

A LITERARY MAGAZINE OF CALIFORNIA

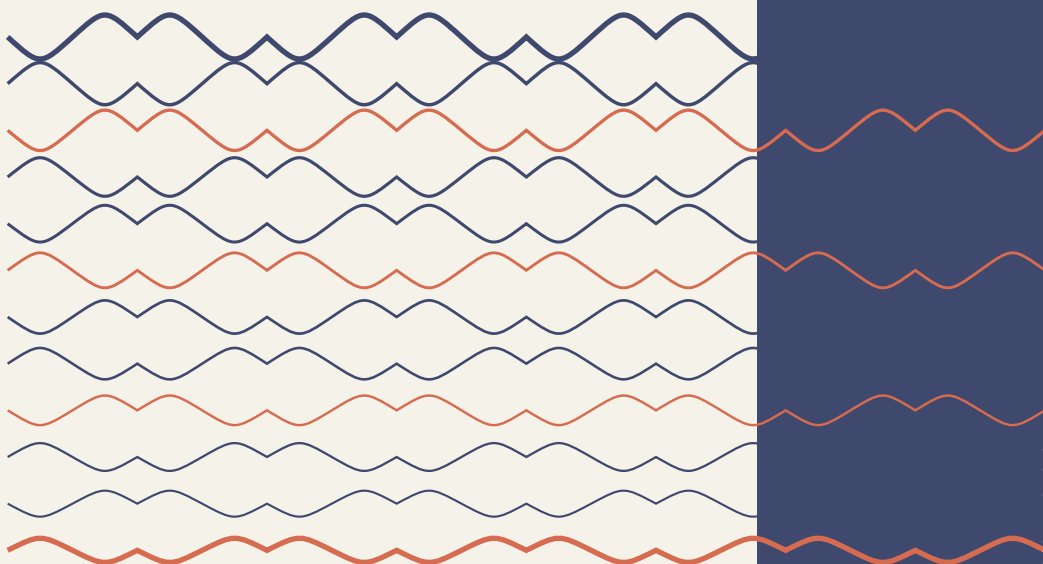
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A Literary Magazine of California

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EDITED BY

Gene Frumkin

A CLEAN READING EDITION

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

OSEPHINE AIN lives in a glass house on top of a big hill. Known around town for her monthly poetry gatherings (attended by those who can climb the big hill). Her husband is painter Robert Chuey.

GEORGE BETAR is attending the University of Southern California. This is his second appearance in this Notes column, but only his first in the magazine. So we goofed.

CHARLES BUKOWSKI began writing poetry at 'the rather crotchety and advanced age of 35? Now 39. Has advanced through Coastlines before, crotchety-like.

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE lives in North Hollywood with his wife and two or three kids (the uncertainty is ours, not his). Has published in a number of little mags.

PAUL CORDELL has been living in Los Angeles for the past six years, working mostly for the Los Angeles County Library. His hobby is answering the telephone. Lists publication in some of the leading literary fribes.

BARDING DAHL is the Sol Hurok of the local little theatre scene, also a real estate wizard and dealer in furniture. Has made it in Coastlines priorly.

GENEVIEVE DAVIS seems to be a housewife with an old typewriter, one husband and two children. Writes that she once had some childhood diseases. Well, tell us about your operation.

ROBERT ESKEW is a big man now in National City, Calif., which is a tequilla bottle away from Tijuana. Edits the Star News for the township and serves, laughingly on the board of directors of the chamber of commerce.

GENE FRUMKIN is a flower salesman for Forest Lawn. Lives in a nursery (full of one kid).

ESTELLE GERSHOREN is the sister of Sidney Gershoren.

SIDNEY GERSHOREN is the brother of Estelle Gershoren.

MILTON GERSHOREN, who designed our cover, is the father.

VAHAN K. GREGORY is the proprietor of the Cappiccio coffee house just off Hollywood Blvd. The only poet in existence who brews his poems.

LOUIS HILL is writing two novels simultaneously and filling in his spare time with poetry and teaching high school in Glendale, Calif. Edited Statement at Los Angeles State College.

STANLEY KIESEL, who used to be way out, has just moved adjacent to the Hollywood Freeway, only five minutes away from zany, teeming Hollywood. To our knowledge, he is the first ex-Exurbanite.

CARL LARSEN now lives in New York City. Says 'it gets very cold here in this winter and even snows, but what the hell.' Brave lads, these emigrant Californians.

THOMAS M. LIVINGSTON is supposed to be at some beach around L.A., slow working his way inland. Has been represented in New Campus Writing.

MARY GRAHAM LUND writes 'Juvenile stories which support my typewriter. This is her first appearance in Coastlines, which won't help her typewriter at all.

LACHLAN MACDONALD teaches at the Webb School (for boys) in Claremont, Calif. Is the new fiction editor of L.A. Magazine. Makes his living by holding book auctions.

JILL MARX was born in the Hudson River, spent time in Brooklyn, came to Angeles when she was ill (or was it 112). Sorry, not sure we are reading her typewriting correctly.

continued on page

THE NON-EXISTENT CITY

When the world was turning over from country life to city life, every city had to have a recognizable character and very distinct images were conveyed by the mention of names such as Paris, St Louis, New York, Bombay, a Francisco. The images are still floating around, but the cities themselves have begun to become undistinguishable from each other to all except Horace utton and the vested travel flacks. Once the city itself provided tremendous aferial to the writer -- there are fine essays of place by Dickens, Kipling, alka, as well as poems by such as Whitman, Lorca, Hart Crane. The city is ten the setting today, but seldom the theme.

It is unrewarding today to try to distinguish between what is characteristic City and what is characteristic of a specific place, like Los Angeles. Traffic, urbs, TV? Housing, hoods, education? These are but marginal differences cities are different the way new models of automobiles are different.

A city is a machine designed to consume people. Some become legendary to bizarre aspects of their human diet. There are those who believe Los geles. to be by day cunning and dissembling, by night drugged in lust or dation; they imagine it as a vast municipal beast too large to fit into a man's view. It is a city praised, feared, joked about, promoted -- but never quite ntified. Not quite tangible enough to sustain a metaphor.

he idea of the city is dead. They aren't building cities anymore. Cities
 * work: they can't be fed, protected, sheltered or flushed with any degree Iciency. Many city owners are trading theirs in for units small enough to real enough to touch, roomy enough for privacy, near enough for money, I far enough for quietude.

Probably only one man sees the whole city, if the atmosphere permits. He in his bomber cockpit and follows a daily high-altitude course of military About sunset each day the white sunglowing vapor trail of his aircraft seen in the sky due west of the San Bernardino freeway. Seven million could see him if they looked but you could probably count on two the number of them who know his name, what his plane carries, what I do to the seven million people who don't bother to look to heaven. city seen by that one man's pilot eyes is too greatly dispersed for nd viewing. It is also elusive to the mind's eye. Of course we have all about Los Angeles -- but the cat's meow is not quite the same as the a as easy to believe that no such place exists as it is to try to visualize, neile the myriad mental snapshots, to create the city. Better, maybe, to that the city is non-existent. To say 'There is no city here.' To say his? '

the dream, and the nightmare. The proving ground of Man vs. MG, muter's calculated risk, the last great grazing range of the auto herd. is the trinity worshipped here: Ford is the Father, Edison the Holy nd Goodyear the Son. Ascension will be by missile, Resurrection by Brothers. The Revelations are in the Los Angeles Times; it states Clearly that this is The End of The World.

Yet, whatever problems are solved here will be solved for the old cities of America, of Europe. Whatever failures face the Angels must become the lot of mankind.

Problem: how can millions live at home without walking on each other's heads? Solution: the power of the Holy Ghost spread by intricate network to millions of one-story homes.

Problem: how will millions go to the money places to get money in order to stay home? Solution: chariots courtesy of Father Ford.

Problem: how will millions be content to stay home. Solution: gardens and groves without season, courtesy of the Prophet Burbank.

Problem: how can these things be held together? Solution: freeways, telephones, TV channels, radio.

Problem: freeways, telephones, TV channels, radio. Solution: Let us Pray

Prayer in the city may assume many forms, may be addressed to any of several powers. This introduction had originally been intended to compile, with the snapshot-collection juxtapositions of feverish young Dos Passos, some glimpses of life among the Angels. The literary party, the box-handler in the packing house, the sale of a junk car by a high-powered advertising lot downtown, the arrangements for a suicide's funeral, the saving of a swimmer's life at Corona, the inside view of a current big murder trial. Or, for another list, the Beverly Hills Christmas decorations gaucherie, the routine of life and death at the Children's Unit of General Hospital, a Hungarian refugee's theft in an expensive boys' school, a little boy's first day of school. Endless list endless possibilities.

But that's someone else's novel, or maybe ours at some later date, or have you wondered about another Nathaniel West, or doesn't Holiday even try to be honest about cities?

Whatever follows is by writers we found in the city or who have been under its subtle or not-so-subtle influence. They claim no school, clique or party unifying factor. As editors we are just about agreed that in one way or another they are all Angels.

-Lachlan MacDonal

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BIG AUNTIE

Genevieve Davis

Big Auntie lay dying, looking like some huge mastodon mired in a soiled ay bog of pillow and bed, the vast and separate parts of her slowly shutting wn with a grinding of valves and a sighing of steam like a boiler factory sing to a stop after a furious day's work. The sounds of her dying hung in room, a desperate fish-gill gulping of air and a shuddering gasp and iting go as the giant machinery foundered, the old and acid liquors slow-eping through the lime-narrowed tubing and pipes. The parts of the whole huiting down until only a small working portion remained, imparting a sort if feeble awareness of sight and sound, enabling her to vacillate bladder-like tween the past and the here and now, constricting and pausing to keep from emptying out into nowhere and nothing, a blob, a sponge, absorbing, Forbing the light, the sounds, the patter of the children running on mice-like feet around her bed.

The children, how she loathed them, ever since she first caught them slanting her vast body, their cheeks blown with laughter, looking like balloons ut to burst, their lips finally rubbering out in horse-snort sounds, slapping poking at one another at the depot, their parents shouting in anger, thinwiling their own laughter. And of all the relative's houses where she'd roundchained out her life, the Cranisches were the worst, rubbing their hands at her cases and trunks, waiting on her in thin-lipped glee, filling her full of Haloes and bread so she'd eat less meat, serving her up the cheap casseroles called food and then sneaking into the kitchen to eat the things they

And the children like sharp-toothed rodents, fashioned in the likeness heir parents, whispering behind the fans of their hands, skittering around suitcases and trunks, poking and prying and endlessly pattering around around her bed and when they grew tired of running in one direction, turned tail and ran in the other, falling heavily against the bed, struggling breath, chanting ' Big Auntie stinks, Big Auntie stinks!' squeaking and lering, probing the rings on her fingers until she twitched weakly and they chattering back to resume the endless running, running, running while

Cranisch listened from the next room, her long thin face working hatred.

should stop breathing, it's disgusting.' Albert Cranisch lowered his

What do you want from her, she's dying.' " Then let her die. She smells.' picked up the crossword puzzle, seeing the rank mound of female meat, features doughy and obscured, the pressed anal mouth with its sweetish of orris root. Big Auntie was her mother's sister and she spent four of the year with them, arriving in a flurry of suitcases and trunks.

heavily and smelling richly of the oil that would one day be theirs, lo her by greed, so that they endured the rank female odor of her, to I must have been a gigantic process merely to wash, to lift her arms to her hair, to do any of the things that most of us ordinarily do without

thinking, enduring and enduring her until she was suddenly stricken at the table, unable to move, the unchewed food hanging from her mouth, until they endured no more, the greed coming out of their eyes like hyenas out of a jungle, pulling her from the table, bumping and scraping her along the walls and dumping her on the bed, leaving her untended and unwashed and unfed, the children becoming more and more outrageous, poking at her with hangers and lifting the sheets to see what she looked like, chittering and squealing and holding their noses. And they let her lie unwashed and unfed without sustenance of any kind, making beast-like noises of hunger in her throat until Albert finally threw down his paper and said Good God, they couldn't let her starve, could they, looking at Esther until she got up and went reluctantly into the kitchen, rattling the pots and pans and making some sort of a thin gruelly mess which she set on the nightstand next to the bed and no nearer and af which Big Auntie looked longingly, the saliva hanging in the corners of her mouth, the children laughing and screaming in the doorway, until Albert threw down the paper again to come in and feed her, the muscles in her throat working furiously, her starved body rejecting the food almost immediately, so that Albert gasped at her in astonishment, then in outrage and left her whimpering softly, suspended in an elixir of ether, her consciousness shrouded in a nimbus of cotton batting, the sounds numbing through muffled and gray, winding back like soiled linen to a point in time when she was still Hazel and not Big Auntie, when she was only plump and not fat, winding back to Frank and he had just struck oil, lurching crazily into their tiny bungalow, his eyes and teeth glittering beneath the oil and dirt, scooping her up off the floor and spinning her about into a huge red balloon, a rosy round distortion, a ferris wheel carnival world of loop the loops and pink cotton candy and honky tonk music that ground on and on, with him touching the cherry red earrings that hung from her ears so that they swung like bells, his eyes and teeth white in his orange face. And then one night as she waited, waited for him to come and start up the music, someone, she didn't remember who, although she saw again the dusty prints his boots made on the wooden floor, came running in from the field yelling that there'd been an accident and it was a pretty good one too, one that Frank didn't live through and afterwards they stood shifting their feet in the dirt and blowing the air through their noses, asking her was there anything they could do and the first thing she did was to take off the cherry earrings and put them in the box with Frank's gold cuff links, so that there was something of hers and something of his lying together. And the money kept gushing in, but the music ran down like a dying carousel and the red balloon got smaller and smaller until all the air went out of it in a final phfft and she lay awake listening to the cotton wood leaves washing against the boards of the house and entreating the empty pillow beside her.

Until she packed up and left, going first to Chicago and then to New York eating against the inhospitality and the loneliness, filling the void at Schrafit's and Loft's and 'I'll have some pie a la mode and a hot fudge sundae' and the only one who could fill it was dead and pretty soon she wasn't just plump but heavy, then not just heavy, but fat and when she finally found a man

THE WAKE AND THE DEAL

Ramon Sepulveda

The first sunrise was much easier on her than the first sunset. On that first sunrise, when they brought him back to her in that way, she had to use a lot of control. First for her sorrow, then, and almost immediately, for the immense shame at seeing how the hearse people delivered the body.

But she knew her brother was watching her and she merely looked on expressionless, both at the body, her brother, and the hearse people, who left hurriedly without explaining the total lack of clothes on the corpse.

After they left, she said, "Assist me to take him up there, Tilo" Nodded across the river to a mesa below the slope under the high boulder-crowned ridge.

'Sister, wouldn't that look improper?'

She placed her hands under her man's arms and lifted.

Tilo shrugged and took the feet. And together they carried her man across, resting silently along the way, until they passed the old cemetery, and stopped by a large flat boulder that had Indian hieroglyphics chiseled on it.

* Lay him on this rock,' she said.

'I remember,' Tilo said. 'He called this stone a jewel that had fallen from the crown of the ridge'

She looked up at the reddish boulders imbedded and uplifted all along the horseshoe-shaped ridge. 'Yes. He liked to sit here and look down the valley and compose words. Poems about this place and us'

And so they laid her man on the boulder, she carefully folding his hands across his chest, on which Tilo placed a cross he made from the limb of a cottonwood sapling.

* Shouldn't we cover him, sister?'

'No. And here the wake shall be held. This was his only riches.'

'You were his first, Nena.'

She stood as unswayed as a government fence. "Yes' She said it without immodesty, but having known it truly.

Tilo began to unbutton his shirt. 'I can't stand to see him lie like that on that cold rock, sister.'

'Don't be foolish.' She sighed. 'Besides, now he feels nothing.' Reached down and touched a curl over the dead man's forehead. 'I'm the one who feels for both.' She closed her eyes. 'And this shame.' Clenched her fists beside her. 'And this shame.'

Tilo gritted his teeth. 'I will take my clothes off to clothe him, sister.'

* Don't be foolish, I tell you? She looked fiercely at her only brother. want this to be remembered to the graves of many here'

'Sister,' Tilo's shoulders sagged, 'I only wanted to contribute.'

*And I know that, brother.' She said it softly. 'Now to tell it about that my husband is dead and that the wake shall be held here.'

Tilo nodded and started down the gentle slope with junipers, scrub oak and other boulders broken off from the high crown.

Then she went down to the small store owned by a certain Casimiro.
I feel it, mujer,' Casimiro said. 'You can take what you need from here.'
dicated the Levis and cowboy shirts stacked to one side of the counter.
upply yourself?
'I only want a large can of coffee for the people tonight,' she said. 'Nothing
e. And we already owe you enough.'
Casimiro cleared his throat. You know your credit is always good here,
agdarena.' His eyes scaled her once from head to toe and back to her eyes.
You shall be paid in full.' Her green eyes were as cold as the grayed sky
atside. 'With money.'
Casimiro got the five-pound can of coffee and set it before her on the
unter. "How long will you stay in the valley -- after?"
She picked up the can. 'Long enough to pay you back.'
'That wasn't necessary, Magdalena.'
She started out the door.
I may not be able to attend the wake,' he said. 'But maybe the burial
narrow.'
The handful of dirt for you to toss into his grave will be waiting.' Then
went out, paused on the porch just outside the door.
You know I want you more than life itself, Magdalena.'
Then you will agree to what I've proposed?
Canimiro wiped his forehead. Nodded. 'All right.'
Give me the bills.'
All? 'Casimiro's hands began to tremble.
All,' she said, 'but mine. I'll still pay for mine?'
Casimiro licked his lower slack lip. 'All right.' Reached into a box under
counter, where lay a thick stack of yellow bills. He looked at the stack
· while, as if deciding whether or not to bring them out. Then he brought
out and set them on the counter. 'Here they are.'
Bring them to me.' She held her hand, palm up, but did not look into
store.
You could at least come and get them,' he said.
I said bring them to me."
Crimiro wiped his forehead. 'All right.' Shook his head. 'What a stubborn
n you are, Magdalena.' Picked up the bills, partly waddled toward her.
on as she received the bills, she inspected them.
They're all there, Nena."
Magdalena,' she said. 'You don't own me yet.' She put the bills in the
et of her coat. 'I also want the book'
it the ledger is very important to my business,' he protested. "The taxes,

want the book, too.'
Oh. All right, then.' His shoulders sagged.
Good morning, don Casimiro.' There wasn't even a derisive smile on her
as she closed the door and went down the cement steps.
iro watched her walking down the gravel road through the window.
he took a nickel, inserted it in the Coke machine, and drank thirstily.

