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MANUSCRIPT







THE MANUSCRIPT

a collection of poetry
prose and art
composed at several times
throughout the academic year of
1972~1973

by
Students of Wilkes College

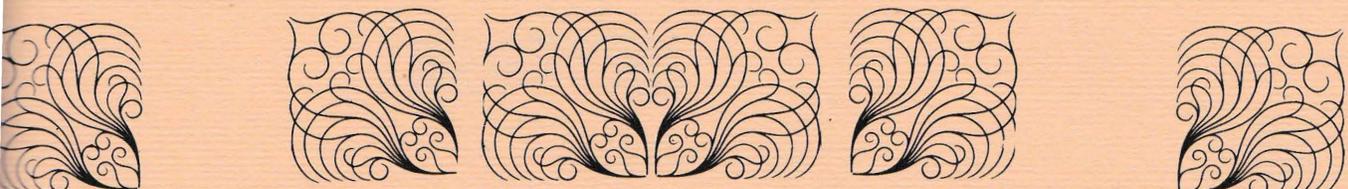
*Duke. The best in this kinde are
but shadows and the worst are
no worse, if imagination amend
them.*

*A Midsummer nights dreame.
Act V Scene i*



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WYOMING, PENNSYLVANIA



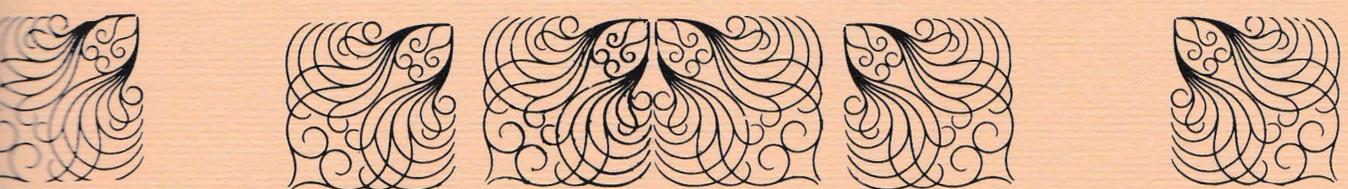


DIONYSIAN REVELLER

Of you I sing
my ruby-eyed portugese,
capped by a golden-hued bonnet,
winking coyly behind
a soft green window

A stronger temptation
you are, than sun
filled May when
dry labor calls,
a flowing warmth,
unmatched by crackling
logs in hearthful lure,
unhoused, you joyfully
swirl, enticing in
cut crystal, prideless
in decanted mirth;
no friend of melancholy
you whose laughing soul
spirits away
the pensive mood,
the knitted brow,
yet more than friend to me,
my blushing lover,
a cold first touch
belies the fire you are,
the joy you give,
and by your favor
a dancing spirit released,
whirling on liquid sunbeams.

Bob Fiori





Twitch

have we crept through this sticky vision for nothing?

had chaos once over for breakfast
contemplating great shiny black-balled tits.
(sunrise
over Pennsylvania coal mine shit)

have we met the wet parted lips of dream
with our own stretched wide
yawning.

have we tugged at the grace of childhood
crawled towards the womb
of our fathers great gowns
only to find his fingers lame and tattered
searching probing
at wisdoms rusty panties.
and thus agreed the whole world was
our straight man and we
the great jokers
in charge of editing and the old age
warp.

have we unraveled these historic nights for nothing?
for nothing
have we hypnotized our fate and
rolled the whores of our sensorium?
for nothing?, for nothing at all?;

the night unbuttons its collar
red lights switch to green for our approach
trucks graciously pass us on
lakes tease their bleached hair
shyly expecting where our old car leads

to now.

Bloody gash in the consciousness
Dripping cartilage of catatonia
sweat on every pore of body brain
gums nerve chilled inside marrow back of neck
jaw locked
open
no air
lungs limp

S W A L L O W
deathpass out
drywindy oblivion

Your bony fingers
 pressed on your skull
 Louis Armstrong in the Potomac night
and Lordee
them Saints came marchin'
through the orange dome of dope and
prison Virginia

Michael Scholnick



JACK IN METAMORPHOSIS

Never a woman can touch you now.
Rigid
scratched sick-city grafitti's
carved into a moon
what once was sun to brick-blank walls
your got-god hands defined.

