (*from offstage*) Honey, I'm home.

Mrs. MacBeth: (*relieved*) At last, oh sweet, dear husband. At last you are here. Have you the poultry?

MacBeth: (*entering*) Oh, I forgot. I went with Banquo to get a haircut, and . . .

Mrs. MacBeth: (*interrupting*) And you forgot my chicken?

MacBeth: (*continuing*) . . . We met these weird barbers . . .

Mrs. MacBeth: . . . I must have that chicken! Have you lost your senses? Go out and get my chicken.

MacBeth: . . . They told my future. They said . . .

MacBeth and Mrs. MacBeth: We're having guests for dinner. (*They realize they've said the same thing, smile, hook their little fingers together. Then their looks turn confused.*) Huh?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*anxious*) You knew about our guests. But how could you have known? You have been kept apart from this knowledge for weeks. Pray thee, tell me how it is you came by this knowledge?

MacBeth: (*explaining*) As I was trying to tell you before, I had three predictions for my future told me. One has already come true. Why are we having guests for dinner?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*very interested*) Pray, hasten to tell me the others. What greatness lies in our future?

MacBeth: We're going to lose a piece of cutlery, and, . . . (*he is trying to remember*) . . . I forget the other. I remember the cutlery, though.

Mrs. MacBeth: (*as the clock strikes six*) What foul friend, time. Quickly, you must journey to the Colonel's. We must feed our guests.

MacBeth: (*reasoning*) Can't you cook something for them?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*clenching her fists*) No! I didn't have time! We must seek our feast elsewhere . . . my cupboard is bare. Get thee the chicken!

MacBeth: (*a sudden realization*) Of course! I'm going to lose an argument with you! The third prediction. Another one proves to be true. I'll be off for the chicken now. (*exit.*)

Mrs. MacBeth: Such a friend is he who is my husband. (*exit.*)

Scene III: *MacBeth's house. The laundry room. Mrs. MacBeth is taking her dress out of the washing machine. She looks it over carefully, frowns, then takes a bottle from a shelf, opens it and pours some liquid on the dress, rubbing furiously.*

Mrs. MacBeth: Out! Out! Damned spot! I say out! Yet, who would have thought the old bottle to have so much ketchup in it?

Scene IV: *The living room. MacBeth is shooting darts at a dartboard which is hanging on a door. Just as he throws one, the door swings open and Duncan enters.*

Duncan: Hello, son, it's your Uncle Duncan, how . . . (*he is struck by the dart*) Oh, dear, something's amiss in the state of Scotland! (*He falls to the floor*) Et tu, MacBeth! Then fall Duncan. (*Then Duncan dies.*)

MacBeth: (*it was all too fast for him*) Oh, my! What have I done?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*entering*) What have you done? Is he dead? You stupid fool! You fool! What have you done? He's bleeding on the carpet I just had cleaned. Quick, take out the dart!

MacBeth: (*as he tries to remove the dart*) I cannot. It's stuck!

Mrs. MacBeth: Then go out to the kitchen and get the carving knife and we'll dig it out. It must be removed at any expense.

MacBeth: (*agreeing*) You're right, as always, dear. (*exit*)

Mrs. MacBeth: (*as he goes*) The mad, impetuous fool! (*The doorbell rings*) Oh, this would be the unkindest cut of all! (*calling to MacBeth*) Hurry! Help me! The door, our guests arrive!

MacBeth: (*rationalizing*) I have stepped so far in the kitchen that it is just as easy to go forward and get the knife as it is to answer the door. (*There is banging on the door now*)

Mrs. MacBeth: Well, then we must make haste!

MacBeth: (*entering*) What luck I have had this day! I can't find the knife. We've lost our knife! (*more banging*)

Mrs. MacBeth: (*remembering*) That's the knife my mother gave us. What did you do with it?

MacBeth: (*remembering*) . . . The prediction! The knife is lost! (*more banging*) Oh, stop! (*calling outside*) You'd swear you were banging the gates of hell! Who's there, in name of Beelzebub?