The sun came out that afternoon and then was covered up by the greyness. Then later came out again on the high horizon and settled. The people that came early stood around a small fire several feet from the stone where her man lay and talked in low voices.

* We would like to do something, Magdalena,' one of them said.

'No. Don't molest yourselves. That he lie as they sent him. As he came into this world.'

'Perhaps,' another said, 'it was an error.'

'Could have been.' She watched the greyness break up in places and the moon shine palely fully.

*I can go into Platigol, if you don't want anything from the Casimiro, and get the necessary."

'No. Whatever it was. It's done. Leave it.' She took the big coffee pot to one side and began serving it in tin cups. The men accepted it quietly, almost embarrassedly, glancing over their shoulders at the naked dead man.

* With his bad lungs he could not climb.' She served coffee then to the women present. 'This was as high as he could ever get.' Then she went back to the base of the rock and stood not looking down at him but across at the valley and the few dim lamplights and the few electric bulbs lit in the houses

"At least I think he ought to have shoes,' one of the men whispered in the small tight circle sitting around the fire.

'What does he need shoes for? Who can see his feet?'

'A shirt would be enough, I believe."

'Magdalena is stubborn. She's badly hurt."

'Ashamed. That's why.'

One of the women with Magdalena came over to where the men took turns digging the grave and whispered to one of the men.

'Couldn't you spare him a pair of trousers, viejo?'

'You know how much I would like to, woman. But I have to go across, nodded toward the south, 'and see the sick brother. And already we have borrowed too much at the Casimiro's.'

The woman shook her head. 'It is not good. What they did.'

*Well, probably one of them there had a relative as poor as ourselves and thought the living had more need of the clothes than Magdalena's husband."

· I hope every one of those rankers who wears his clothes get the tisin until the end of his generation.'

'Don't get angry, hombre."

· Well, it sours me to see such a low act.' He nodded toward the bier. Ge back to the women. If Magdalena does not want him clothed then he shall be buried as he was born.' Shook his head. 'But what a shame."

By dawn only a young boy stood around the fire drinking the last of the coffee. Tilo worked on a sort of stretcher while Magdalena watched for the new sunrise hopefully.

But the sky was clouded dark grey and quiet and warmish.

Less than a month after the burial there were two main topics of conversation in the Valley of the Roadrunner: Magdalena's unexpected marriage to

asimiro and the equally unexplainable cancellation of all their outstanding sbts to him.

Neither Magdalena nor Casimiro explained anything to the villagers. However, the prices in Casimiro's store went up a cent here and there.

THE DEATH OF THE FLYING MULE

Zack Walsh

The gray morning seemed to understand a quiet awakening, and Kaner in-did his eyes slowly. 'I am not anxious,' he said. But he was anxious, and got out of bed with a quick effort that denied sleep. Eyes that are as cold sleepwalkers stared back at him from the mirror. The room was chilly - amp as a grotto, and the room was a cave that sucked light from one large indow. Kaner felt like a machine walking without heat, without friction, ithout noise. The hot plate briefly warmed his hands, and then with a sling of full liberty he turned at, looked at his almost completed canvas at far end of the room. Large, spacious with white, it grew into the room id became part of the wall. But the painting still needed attention, and aner wanted to finish before Christine arrived.

Paint the damn thing,' he said. He talked above a whisper, sometimes into shout. He urged himself on -- raced his motor like an athlete, called him- names and drove life into his thin wrists and tight fingers. 'You are an he said. 'You paint like a bull-ox!' Some of it came from the frustra-

of being too old to be a young artist. Dying young to be discovered and elaimed and immortalized by college girls -- it was too late. Kaner still dn't know quite where he was and where it was all leading, and the thought etimes forced him into the dry mouth of insecurity, and then he would to a point of numbness and try to intoxicate the breath of time into not ring -- time would surely miss him, couldn't possibly see him then.

ou are a slug! A silver fish in the crap-house!' A red line of paint ran an open wound dividing an area of untouched canvas. Kaner smudged it

There are good and bad accidents, he thought, and you have to know you are fortunate. Pre-school, grade school, high school and college. olt it had taken him more than a decade to un-do and re-learn it all. much was junk and how much to save? 'You can't get cluttered!' he

d. And then for a moment he thought of Christine, who sustained parts and provoked others to flap around with the fever of protest. Even she gave of herself willingly something seemed wrong - inside it was although it might look great on the outside to a passer-by. The pallet became a definitive weapon and the colors mixed and fused into a shadow, into an orange noon sun. 'Dung!' he shouted. But it wasn't

bad, and he sat back on the stone hard chair and tried to see the painting once with a new fresh eye. How do you know when to stop? It was

beginning to look overworked, he thought, and it should be finished. It had to be called, 'Finished!' he shouted.

Kaner was wiping his hands, feeling hungry and elated. The elation of victory - another mountain climbed, another painting painted. Christine quietly entered. The recognition of short, quick steps. Click, click, click went her heels over to the table. The drop of a bag -- a bag of groceries. He sensed her tiptoed approach behind him, and then her arms around his waist like soft gloves.

'Guess who?' she said.

"The milk maid?"

'Darling, are you feeling crotchety?'

· Feel great..

'Oh, how I love the smell of paint!'

He untied her arms and looked down. Upper-middle class, he thought, filled with bad taste and good intentions. If he could re-arrange her to an image, what would she be? More sophisticated, more sensitive, more intelligent and more individual. He would change the lipstick, but her eyes were brown and alive.

* Finally finished,' he smiled.

'Finished what?'

"The painting:'

*That's good, but you need some breakfast, I can feel your ribs.'

'Don't you want to see it?' he asked.

Christine hugged him with all of her youth. 'Oh, the way you make me feel, and all you can think about is painting!'

Look hunger in the eye and love and passion fade like morning stars. Bui Kaner wasn't that hungry --it was more complicated. He was discovering that he didn't need to go to bed with her, nor with anyone. Perhaps it was a period - a phase that closes all the ducts, and the outer man withdraws into a sheath that covers every pore, and from there one can find contemplation.

Toast and bacon and scrambled eggs, and Christine's arranged lips that pouted, flirted, became animal sweet and angry. Now they were prim and somewhat superior. 'Darling, you should push yourself a little more -- there's nothing wrong with the artist selling himself. Kaner wasn't listening. Hi didn't want to go into it, for it was an ageless conversation between them that seemed never to be resolved. His eyes followed the line of the ceiling and then descended to a fixed study of the painting. There are an infinite number of ways to paint a flower, and how to find the best way?

Now her lips defined an annoyed curve - attention getting. 'You don't want to live like this forever,' she said.

'Now what does that mean?' he asked.

·You know what I mean... like this..:

What does one say to the sweep of a hand that can so easily dismiss a way of life? 'Bullshit!' he said. For she came from a background of private lessons, tennis court afternoons and Palm Beach in winter. The estate had been erected and sealed in mothballs before she was born, and she had only seen the pretty sunsets of life above the mechanics of sweat. "You don't

have to swear at me,' she was saying. Indignation, and her inborn regard for the value of money. How many times had he told her that the artist isn't a businessman? Kaner tried to be poised and understanding -- he focused on her hands, they were graceful, delicate without being fragile, and he was about to say, 'Don't you understand.. But the conditioned voice of her mother emerged from a doll-like expression. 'I don't mind helping you, but

Then he could have done what she probably expected - hit her, curse her, and she would cry and he would feel more guilty. Instead he did nothing and said nothing. He brooded above the wood grain next to his plate. He took some coffee and washed his mouth -- the bitter taste came into his eyes, and he stared at her until she came over and sat on his knee. 'I didn't mean to hurt you,' she said. She wiped his mouth and kissed his cheek -- she moved her fingers through heavy hair, and he could feel the pressure of her thighs.

"Don't stay mad," she said coyly.

'Bitchy,' he said.

'Are you mad?'

'You deserve a three star general.'

'I just want you..'

Although the scene held a comic ring, Kaner felt locked in a desperate bind, though the high water mark of western civilization was sitting on his knee. For he was holding disparity with closeness, friendship with hostility and love with unwillingness, and the whole mixture threatened his need for freedom.

Her sweet side was indulgent and caring, tempting and perfumed. He found the nape of her neck with his mouth and held her. To be needed and to have need, it was a universal. And his thoughts wandered back to the beginning when there had been a clear ribbon of attraction, without thought, without understanding. There she was with her clear brown eyes searching, seeking a teacher, a special lesson, a secret course in the cultural arts. 'What do your paintings mean?' she had asked him. The word art had provided service for introduction and made the relationship happen, until the enchantment. Kaner looked beyond the smooth comb of her hair, a small part of the painting needed a black strip frame -- his lips brushed her cheek.

Don't you want to?' she asked softly.

Perhaps it had become too easy, Kaner thought. Sex had become a wispy smoke from a constant underground fire, because apes and men had given him the seasonal mating song for an everyday appetite.

Later,' he said.

'I don't believe you really want me anymore.'

'That's not it.'

'What is it then?'

'Love, love, crazy love ..?'

'You're making fun.'

'Diamond rings and everything..?'

'You aren't making sense!'

cautious silence - cheek pressed against cheek -- a slight movement of lips against his. And with one eye over her shoulder, Kaner could see a

portion of the painting. The room was brighter and the colors sang out to him -they spoke with cheerful tone and they brought a good feeling of warmth and accomplishment.

'Come, I'll show you the painting, he said.

Her reluctance mixed with a bored 'Alright,' and he followed her over to the canvas. Christine stood there as confident as a critic - a measurement from here, a measurement from there, a walk forward, a walk backward, a squint of the eyes, and a wide total look. It was punishment to wait for a reaction. Perhaps if he were more certain of his own work it wouldn't matter. But sensitive humility becomes an easy, open target.

* You know what I think it looks like,' she said at last with easy confidence. 'Of course I think it's very good, but I think it looks like a flying mule.'

What more hopeless statement could anyone make? A dart pressed into his temple, and he walked over to the window where two flights down the shoppers, the clerks, and all the other consumers and producers were on the half run having a busy day. Only in the small park across the street where the old men and the pigeons played, could time be taken for quiet games. Kaner felt especially defensive and alien, for the world was against him, and he had half a mind to drop water bombs on old ladies and expensive matrons.

'Is that all you can see in the painting?' he asked her in a tight voice.

'Darling, I didn't mean that was all --it has other nice places about it. I suppose I said something wrong..?

He liked her eyes, and when he turned he tried to see only them. She was more sensual than beautiful, more alert than intelligent, and more trying than unwilling. The total response was like fine sandpaper. During the course of a lifetime he could be worn thin, but for the present he could only be annoyed.

'Show me the flying mule,' he said with a surge of prideful conviction.

'Please, I don't know why I said that.'

'Show me!'

'Well, over here there's a place that reminds me..?

"Where?"

Kaner moved quickly and followed her directing hand.

'See the head and the tail,' she said, 'and those are the wings.'

A subtle image emerged and seemed to take life on the canvas. In horrified silence Kaner saw it. A painted area at least one foot square formed the suggestion. What appeared to be a mule floated above a sweep of blue. Although the impression depended on the eye and the way one looked, it was nevertheless unmistakable. Without intention, without ever noticing-it seemed unbelievable. He groped for an explanation, but he was at a loss.

'I suppose I'm wrong,' she said, 'but it was one of the first things I saw. Christine was beginning to feel sure, and her voice softened and she moved a step closer. 'Of course, I don't think it spoils the painting, but it does make it more intentional, more representational.

Embarrassment on top of pity on top of sweetness. It was just too much and Kaner pushed her roughly aside. With his largest brush he made several devastating strokes that washed the mule out of existence. The mule was gone

orever, having fled into a deep hole of zinc white. For the painting had a hole arger than his head that swelled into the surrounding colors and gave everything an off balance mad-eyed look. Kaner rushed away and fell on the bed. le pressed his eyes into his knuckles until colored moving doughnuts passed cross the landscape of his inner eye.

'You shouldn't have done that,' she said in warm liquid voice. ' But I love rou.' She was massaging the sinews of his spine and relaxing an alert resistance with tenderness. There seemed no way out, for somewhere there was the lying chant of Indian drums being absorbed like moisture into the earth. He hought of moss green shade, of candy striped umbrellas, of happy little cople coming out of wells. He thought of London and Paris, of Egypt and Rome, and a walk through all the galleries of Europe. He thought of fitful sights, of lonely sleepless awakenings. He thought of death, and then he was folding her in his arms.

NEWS NOTE: Word has just reached us that Lachlan MacDonald's story, "The Hunter", in Coastlines No. 13 has been chosen for inclusion in Martha Foley's Best American Short Stories of 1959, an annual selection published by Houghton Mifflin Co.

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Gil Orlovitz

On the back cover of a paperback there is a still shot of a celebrated Hollywood star dressed for the role of a European general, beribboned, debonair, mustached, visibly virile and, with a successfully festering smile, about to seat himself at a diminutive circular restaurant table. For purposes of at least geographic accuracy the nation to which his uniform adverts should be noted, but the studio which costumes him insists on the license of creative imagination, so that research goes aborted. No such license is accorded the brief creature who hovers under the general with napkin and tray: anywhere on the Continent he is quickly identifiable as a waiter belonging to no country but who may be with respect to his nasal structure either Syrian, or Italian, or Jewish, depending on one's tentative tolerance. Since the star has been already unnecessarily named on the front cover, it would have been insulting to name him on the rear. And, of course, so far as the actor who portrays the waiter is concerned, he cannot but regard it as inevitable that on the back cover insult must yield to total anonymity.

Diana Fried keeps the paperback suitably dogeared, mostly out of respect for the screenplay within, an anti-Communist tract which the Catholic Church recommends for viewing by the entire family. Mrs Fried's consists of her husband, Karl, the waiter on the back cover; Jennifer McBurney, a onetime practical nurse; and one black dachshund and three cats

Oh, dear, you didn't come back in time to let them out and now look what they've done, oh dear, the cats, I think I'm going to faint:

Tom Horgan, a letter from his wife in hand, waits patiently; the flesh under his eyes resembles a pair of baggy khaki shorts (I've shipped all the furniture to your California address, and I'm following with the children

I'm not at all sure we should let the animals see the film, what do you think? Karl Fried addresses his wife, his German accent having been blended by considerable hauteur with a severely functional English enunciation.

Both Diana and Karl are Christian Scientists

through the open door of the KARL FRIED ACTING STUDIO can be heard through the fatty summer night the thick slabs of the nearby Methodist churchbell piling up one by tongue-slavering one the putrescent thrills of the clapper enunciating in the thickest caricature of a holy accent

EIGHT O'CLOCK. At 14324 Passim Place, Hollywood, the upstairs apartment, where the living quarters of the Frieds blend in the front room with a tiny raised platform suggesting a stage, on which are focussed two small spotlights of the type one sees in department store windows glaring on the mannikins. There is no curtain. In front of the raised platform (it must be insisted that somehow this is not a stage) are a number of hard wooden chairs taken up by the students who are divided into two classes, the beginners and the advanced, though working actors can be found as well in the former. A week after Karl Fried dies, Martin Ratter addresses the roomful of actor

ind actresses, all of whom at one time or another have been students of Karl

(at the Munich State Theatre, Germany, plays leading roles

a wiry Hamlet

a wiry Lear

a wiry Macbeth

a wiry Falstaff half English half liar half fat half thin half German half
ewish half Cyrano;

Karl Fried is but half-conscious of his nose: he but half catches it in a
ideglance at the mirror, a snatch here and a snatch there, he never breathes
ully or stertorously, he catches at the air through his nose, catches at a smell,
he nose partly in shadow though the nostrils own such holes that the
Methodist bells could be hung there and announce the hour, announce Karl
fried; indeed, the sounds come ringing through his nostrils. Looking at him,
no can see the time being announced; he is stunned, he is encased; he is

lur, though he may be looking at you through a blur, as if you may bea you.
fockstill under the hammering; he does not yield; you never see him in a

abrating, and through the vibrations he can see a perfectly transfixed image
eyond); a word concerning Martin Rattner:

He is Jeremiah Rattner's brother; their father beloved upon the Yiddish
lage, a cultural anomaly once limited to perhaps six blocks at the lower end

Manhattan's Second Avenue. Jeremiah is an internationally-acclaimed
layer; Martin's ability is known only to the trade, but it is as steadily
employed, principally in the movies and television; the two brothers resemble
inch other remarkably, but Martin is a decade older, more shrunken, less
alished, more sweaty: he would never consider carrying a naked statuette of
ex-wife with him to his dressing-room, as Jeremiah does, caressing it in
int of strangers who come to pay their respects; Martin, indeed, might think
caressing a live naked woman before strangers, and entertain the idea at
le length; Karl Fried might think of the possibility momentarily, and

lus it; in a ribald moment, Karl might evoke the whole image in the air
I, but satirically only, and end the matter by tickling the evocation out of
apectator's brain, make it flee and possibly trip over itself as it runs down
airway, falling as Karl looks down from a landing and shaking his head
If to say, Too bad, too bad

Anyhow: a little more on Karl's nose:

the nostrils in their constant flare disclose big black hairy holes. In a dream
ht Karl conceives them as a woman's black breasts whose nipples are
of black hair.

rtin Rattner's pushed cluttered shining face, as though things are grow-
ere: cheek-roots, eyebrow-roots, chin-roots, a crushed ear on either side
crewcut skull with its matted short gray hairs. Underneath, shockingly,
apensively soft cream openthroated shirt, a softly-gleaming gray gabar-
uit. Unbelievable. There's no gabardine body, no tailored belly; one
mand the small thick shoulders. Shockingly, again, gray hairy hands
from the gabardine cuffs

and the tough Second Avenue speech nothing more than a role everyone half-believes, except Karl Fried

Look we're all here tonight to help Diana. That's the main object. Now Ill be honest with allaya. I can take over one class. I aint got the time, but for that I can make time, one class. I can do it for a month and the first student who don't pay out he goes, for that I won't have no patience because Diana needs the money, Karl left no insurance, I understand Stan Remming'll take care of those details, is that right Stan?