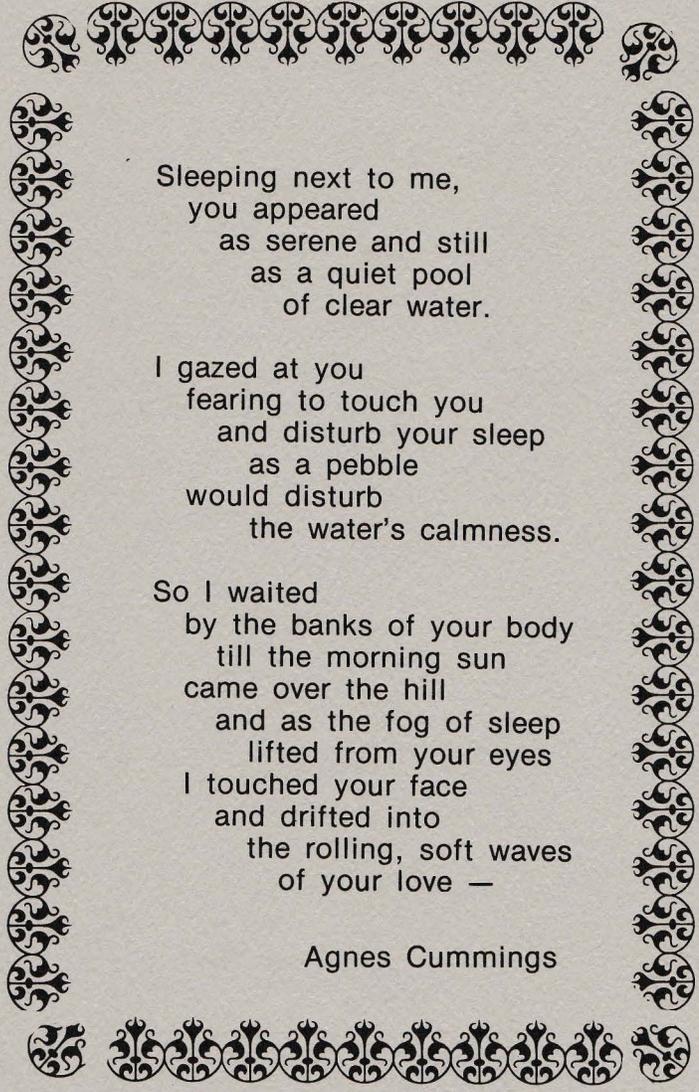
Your rain-soaked lines
designed
to still shook chills abort a quiet
tear
just catch cold questions, yes!
For at the prick of one prodigal pant hair in your crotch
you wince in nausea
is a woman's finger body breast.

Well, was it first the chicken?
yes
the egg,
though cracked,
still quakes its throttled birth
as

quiver-killed you come to him,
on trembling tightrope toes to him,
one pristine kiss —
the metamorphosis!

Cindy Locke



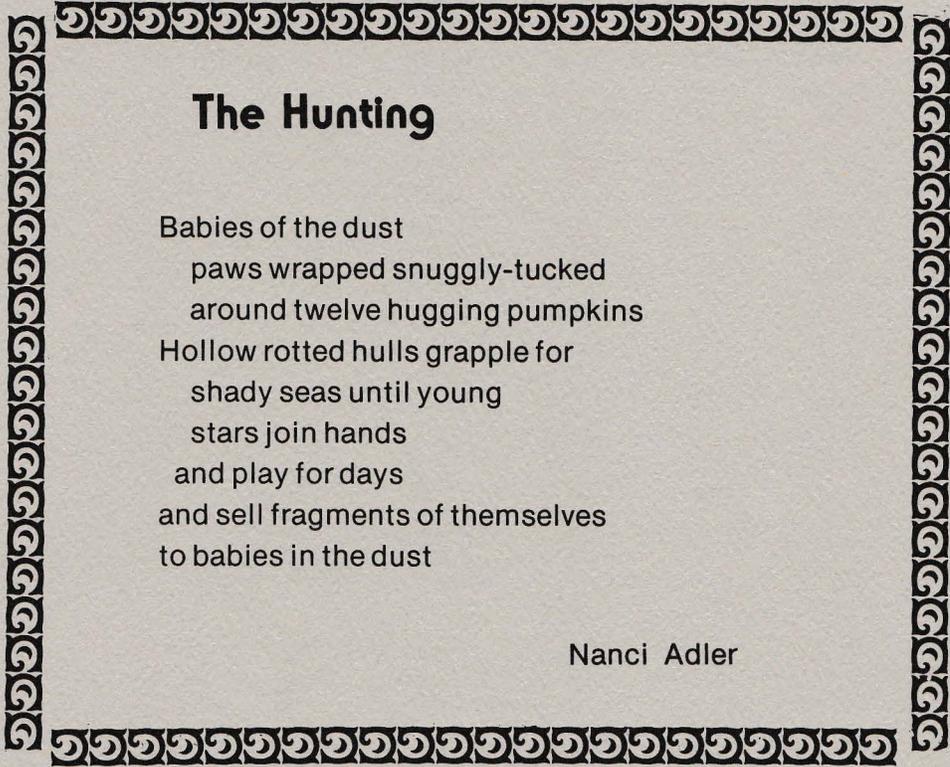


Sleeping next to me,
you appeared
as serene and still
as a quiet pool
of clear water.

I gazed at you
fearing to touch you
and disturb your sleep
as a pebble
would disturb
the water's calmness.

So I waited
by the banks of your body
till the morning sun
came over the hill
and as the fog of sleep
lifted from your eyes
I touched your face
and drifted into
the rolling, soft waves
of your love —

Agnes Cummings



The Hunting

Babies of the dust
paws wrapped snugly-tucked
around twelve hugging pumpkins
Hollow rotted hulls grapple for
shady seas until young
stars join hands
and play for days
and sell fragments of themselves
to babies in the dust

Nanci Adler

Recompense

Giovanna had been married to Vincenza for thirty-two years, and for thirty-two years they had lived in the same house just outside a backwards rural village. She was the mother of ten children; the three oldest, Primo, Secunda, and Trece had married and left home. Giovanna was by no means sorry to see them go, for it was hard to make ends meet on the small amount of money Vincenza brought home, and one could hardly say that the children had been conceived in love. Giovanna was married at fourteen. Her parents were happy to have matched her so young, and Vincenza was satisfied with his bride because he had waited till he was past his youth to seek a wife. They met for the first time at the altar, and it was said that the vows they spoke to each other were their last civil words of conversation. Throughout their marriage Vincenza worked in the fields of the vineyards, and Giovanna cooked his meals and kept his house with an attitude of perseverance. She knew how and when to argue with him, and when to be silent. She knew also that when he stayed very late at the tavern that he would come home and beat her until she no longer had the strength to cry out. Giovanna's only consolation was her overwhelming faith that she would have recompense in the afterlife, and she did everything in her power to insure her desperate hopes. She rose each morning at sunrise and walked to the village to attend mass. During lent she made a second trip in the afternoon to say the stations of the cross. She filled her house with plaster statues of saints and ornate but faded pictures of holy martyrs, and she filled her mind with the prayers and petitions she'd known since childhood. Each was so familiar to her and yet each time she went over one in her mind she tried to fill it with a new urgency. The largest statue was in her bedroom near the bed. When she could manage to skimp enough in her grocery shopping, she would spend the few lire on a votive candle which she'd light at dusk each night. Each night she'd kneel in the candlelit room before the large statue of the Madonna and pray with her beads in her hand, with her face contorted into an expression of agony, and occasionally her shoulders would shake with silent sobbing.