Banquo: (*from offstage*) It is Banquo!

Mrs. MacBeth: (*calling outside*) Just a minute, Banquo. (*to MacBeth*) Hurry, we have little time, let's put the body in the bathroom until later. We must tend to the guests and tend to this later. (*They drag Duncan's body offstage*) Remember, husband, change the stupid look upon thy face. False face must hide what false heart knows is true. (*they exit; there is another bang at the door*)

MacBeth: (*runs out and answers the door, smiling*) Banquo, old chum! Why didn't you tell me you were out there?

Banquo: (*confused*) I thought I did.

MacBeth: Don't let it bother you. Go into the dining room. The others will be here in a minute. My wife will tend to you. (*MacBeth takes his shoulder and leads him out. exit*)

Scene V: *The dining room. The room is full of people all wearing party hats. MacBeth's seat is empty.*

Guest 1: (*leans over to Mrs. MacBeth*) Where is your husband, my dear? Did he forget his own birthday?

Mrs. MacBeth: (*twitching*) The hour has not yet come. He will be here, fear thee not, good friend. (*she stares down at the table, then announces*) We might just as well begin the feast, Mr. MacBeth will be with us very soon. (*she looks again at table, then realizing*) What is this? Is this a dagger I see before me? Let me clutch thee. It is my mother's very own gift! All is well now.

(*MacBeth enters the room. There is a red spot on his chin. The guests rise and sing "Happy Birthday" to him. He sits down next to Mrs. MacBeth, embarrassed.*)

MacBeth: (*to Mrs. MacBeth*) Honey, you remembered.

Mrs. MacBeth: (*whispering*) There is blood on thy face.

MacBeth: (*putting his thumb on his chin*) I cut myself shaving.

Mrs. MacBeth: Is the body secured? Pray, tell me truly.

MacBeth: Still in the bathroom, my sweet. It was so considerate of you to think of this surprise party for me.

Mrs. MacBeth: (*showing him the knife*) Look, I found the knife.

MacBeth: (*taking it*) Well, then I'll just go . . .

Mrs. MacBeth: (*interrupting*) Sit down, you fool! (*to all*) Let's eat!

(*they start to begin, but are interrupted by a rather large man who enters the room. He is wearing overalls which say "MacDuff's Plumbing" on the back.*)

MacDuff: (*shouting*) Alright everyone, which is the murderer?

MacBeth: What? Who are you? Why do you come here?

MacDuff: My name is MacDuff. I am a plumber by trade. I was summoned by a boy named Scott, a funny little kid, talks in rhymes. Anyway, he told me that something was clogging up the bath tub. He sure was right. It was a 175 lb. dead man.

MacBeth: (*vanquished*) I'd never believe it! How could this happen? There's the rub!

Mrs. MacBeth: You fool!

(*Curtain*)

Stanley J. Freeda



AUTUMN

In late September
The days of sunlight wane;
And amidst the fields and hardening furrows,
Along the barren cliffs that cast their shadows,
Winds begin to move
And quietly make their way,
Embarking on their journey
And undertake a new found task —
To seek the leaves of ripening brown
That cling to weary, laden branches.

Bowing to the northwind, cold,
Slowly they begin to flutter.
And alone,
One by one, they fall
Dropping where they may:
Some to earth,
Others to clay.
And quickly they are scattered,
Turned and tossed by every passing gust,
To rustle in the night,
Alone to find a rest that waits,
Soil for another year's harvest.

And the eyes of autumn softly smile
At those who wonder at the swallow's flight,
Who southward gaze
And taste the air
That whistles through the attic soft
And passes with the fading light,
While gussets strain and joints creak
And tell their tale of woe,
Crying in their dark despair
Someday to only break.