Stan swiftly snips away at each corner of his mouth to cut a flitsmile as he tips his body away from Martin Rattner and ducks his head over the listening ex-students toward the rear door in which the grief-pasted Diana Fried stands. handkerchief wadded in doublefist, double-fisted face, pugilistic breasts and the face of a piglet-eyed pug, a figure for the gulps in Karl Fried's bed, Karl having a large adams-apple, the hooknose motif repeated in the throat, gulping Diana, curt angular snake gulping, you can see her wadded throughout his body as he swallows her in massive chunks on the sheets as a midnight snack while he studies tomorrow's Matinee Theatre script, Diana quite happy that she's being gulped in the interests of the acting art, feeling his big yellow front teeth biting into her, she shakes like a thick jelly, is Karl at the trough or is she? Difficult to tell, but clearly sex is feeding time, feeding time, and Karl throws her a wriggling fish for which Diana is gruntingly grateful;

but she makes an obvious show of Karl's memory being too overwhelmingly provocative, death is feeding time too and she smells the food and she exits, her throat working, her belly heaving, weeping for pure hunger.

The ex-students are embarrassed. There is some confusion of sentiment here. Are we for Karl or Diana?

Though I walk into the valley of the shadow of death one of his ex-students, a tall thin girl, whom Karl would never consider teaching unless he judges her viable, reads the psalm and botches it not because she's overcome with emotion but because she simply doesn't know how to handle Elizabethan prosody; stumbling, familiar only with the rhetoric of naturalism, the American tough-talk now called upon to terminate this paying of respects, the poor girl reads the poem as if it is couched in some alien exotic tongue, as indeed it is for her television-oriented syllables, she knows Karl will flay her for her shoddy diction.

Worse, there's no creative imagination in what you're doing, he smiles his scorn upon her, and traps the class behind with rapping grins, slashing at them with his scintillant glares. You have no idea what the poet means. What does it mean to walk into the valley of the shadow of death, eh? he insists. In your own words of course, he glances back at the class over his shoulder. Take your time. Think about it. The bible rattles in her hands as she compresses her mouth, the tall thin girl with the whitespots on her cheekbones from which the blood has blurted. He takes several hypotenuses, a geometrician in his scoots across the floor

to a love scene on the small raised platform he pays concentrated attention. The black dachshund jumps onto Diana's lap behind him. Diana caresses the dog while she smiles on the love scene, she laughs at one point

1 Karl turns on his wife furiously, Shhh! sshh! he sibilants enragedly at

The smiles. sed late the anage to in part a ty to hes whisper

ddhism kisses the actress. Karl Fried fastens concentration on the two as to leech them, as if the two are incredible. A love scene is probably the -st difficult kind of scene to do con-vin-cing-ly. He parts the syllables. He's tranced by the two on the platform. Is it possible? Are they? What is it that "y are doing? There's no doubt there's an element of humor in a particular change the two have, tickling his wife behind him. She must laugh. Here is attempting to understand what they're doing, and his wife laughs. ere's no humor in Karl Fried's attempt to understand. It might be possible it his wife is laughing at him because he's trying to understand. That tends break up the scene; more importantly, to break up the Karl Fried scene, who watches. Diana is amused by his watching, and she can't tolerate it, b remains undigested behind him while he gulps what is before him. Karl kles her in her throat: she is consuming him, and it tickles. He has smiled the humorous element on the platform, while Diana laughs. Laughs, she plies, to make Karl laugh, because Karl is not permitted to smile, there's hypocrisy in his smile, she believes, in that very quiet indulgence. He is not be indülgent, she won't have it, she won't have the two people on the atform, nor the man in front of her as she fondles the black dachshund who embles Karl, the dog with the long sad nose, the large sad floppy ears, the ag sad low-axised underslung body, the long sad eyes which are Karl's unterparts except that Karl's have black holes, the flareblaring black pits of strils have sunk into the man's eyes, tunnels with black hairy sides into lich the man's sights go tumbling down, each sight striving to catch on to hair, but the hairs are slippery with mucous (as you see in Karl's eyes, acid, glistening), so that the sight's hold slips, falls further down, till sight lost sight of but undeniably keeps falling, there's no end to the fall, and nstantly Karl knows this so that his perception is a vertigo having no ttom, he can never hear the end of the sight, the unmistakable thud, never. ly the sound of wind made by the falling -and it is Diana's laughter lich intrudes upon the falling sound, for it is possible that in that very ament of her laughter a sight might reach its thud and he will not have ard it, the possible one time Diana has drowned out, unforgiveable he looks er, for which there's no possible apology.

pummeled prehistoric sofa resembling a dachshund runs perpendicular the hard chairs in the studio; lumpy and lachrymose sofa. Above which, the wall: a photo of Greta Garbo, curling at the edges, fadingly inscribed my dearest friend, Karl. There is something bitter to Greta Garbo's face, and bitter; something of an implied sneer at the mouth, a faint sniffing it around the eyes and nostrils. Not that the perfection is marred, but the mar is perfected, made extraordinarily beautiful, a breathtaking mar If, a glaze, nature at its most triumphant in making the flaw a matter of hing artistry, Karl must shrug his adoration of Garbo's achievement never she is mentioned, he will not even deign to analyse the marvel

in the compass of the American fraternal and sorority orders the presence of an imported Swedish actress whose shoulders have been absorbed by her cheekbones, whose face is an anglicized african mask

(the whole face as seen through a profile, as though one must painfully crane one's neck around the corner, the Picasso loan from the Egyptian bas-reliefs, Karl remarks that the Spanish artist has been greatly influenced by the Egyptians, a characteristic nobody seems to have noted, Karl says rather arrogantly, I have seen the Young Woman Regarding Herself In The Egyptian Mirrors, which were also constructed in miniature pyramids, in which the great Pharaohs were interred, who knew well that the preservation of the race lay in the woman's pyramidal mirror constructed upon a desert guarded by sphinxes as She goes on eternally chattering

chattering
chattering)

devoid of function, becoming then a museum piece to be viewed for an admission-price accompanied by rapidly moving slides while somebody lectures the plot in the dark, the chatter of a face guarded by silence --

Garbo's acrid insistence on her loneliness a taunting of the American public confessional

You understand that acting must be a kind of taunting of the audience, but you must hold them in check, they must not charge at you, you must persuade them they taunt themselves and must then turn from themselves to worship you

there is nothing new about acting as a form of religious observance; you are after all taking the roles of gods and goddesses performing in perfect control their own destiny, comic or tragic. Gods have always taunted men and deceived them into thinking they taunted themselves and must therefore turn to the gods to love

there is nothing new about men wanting other men to believe they are gods who are terribly lonely, male or female; therefore:

Garbo, striding

imperiously, or

compassionately, or, best of all,

grandly dying. How ultimately satisfying to see one's god die. The secret of the greatness of Greta Garbo is that she had made her audience see her as Christ, and how one wishes to lay one's hands greedily on Christ, eh? To break in upon his rigorous intimacy: How does a God live by herself? What does she do? How does she divinely rise in the morning and go to sleep at night god

DAMN the audience, Karl Fried nearly spits at the mirror as he shaves When have gods not hated men? Martin Ratter says I'll be honest withya like I was always honest with Karl, I aint gonna teach like he did, it aint I didn't respect his method like you refer to it, I respect it but I got my own way, I think I recognize a coupla faces here who were in my classes before, I think they'll tellya I got results

Hot as hell, Karl Fried shakes his head at his students and scratches his back with the Chinese backscratcher. Shirtless, he hypotenuses amongst them,

s skinny hairy chickenbreastedness sweating, as he rapidly beats the air with fan in front of his face. We're getting an air-conditioner here in a few days. s ridiculous to come from a hot working day to a hot studio at night, body can do his best under such conditions, nobody
The class watches his naked torso, its skimpy frailty, feeling that its hair could be plucked and readied for the broiler.
(.. results... SSS\$...)

Restlessly Karl darts back and forth among the students, scratching his ick, waving the backscratcher as a baton, a rumble in his throat when a adent on the platform complains of the difficulty of achievement, so he rns his back to the platform and sotto voce addresses nobody in particular, ifficult, the horse rears in his throat; Difficult, the contempt in tight abandon ider his breath, When they will actually realize the difficulty, of what it is to i an actor. He snorts. A row of footlights burns under his eyes, and Karl ried is thrown into the blackest shadow, never mind the script, it is your business to do a good acting job. However id the writing, however short the rehearsal time, you can bring art to your le. There is no excuse for doing otherwise, you understand? Of course levision is a business and only a business, but as actors you can still bring eative imagination to what you are doing onstage
Abruptly, he has a naked torso; abruptly, he detects repulsion in his udents' eyes at his trivial torso; the naked frailty is too much for them; he ust endure the heat, he must be tortured by it, and he dons a thin shirt to eryone's relief but his own; ugliness is too much for the American, after I, especially that of the body, the frame
once, walking along Vista Street with Diana on a smogless spring day, the ilshire business district and the Baldwin Hills in the prickly distance, and

Venice oil derricks further beyond overlooking the Pacific, Diana begins malign a house they pass for its use of garish color (Diana tells the story raelf in memory of Karl Fried's sense of the beautiful, but Karl instantly bukes her. He asks her to look around at the other houses, what does she see? She admits they are quite drab.
Exaetly! Karl nods once, sharply. The people who live in the garish house el a need for beauty and they try to express it. Badly, to be sure. But they e not vulgar in the sense that they feel the need; these garish colors are their ea of the beautiful; those who live in the drab houses feel no such need, and ey are the vulgar and ugly ones

Diana and Karl often take walks around Hollywood's residential districts, | illmatched pair, she with the body of the famous Lipschultz floating nude id the porcine narrow squeaking eyes and face; he shorter by half a head, adling by her waddling. A rare sight, rarer by virtue of the fact that hardly yone is to be seen walking in these areas; it is very nearly a sin to be Ithout a car. Not that the Frieds do not own one; they do, a British-made mson Goliath. Which Karl hates to drive, it demands too much of him, he hes it only because Diana insists she be relieved of some of it. She must do great deal of it as a companion to a child-actor whom she drives back and ith to the studios, and waits on while the boy is on set, for which she is of

course recompensed, for Karl's income is not so great that she can afford to turn down additional. His agent blithely informs him on the phone he had a job offer for Karl this morning, but turned it down. Why, Karl inquires. Because the producer will not meet our price. I would have liked the job anyhow, and it would have been 400 dollars. Our price is five hundred and fifty, the agent replies; your status will be affected, as you know, if you accept any role for less. But I could use the 400 dollars, Karl protests, that's 400 dollars lost. Your price will steadily go down if you begin to accept less, the agent patiently points out.

You have got to be a good deal of a child to want to be an actor, Karl tells his class. Is it not childlike to want to be in such a profession? in which your meals are not assured, your rent is long overdue, your wardrobe is in tatters, in which you must turn down jobs if your price is not met...

He feeds Stan Remming, a young indigent actor. Also Jimmy Roe till he quits, enraged because Karl tells him before the whole class that while Jimmy is richly talented he has no discipline and will amount to nothing till he gains it

I can't tell you what I owe him, Jimmy says to Franny Mister at the edge of the Morocco Apartments swimming-pool on Hayworth Avenue, a long brilliant blue rectangle. When did you hear it?

Stan Remming just called me, the gobletbodied whorl-blonded girl says.

You know I just can't believe he's dead, Jimmy complains.

Yeh, Franny nods dolorously.

I just can't believe it. You're sure, now.

Uh-huh. The girl stares at the brilliant blue rectangle of the pool. Flawless, The middle of summer and the blue pool is flawless. The long blue rectangle of the sky above is flawless. The adjacent apartment house is a sort of New Orleans type, with outside porches running the length of each storey, and open stairways landscaped down the sides, something like the set for A Street-car Named Desire. The Morocco Apartments have a whitewashed quality under the noon sun. Whitewashed and flawless here we are, Franny thinks. I believe Karl is a spirit watching us. He just can't be dead, he just can't be

You know I was starving when he took me in, Jimmy says, his face like a gnarled clown's of Irish and Italian parentage, a little piglike too, more elongated, however, than Diana's, more twistedly knobby. Did you know that. Franny?

She shakes her head no. There is a living mass in her throat that grows and grows but won't move up or down. Nobody's swimming in the pool

I met him at the airport once with Diana, Jimmy says in incredulous tones. and he suddenly bent in two, and when I tried to help him he just straightened up and told me to forget about it, that he was just tired, he never went to a doctor, you know that, Franny?

Because he was a Christian Scientist. Can you believe that? Jimmy looks at her, lower lip pendulous. It's his own fault, I know that, Jimmy assures himself sadly, sadly looking after the girl as she abruptly moves off, she's got to get into her apartment before her ugly sobs come out, like gusts of gut

urting to thrust up and out that living mass in her throat, before she'll be mpedelled to answer how Karl Fried died, thinking with fantastic horror w Karl Fried tells the class A man dies as he lives, in the way that he lives us he dies, no other way, which is why so many death scenes are so false, by do not convince you. Franny doesn't understand how he can talk so bly about death at all, because she avoids the subject like the plague.

Franny?

Yes.

This is Diana. You haven't phoned since you left the class so I thought I'd one you. Dear, how are you?

Franny giggles. Things are still tight moneywise.

Oh I'm sorry, dear. I know how it is. Someday we must have lunch and u will tell me why you had to leave the class, won't you?

Yes. Let's do that.

I'm also calling about Bob Terrance. I'm calling everybody I know. It's e, dear, that I'm hardly on speaking terms with Bob anymore, but he's such terribly gifted performer I feel I ought to do something for him and I'm ling everybody I know. And I know your husband knows Bill Marchant d I want Bob to meet Bill, I think he might give him an introduction to a w producers.

But Gregg only met him once and hardly talked with him.

Oh I thought he knew him better than that.

No.

Well you understand I wanted so much for Bob to get started. I've been on o phone for an hour.

I guess I can't help you, Diana.

Oh, dear, I am sorry. You will remember we are to have lunch. Please call e, dear.

Oh, yes.

Jimmy.

Yes, Karl. Jimmy Roe's Italo-Irish pug-pinochio face quite blithely arro- nt. seamed, sere for all its rich creasings on its long torso and the abruptly ort legs on the platform (would you believe it Cagney the great Cagney me up to me after the scene and said Jimmy Roe? I gulped. I could hardly swer. Yes, Mr Cagney. Caught you on tv last night, Jimmy. You did, Mr agney? ((I must've sounded like an idiot, I didn't know what to say)) Yeh. ood acting job, Jimmy. It's pretty great of you to say so Mr Cagney. No, no, n't say that, Jimmy, don't say that! A good job's a good job and I believe I actor ought to be praised for it. And off Cagney walks. My mouth was en. I just stood there, I was blushing), the young man who says he can't and being in a play because it means doing the same role over and over ain and he can't stand that so that's why he prefers movie and tv acting. ere's something new all the time, I don't understand how actors do plays. ust don't, his eyes in chinks, the class silent.

Did the scene call for cursing? Karl anchors the small toyboat of a smile either lipcorner, but grim gusts blowing from his bald black eyes.

The scene didn't but I did, Jimmy avers superiorly, snottily. I felt it that way.

Did you? Karl aims at the class. Was anybody else here in the class convinced by Jimmy's necessity? Skeptical murmurs.

I felt it that way, Karl, Jimmy's is a jagged whine.

Cursing does not shock me, Jimmy.

I know that.

I am only shocked where there is no necessity for shock.

I felt the necessity.

But no one else here did. How do you account for that? Tell us in your own words. Think about it.

I don't have to think about it. If I feel like cursing, I'm going to curse.

No, I am afraid you will not.

I'm sorry I've got to disagree.

Oh, disagree, by all means. We allow anyone to disagree, do we not? Karl grips the entire class with the black smile coursing over his white face. But there has not been a single scene, Jimmy, which we have heard without your cursing. Do you always feel you must curse, Jimmy?

I don't think so

But you always do. You must know by now that this is not a class in psychoanalytic group therapy. For that you go elsewhere, and there you can curse to your heart's content, and everyone there will believe you. But I do not believe you. I am not your doctor, Jimmy.

I know that, Jimmy is surly.

No you do not know that. I will have to ask you to refrain from cursing henceforth.

Now look here, Karl, if I feel like cursing I'm

Big long gnarled pinocchio toes in the rubber sandals at the Morocco Apartments swimmingpool, I can't believe he's gone, Franny. I'm going to

Franny?

Yes?