Just as the years served to intensify Giovanna's devotion, they seemed to embitter Vincenza's disposition. When his third son was old enough to go into the fields to work, he ceased to go. Instead he spent all his time and much of the household money at the tavern. The more devout Giovanna became, the more contemptuous he was of it. One night as darkness fell and Giovanna fell to her knees in prayer, he charged out of the house and down to the tavern to have peace, he said, and to escape the unbearable spectacle of holiness. He spent the rest of the night in the tavern, where he drank himself senseless. In the small hours of the morning the disgusted tavern-keeper tossed him out into the street. He stood there, as if rooted, and his body swayed from side to side.

The sun rose over the corpse that lay in the middle of the main street in the village. Giovanna rose as usual with the sun to get dressed for mass. As she was descending the road into the village, she met the wagon carrying Vincenza's body back to the house, and she was so overcome with grief that she fell to the ground next to the wagon. The two men from the village climbed down from the wagon and picked up her sobbing form. They laid her in the wagon next to the corpse, and she, as though unaware of their presence, remained limp and sobbing on the bed of the wagon.

Giovanna was in a state of hysteria throughout the hours that followed. She was incapable even of dressing herself and when her daughter Secunda arrived at her mother's home, she had to dress her in the black attire she would wear from that day till the end of her life. The wake lasted only one day, and when they finally closed the casket, Giovanna threw herself over it and wept and moaned. She began to talk incoherently as the pallbearers carried her away from the casket. They lifted the box to remove it, and Giovanna sobbed, "Oh, my God, no . . . my God, why don't you take me instead?"

Ann Schifano



Hard Times For a Sweetheart

Let them march unto the gates
and watch them gather at the tables
dropping half-dead roses at your feet

It is deaths green cheeks that rattle at the door

Let them be!
Let them be dear friend!
It is not us who place before them galaxies
in which to dance
and dream of jewels aflame

Let them be!

Let them hear their requests
and watch them clap to your rhythm and blues
twisting your elegant chants into petty elaborations

Let them be!
only we shall be alone in this grey and cold transnight
eyelids ashes
faces pale as pale as moon in eternal poem

Let them be my lil' lamb
Let them be!

I have seen you climb the
steps
to bedrooms lonely breast.

I dreamt our river reached a damn
where we placed our skulls atop the rest

Michael Scholnick



Once Again for Zelda (A Geometry)

Our lives are half a ghost.
I am a thing inanimate
you are phantom in search of flesh and form.

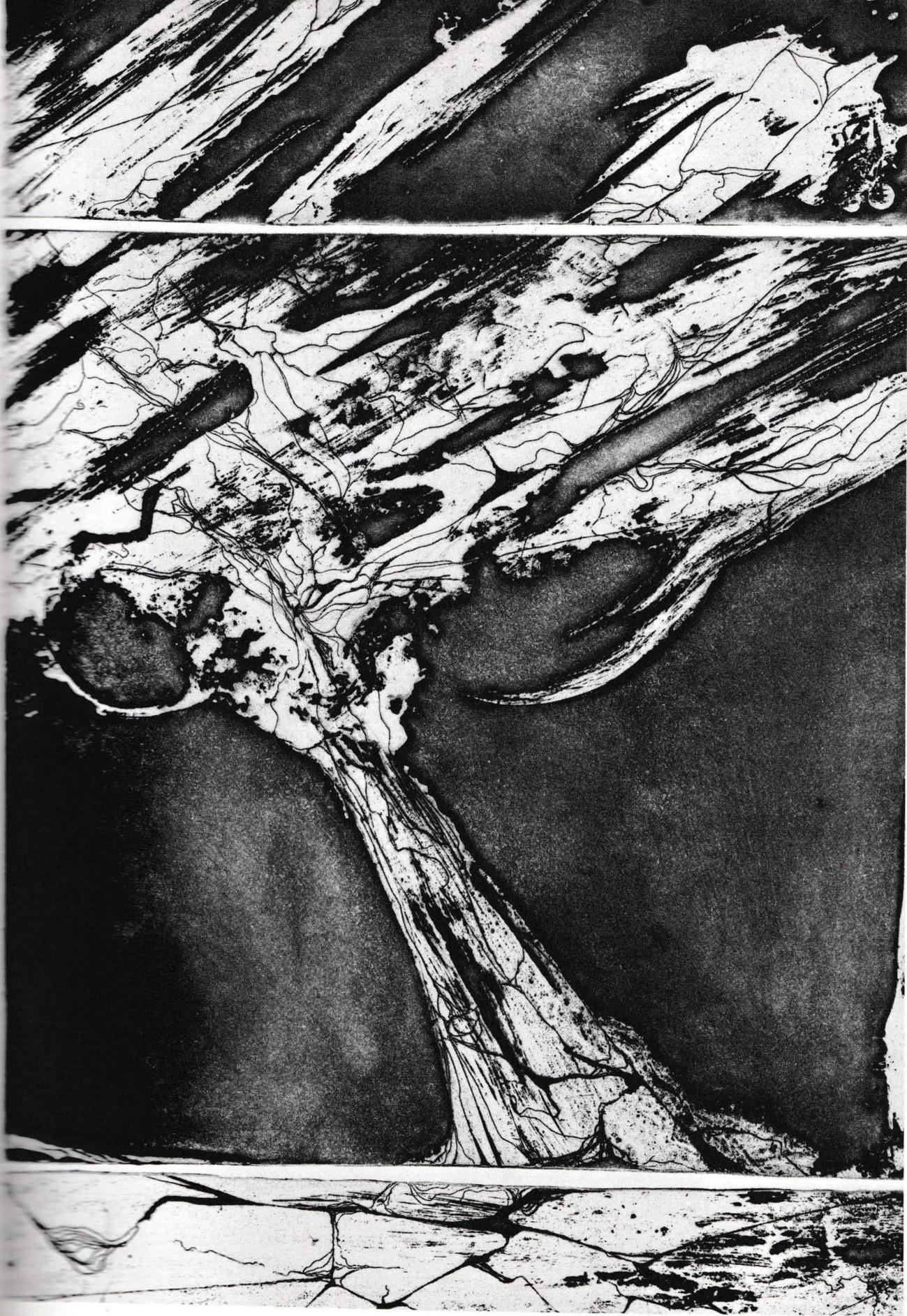
Ha! I thought it was I
who glistened these chiselings
who christened their articulation with melody
who soaked their sockets with contemplation.