Bernie Martz



COFFEE SPOONS

Juggle ambition in both hands and leave
No hold for recollection
Until all eyes unequivocally state success:
Sad recompense for unrewarded dreams.
We are so steeped in waiting.
Stuff platitudes and tempered passions
in vast voids, damp and darkened,
Crowding urgent inspiration, which remains
unborn for my reflections.
A leaf formed, its potential sealed, is called,
presents even its soft, fine underbelly to the world:
No distress in preparation.
And yet should I be called to show such trust in supposed
predetermined courses
How I would be stayed by recollections of others in the past —
Foolish, beguiled into innocence;
And, wanting only confirmation of a dream,
would stumble over visions
sleeping in the wind-tossed grass.

Amy Elias



LOVE POEM

With each other we
are not such delicate artists
Such careless sculptors each
Never leaving the other
In Gallery condition.
Little scars form a maze,
A pattern so complex that
 As years go by
It becomes harder to find its center,
The heart in which we live.
I remember the religion of romance.
We worshipped love itself,
Each union a passionate sainthood,
Each touch an honest flame, a
 votive touch.
But now we are reluctant canvas
Sculptors, brittle and pale as dusty plaster,
Lost somewhere in our frantic puzzle
Crazy prizon-maze.
Now we are mature.

Steve Corcoran



ROSES

Fresh from the warmth
And the love in their cutting
Carelessly dropped
Left huddled in the snow
Roses are quickly brittle
By winter's chill
That strips each stem of life
And cracks each frozen petal
Splintering the pieces
Among thorns
That lie fallen
Embedded in their place

Bernie Martz

THE MAILROOM CLERK

"Dear John," Ah — even I know that!
Oh — but how about, "Auntie Claire,
I'll be in town next week, can I borrow the flat?"
Bah! There's no poetry there!

"Look," they say, "He scribbles."
"But it's true, he has no heart."
— I'll show them heartless drivel,
I'll make them fear me from the start.

"Dear Customer," nothing there,
A second notice, . . . lights out next.
Here perhaps . . . "Mother Dear" (seehere, seehere)
"Signed, Frightened and fearfully perplexed."

Thus, I'll give them something, yes?
Close to home? I'll break their hearts.
"Charles, Loved it ever so much . . .
"Some time again." There's homespun art!

Star-crossed lovers? They'll have their fill.
"Catherine, You know well I seldom write."
Well! mm-perhaps. Bah! His head doth swill.
But there's hundreds more, we'll sniff them out.