This is Stan Remming, I have something very unpleasant to tell you

What what what

is the matter with this room? Along which the black dachshund sniffs, radically differentiated from the room with the small raised

Look what Diana gave me, Bob Terrance says to Tom Horgan waiting for Bob to turn out the light so he can go to sleep in the big double bed, Bob holding up a shapeless mustard-yellow longsleeved sweater. The baggy khaki shorts under Tom's eyes are baggier than ever as he lies abed, his balding, his thin sparsely-settled mustache already asleep for the night.

Well Tom you're certainly welcome to stay here as long as you like, Diana tells him, really it's not that I can't see what she wants but I'm just too damned tired for that sort of thing, as Tom recounts it,

You don't have to pay any rent, Diana assures him.

That's a warm-looking sweater, Bob. It used to be Karl's.

On the back cover.

You think I should wear it?

Of a paperback.
 Sure. You're sleeping in his bed.
 That's right.
 There is a still shot.
 You're sleeping with his wife.
 Of a celebrated Hollywood star.
 There's something wrong. If he'd been a celebrated Hollywood star, that is.
 But he wasn't.
 Dressed for the role of a European general.
 Not in a shapeless mustard-yellow longsleeved sweater. I really don't know
 hat's inside.
 Turn it inside out.
 I can't.
 Try.
 It won't turn inside out. You know, if its shapeless enough right side
 at..
 Karl says put it on and then turn yourself inside out. That's acting
 My whole trouble as a human being is that I have never been able to love,
 arl Fried addresses the class. I have been married three times, and I have
 ot loved any of my wives. Diana will tell you that this is true, is it not so?
 Diana grins at the dachshund in her lap. Yes.
 I envy any of you who is able to love, Karl says.
 Franny Mister is stupefied at her teacher's admission. No, but it is not an
 Imission. It is very nearly a triumphal announcement, a signal of unique
 atus for Karl Fried, especially with Diana present with a dog in her lap.
 arl does not insult Diana; rather, it is the other way around, in that since
 le consents to marry Karl without his loving her then she is humiliating him.
 orse, it's mortification in the extreme. Doggedly: I will love a man who does
 at love me; I will live with a man who does not live with me; I will sleep
 ith a man who does not sleep with me; I will know a man who does not
 id cannot know me. Quite an experience, Franny Mister admits to herself.
 unique experience, Diana feels to herself, strokes it, puts her fingers in the
 g's mouth about it, roughs up the dog, rolls the dog over on his belly, is
 o dog male or female? That doesn't matter, since he or she or it doesn't
 ve her, sex is no object, sex is rather subject, something for Diana alone,
 ell it's all clear Franny Mister thinks, because what Diana is doing is mastur-
 ting, she is able to experience her supreme gratification of being able
 irdinally to love herself because Karl cannot love her. Marvelous. Her
 art's desire. She isn't really gulped down by Karl, not in the truthful sense:
 le is using him for jawwork, he's her medium, his yellow teeth are the
 gers she cannot use upon herself for the end wish of onanism, while she
 lows all along that Karl despises her as she reaches for her own joy, thats
 by she seems and is so apart from him, which everybody recognizes, theirs
 no relationship, simply a geographical propinquity. So they each practice
 * for themselves. But Karl Fried isn't masturbating. His sex-objects are
 mply anonymous
 Insult must yield to total anonymity.

Karl Fried must have the strange strange belief, Franny Mister thinks, of being able to impart ecstasy to the anonymous. He is par example, then, an Actor. Let not the anonymous identify itself, or he won't give out with ecstasy, because: if an object is already identified, what should it want of Karl Fried? Because it will already have achieved the next-to-most magnificent goal, that of self-identification. But being Fried-ecstatic in anonymity is the greatest goal, but that's something an object can't know until it receives the Fried-ecstatic. Fried will then have transcended the self-identification. What, then, he is doing for Diana is to provide her, so to speak, with Ecstasy Anonymous got through her masturbation via Karl the medium, he therefore performing a double role, medium and giver, impossible for her to realize his double role, naturally, otherwise the doubleness would become single. Maybe, Franny Mister thinks, his greatest acting is reserved for his wives and mistresses; maybe it's just possible he misses being a Great Actor onstage because he's achieved it Privately, with No Audience. Very arcane, indeed. Very recondite. So that if Karl Fried commits suicide, then... Franny Mister won't permit herself to go further. To go further, she thinks, would stop her from ever being a Mother again, she has one eight-year-old daughter. Does Karl Fried have children? No. But he, and Diana, do take in stray objects.

The onetime practical nurse Jennifer McBurney for instance who one night after Jimmy Roe gives a specially dynamic piece of improvisation on the small raised platform shyly approaches him...

Jimmy....

Yes, Jennifer who has glistening lavender eyes of shimmering lustre.

Tom, Diana says, looking at the balding wisping player of debonair slightly addled roles, the fey uncle, the somewhat distraught father in the Diplomatic Service, the French elderly lover, the tarnished bon vivant, the kindly humorous Doctor who Franny Mister has told Diana about because he's been staying with Charlie Morgan his wife and child in their small Beverly Hills apartment on the wrong side of the Hills without the pastel estates and the anal-shaped swimmingpools having just come from New York to try cracking television in Hollywood because tv in NY has all but vanished, and it's simply too crowded in the Morgan establishment though Charlie never protests but his wife becomes increasingly irascible about the matter, Charlie's a great big ex-Marine with a soupy heart, so it's really necessary Tom get to move, so Franny acquaints Diana with the picture especially since Karl is dead and Diana says certainly he can move right in but then she's not sure and then she's sure and keeps vacillating, uttering things like What will my neighbors think what with Karl just dead, oh let him move right in but he's got to do certain things if he does live here, I've got to tell him about the cats and the dog because he's got to walk the dog and see the cats get properly fed, and Look here, Jennifer says she's been wanting to move ANYHOW and she will once Tom comes in

Oh I feel so BADLY about Jennifer, Diana insists Franny have coffee with her after class Diana's trying to keep going with Karl's students but they have now shrunk to four, she's not the teacher Karl is though she once taught

fore and did a good deal of acting in Children's Theatres,
 acting in children's theatres, Gregg snorts
 and you know what, Gregg?
 What?

Well I think she's just plain sadistic, Franny tells her husband.
 Why is that?

Well like how she insists I keep doing that kissing scene with that fairy.
 's just not right Diana keeps saying. Do it again. Again, again. And the
 ury's awfully embarrassed, and so am I. Sure Karl used to insist, but he
 as'n't sadistic, and he'd never do it with a kissing sequence
 oh

not

a

kissing

sequence

well... And Diana does. Standing there. Watching. The fairy blushing.
 nd I'm blushing, Gregg.

Jennifer went to visit her daughter in Denver and got a heart attack there
 ad died and I feel so awful, Franny, as though I ejected her to send her to
 er death, I think I'm going to faint Franny

No you're not.

I feel very badly. Come with me to the bathroom.

That goddamn bitch, Franny tells her husband. I don't want to get involved
 ith her, I won't, I won't stay after hours, I won't listen to her, SHE'S not
 ck, I told her to put her head down between her knees, she didn't faint
 f shimmering lavender lustre,

Jimmy, Jennifer whispers. The lavender eyes brilliantly pulsating in her soft
 hite deadfleshed tiny heartshaped face with a million lines all underneath
 le skin, you can detect them, as though everything is crumpling underneath
 id simply making shadows of the buckling on the surface, the neck mush-
 omstemmed and mushroomfleshed, dying whitely in the dark, the blood
 ming up only as a kind of shy ladies' perfume from the weakened dispenser
 eneath in the toilet of the body,

You were very brilliant, Jennifer whispers, and we've simply got to do some-
 ing for you. You should be very famous, and we've got to see to it, and we
 all. You are a great artist, Jimmy. Do you know I used to play piano? Oh
 8, very well indeed, but my parents seemed to discourage it, and artists
 ouldn't be discouraged, Jennifer now speaks aloud, aloud by god, a ladylike
 ger in her voice, her whiteflesh abruptly firming, the lines of her years
 omentarily emerging to the surface where they should be, out in the open.
 hen,

she turns away, swiftly, nodding with purposeful vigor

I TRY to get her to come along with me to do the shopping, Diana says,
 it Jennifer insists on staying in the car, she just won't venture out, and she's
 > wonderful, she does all the cooking and ironing and washing and she gets
 IRRITATED when I don't come home on time

to Franny on the phone, No I don't know where Diana is.

Do you expect her soon?

Well I certainly hope so, Jennifer tartly replies. I've got her supper ready and it's going to be just unpalatable if she doesn't come home soon

The dachshund sniffs around the living quarters of the Fried apartment at 1432} Passim Place, Hollywood

The brief creature who hovers under the general.

Karl Fried wears black sharply-pointed shoes, scuffed. In Belsen, while bleeding thinly during a beating by his Nazi captors, his blood a pale pink, Karl manages to act a smile in front of the swastika uniforms, behind whom is a mass of unseeing men, behind whom is a mass of unseeing buildings, above which is a thin sun casting nondescript shadow on the scuffed pointed torso of Karl Fried wearing black pointed ribs as he acts a smile, acts it most unwillingly because his yellow teeth keep sucking the insides of his lips, the teeth don't want to be shown, they're terribly shy because not only are they yellow but they're big and most unesthetic for Karl's face and they like to keep hidden in corners, but Karl forces them out, it's about time they stopped being virgins anyhow, a concentration-camp is hardly the place for virginity, especially that of teeth he tells himself as his black hairy torso with the thistle nipples is strapped and unstrapped successively by a stinging tickle

a tickling stingle

making the nipples want to giggle

but that giggle never even reaches his larynx because it's stopped by the strapping at the base of the throat; starts again, and then is cringed back to circle around the nipples; but his mind can get hold of the giggle around the nipples, and his mind, you see, can understand and observe the grins of the Nazis, can, you see, partake of those grins for his smile-act, thereby in the faculty of using humor as it exists externally and as it exists in the cells of his nipples internally which are defending themselves by going round and round and round trying to become dizzy

he can push a concentration of both into his lips, because he is attempting to force-feed himself, and whisper to the lovely scent of the Germans bending over him,

I'm only half a Jew, you see, gentlemen, (smiling, smiling, smiling) so, after all, it's very logical that you can only half kill me.

lovely scent,

the dachshund is sniffing for in the livingroom with its long pointed black shoe scuffed nose, Karl Fried swears the perfume the Nazis used he would delicately dab himself with for the rest of his life (smiling, smiling, smiling)

THAT smile-act Karl never rids himself of; THAT smile permeates each smile he does thereafter, whether real or acting, you can only half kill me

HALF a spirit at least of Karl Fried must be hovering about, Franny Mister believes

under the low bamboo table used as a sofa or couch, pillows scattered on it, hard to the rump, but Karl manages to curl up on it, the brief creature,

nisshapen boy very nearly, with the big adult skull, the body a barelegged
 hingboy creature;
 a round low table in the center of the room for magazines and the like.
 rainst one wall a combination hi-fi recordplayer, FM and AM radio, in pale
 and wood like the bamboo, like the table, like the bookcase against the
 posite wall, in which book collection, mainly plays, there is the curious
 ick volume Emil Ludwig's The Nile. A great writer, Karl says. The decor
 hard wood, blond wood, bamboo discomfort, straightbacked chairs, one
 ust sit up straight or curl or lie down flat; impossible to slump. One must
 harpata, on acrobat cave is a decataly arps himself into an her lifted

fa in the hallway, pillowing head in crooked elbow, looks up slyly, says,
 Scheherazade, thousand and second night
 Diana squirts giggles into the hallway, her porky features kneading them-
 Ives instantly into knobs, nodes, lumps, clumps and clusters
 Stan Remming takes rollcall;
 walks Diana and the dachshund;
 feeds the cats;
 sets the raised platform for an improvisation;
 gives instruction when the Master must be at rehearsal;
 cleans the ashtrays;
 serves coffee from the anteroom, on the wall of which hangs a board with
 ails on which hang clean coffeecups over a washstand, the room also used
 r various costumes and a clothes-dummy which Diana uses for designing
 er own dresses and fitting them;
 keeps weekly accounts, which student is paying and which in arrears;
 hispers to students in arrears;
 wears but one suit of clothing, shiny serge; his shirt-cuffs ragged; his black
 loes pointed and scuffed; his black hair slicked; his face freshlyshaven; bass-
 iced; five feet ten, thin, thinfaced but romantic-lead type but hair nicked
 re and there by gray; flitsmiled, flitmovemented; big basso-assured voice,
 it a wisp of a thing underneath the skin, but leaves the KARL FRIED
 CTING STUDIO a month after Karl's death, Very VERY ungrateful of
 an, Diana says, I'm terribly disappointed in him, dear. There is a bust of
 cethoven in the livingroom, but Diana who buys most of the records plays
 merican jazz, the kind with the thumpiest beat, Isn't it just marvellous she
 wills, I just want to do all kinds of things when I listen to it, don't YOU?
 arl carries the grocerybags as they emerge from the supermarket on Sunset
 oulevard and walk to their red Goliath
 the dachshund wobbles from one set of shoes to another in the livingroom,
 e mawkish big black eyes lachrymosely peering up at the legs, the torso,
 e face, the damn dog
 mewing, really,
 mewing like a cat with a deep voice, mewing in its dull grief, paddywobbling
 out, stubtail ticktocking, hardly lifting its paws, fat with loyalty, over-
 uffed with it, trying somehow to vomit it out in a lump on the floor
 get out GET OUT Diana shrills at Tom Horgan, because the TWO of you

can't stay, not you and Bob both, and Bob's going to be here so you find yourself another place I'm not going to have you and your wife and your child and your belongings here

Now you just stay as long as you need to, Tom, Diana tells him, pouch-voiced, fatvoiced, adenoidally overstuffed, the adenoids like monstrous bulging sofas under and over her squeakdeep eyes

padding about, the dachshund is an old decrepit man as the three cats peer at him from vantage points around the hard blond hifi room, one of them perched on the bookcase above Emil Ludwig's *The Nile*, one rakishly lifting an ear on the table, one hunched on the windowsill Franny what do you think of this magnificent piece of driftwood Bob found for me at the beach the other day, doesn't it have marvellous shapes, like a piece of sculpture

I'm sorry I don't agree with you, Franny, Karl demurs, on the contrary I found Kim Stanley's performance in the *Odets* play very mannered, very mannered indeed, I could not watch it

on Friday noon Karl is seen on the television screen playing the role of a Moroccan physician; he leers and he practically hisses, he bows and he scrapes, he drips obsequiousness and bares his teeth as he fans the Mediterranean heat away in the stifling office, the overcorrupt doctor, discontent with his sub-villainy he lags it, so that, in the oblation of his acting, decanted once into the hard ethos of a Lessing and the iridescent miscellany of an atonal Shakespeare, to the plucked artificial fowl frying on the sight of American housewife in the midst of vacuum-cleaner and Drano Karl Fried becomes nothing more on the screen than an amputee going door-to-door for magazine subscriptions and holding out his super-pathetic shining hook from the prosthetic arm,

half-alive,

half-Jew,

half-artist; and, therefore, half a liar to his acting students, and half-laughing at them for believing him.

Greta Garbo seems rather sour.

Reaching the United States, the account goes on, Karl Fried teaches an acting class in Erwin Piscator's Dramatic Workshop in New York, at which Charlie Morgan, ex-Marine, ex-childactor, a complex and tender hulk of a man, is a student. In one production, Karl Fried is momentarily over-enamored of an exit he must make, and overstays his leave, infuriating Charlie to the extent that he wreaks instant revenge by upstaging and totally obliterating Karl from the audience and infuriating the brief creature in turn Karl's first wife has died in a concentration-camp. Diana meets him in New York as he is pondering divorce from his second wife, a sickly, nagging thing who ceases complaint only when he is bed with her

Belonging to no country.

Diana is in a state of constant shame because she's his second wife's best friend, her guilt instantly assuaged the moment Karl divorces her best friend and marries Diana.

He then is the recipient of an offer from a major Hollywood studio to do a

important role in an anti-Communist picture. He accepts and takes the gamble, for there are no further commitments, but he believes that once in Hollywood other roles will be offered him as a matter of course.

This does not occur. Both he and Diana, finding their savings depleted, stain jobs on the assemblyline of an aircraft factory. They live in a tiny apartment at Hermosa Beach, a small slum on the outskirts of Los Angeles.

Diana, in dryeyed memory, says: There were days we didn't eat. One night, she says, we had only a potato before we were to be paid the next day. I boiled it and we ate it and we drank the water I boiled it in.

Anywhere on the Continent he is quickly identifiable as a waiter.

Nights, Karl Fried works the production line. Days, he makes the rounds of agents.

He begins to do small roles. The Munich State Theatre:

Ariel.

Puck

Of course on the overstuffed sofa in the hallway outside the Mister apartment he is

at last able to open an acting studio at 1432½ Passim Place, Hollywood, the reet-level apartment underneath resounding with the torments of voice students raw-assed from going up and down scales

you understand, he addresses the tall lanternjawed blondhaired thirtytwo year old professional actor, Wolfe Shields, you actually understand what it means to be a Zen Buddhist, do you?

I think so, Karl, Wolfe mixes his lips on the raised platform.

Karl smacks his open palm with the Chinese backscratcher, his violently lack eyes itching on their shining whites, his Nazi smile hooking the students she glances at them.

Very well, then, Wolfe, suppose you tell us. I believe it will be appropriate.

Well, I think the first thing, Karl, Wolfe's jaw dangles in his neck, a tall blond man fishing from a high bank

Yes yes the first thing, tell us.

Shysmiling, Wolfe clears his throat, very gently making a passing remark, Well I shall, Karl, if you'll desist a moment

Karl throws up his hands.