who gave these oily puddles sun?
you did.
and when you leave
we stumble in the dark
and collide—
hysterical
like electrons starved for a compound.

Disguised as rainbows
we leave in a vapor
to rain on the roots of this unreal town.

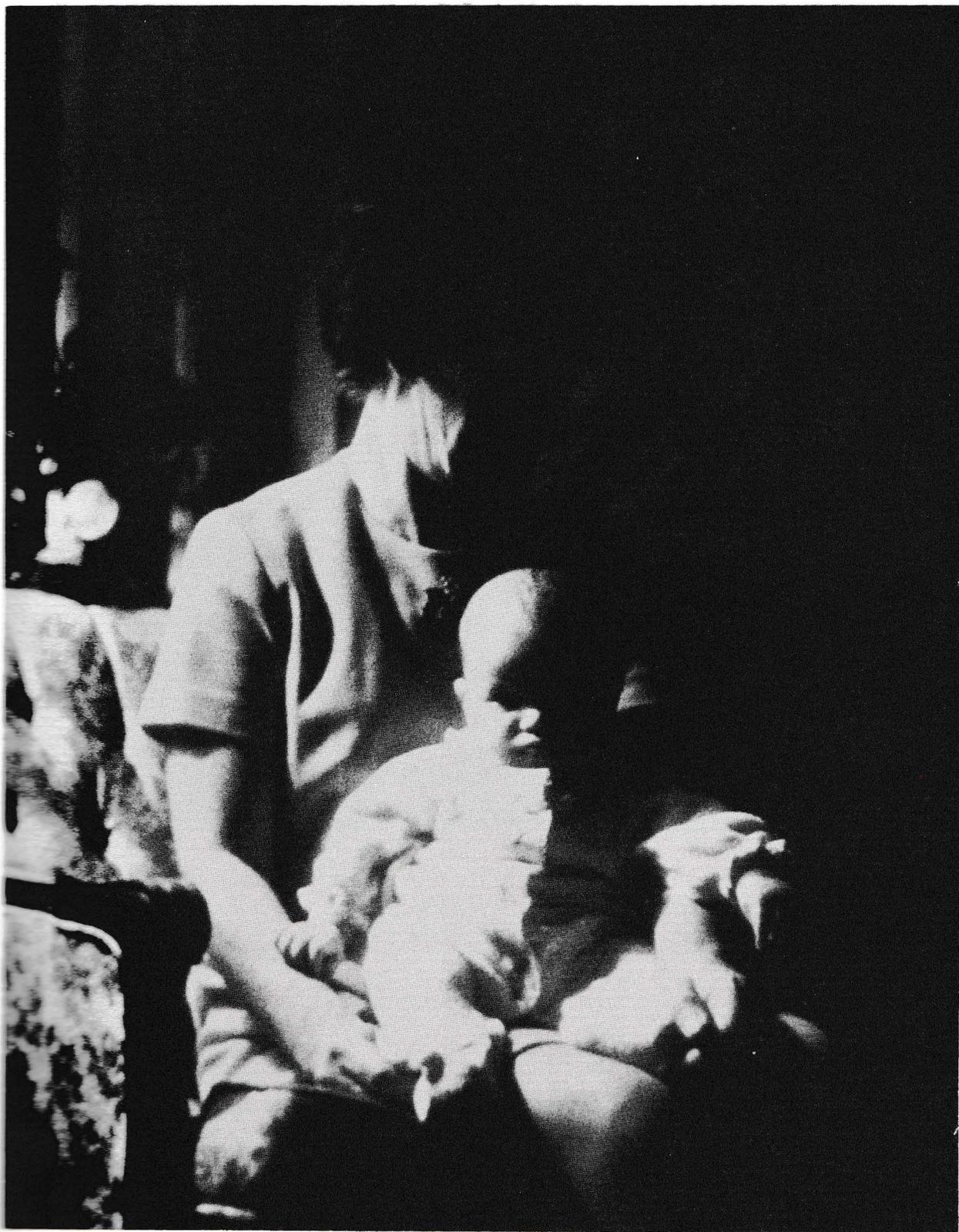
Michael Scholnick





Untitled
Ella McNamara





Untitled
Cathy Kosiek



Untitled

Eva Antanelis





"The Blossom"
Katy Hauck



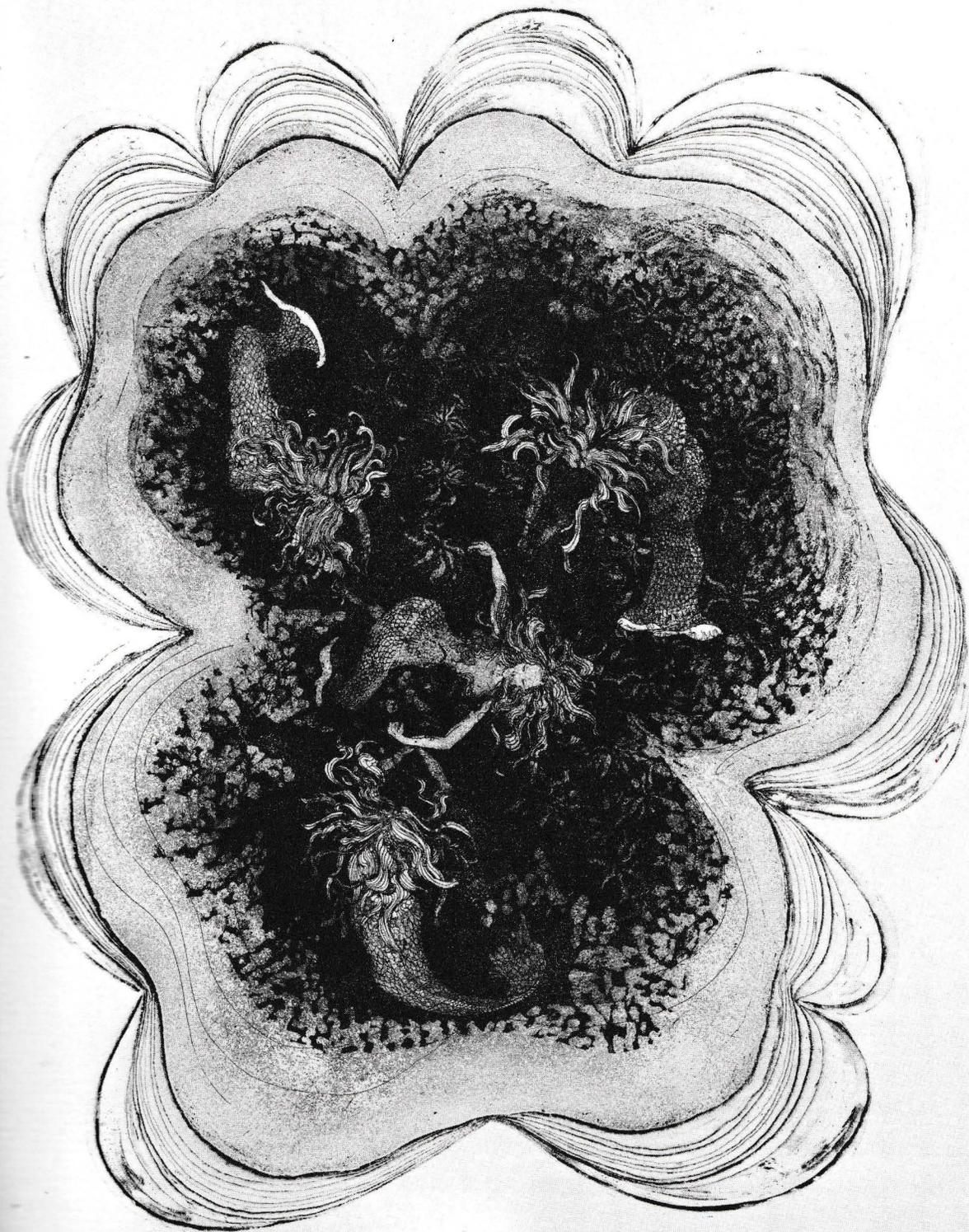
"Love gangsters"

Bob Mikoloyczak



Gramma Brown

Randy Steele



"Death of a Sea Nymph"
Katy Hauck

The Infants

A gang of infant teddy bears
kissing, hugging— all in pairs
Blushing fruits caress their rinds
While bunnies make sniveling finds

The spheroid earth with spinning smile
eyes betray lost phantom whites
And mold devours a breathing yeast
While gangs of infant men try least

Within the garbled land of Here
dripping spirits wheeze with cheer
As the sun spills darkening foam
Our eyes, in corners, whisper “home...”

Nanci Adler



I'll Remember your sentence Just remember my incision

have we lost it amigo?
What?
Youth — her fantasy insatiate as death itself

Our lives are a dream flame
two sticks rubbing in some parable of hope
nails and hammers rusting in the ocean
how are we to love in this
where our one moment
is ruled by some drunken cameramen fucking around wit the lights?
We're two men in this cosmic precision
What gifts to send in this toothless universe?
Are we just stars blue swallowed
dripping our twinkling prayers
along some other dimensions speed of light?