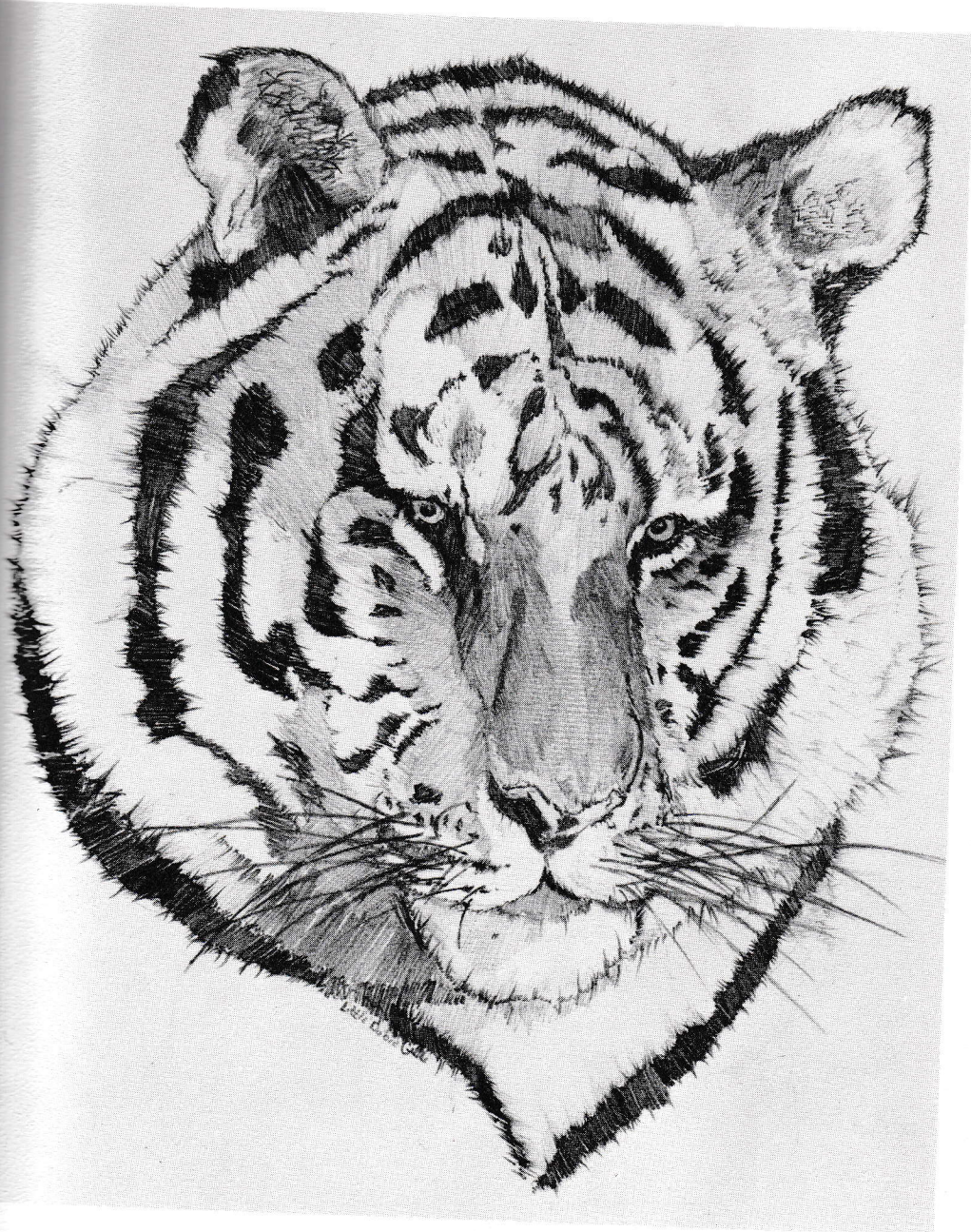
You want the stuff that dreams are made of?
Here — "Dear Elizabeth," What? Do you suppose?
Yes. Here. Tender, loving, full of hope.
What's this? "P.S. This comedy's about to close."

William Mondlak

UNTITLED

The clock stirs the hours
behind the glass, after
evening's faint blush took its time passing
the birds feeding from my strange hands,
undisturbed to think that they and I are not alone.

Kenneth Waters



**SURREALIST SHIRLEY TEMPLE AND THE
ASSASSINATED CATHOLIC PRESIDENT**

At age 5
She would dance in her attic
With President Kennedy,
While Bobby played the
Baby grand.
Mr. Kennedy was never stiff,
And not once
Did he ever step on her toes.