Well the first thing is that it involves considerable discipline

Discipline! Karl pucks up his mouth at the class.

Yes, and introspection, Wolfe diffidently suggests. And it is said that after years and years of discipline and introspection that ah-- it will very suddenly come to you-

What will? Karl sharply intrudes. What will suddenly come to you?

Now I'm getting to that, Wolfe gently protests on the small raised platform, the students licking the sight of the hypotenusing Karl and Wolfe shambling, unching, straightening, chindangling, throatclearing all in one and same spot. 's supposed to be indescribable, you see, Wolfe licks his lips and hitches up his finely-cut jacket. You're supposed to suddenly understand what's indescribable- it's the bit that says now forgive me if I sound a little pre-

tentious, I don't mean to - after all, students have spent years studying Zen

Karl's hooknose makes nicks on the air. Yes. Yes.

I mean you're supposed to suddenly know the principle at---- I guess you might call it the root of the universe.

I see. Now. How did the Zen monks teach their students discipline and introspection? Can you tell us that? Vitally important, don't you think, Wolfe?

Oh, yes, yes. Wolfe clasps his hands in front of him. Well, they they sort of make fun of their students.

Fun?

Yes. The monks, I believe, would deride them--derision would be the accurate term, I suppose.

Well, then, Karl shrugs, laughing shortly, nodding at the class who then laugh shortly, you must tell us what makes you think you wish to be an actor.

Is that quite fair, Karl? Wolfe is very gentlemanly, very correct, very polite, his trousers are very pressed, his tie is very straight even in the sweltering heat of the fatty summer night, very six feet two and a half inches tall I am not in love

No neither am I

What do you think a Zen monk would have replied to your question of fairness, eh Wolfe?

Wolfe Shields grins swiftly, beautifully, correct charm; then stifles the grin, twinkles an eye

I don't think it's funny, Wolfe, do you? Do you, really? Karl sounds unbelievably offended.

Oh no, Karl. It's simply I didn't see you quite in the role of a Zen Monk, you know.

All right! Karl dazzlingly condescends the mot. But but but, Wolfe, you might think of me in such a role

He had you there, Karl, Diana vulgarly guffaws.

Please keep quiet, Karl viciously raps at her.

Diana folds her lips, looks down, strokes the dachshund.

So, Karl pulls hypotenuses from the room, backscratching, batoning it. So, will you tell us why you think you wish to be an actor? Karl turns black nostrils on the tall blond man.

Wolfe Shields has great lowering bones over his eyes, and a heavy jaw, but he responds without rancor. His is an enormously larger body than Karl Fried's, and he must give his teacher a head start. Wolfe can stand there, a hulk, reinforced concrete, while a rabbit with black pistols scurries here and there. The big bone must be gnawed at, else there's no point to Wolfe's size. And it is to Wolfe's perceptive advantage to see Karl in the role of a monk; Karl is giving Wolfe credit for such a perception, after all; it is a compliment to Wolfe, and he begins to treasure a small smile about his own mouth. He can see Karl as a medicine-man, a priest, can see him with his little bones frothing about his skin; a lascivious monk who carries his genitals as a skull-and-crossbones; can see him as a pirate pacing a miniature deck, and ordering all the mice of the ship to walk the plank! Wolfe is never over-

eated, after all, on the hottest night, while Karl is drenched in sweat and tting whiter and whiter by the second, his immense hooked nose making the r a part of the earth, nosing along it, there must be a clue somewhere to the eath of the man. The murderer must not go unpunished: he must be made anifest: root out the destroyer, Karl Fried will not permit him to remain onceaed; and insofar as each man nourishes a murderer in himself, he must : discovered, else we become hollowed out. Karl Fried seems terribly ollowed out, Wolfe thinks. Karl has not been successful, and must feel at since he himself is betrayed he then must help others not to betray emselves: his whole body is an act of warning; the backscratcher a constant Imonition; his angular turns about the room the annunciation of peril. I wish be an actor, Wolfe says, so that I shall never forget who I am, so that I all always remember myself.

That is much too vague, Karl says crossly.

Well in each of our roles, Karl, we have got to use ourselves, so that we ever forget who we are.

How do you know you are using yourself? Tell me that, Wolfe. Think about a minute. Tell us in your own words. Pah, it is hot. Diana, you will make re about the air-conditioner tomorrow.

Yes, Karl. Diana has a secret code she uses for herself, but it is a babble she erself does not understand, but feels comfortable mumbling it.

I don't know if I am using myself, Karl, but the audience will know, and ill tell me. Yes, yes that's it the words are cluttering his lips now. I ish to be an actor because the audience will point up to the stage and say, 's, yes, he's the man who's disloyal to his friend, who's the fraudulent hero his son, who's the thief of the crown jewels the audience will love me r the role I best play, so that I can go about onstage constantly absolved hile constantly guilty. I wish to be an actor for the sake of whatever hidden man I am can go about in the sharpest light and be adored for it- Is the actor then a narcissist who looks into the reflecting pool of the dience? Is he a beggar who asks alms of an audience? Do you wish to be 1 actor to pick up whatever images an audience is willing to part with? Well-

Well indeed! The brief creature all but flings himself on Wolfe Shields. appose an audience isn't willing to part with a single image of an evening? ill you cry for mercy? If you do, that is being a very bad actor indeed. You derstand that, do you not?

Oh, yes.

Then you really don't know why you want to be an actor.

I'm somewhat confused at this juncture, Karl.

Good good good! Karl is elated with Wolfe. It's very rich to be confused. ou have taken an important step. Most of us never get to the point of mitting how confused we are. We try to solve rather than dissolve. Have u ever attempted crushing everything within you into a kind of juice ther than crystallising? No, of course you have not. Ah, juices.... I think is time for a break, eh Stan?

Flitheaded Stan Remming sticks out a basso smile, Yes it is.

But before we break, I have a question for the class. What is beautiful about a blind man crossing the street? With vast superiority Karl looks over he students. Franny Mister trembles: she knows, she knows, and the whorl-alonded girl trembles her face up at Karl Fried

Ah, of course, I might have known, Karl all but pats her on the head rom afar. Well, what is it?

Franny does not play with herself, but the words hardly manage to come ap for air in the hurt love she bears for Karl Fried, this half-Jew Christian Scientist who hopes to cure Diana Fried's very existence in this little studio with its raised platform surrounded by the gigantic Hollywood sound stages silkily awarding Karl Fried the part of a waiter

so that research goes aborted

Franny can feel the dissolving juices she wishes to warn him, but the paradox ocks up her throat

Come, come, Franny, you had your face up! Karl gently admonishes her, oleased by his wit.

Oh, Franny flushes. Well, she swallows. What's beautiful about a blind man rossing the street? Well, why the fact that he's crossing the street!

A red Goliath is parked in the underground garage of the Morocco Apart-

pon are in the bang and 1100 dollars in the bank and I really shouldn't go to New York, but my nents on Hayworth Avenue. This means that Diana Fried is taking voice ersions from Franny Mister on Saturday morning. Yes, dear, I have only

riends have invited me, and I think I should, don't you? for Christmas. Christmas. I do need a vacation, Franny, don't you think. It'll help me orget. I'm in terrible financial straits and I shouldn't spend the money, I lon't know where I'm going to get new students, you must be sure to attend Monday night, Franny, it's terribly important, I'm having a few new prospects come in, and incidentally if you know of anyone wanting to rent the studio or showcase performances I do wish you'd have them consult me, does your usband really want Charlie Morgan to direct his play, oh yes of course your usband can have the studio anytime he wants, well now I'm not so sure was speaking to my friends last night and they advised me so I've thought wice well the cigarette butts you know the cast has got to clean up whatever lirt they, no I've simply got to make some money now and my friends say hat a production wouldn't help me very much, now look all I want is that hen the production is advertised that they mention the studio in connection vith, oh I'm terribly sorry Gregg I shouldn't have led you to think Karl Fried tells Franny Your husband writes very beautiful and powerful lays but they're not what I'm looking for I want to do a play now that as hope in it

hope

hope

hope Diana's father a thin spike of a man sits in the livingroom of the ried apartment, quite British. Well, you know, I did try to give up smoking /hen my wife died of cancer, but a year after her death I resumed the dachshund sniffs blackbowleyed at his pointed black shoes. I suppose

's inquiring after Karl, Diana's father says
 hope
 Are you feeling a little better, Diana.
 Yes.

Nadie dova they fiore, ye a bi. Please denter me dis very sect of
 u to come, Franny
 you tell Charlie Morgan I want to talk to Tom on the phone. Tom
 Yes?

You can pack your bags and come over right away
 the Methodist churchbell on the sweet young thing of a braless morning, a
 rning cool and bluegray at the temples, no thick sandwichsound, but a
 reheaded prayer, the mists braless slipping through the palmfringed streets,
 norning nor more than nine years old getting up very early at seven a.m. to
 out and find friends to play, other nine-year-olds, look what he wrote in
 / copybook, a low guitar of a giggle through the resilient streets, the day
 t beginning to draw cool braless breath, the sounds of the Methodist
 archbell a trickle of a childlike bell over a shopdoor as the early customer
 atures out on the new street

even o'clock in the morning

hat's all

no more

not very impressive

ust seven

quite early

lon't tense

even for a nine-year-old who suddenly sits up in bed

10 that's not how he, Franny tenses, that's impossible, that's not how he
 d, con-vin-cing-ly, I'd never have believed

well and yet, so: a hurt love for somebody not quite grown up is that the
 y he

Carl Fried opens his eyes to Diana lightly sleeping, black pointed eyes,
 he lies abed at seven a.m., Diana instantly awake, his shoes are pinching
 1, says, I'm not feeling well.

Before Diana can rise, Karl sits abruptly up, thin black pointed ribs with
 ir hands up, his heart with both nipples pointed straight in at it, the circles
 the German's whip tightening in ever-smaller circles around the tiny red
 sel, Karl's eyes wide

vide

vide, blind man crossing the street. His hands grope for the mustard yellow
 peless sweater. Dumbly, Diana turns to get it for him when, disappointed,
 actor slumps over.

What about the other half of you? the Nazi answers Karl Fried.

Beautiful.

Five Poems

*Bert Meyers**Once, in Autumn*

Once in autumn, I saw the sun
pause in the wrinkles of a tree
like passion on an old man's face.
My father, armed with shears, came out
and trimmed the little shrubs to death.

And always, in a wild backyard
my father stepped upon his flesh
(those blind galoshes struck the earth)
and tough as trucks, his hands ran loose
killing the plants they couldn't name.

A lawn -- or passion -- if ignored
may rise around a house like fire.
Son, my father said, Fight back
the garden with its big green hips.
I fought a beast of leaves instead.

But, with a scowl, my iron dad
cut down the grass to a proper flame.
He said: Too many flowers. And then
(though with a hose I'd been their stem)
my scowling conscience cut them off.

At Night

At night, when the mouse
is murdered by cheese,
when the tired walls turn away,
when the body can't stand anymore,
then death parts my hair
and I don't want to die.
I don't want to die!

The asthma weeps.
The asthma burns in its leaves.
The medicines consult,
aware of their labels,
by the bed.

out of the faucets, the floors,
from the big clock that bleeds
weakening in its springs,
it comes shoveling out my chest.

And I don't know why
but I know the heart beats
and beats a man to death.

On A Summer Night

On a golden boulevard I watch
the women: so many flow past me.
And their hips rock like little ships
that need a mast to go to sea.

Now at the walls the men appear.
Mounted upon a myth, they hunt --
their eyes deep in the high-heeled waves --
that fallen cup of sacrament.

I thought I saw in a passing face
how love to lovers will be good.
Gayly they'll fish all night to find
that jovial serpent in the blood.

But I go to a familiar door.
And wait until she asks who's there.
And always, in the dark, she opens
without pleasure -- and without despair.

I see myself in a bulging sheet,
no-body to her, although, so near.
I think: You're a ghost; and flee
before she asks what I'm doing here.

A white cat climbs over that wall
and all the stars are out of place.
Buildings grow in their tall grey robes;
coldly the headlights peel my face.

Porcupine

A little Saint

Sebastian

*(body of barbs)
that hardly hurt)
and like a Saint
misunderstood,
when he appears
he scares the wood.*

*We love to catch
an animal;
then, petting it,
insist the beast
should lick our hand.
But porcupines:
they're very mean
to have such spines.*

My Parents

When my mother puts her flowers
in a bowl - amaryllis, rose --
light from another afternoon
still makes the lonely body glow.

And still my father comes, poor man!--
a hard day on his knees, from money.
My mother turns to an old piano,
her hands snowbound among the keys.

I know they sleep in the same dream,
while the fat moth spreads its dust.
My parents wear each other's breath;
their clock's forgotten how to tell the time.

from

Letter to an Imaginary Friend

Thomas McGrath

ve and hunger! -- the secret is all there somewhere --
id the fiery dance of the stars in their journeying for houses.
id if hunger ended in the cantrip circle,
the union of hungry men, in the blue ice of the reefer
here Cal travelled ...

wsmiths
immune of mystical sweat.
it ended there.

was she built the fire in the heart of the winter night
and rang all the bells in the stiff church of the ice.
iners light/
mpfire/
lipping hammer of purest flame, tunneling
le ultimate rock, the darkness that is as long as we are.
emed like no camp fire,
it the permanent warmth, the absolute seed of the sun
ould sow in my personal blood-ranch...
it I am a farmer of bones.

season was ending.

White papers. Architectural changes.

Whitey's Circular Bar, in East Grand Forks,
e stood like the signal figures under the legend tree,
inking. With Sam and Dee. Who were talking of marriage.
ood in the rain of music and silver under the illegal machines,
here Alton pursued the mechanical capitalist,
cking the slot machine's arm down again and again.

Marriage is the continuation of sex by other means.'
m was going away to drive airplanes for the government.
meone sang in Norwegian, under the metallic laughter
machines and money.

' Some people can be happy with a book by Donne
nd a piece of Ass. It's lack of high thought keeps
y life poor:

And went out in a chiming rain

I jackpot silver.
ad crossed the black river one instant before the breakup.
and turned dreamward.

One to the East and airplanes,

One, Marian, to the true North. One
 To the West of Wish. Myself, South, toward speech.
 And all to the wars and the whores and the wares and the ways of a rotten
 season.
 And who could have guessed it?

The pole star stood to the North:
 Fire was steady on the permanent sky.

Then South to the University with the 500,000 pianos.
 Bought because Huey Long had written: 'Get rid of them nags!' (Horses for the young ladies' riding stable)
 Because one of 'em had broken the neck of a possible voter
 To Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the University there.
 Where they had bought football, pianos, horses and Donnish Oxonians
 To start a culture farm, a little Athens-on-the-bayou.
 And a good job too.

And they all put in together and they got up
 A Tradition. They got hold of Donne, and before they had got done
 They damn near had him.

And they got hold of Agrarianism --

Salvation - 40 acres and a mule -- the Protestant Heaven,
 Free Enterprise. Kind of intellectual ribbon-development --
 But I was Catholic, a peasant, from Sauvequiepeville --
 I wanted the City of Man.

III

And Cleanth Brooks would talk, at the Roosevelt Tavern,
 Where we went to drink beer. And Katherine Anne Porter sometimes.
 (They've probably changed all the names now.)
 And down the street Alan Swallow was handsetting books
 In an old garage. A wild man from Wyoming,
 With no tradition.

But it came in handy, later

that tradition. The metaphysical poets
 Of the Second Coming had it for God or Sense --
 Had it in place of a backbone: and many's the scarecrow,
 Many's the Raggedy Man it's propped up stiff as a corpse.

Int,

Then Asia Street, where I roomed at the family Peets.
 A bug mine, a collapsible chamber of horrors
 Held together by tarpaper and white chauvinism.
 There was Peets with his gin, his nine foot wife, and his son
 Who was big enough to be twins -- the only man in the South
 Who could play both guard and end with no tackle between -

id the daughter, big as all three, with a back-side for a face,
 ith a mouth of pure guttapercha, with a cast, with a fine
 gh shining of lunacy crossing her horsy eyes --
 uck or fight!' I can hear her yelling it now
 d out of the room at the back the bed starts roaring.
 e house is moaning and shaking, the dust snows down from the ceiling,
 e old dog sneezes and pukes and Peets is cursing his wife:
 each your daughter some manners, you goddam cow!
 Il her to close her door, and come back to this goddam bed!

id Crane comes in with his latest girl and they start
 eking the gong around; and the whole place shaking and roaring,
 ce a plane about to take off; and the gators awake
 lowing, under the house, and flee for the bayous
 ile the old dog screams at the moon --
 der! Tradition and Order!
 d all the beds in the joint a-flap at both ends!

en I would get up, maybe, leaving that sex foundry
 at stamping mill for the minting of unfixed forms,
 d lug my chastity, my faithfulness, around the town.
 on in the western dark and the blue permanent stars
 fted a bit in the sky.

Toward music, toward speech, drifting

e night.
 gh noon of darkness now and the loud magnolias lifting
 eir ten-thousand candle-power blooms.

Proud flesh, these flowers,

rth offering, inescapable
 blems.
 ering of night birds too, and the travelling far stars
 d the round dance of the seasons: inviolate
 rment.

en the night's cold book.

Salt for the quick.

w from the farthest bar a music breaks and binds,
 icy necklace of bluest fire spills down the hour.
 e river stirs and seethes, its steady working whispering
 o the ultimate South

Drifting

ward Scorpio in the hangdog heat of the sullen season.
 ward the Gulf...
 the river-run hush and hurry of that great night water:
 the black lots and the god-mating beasts of the green man-farming sea.