Do we do our own way?
two tangents in search of a circle
dry heaving our affection
on this century and pavement.
Our memories lacklove
and our faculties dissolved each day to sleep.
And where to that sleep? to dream?
Ah But that dream a web sweet
wherein lies our Belle Reve caught
For there is no dream home lost
only we at home in a dream

But oh Tovaritch how slow the evolution
Our spirit Elysium gasping on the sands
and our prayed for radiation creeping quietly in its iceage
How in the labyrinth the ecstasy
How slow the exquisite mutation

Cough it up
Cough it up now
Imagination dust begins to clot
You need to vision up no birds
Dammit
You are one yourself
with your inhuman wings glittering in the moist
and this ancient earth your endless skyway

Michael Scholnick

A PROMISE OF SURVIVAL

He crouched by his signal fire while twilight pasted his long shadow on the ground behind him. He felt the aching pain from the three days and two nights he had spent on the beach and knew he could not stay a fourth. To observe his behavior, one would think him to be rather peculiar. He seemed content to sit for hours in assiduous concentration on the face of the ocean that lay before him. At times, he would rise, rush to the water's edge, gaze intently, and soon return disappointedly to his former position. He was occasionally lifted to his feet by extreme rage, kicking sand and cursing some unseen offender. Then, just as suddenly, he would be thrown back on the ground by an uncontrollable fit of laughter. His other animated moments were spent covering and recovering a large side of beef with rags soaked in salt water. He went about this task with the skill and patience of a surgeon dressing the wounds of an injured man. Each time he finished, he would pat the meat maternally and gaze seaward. At night, his huddled form fell over and slept as if he were the door of a warm house shut tight against a cold night. He had been on the island for three days and was growing weary of his unrewarded vigil. The afternoon of the third day had found him occasionally looking inland at a forest a few miles off. By the morning of the fourth, he was resolved to leave the beach and make for the distant forest where his survival was more assured. He cursed the island for being so large that he could not remain near the beach, in sight of passing ships. At the same time, he blessed it since its size surely meant that there would be plenty to eat in the forest beyond. Sand crabs and other inhabitants of the beach made up the larger portion of his diet. The side of beef would keep him from starvation on his journey inland and so he saved it and continued nursing it. Often, he would lie beside it, cradling it in his arms, and nibble on it or just press his tongue against the salty flesh. The meat was a promise of survival to him, a defense against the effects of an angry or indifferent God.

Four days ago, he was a deck hand on the "Patina," a small Spanish trading ship. His duties were to help haul the sails up the masts and position them before the best wind. He did this with many other men, all straining at the ropes while the great sail crept up the mast, catching the wind as it climbed. He could not help but feel that he was somehow cheating the wind by making it do what it had not intended. It made him feel good to have this power. Four days ago he had been pulling at the ropes and gazing at the white sail swallowing the wind when something flew down across the stretched canvas. It was Manuel. Somehow, he had lost his footing at his post halfway up the mizzen. He landed in a crumpled heap near the others. There was a moment's hesitation, then some of the crew silently gathered him up and took him somewhere below deck. Their reaction was ant-like. It was hard to know whether they carried him away out of respect or to clear the deck so they could continue their work. They had thought it to be an accident plain and simple. He remembered how the Captain gave him charge of the body. He remembered also how he pleaded with the Captain later that evening. He tried to explain that he knew something of sickness and death and that Manuel had not died of a fall, that he died of the plague. The Captain could do nothing but stare back at him with his pale, bloated face. The Captain and two others died a short time later. He knew nothing of these additional deaths. For him, the evidence that Manuel provided was sufficient to warrant his course of action. As he left the Captain, he made his way to the supply room. After cutting down one of the large sides of beef that hung there, he dragged it up to the deck and loaded it into a lifeboat. He lowered the boat over the side and left his dying shipmates to their common end. He had been on the "Patina" for a few years and travelled this route often so he was familiar with the charts for the area. Though he had never seen it, he knew the island would be there.

Now, on the morning of the fourth day, his signal fire had not been seen by any passing ships. As far as he could tell, there had been no passing ships. And so, he decided to journey inland where he would be more comfortable. If all went well, he would return in a month and build a new fire. His decision seemed to reassure him and allowed him to shake off the weakness that had accumulated during the last few days. At first, he thought the weakness may have been the plague. But he had survived many sicknesses and so it was too foolish even to consider. He had left the ship too soon to breathe that fatal air. He would have to leave shortly if he wanted to spend the night in the comfort of the distant forest. But the beef would be a problem. It was too large to be carried so he fashioned a carrier from some canvas in the lifeboat. By laying the meat on it, he could drag it with less effort than if he carried it. It would be difficult, but not as difficult as leaving it behind and starving. He would need energy if he was to drag the side of beef and still reach the forest by nightfall. He cut a large piece from the beef and prepared to cook it over his fire. He would begin his trip inland afterward.

The first mate of the "Patina" buttoned his coat against the cold as he came on deck. He had been given command shortly after the discovery of the Captain's death. It was very unfortunate. He looked at the agile men climbing up the masts and thought of Manuel and the others and thought of how senselessly they all had died. At first they had thought Manuel's death was an accident. After the others, there was talk of plague. But even these things are worthy of dying for. They had died ridiculously. It seems that the ship's supplier was a poor dealer in livestock. All of the beef he had purchased was diseased. The first mate watched as the last of the poisoned meat was thrown overboard. He turned his heavy collar up and went below to the Captain's quarters. He had not yet put his things in order.