Henry E. Long



POEM FOR PETER*

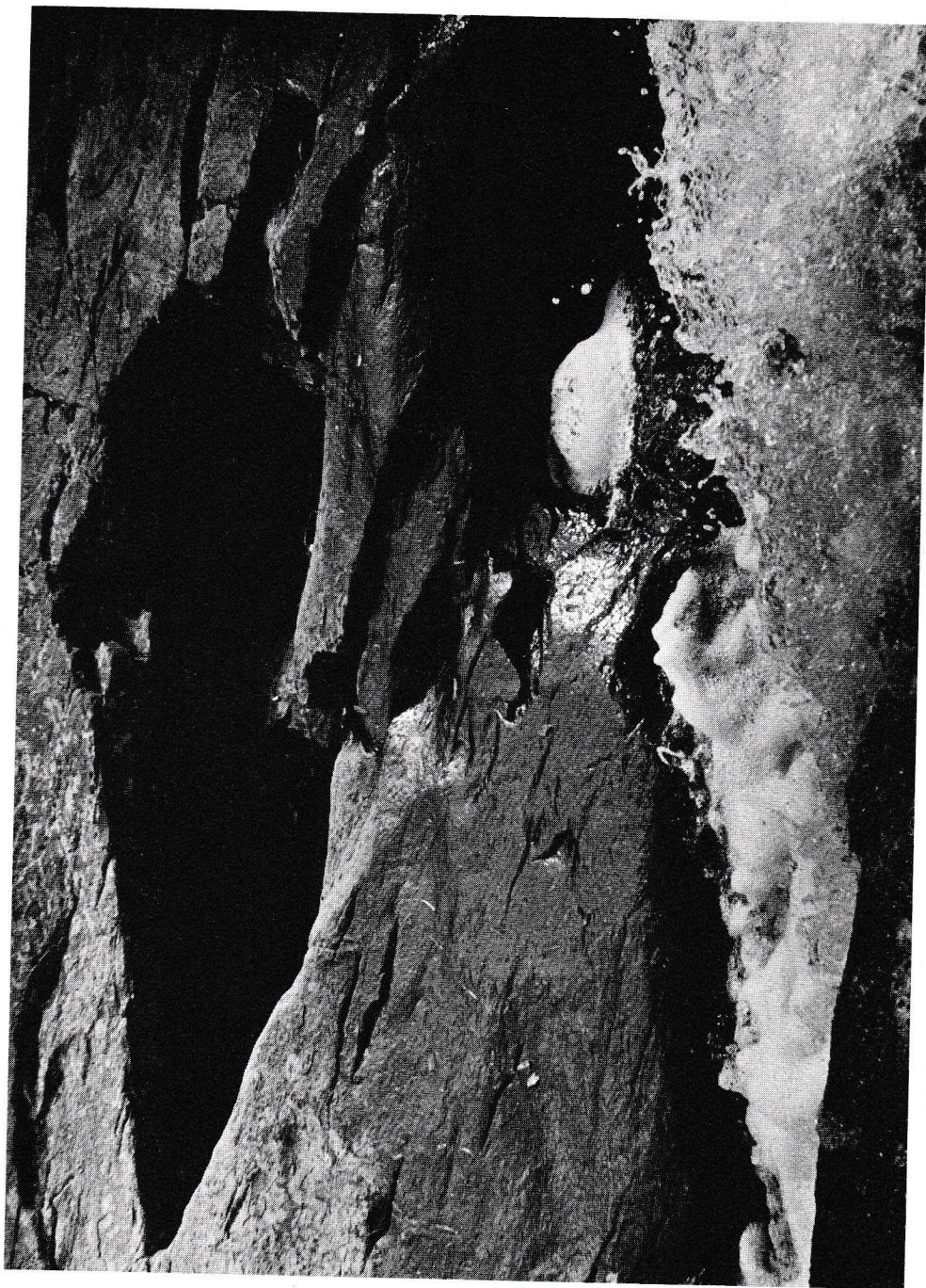
All the broken trees are falling.
Snow descends,
melting with polluted ice
along streets that stretch
their dark underbellies like snakes.

If the sky could open
and release pure rain
to the ground's breathing pores,
I could close my eyes
and no longer imagine you.

If the wind were stirring
twigs and small leaves,
I would not want the touch
of rain and grass
under my bare feet.
I would want only
the long amber heat of autumn.

Anne May

*Honorable Mention



WHERE THE DEAD SLEEP
for my mother and father

The ashes of memory
lie scattered among forsythia and lilac
and turn to dust
beneath the shadow of the elm.
The wind moans through its nodding branches.
The earth is a blanket of moist yellow petals
concealing tombs of stuffed bears.
No smooth stones mark these graves.

The beach gradually disappears,
receding into the sea.
At dusk, dunes rise,
and behind them sandpipers find refuge
from surf and fishermen.
Shreds of kelp catch the toes of boys
who kneel in moonlight
waist deep and unafraid.

Lullabies wander in silence
from the river's cradle
where water rolls and foams,
a toothless old woman forgetting her way.
The rough murmurs of stars
govern a child's dreams,
casting light and shadows of elm
which clutch tiny feet like sea crabs.

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