Three Poems

*Robert Eskew**New Town, Dream Town*

It is my second night in the new town;
The old landlord with his garrulous mumblings
And hulking shyness has left me to my room.
His relic house in this ancient city claims me
Beneath a full moon that illuminates nothing I know.
Outside a cock crows to ice cream bells,
The old man's dog scatters moonlit cats
And the town dreams again among lemon groves
That grow no more, will never grow again.
I am absent from the dream and curiously alone.

Three of us share a rented second floor,
Three strangers bound by common toilet, sink and tub.
We're neither face nor form but merely footsteps down a hall,
Or labels in a kitchen where we hide our private food,
Secretly known through seasonings or cooking smells.
We have but human accident to let us meet
To find ourselves obliged to resurrect cliches
To make such meeting easy and correct.
It is my second night in the dreaming town;
To all things I am enormously alone.

The New Neighbors

My wife tells me they are quite plain;
I have not seen them but have heard their voices often
In the night that separates their window from our own,
As I hear them now, laughing through the dark, new rain
That sifts between our neighboring lives.

Plain they are lovers bedded down;
I do not know this, yet have heard the too familiar sounds
That only lovers make in arms against the night and darkened rain,
The trumpeting that make them lords of any town:
Their glory undulates and thrives.

I take another glass of wine;
They do not know I wait and listen through the sifting rain,
A barren lord of loving stripped of passion and renown
Within the court of glad and glory lately mine:
For them alone a love survives.

If they are plain, as I am told,
I have not seen or heard it, night or rain or otherwise,
For transported through darkness their lovely bellowings
Redesign our love; we are new again in what was never old:
From this alone our life derives.

In Your Name

(For Gino)

Perhaps I'll make a poet yet, Gino:
I remember the faith in your eyes scanning my lines,
As though such gropings were primal to your own success.
If you were not poet then, I since have made you one.
I have learned you across a desk, a glass of wine,
And at your table when your wife denied dessert
Have sensed the sweet, delicious words you've yet to find.

I know your hunger is for others and I am one,
Lucky to be blessed among such men.
You sing while the world goes to hell about you,
Convinced such hell is for a time
And absent from neighborhoods of those you love.
Your truth lies in your believing;
The beauty is that you have earned your song.

If ever I do become a poet, Gino,
It will be not in your image but in your name,
For you have given me more than all the others:
I cannot say it, only play it on a grateful pen.

Two Poems

*William Pillin**Ocean Park*

I confront the star-spell of the esplanade!
I walk as jaunty as a sailor
among fortune-tellers, dancers, gymnasts,
among girls that stroll like swaying flowers,
among gamblers, among all sorts of gypsies.

Necromantic presences mingle among us:
this cute whore is Phryne, sister of moonlights,
that old Jew under a streetlight is Merlin;
Shahrazad serves coffee and pancakes
and Sindbad lures the unwary with trinkets.

I have an illusion of freedom
and it well may be a prelude to trouble.
Who cares? This is a magical evening!
All things assume a novel succulence; clusters
of black grapes, sausages, pastries. I am hungry!
And avid too, like a cat in the jungle
seduced by a scent of musk or civet.

In blue-bright air flares are falling
to dissolve on restaurants, wineshops,
dance-halls and dimly lighted interiors
from one of which (an obscure shrine of Pan?)
we hear a bacchic wail of clarinets.
Here is a cafe where Lesbians gather
and here is a place where, they tell me,
anything can happen. The unpredictable
lures like an unwritten poem. All else failing
one could shoot down a bomber or witness
a piquant disrobing in a penny arcade.

I turn sadly back to my curfewed suburb
of discreet doorways and subdued lamplights.
What is lacking there, what tang, what tonic?
Nocturnal laughters and musical whispers
have been exiled to this sea-edge
by the police and the jeering merchants.
Held by a dangerous moonlight
between cold stone and colder waters
life's subtle djinns clamor for release.

To a Customer

If you dislike our pot, Mister,
go buy from another.

But don't stand there with a turned up nose,
you bastard!

I labored in shaping the slender amphora
and Polia designed a small alleluia upon it.

Go now.
Your shadow lingers over the highlights.

At the Bus Stop

So much of life is waiting.
The woman on the bench smiles happily;
A boy moves his lips, his face
Coiled in lines of concentration;
A girl makes her fingers dance
With precision - piano or typewriter?
That old man has looked at his watch
Twenty times in five minutes.
But the little old woman with the large bouquet
Sits patiently, not noticing the bee
That circles about the flowers.
A small boy takes his finger from his mouth
To watch it in breathless wonder.

- Mary Graham Lund

On This Corner

On this corner is standing
a disciple of Jesus
(in his head is a small
round, deep black hole

his wife is moving around
like a small grey mouse
(selling autographed pictures
of his soul

- Robert Vaughan

[two Poems

Mel Weisburd

The Sixth and the Seventh Sense of Men

I'd like to stop time at just about the Flying Jenny
To hear it squeal and cough to plow the sky
With its wooden prop and singing struts,
Then stretch its wings out upon a gale,
Tethered by the craft of equilibrium,
And mount all three dimensions all at once,
Treading aloft in the sunset or the squall.
First, you rent a little harmless anger
At the planet you could never hurt,
Throttle wide open and exhaust flaring
Smashing the air and stinging window panes;
Then to stunt your signature in the sky,
Lording it over those sepia melancholies
That disguise mankind in the earth.

It was the reflex of the human reach, I guess,
Whose art and muscle were but one remove
From the scoop of the crawl-stroking arm
Emblazoned in the coverts of the wind,
Meant only to balance motion against the air,
Windmill in the metaphor's weather.

But time cannot be stopped, except by death
Of the simultaneous and universal kind;
Nor can this crude flying machine
Be diverted to other sport, nor can this stick
And glue reminiscence be junked:
The sixth sense was born for the seventh
To elude the means of the first five:
Seething supersonic gazelle sucked into air,
Invention without inventor; abstract and
Programmed perception without perceptor:
Creature of the extrapolated magnitude
Of the Seventh Sense: radar and radio astronomy:
Sentient angels plunge into inverted depths
Of unsought and undreamed futures:
Objects in the scope, but retina dead
While the symbols of theoretical reality,
Pound like rivets in the practical mind,
Expounding the eighth and the infinite sense.

In the time of the Jenny you could preach
The instinct of the sixth sense by parable:
* The stone flies and kills or rests forever
On a cloven road. That is the issue...
And the mind would come to fix on that stone
As if it were a missile of clairvoyance
At rest in a garden of rapport,
And it would contemplate in the green naked shade
The eighth and the ninth sense illumined
By the incandescence of the wish:
Precognitions, fantastic realities, Brother-
Hoods, Universals, Justice, Life and Power
Hereafter; Laughter, Joy and Love -
Complete concretion of the mystic realm.
Unless -- unless, there are five senses after all,
And not even that in interstellar vessels,
Which succumb to the ennui of space,
Or not even that, if there is no sense at all
In all of nature but that gross stupidity,
Blundering mushrooms rising from the missile slopes,
In the massacres of universal death.

Leave Taking

For Gloria

At last we leave the charred harbor
To be made real again by uncanny love,
Plying upon the sealed waters
Into the purpose of the sunrise and the night,
In this ocean whose stars are kelp.
Even I am buoyant in the swells to tell you
I love you by the silver keel of the moon,
"Till it burns blue with my selfishness,
And the ocean is strummed to the summer shores,
Though I cough on the lustre of those summers.

I confess now that land madness of cursing
Stifled objects: the tousled moon
For his good humor or the generosity of the sun.
(The smiles of people burned me dark)
Would that all their love had been in my heart!
A crab like I will neither swim nor fly
Forced to see through the wreckage of his eyes
The sky is a vast well-kept park
With no trespass on the buttoned grass.
And I am scuttled to the ocean floor.

Thank heavens we are healed by sea's amends,
That ambient and undulating justice,
The running resumé and gross statistic
That horizons our course on the world.
And bound to the cleavage of our way and wake,
We face each other in the circumference of this craft,
And count vestigial dreams and soul's conclusions,
Listing the proper names of old ports
Where we may lie at anchor to hear the pounding surf,
While man worms now that solid oak of sky.

To -

It rained this morning.
The water streaming down the window
Gave a Monet picture of the street
Where last night, we stood and talked.
And for a moment, I was afraid
That all would blur and fade...
Even that brief moment, when we talked.

I tried to calm myself, and remember
The slow, quiet growth of enduring love...
After all... we only met twice.
But at this moment, I wanted to give
As the clouds give rain to flower the earth
And found it hard to be wise.

- Tom Viertel

wo Poems

Ann Stanford

Pandora

Never, never again the house new or youth precise,
Or the fresh loaves of hay in the field.
And the tree bark shimmers black and white
Only after rain

The day rose clear-faced and quick
Breathing lemon and sage, undoubtedly crystal,
Fog was for coolness, not to get lost in, and the wicked
Rode to ominous music.

The box had been left, but I never suddenly opened the lid.
The day hung so full, time being happy and short,
No reason to fret over a dusty chest in a corner,
And I had given my word.

But nothing is changeless; while it was there in the house
Something crept out, buzzing and small.
I heard it at night, an insect whine in the air
Unseen in the light.

And the mornings were sad sometimes
And rising slow, and the day crumpled and worn
Like a picture handled too much,
And I indifferent.

Came haze outlasting the dawn
Between me and the fields, the horizon too close;
And bright days were full of objects
Not noticed before.

Love broke to a trinity, there were too many paths;
None seemed to be true, and in the oat fields the horsemen
Wore various guises, and which could I trust
On their spotted geldings?

I have heard of such things, but not for myself,
And the silver sifts from the box
On my hair and my tears, and the owner is gone, and I-
I shall never be rid of it.

In the Lenten Season

Risen the masquerade of flesh
 Compounds this floating spring, the plane
 Of trees, bloom, terrace, where we pass
 The garrulous afternoon. The noun

Is what is feared: to name the sly
 Commotion of the blood which runs
 Unplanned as leaves to their own ways.
 The day ends in a double vision

Of the self immaculate, and its brood
 Of interior dwellers -- kernel and shell:
 The token ritual, grown hard,
 And the sweet corruptible.

Two Poems

Carl Larsen

Memo from an Untidy Little Universe: 1

as the bombs apologize
 their way into the buildings,
 blending them
 with concrete streets
 and adding just a dash
 of flesh and baseball bats
 and new car chrome,
 changing in their subtle
 final way
 the shape of this
 untidy little universe,
 i enter
 the isotope-i
 to summarize
 for future no ones
 why

Memo from an Untidy Little Universe: 2

dear-heart,
it aint your world,
stay out.
we proved
(no matter what we claimed)
the earth is flat
(we flattened it)
the powder flaking in your hands
as you stand wondering
on the ashes of our empire
was once and for a change
an upright god
that
probing in his breast
with needle eye
discovered that he had a heart,
and strength,
and with them both
he cleverly created
love & hate
then set about to find
which was the greatest:
neighbor, like i said,
forget it --
nothing grows
where we have walked

At the Right Time

When the Vice President
 Runs for the Presidency,
 He'll operate from a sump pit
 (Up to his elbows in it)

Where he'll raise a gigantic chocolate-dipped
 Head of the President (made
 When he was General of World Armies)

And, whipping his boss's head
 around
 and

around,

While the crowd assembles
 To give their kiddies their licks,
 He'll shout vague mystical
 Almost prophetic things
 About Truth
 and Life

and Peace,

Which are all being tabulated
 And handed to him
 By several unbelievably hard-working ants
 Taking and sampling opinions
 In and out of the old cans
 And melting chocolates
 And soap and oranges
 And old ads and egg shells
 That you expect to find
 In an old sump pit.

-Donald J. Young

Vindication

(For A.C.T. on her sudden death)

Upwards now
 into nest and entrail
 I send my hands to pluck
 I send my tongue my sorrow

and my tenderness
and forget the annoyance
and death reminds me to forget
and these returning
justify
in utterance and dignity
all of the grey vulgarity
you may have shown
or betrayed

betrayed
where death never does
but rather
when purpose turns to flotsam
that was childhood once and a cluster
and proves that laughter can die
and go rotten
it comes to make it into brightness again

proof is my compassion
and the way that corpses laugh
or smile
or look
in the cleaner fabric of remembrance

don't trample on it oh brother
or stranger
let it go whole
for the living to forget the dead
not speaking ill of their flesh
verging into spirit
or oblivion
faults
errors
let them go
and not recall whether virgin or whore
whether it's I go first or you
for death is a kingdom in reverse

or a mirror where you part your hair to the right
or a lake where you breathe in the depths
and always a dignity recurring
or a vagabond
and in his dirty pockets
this apple whose cheek burned to the sun.

- Alvaro Cardona-Hine

Three Poems

Charles Bukowski

Plea to a Passing Maid

girl in shorts, biting your nails, revolving your ass,
the boys are looking at you-
you hold more, it seems,
than Gauguin or Brahma or Balzac,
more, at least, than the skulls that swim at our feet,
your swagger breaks the Eiffel tower,
tears the sharks from the heart,
turns the heads of old newsboys long ago gone
sexually to pot;
your caged malarky, your idiot's dance...
mugging it, delightful -- don't ever wash stained under-
wear or chase your acts of love
through neighborhood alleys --
don't spoil it for us,
putting on weight and weariness,
settling for TV and a namby-pamby husband;
don't give up that absurd dispossessed wiggle
to water a Saturday's front lawn -
don't send us back to Balzac or introspection
or Paris
or wine, don't send us back
to the incubation of our doubts or the memory
of death-wiggle, bitch, madden us with love
and hunger, keep the sharks, the bloody sharks,
from the heart.

No Charge

this babe in the grandstand
with dyed red hair
kept leaning her breasts against me
and talking about Gardena
poker parlors
but I blew smoke into
her face
and told her about a Van Gogh
exhibition
Id seen up on the hill
and that night

when I took her home
she said
' Big Red ' was the best horse
she'd ever seen
until I stripped down. Tho I
think on the Van Gogh thing
they charged
50c.

Love Is a Piece of Paper Torn to Bits

all the beer was poisoned and the capt. went down
and the mate and the cook
and we had nobody to grab sail
and the N.wester ripped the sheets like toenails
and we pitched like crazy
the hull tearing its sides
and all the time in the corner
some punk had a drunken slut (my wife)
and was pumping away
like nothing was happening
and the cat kept looking at me
and crawling in the pantry
amongst the clanking dishes
with flowers and vines painted on them
until I couldn't stand it anymore
and took the thing
and heaved it
over
the side.

Two Poems

Sidney Gershoren

The Settled Province of Ruin Where I Go

The settled province of ruin where I go,
The martyred men all green with memory,
The streets, a jungle where the banker's eye
Hunts loneliness of the sky's currency.

The frantic men whose lives would not assemble
The holds of their ships, a dark and famous lie,
The future, if they mapped infinity,
The past a hut whose denizens dissemble.

I walk through that loud smoky country now
And do not once remember how or why
I am of this world. The patches of the sky
Die with the crickets on the evening's brow.

But this brief dungeon with bars on the sky -
A milky contour -- all the roads my own,
May never vanish. The green and martyred men
May sit for ages calmly, never die.

Nor will I ever vanish or appear,
But be forever changing as the sky
And constant as the earth. The birds will die,
And the stars burn on, as real and as clear

As always. But the footsteps will appear
On my invisible island and the man
Will haunt me faster than ever Judas ran,
In my ruined province where no waters clear.

The Frugal Repast

Here is the chained swan by the passive lake,
A swan of ivory, alive in its reflection,
Water tense as crystal, the sun,
The sun above a day's constant medallion.
And quieter than time we walked the shore
Near the green rust that had lain
Reflecting always on the shallows, and walking saw
Past the chained swan, the evening sink and rust
Into the grand canyons of our day.
We saw the stars rise and the voice of crickets
Painting the seasons with their constant static.
Light of innumerable gulls placid on the lake,
The quiet burns its huge swans of decay.

I talked to you of how your eyes were young
And you: ' My father never would let us marry.'
'He does not see,' I said how the world turns,
He is now blind with too much harvesting.'
* The cold comes very early, I could say,
And that was all that I could say for fear,
Fear of nothing but the fear of her
Drowning amid the snows and foams of repentance.
The stars were white; the past seemed almost real,
But then I knew the tiger coughed for food.

Was it a cold reminder of our beginnings
Had brought us here under a mother of trees,
By the placid lake, did we already know
That we had lain with ragged generations,
The unkind, uncouth, kissed from even the beggars' gates,
The ragged outcasts of all generations?
And even a sea of creatures we never knew,
The first exiles from the warmth of seas.

But we were happy for the night, and covered
Our bodies with our cares and were content
To share the peace, carrying fantastic treaties.
But the night passed and the star left the sky
With no identity except the sun,
And saw the swan unchained lift to the air,
Borne away on time's miraculous wings.

Ewo Poems

*Jill Marx**Deception of Heat*

People lie flatly on the bleached grass
 Pale and limp as papers weighted down
By the heavy crystal of the sun.

They think they have banished
The sun-dial from the garden.

Only, there by the ragged hedge,
The man in blue overalls
With his big, swinging scythe
Keeps the rhythm of the clock.

The Mute Poet

Threatened with disaster
 By the sewing machine of fame
 That can stitch the spirit faster

To an empty name
Than anything
He stood mute
Searching out the season
That would heave, uproot
And desolate his reason
So he might sing!

*Paul Cordell**Whose Wounds Are Huge*

They chided, and taught the child to believe
The sky couldn't fall. That those pieces
Found in the grass were part of the puzzle,
Would fit together to form a blue world.

The root of the matter was hard to seek,
The clue deep cached in neutral earth.
A tense tongue garbled the word. And the key
Was valid only for the mantis pose.

Faith figured a truth, bright red at the edge
And randy-round; opposed its shape
To diamond and square. And warned that facts,
Those acres of dust, are never enough.