Brent Spencer





and we shall be glad



fluent star owl begging
at your tombstone tapping
in a feathered frenzy kindness chokes my clenching rage
coyness masking horror
and seduction shielding knowledge
in a twisted thimblehead the tempest hoardes its rain
for tears and truth were gifts of faith and time
now left behind
but child, can I dance once more in the graveyard of your mind?
can I dance? and night contracts in spinning whispers
can I dance? and shadows drape your stonecold eyes
midnight drinks to the tinsel in trashcans
now your life's love's cut-rate novel
where's the prize?
in dawn's clean sting crash your dead-end surrender
and come bolting statue streets down whiteshot skies
in oldbrown shoes I'm your morning's defender
but alone your drumbeat breaks through ancient cries
o holy solo drums beyond the wailing!
your arrows pierce the penance-pounded hearts
you jerk madonnas from their teartrapped altars
pronounce orgasmic nunneries obscene
you snatch arthritic rosaries from bitter backtracked hands
burst clotted hate behind the christian cheek
o holy solo drumbeat from the ocean's deep
explode the world's clenched hands and little birds will kiss the shore

Cindy Locke





Psalm

Papa your feet are swelling with boredom.
Papa your thighs are dying of spasm.
Papa your hands are tapping in numbness.
Papa your eyes are red from paralysis.
Papa your imagination is silent
in the heavy skull of reality.

Oh papa
Papa you're growing old
with a good memory
and cursed with cavity
for a lover.

Oh Papa what price this steep ramp unto DEATH?

Papa, spring is in China town
pills of Queens Madona
on her hysterical lips

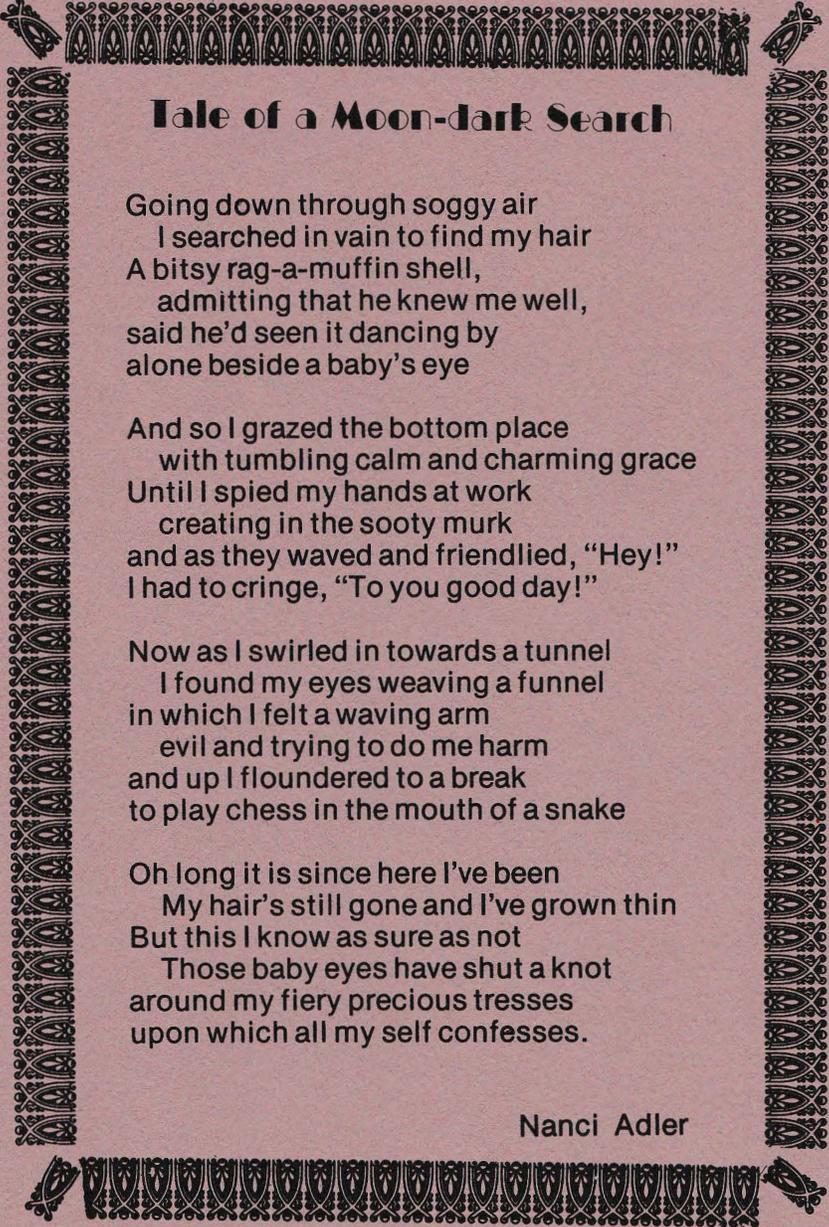
Summer, on borrowed time.

Autumn, surely doomed, busted on the subway
slips in his pocket.

Oh Papa
Papa, what of cancer hospital shudder
winter in your wheelchair smell
of shit and piss.

Michael Scholnick





Tale of a Moon-dark Search

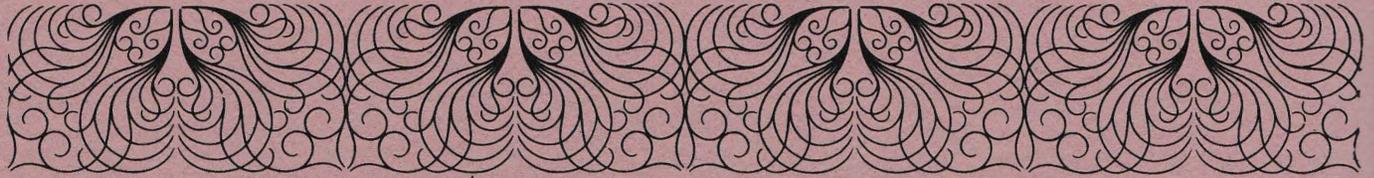
Going down through soggy air
I searched in vain to find my hair
A bitsy rag-a-muffin shell,
admitting that he knew me well,
said he'd seen it dancing by
alone beside a baby's eye

And so I grazed the bottom place
with tumbling calm and charming grace
Until I spied my hands at work
creating in the sooty murk
and as they waved and friendlied, "Hey!"
I had to cringe, "To you good day!"

Now as I swirled in towards a tunnel
I found my eyes weaving a funnel
in which I felt a waving arm
evil and trying to do me harm
and up I floundered to a break
to play chess in the mouth of a snake

Oh long it is since here I've been
My hair's still gone and I've grown thin
But this I know as sure as not
Those baby eyes have shut a knot
around my fiery precious tresses
upon which all my self confesses.

Nanci Adler



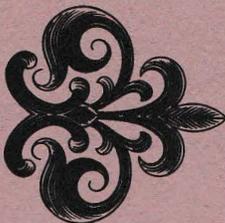
Reading Rimbaud

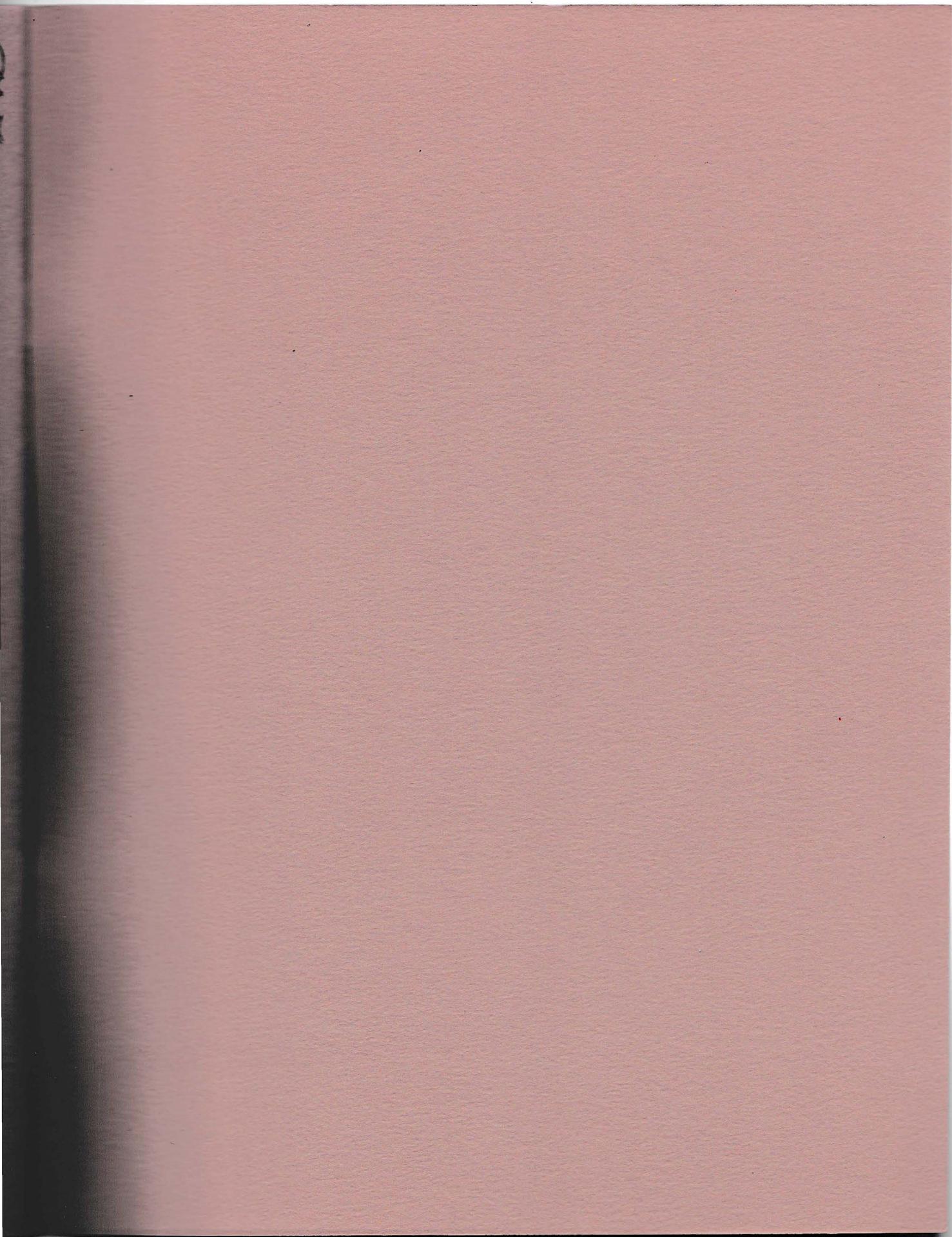
A beautiful day in Wilkes-Barre!
Perhaps my friends will call for me
But I'm feeling evil and don't
want to go out and play
I should leave signs
Watch Out!
for when I'm mad I've got a thin mean smile
with a black beret and brooding eyes so
all must think I plot oblivion for my
senses on the verge of demonic revelation.

Ah yes my friends be met at the door
by someone embarrassed from my family
or by a kind christian nurse who brings me
her big breasts magazines sponge bath
and thick hot soup.
And so they be told
how it happened suddenly
He hardly talks to anyone
He sits in his room playing operas and
child-like and still sits staring out the window

Oh the torture
for no such luck awaits me
my fate far worse
to wear a jolly hat and chubby smile.
A thousand masks we collect and none of them can talk.

Michael Scholnick





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