Altars of glass rose on the sandy waste.
Each way his terror looked for calm
Mirrors would tilt toward the slanting sky
His hand had held when it started to fall.

Fear and belief betrayed his simple blood.
So heart shed these and leapt to prove
The fact no altitude can change:
That world is only real whose wounds are huge.

Landscape Near Lebec

Great Danes roam those speckled hills.
But fleet birds only dare to house
Among the shale that rustles, falls,
Through all weathers' sparrow colors.

Great eyes, the Danes', regarding us
From blinds of larch and scrubby pine
Grow large, electric, to impose
Intensities of winter green.

For such is the season coming on :
The flaming bush whose fires go out
Against the frost; the widening plain;
And lean dogs racing to drink the night.

There I pause to think where I might run
Greenly to trace my hunters home,
To track the snowy hills again,
Hear daft birds crying my winter name.

Legend

The sky is obese with red sun at mid-day
And the sun feasts on the salamanders of an ambivalent ocean.
The people can only feast on the beans in their bellies
Under an unhappy paper shack
With daisies in their hair
And the longitudinal meridians of time in their faces.

En Afrique
The elegant elephant
With his pointed trunk
Meets the waterhole
Halfway.

For the elephants -- the mud
For the people under their paper parasols --the beans.

But the feast is leaner now in the sky
At the end of synchronized crossties
And the sun is taking the evening train out of town.

- Estelle Gershgoren

from

Quatrains for a Quiet Clavichord

Rondeau a Couperin

My clavichord I shall constrain
To strew the air with posies. Only
That metallic click and clang
Will please deaf friends. Pleasure is lonely.

Homer and Omar in their tents
To plain deeds gave heroic readings.
In homely impotence I play
Clavier to open windows evenings.

My clavichord I shall constrain
To strew the air with posies only.
The metallic click and clang
Pleases deaf friends. Delight is lonely.

Be wrong with force and with intent

Be firm. The metal hammers strike
The intellect. The clavichord
Recedes. But then a string must break.

My clavichord I shall constrain
To strew the air with posies. Only
The metallic click and clang
With please deaf friends. Pleasure is lonely.

For who with wit and wisdom wearies

Women who are wide and wise
May own a double bed, my dearies,
But no one's sides beside his sides.

My clavichord I shall constrain
To strew the air with poses only.
The metallic click and clang
Pleases deaf friends. And I am lonely.

Sarabande

Action and thinking have no common

Time: to make the world's decisions
Action controls; then bleeding, blind
Justice: Where are you who were thinking?

We were, therefore, we were thinking.

We were, therefore, not as judges.

We the outcast, weak, and foreign,
Drafted, defeated, prisoned, dead in
Action, thought have nothing common.
 Time to make the world's decision.
 Action controls the bleeding; blind
 Justice: Where are you who are thinking?
We are, therefore, we are thinking.
 We are here, though not as judges:
 Prisoned, cast out, helpless, foreign,
Drafted, defeated, dead in action.

- Peter Yates

Boating Party Girl

With another's wife in every port
 Each navigator knew enough
 To allow fifteen degrees for deviation
 When you boxed the compass. Amateur seamen
 Called you a two-armed octopus, vicariously
 To try your suction cups.
 You were a sponge? The slick algae toward which
 Animals must gravitate, blinded redly
 By the hot gases of your tropic biology.
 You took them down below surface
 And they were home, cradled
 In your ready jelly:
 Seeing their futures on your turbulent surface,
 Seeing the unaimed drift,
 Transplanted to those bottom-pinching islands
 Invented by some old bowsprit
 With executive abandon. You were a marine dream;
 A wet encounter,
 Having gone down to the sea in shrift
 And causing men's flood tides to rise
 Waist deep around you. Finally -
 Landed yachtsmen wanted you, to replace the gleaming hardware
 Between their expensive decks
 Prior to putting hooks into their Hollywood clients;
 To be rocked beyond the dogwatch by your gentle swell --
 To be piloted into the uncharted --
 Then,
 You were to come home through dawn, with limp canvas
 And a foul bilge,
 And your paint scuffed by saltwater tears.

- Curtis Zahn

Two Poems

Vahan K. Gregory

Play a Guitar

In a dream I heard
That Sandburg had died.

*I walked along roads
 And over mountains
 Till I got to his grave;*

I spent the night
 Lying beside it
 Playing a guitar
And singing folk songs.

How fine that it happened
 First in a dream
 For I cannot sing
 Or play a guitar.

Vicki

Flute, guitar, and voice mutter folk songs
 Out of a book after classes and tea.
 The kitchen cleaned, at last she relaxes;
Crosses her buxom bones at the knee.

Poetess laureate of U.C.L.A.,
 Her elegant vision sees athletes at ease
 Starring her evening to midnight floor
 Feeling fig leaves from autopornographies

While into her ardor none deem to caper.

Alas, neither sense, wit, nor esthetics,
Poems. pennies, nor early publication
 Seem to serve her prodigious end.
 No hero courses her source of elation.

But since biology is sire to poetics
 It can mix a metaphor without seeming crass:
 Because her roommate is slender and sexy,
 Vicki has platonic friends up the ass.

Three Poems

*Josephine Ain**You There, Weeping*

Between elms of shining water
 A clock strikes. A dog barks.
 A bird shatters the boughs.
 And wavering in the furrows
 I free myself to free myself again.

I have escaped to continue.

The bird continuously falling
 The dew ceremonially shining
 We are all in it together
 All under the sky.

There is no other garden
 And there is no other fate.
 However disheveled your love
 However distraught
 Time will make intimate
 Even your doubt.

And you will not surpass the clouds.
 You there weeping, you will fall silent.

Magdalen

Vivid with impotence and sublime
 Woman more woman than the universe is God
 At last complete, at last discovered
 Magdalen, stairway of plunder
 Stands squared circumference
 About an octagonal thunder -
 A frozen waterfall;
 A parasol of rock;
 Christ nailed between her hands;
 She is the waking of an army.
 She is the total tent.
 Her hair spouts clots of blood;
 Her feet are webbed;
 Bludgeon of another's anguish

She rears clumsy and incoherent
 And magnificent.
 Evocative of heaven
 Dementia of her lids.
 There is no saliva
 And no spit.
 Her robe rocks and is not rent.
 This creature may walk backward in a minute.
 She would displace the cross
 And with each spike receive
 Both Christ and Death,
 Take life and perish.
 Or rapt of mind be found
 The morning of that time
 Zig-zagging briar
 About a crown.

Don Quixote

Don Quixote like a tree walking
 Out of his element, out of our world.
 The blasted limbs like sour branches
 Protrude a nectar of the bone.

Long nose of bleak and ravelled pride

Travels the foolish firmament.
 Hail, the gaunt, the ripe eccentric
 As wind blows tremulous on armor.
 What if the eyes, besotted acorns
 Sprout wistfully a thousand oaks?
 He has Sancho and Dulcinea
 And an island anchored to an antelope.
 His bow of monumental mood
 Is courtly and bizarre, more poignant
 Than defeat, more elegant than wit.
 Mounted, his yellow nag emits
 The shrill alarm of prowess.
 Imagination is tilt
 Against the errors of the world.

Beware the hollow cheek and winsome.

This madman moves invincible.
 A spectre dusts the webbed horizon
 In divine frenzy of elbows.
 Huge hand descending
 Salutes the impossible.
 Takes purity and makes it breathe;
 Takes love and makes it whole.

*The Clue***DETECTIVE**

Bring me the evidence of the dead man.
 Let me see his shoes, for the agglutinations
 of the soles may show me his mysterious way...
 Ah, you see? A stamp of dirty gum.
 Across it, like a postmark,
 some needles of hay.
 Significant. Is there a farm nearby?

CORONER

Yes. Many horses grazing on the sea,
 glaring furrows of sun with fish implanted,
 the hands, lovely boys, with moccasinned glee
 hauling in the red and purple clouds,
 the rainbow of bugs and feathers
 in the struggling net
 -- or flying off, like boys, with the morning crop..

DETECTIVE

A dazzle for tourists, sounds like, but we'll go
 whatever my suspicion of artifice.
 Death is so uncomfortable, always old-fashioned:
 a Pony Express sort of country
 whose mischievous Indians twang
 false directions.
 Here we are. Sir, are you this farm's butler?

FARMER

Indeed. But won't you step out of your past,
 your puddle, so we can dissect our commerce
 in a huskdry attitude of head and heart?

DETECTIVE

No commerce, my friend. I want the facts.
 The dead man's an anagram,
 the letter by letter
 rebuttal of life's laws and lexicons.
 I must solve him: the taxpayers demand it.
 Where is your hay? I'll have to test your stack
 by microscope against my sticky clue.

FARMER

O he was here, why trouble the hay?
 Your lens would magnify
 its own myopia.

DETECTIVE

Then I have traced him to a hopeful report.

FARMER

Indeed. Hope is our staple industry,
manufactured by the signs of the Zodiac
and packaged for promotion in department stores.

DETECTIVE

But the dead man, you saw him last...?

FARMER

On stilts, learning the water
like his first skates.

CORONER

Winter must be the season of greatest joy

for then the gods come rushing down in snowflakes
to sweeten the birds and lay their swift saddles
on backs of horses. The heavens get white and hard;
the weightless boys slide up the mountains,
Aladdins on the sleds
of their smoking breath...

FARMER

Well, this place is almost Hollywood

but we are nature's costume turned inside out,
not a man-made duck betraying its true feathers.

DETECTIVE

I must talk to the dead man. Where is he now,
this chief witness against himself?
His story is awaited
like a Hitchcock shock.

BOY

He's a watermelon climbing a lemon tree.

FARMER

Be quiet, fool. Ah, sir, there is no science
in such talk for it would be a dialogue
with a snowman whose words would melt before your eyes.

BOY

With only the smoke of his cigar
souvenir in your nostrils.

DETECTIVE

At least that's something
to show them back home: a ten-cent smell of death.

FARMER

You amuse me. Come to that house floating in the sea.
Walk there: the path of roses through the water
will buoy your step to the dead man's hideaway.

CORONER

Friend, do not go unless you would make
foolscap for the sharks that wait
beneath the floor
- sharp black pencils -- to write obituaries

for the morning news. My knife has long dissevered
the many disguises of death, one time a woman
with frank blue eyes and charming Oxford lips
who spoke of Bach in trapezoids,
who met Apollinaire
in a metaphor,
who was the dream behind the dream of Freud;

another time a man with a hero's flag
who marched from town to town inciting violence
against the local Attila and his militia
-all of them masks, all mere symbols.
Death itself is a child's face
open as the sky...
but cunning as a bomb. Beware the Farmer.

DETECTIVE

Ah, Coroner, you have a firmer vocation,
you probe deeper than clues: to the pearl of meaning
But I am not an artist. I stop at the oyster
for that is all I can plainly see.
I have a job to do,
a living to make.
Come, Farmer, I'll follow you along the flowers.

BOY

Oho, what a fool! He'll walk forever
behind the Farmer, trampling the fake roses,
getting no nearer the lazy denouement,
the house a horizon holding its place
in the distance, its vacancy.
Look at that dunce:
the Master'll make him stand in the corner forever.

N1

CORONER

Goodbye, friend. May you find better reason
for being brave than your paycheck's gun in your back.
May you imagine the ocean's Fourth of July,
I pray it, as once in a child's brain
I followed a string of flame
so close to the sun
that still the flaring hawk holds fast my eyes.

- Gene Frumkin

Two Poems

Stanley Kiesel

Epithalamium

bachelor is like an overtrained athlete;
 each year he injects a new girl into your ear
 until his affair undergoes surgery.
 well-meaning except from your hard-up past
 he is always on your branch without your permission.
 he works, sees people, has phobias;
 while his legend grows senile.

man who's not wed to something better than himself
 r who does not work to serve the restraints and liberties of marriage
 dives on a diving board; becomes ungenerous and bare.
 his discipline of his life grows no vertebrae.
 e becomes a man always framed in someone else's doorway.

he insights we possess in ourselves work on commission:
 hat is eventful illuminates, but we neglect those household moments
 nat lie around us like hairpins in dust.
 othing is harder to apprentice than experience.

ho, I asked, could trim my hair, my nails, my desire, better than myself?
 y needs had always marched in single file behind me.
 y life; risky bedding; penetrations made of wood; bottled women;
 et marriage was looked upon as a license for submission, a brilliant
impoverishment,

A land of serene squalor. A way of putting a sail on a steamship.
 Fool! shouted self, search your pockets for someone worthy and you'll find
 no one;

This idea of rescuing Garbo is a pet you'd best get rid of.
 Man, make a forced landing! And get off the stage!

It's true, we let ourselves be domesticated by our phantasies;
 Often our desires bark at real love when it comes to scare it off.
 (What a picket line our qualms produce!)
 I swore out a warrant against being married;
 I rented a boat and rowed far out on remorse, losing sight of all rational
 shores...

But I wed. Hoisted up on a mast was my agonized grin;
 The priest saluted it with his baton.

III

Wit's telescope, salads of mercy or money, all the ovations in need of baths,
 We have left these behind. The heroics that were plotted ahead, the
 corseted joys,
 The tiny dribbling consents, the hands that ran after directions,
 The submarines of motive that never emerged, gone.
 We have made rags out of everything we have ever been.

What we have always wanted to be is put to proof.
 Certainly we are in the direction of flow, residing in one another's body,
 Like one number contained in another;
 Our shy and separate powers become bold and cliff-like in a single motion.
 When two people love, death has an upset stomach.

IV

It is my marriage which has given me a vision:
 Our charities should be our own pet limbs.

When penetrance to the air hints of no spear,
 When the cubes and squares of our sophisticated brains
 Are interred with the last dead citizen-specimen,
 Then shall we not turn strongly towards joy,
 And do more than merely tour the likelihood of love?

In The Boughs

We studied birds -- asked them questions --
Collected data in a book
So huge, our poor arms shook
As we lugged it about from field to field.
We climbed trees and talked back and forth
With birds concerning their relations:
How they would govern nations,
Given the chance, of course; and why they sang --
O, we never had to force things out of them -
They gossiped willingly and their answers were encouraging.
To say the least: they never ceased reminding us
That just to peck around a bit would give us wings,
And if we sat around in branches long enough
We could hatch tremendous things...
Well of course we took all this with a grain of salt;
After all, we knew what we were,
And that hatching was not a job to be done by us,
A boy and a girl with no feathers and too little fur
And hands and arms and running feet,
But we kept what they said under consideration
Because they had a way of making things sound sweet.
So we decided not to make fun.

We interviewed robins, sparrows and crows;
We found out things that nobody knows
Or has yet discovered about birds,
And we put it all down in the choicest of words,
The clearest of prose, including some rhyme
When we thought it was needed.
And we never, never once repeated
Material -- there was so much to write about:
Their choice of trees, of fruit, of season;
And for each of these some subtle reason
Had to be worked out in our research,
While those lucky birds just sat on their perches
Watching us work! Well, we comforted ourselves
We would leave something for posterity...

We were sure we had covered hundreds of pages;
Our mothers and fathers considered us sages.
And so we were. The birds told us
That our prosperity lay just around the next tree-top,
And we believed them. We brought our book to class
And hopped around in grand prestige
Winning good grades. And teachers turned their faces
Inside out to smile at us;

It was like a parade or a holiday.
 The book is here -- it lies all day and all night in a drawer,
 Alone, with nothing to help it live anymore.
 Twenty-six pages ...
 It was a wonder we could have written so much.
 And what remarkable illustrations --
 In one, two birds are leaping over a fence
 And the sun is shining with terrible power
 On one lonely flower;
 In another, a red robin sings in an orange cloud,
 His wings are crooked
 But he's not worried, he's having no trouble,
 The other birds are not disturbed.
 How can I say it...
 The weather seems different for the birds that fly now...
 The yellow bills and brown branches and noisy colored wings,
 The tiny twig-feet and the trilling --
 How shall I say it? - are gone.
 That little girl and I, we were the birds in our book:
 The mudlarks and sparrows, the pigeons and crows,
 It was we who sat in the trees and pretended to fly.
 That little girl -- she sang with me
 And flapped her hands on the sides of her dress
 And lifting her arms, she flew away;
 Sweet Pearl... the red robin.

G

La Brea Pits

By morning the pool is a tar-colored eye,
 And dragon splinters shimmer in flight,
 Sometimes passing to iridescent death;
 Linked to the leaf in anthracite.

This is the elephant's graveyard, where ivory cities
 Go to die. And lie interred with mastodons and dreams.
 And the image mantles an ancient pit,
 Passing with the passing sun,
 Into the carbon shadows of afternoon.

I come by night to watch the pool curl back
 Its reptile lid, when the moon-cast slides
 on the iris.
 And the frame of the city draws itself against the sump.
 This is the mineral lust, the city's calcification,
 And the image lies engulfed and lost.

- Louis Hill

he Bird in the Hand Groweth Exceeding Small,

an inquiry into the problem of action

Barding Dahl

- Stating the Case

Thinking, not money, is the root of evil. Veblen, Marx, and many others have pointed out the mischief wrought by those with the leisure to play word games under some exalted name or other. Some of the monsters in their puffed world are 'economic man,' 'psychological man,' 'spiritual man,' and so on. All are totem symbols of the tribe, fear-ridden attempts to reduce complexities to awe-inspiring idols. Marx himself became a victim of the game when he left the arena of action on the continent to prowling the libraries of London.

If there is a single 'cause of the confusion we toil in today, it is without doubt the divorcing of thought and action which took place around the time of Socrates. The academies made a game of thought, a pastime which, like lawn bowling, was pursued for its own sake without regard for anything beyond it. As a result, its importance diminished to the stature of lawn bowling, for who besides the tea-and-crumpet crowd concerns himself with the joustings of philosophers?

The schoolmen since have perpetuated a caricature of Greece as a club for rawling idlers, who bestir themselves only for wine, song, and games of wits and dissembling. Countless students have been robbed of the real Greece, a nation of astonishing fighters who prevailed against enemies and means to build cities, evolving from crude stones and bludgeons to the beautiful symmetry of forms they achieved. They made harmonies of their elements - stone, fabric, color, movement, social relations. Knowledge and the arts found their place along with boats and siege engines. Their unity of thought and action created a flare in history that we still steer by. But Greece fell, and the Romans (Grade 'B' Greeks at best) crumbled to a jigsaw puzzle of nation states, whose main goal in Medieval Europe seemed to be the directing of man's gaze either upward towards the gates of paradise, or downward to the glowing portals of Hell. Horizontal views which might disclose the unsightly scramblings of the rich for places at the trough were profoundly discouraged, not least by Luther.

Man is patient, and the centuries rolled on until the Renaissance cleared away some of the medieval fog and left at least a few noses pointing at due-south. In many ways a misnomer, the Renaissance was at least an aspiration towards the grandeur that was the Age of Pericles. The trouble was, the Greece seen through creaky-limbed schoolmen's eyes was a scarecrow that fitted their sedentary needs. The Greeks were introduced by those with the acts' as fatuous dissemblers who traced exceeding fine webs, and nothing more.

But the driving need to think and to act out those thoughts could not

forever be denied. In time, direct experience was recaptured as the redoubt of real knowledge, and instruments replaced tracts. No longer content to sip the watery dregs handed them by priests and professors, the new-found men gripped the flagon with both hands and had at it with animal gulps. Gobbling art, science, and all history with the greed of sudden arrogance, the new men regained the direct contact with sensation that had for so long been denied them. They acted, built, and fought with a stubborn pride that made every man a buccaneer, a stiff-necked prince who would murmur, and sometimes shout, 'Nevertheless it moves --' in the shadow of the stake. The Elizabethan era was perhaps the apogee of this reorientation.

But the fierceness slackened -- schoolmen are quite long-lived -- and the consequences of unbridled individualism made shambles of much of the old order. The history of usury and its eventual sanctification tell the tale. With the kahn greed or oh idion ual the stat distly, chere tencied nothing to

of man's rapacity, and statecraft hatched so many wars there were hardly enough men left to perpetuate the follies of their fathers.

In the factory, the feudal barony was retained, but with none of the serf's privileges. The only freedom left was the freedom to die by starvation. As a slavery of repetitious actions foreign to the talents and inclinations of the prisoners, the factory is one of the purest examples of aggression. The convicts found guilty of life were exhorted to be 'practical, to accept the inevitability of the treadmill as the best of all possible treadmills, or face the truncheons of the police.

The world view of medieval scholasticism was replaced by rolling pebbles of minutiae as knowledge expanded -- specialists, fields within fields, everything catalogued, and the schoolmen counting angels on the point of a pin. The salaried hairsplitters found that words could be bent to any purpose, and careers were founded on minor cases of the logical paradox: black cannot really be black, since without white it is not really black at all, but rather non-black. Of course there is something we call black, but since it is also non-black, and since nothing can both be and not-be simultaneously, it is obvious there can be no such thing as black. Aristotle, what crimes can be laid to thee...

C

II -A Change of Tack, Spanking Yankee Doodle Dandy

To judge the calamities which have fallen on our heads as the result of word games, we need consider only a single example of an abstract construct that is the dominant characteristic of the American - his notion of equality.

Wherever numbers of people have risen to establish their varied ideas of democracy, the common denominator was the belief that everyone is equal. The natural consequence of this is the informal conviction that if we are all equal, there can be no important differences among people. As a result, in the process of erasing the hallmarks of aristocracy, many sound traditions of character and learning also went into the ashcan. The product of this excessive levelling is now typified by the foreign conception of the American:

rash, selfish, loud, aggressive. He is as good as anybody, and if you don't believe it he'll ram it down your throat to prove it. The extreme type is the lag-waving jingo who trumpets the 'American Way of Life,' as he delightedly urns books and tramples top hats.

However many of these people exist is less important than the pervasive lack of confidence in our educated men. Timid in politics, inept in business, they carry books apologetically, and at every opportunity deprecate the importance of their 'hobbies.' Reading, discussion, and the arts are owned up to with reluctance, and are excused as a doodling break in the more important business of scratching for bucks. The disenfranchisement of the American intellectual has lowered the contribution of our country to world culture. The task of 'subduing' the untamed continent is greatly over-rated as an alibi for our slavish dependence on European culture; more accurate is the observation that we do not dare to be different, and great art is startlingly different.

As the result of our swaggering confidence in our 'equality,' we commit adultery, we make a parlor-game out of defrauding the government, we permit the monstrous humbuggery of advertising -- all manner of outrage do we tolerate so long as the particular idols of our cave are not violated. And since we are no better, we are of course no worse than anyone else; therefore we are depraved, but are never stuffy. We are thieving liars, but never break our word (taking care never to give it unequivocally). We are passionately levoted to civic improvement, but install a new birdbath instead of driving the rascals out. We are generous, but mostly with our subsidized leftovers. We are modest, but never do anything without getting credit for it. We love free speech, but drown with cries of treason those who dissent. We love the free enterpriser, but kill him with scorn because he is not big. We worship our women, but shoo them away from our sly fun. We are brave, but fear death because he will not join a club. We revere God, but are secretly sure he is a fool for giving us the world without a contract.

All these are we, and for better or worse it is our heritage. We import our hinkers from Europe, and although we accord them formal respect, informally we insult them. We swallow whole their ideas, because we paid for them, and shoot them right on through our mental bowels. When needed, we can look them up in a book somewhere.

As hulking children, we snigger at the minor oddities of the professor, giggling truth and justice at so much a year. Partners in absurdity, the paid hinkers and the paying listeners pool their ignorance in the unending propagation of mental constructs: the absolute, the categorical imperative, the first cause, the essential nature of things.

The German druggist sees cosmic significance in the grinding of headache powders, but the American is convinced he is grinding them better than anyone ever did before, and to prove it he will beat your head in or sit on a agpole for a week. The German is a spoke in a vast wheel, the American pops off the academic assembly line and, finding an extra nut or bolt in his hassis, feels himself the new Messiah.

This man-sized child veers about in his careening machines, not knowing

that his imported ideas have formed an imprisoning track, around which he must race till death laps him. The notions of progress, reform, superannuation, are so many rocket blasts that spur him on around the track, but never fast enough to spill him over the sides of the speedway. Never knowing that his ideas are vacuum tubes that hold nothing and generate nothing, the American races his engine, delighting in its power even though it never takes him anywhere.

The American is condescending to those without machines, and so rapid is his motion that he seldom feels the abrasion of his unlubricated ignorance. Foreign to him is such a concept as 'intensity of experience,' he far prefers a bigger bag of absolute onward and upward. At rare moments he is furtively envious of the unyankeeized Negro, who lives a drama of gilded symbols. Concocting a joke of the holes in his pants, the Negro makes of irony a lever that propels him into adventures that carve out slices of sensation thick enough to make the Yankee's mouth water.

The unlettered Negro may never contact the absolute, he may never be sure the world is his oyster, but at his best he runs far ahead of the white Yankee, and fastens with fierce hunger on experience of the immediate - love, revenge, fear, pride.

From the historical perspective, the American cannot even claim he is in decay from an age of classic grandeur, for he never had a present. Lacking faith in the immediate, he is chained to a childlike faith in a future that drains life from the present. The old is obsolete, the present is inadequate, and the future is unattainable a trilogy potent enough to drive anyone over the brink of sanity. Since he has never been anything, there is no tradition to be robbed of, no golden age to long for. In its place is a chaotic loneliness that the roar of machines can never fill.

C

III - In Which the Levellers Tip the Barrel

People such as Alexis de Tocqueville, in his *Democracy in America*, and Jose Ortega y Gasset, in his *Revolt of the Masses*, have clearly signalled the dangers of excessive levelling. An even more extreme example is Orwell's 1984. But De Tocqueville was well aware that the clock cannot be turned back, and that the young giant in the west presaged the future. He saw many positive effects of democracy, and had the sense to see that if properly channeled, the changes could be of much more benefit than the restoration of the decayed monarchies. This is probably De Tocqueville's main contribution.

Ortega y Gasset was apparently not as convinced of the future of democracy, but he made another conclusion which if applied could reverse the modern trend towards futility and aggressive hysteria. That conclusion is an unusual application of the concept of social relativity: that error is an unavoidable component of action. Any act is bound to be 'wrong' from all points of view save one, and modern man is so overwhelmed by the seemingly innumerable points of view, that his convictions are invariably weakened by doubt.

We may conclude that the big problem of our time is the inability to

recognize and accept the error that is part of all our actions. So far are we from this that men of intellect and integrity are rare in positions of power, and the triumph of mediocrity is virtually complete. Only second-rate men have the courage of their convictions, and it is safe to say that they have courage primarily because they lack the wit to see how wrong they are.

For the most part, the intellectual has used his talents to explore the elativities of values, and has taken the coward's way out by declaring that action is impossible because he can never achieve purity by impure means. By in this way avoiding the responsibility of action, the intellectual observes he academic niceties, but leads a grey, uneventful life of wry repose.

At present, man faces the prospect of obliteration by tyrannical majorities - principally of the United States and Russia. Marx did not allow for the dangers of a dictating proletariat, and the shadows over the dissenting minorities of both countries is not a healthy climate for corrective action. Remedial measures against a tyrannical majority can only come from a minority tempered with rock-like certainty as to their rightness. The more tyrannical the majority, the more fanatic the minority, so that when action is finally taken by the minority, it is of such an extreme character that the original aims of the movement are lost in the hurly-burly. There is little emperor of a rock-like nature in the present minorities of either great power, so until another war or general depression arrives, no widespread changes are to be expected.

But the foregoing is from the vantage of the mass - itself an abstract concept. We trust men like De Tocqueville and Ortega y Gasset, not from any documentation of their theories, but because they write directly from experience. They construct abstracts, but always with reference to actualities they have themselves seen. This adds a new dimension to the communication of ideas: the quality of the man who is communicating. Does he have whole-some motivations? Is he aware of his limitations? Does he know the many possible interpretations of his actions? If we get the answers to these questions, we then extend the inquiry to include the direction of the man's conclusions -- are they useful? Do they meet men's needs? We ask these questions because inquiry for the sake of inquiry has produced countless blind alleys in research. The distinction between pure and applied research is imaginary, it is impossible to believe that even the most impassioned mathematician pursues his equations without at least a vague presumption that his work will be of value to someone.

V - Stumbling Blocks in the Path of Action

But if the politicians do so maneuver as to postpone our obliteration, we then face the bleak prospect of living on into the science-fiction world of metal hearts and clicks that pass for pulsebeats. The future these writers foresee is one where the individual is lost in the Project. Getting to Mars is the big thing, how we get there another. Success in the conventional sense will become obsolete once government has grown to the point of supplying all our

basic needs. If a prestige car is available to everyone, possession of more than one car will not be especially meaningful.

A grim vista indeed --angular little men with bulbous heads. They check their instruments and strike for Mars like so many ants after a potato bug. And why? So they can make a report to Central Control, there to be filed away. But to have meaning, life must have complexity, even ambiguity. In a real sense, how we conquer Mars is much more vital than the simple fact of conquest. If we do it as robots, it is meaningless, but if in the crew of that fated rocket there is one who writes poems of meteors seen on the way, another who is surly because he was not chosen as leader, and another with a beloved packet of pornography under his ray-proof tunic, then all's well with the world. The richness of imbalance is the ideal fertilizer for human development.

We cannot simply scrap the past as we can an atom bomb grown too small for global diplomacy. We must draw from tradition those qualities which will unshackle the intellectual. Primary among these is faith in the power of the mind to correctly trigger action in the external world. If only the mediocre man of today can act, he is probably closer to the primitive state. He has strong ego needs, and these help him to blot out many disturbing alternatives. He does not see so many objections to his proposals, and if we examine a book such as Plutarch's *Lives*, we see that the more primitive man of that day analyzed situations in astonishingly plain terms. An impassioned orator was able to win the multitude to clearly disastrous schemes simply by appealing to their grosser emotions. Today, all oration since Roosevelt and Churchill is so much chaff in the winds of public indifference.

A wise man would be able to consider more alternatives, but having selected a course of action, would then embark upon it with all the vigor of the mediocre man. The thinker will make fewer mistakes, and having made some will not be shattered, knowing that success is less astounding than previously. Most of all, the disastrous division of reason and passion will be dissolved.

We must strive for the harmonies of Greece, in which a man studied, thought, and acted all of a piece. His movements were symmetric elements of a dance, and the same symmetry made up the mosaic of his life. All elements of activity were blended to make the complete man. The age of Pericles could return, but not the same. Grander possibilities await those who can build upon that past. For those who can accept the complexity of our day and still retain the ability to act, there is no limit to what the individual can achieve --not necessarily in terms of time machines and ray guns, but in building people who live incomparably richer lives.

The majority, as always, must be persuaded to look down and notice what it is trampling, and to look up and see where it can climb to. We have succeeded only too well in fixing man's gaze at the strictly horizontal. We say majority, but we mean ourselves - the curse of abstraction is hard to throw off.

The art of the actor has much to recommend it; he spends his life in play-acting, but with such fervor that false becomes true, and imitation becomes

reality. For, as any business concern knows, its product is as fair or foul as the public can be made to think it is. The mind of man is fair game, and the race is to the swift. We as yet know of no cosmic logic, and when that day comes to banish frailties and lies, the world as we know it will be no more.

V - The Way to the Gold

We then have singled out a single idea, the notion that the divorcing of reason and passion is the greatest one cause of our modern dilemma, and have briefly traced it from Socrates to the present. The harmonious Greek, the swashbuckling Elizabethan, the continent-gobbling capitalist -- these are figures who excite our envious admiration. We would like to be brave as they, but cannot. There is the mortgage to be considered, and the car payments, and for Pete's sake don't forget the kids, and what if you should be laid oil? We go to school to learn how to meet the payments on our machines, and marry a ghost because she has been chosen for us by the IBM machines of social opinion. We join, we sign, we take the pledge to be regular fellows, and raise the hue and cry against anyone unwilling to take a receipt or who is willing to give blood for something that has no trade-in value.

We stifle the pangs of disquiet, sure that steady money can outweigh all comers, confining the lunge of our imaginations to stolen moments under the tyranny of the alarm clock. Walter Mitty is our spokesman, king of the pikers, and we will never make a bet unless it's even money or better.

The way to the gold of life is not a program that can be numbered -- it is a style whose closest modern counterpart is the gambler's code: play for big stakes, but don't cry if you lose. Only in taking risks of moment can we recapture that preposterous treasure, romance. No matter if it is stumping for political office, or starting a store, or saying hello to a strange girl, or striking out for distant parts without a guided tour ticket, let there be a good chance of losing. Desperation is the wine of triumph, and the joy of bringing in a long shot is second to none.

Reviews

Books New or Neglected: III

Most of the time we talk and no one understands. We want someone to get interested in a book or a person or a habit and they either don't respond or they use it as an excuse to launch into their own pet subject. There was this girl in a jazzy writing class at Chicago a couple of years ago, I forget her name, who had written a short play called *All Men's Troubles Come in Bed*. It was produced, but I missed it. Anyway, she was in this class that had visiting lecturers for two weeks each: Peter Taylor, John Berryman, Howard Nemerov and Saul Bellow. Bellow was talking about Russian writers one day and this girl asked him about Ivan Goncharov and a novel called *Oblomov*. I don't recall his answer, much less her question, but I did pick up a copy of the novel at Kroch's & Brentano's basement paperback mart a couple of weeks later. I've been reading and rereading *Oblomov* and want to tell someone about it, even if no one understands.

To read *Oblomov* you have to get the Penguin Classic for about 85c, in a translation by David Magarshack first published in 1954. In his introduction he pulls the plug on Goncharov (1812-1891) by saying: 'Goncharov's great novel lacks Dostoevsky's violence, Turgenyev's brilliance and compactness, and Tolstoy's monumental force.' Luckily, Goncharov has merits of his own, chiefly a gift for situation, satire, and analysis of a tragi-comic hero who might only be compared to Melville's *Bartleby*. Rather than being characterized by the line I would prefer not to, *Oblomov*, in his way as insignificant and uninteresting as the dead-letter clerk, might be summed up by his phrase 'as soon as I get up.'

For the first 152 pages *Oblomov* is in bed. A series of visitors urging him to join them in social activities has failed to stir him; finally the German efficiency-expert friend, Stolz, gets him awake from a dream-filled sleep brought on by aish many visitors, but it is twenty pages later before *Oblomov* gives up sitting on his bed in procrastination.

It is, of course, a naturally comic scene. The hero, representing pre-Revolution aristocracy in Russia, is incapable either of participating in the synthetic life of his class or of averting the disaster that inattention and inaction are producing at the vast family estate, *Oblomovka*. I am not the only person attracted to the dramatic possibilities in a hero who spends most of the time on stage refusing to leave his bed; a writer named James L. Cooley is adapting the novel to play form (I went to his home in Claremont, hoping to do this piece as an interview with him, but he is spending most of the summer in Fairbanks, Alaska). V. S. Pritchett, in *The Living Novel*, calls *Oblomov* 'the great absentee' and suggests why he is a character central to our time: "In a world of planners he plans himself to sleep. In a world of action he discovers the poetry of procrastination. In a world of passion he discovers the delicacies of reluctance

for our sakes who live in clean rooms and who jump out of bed when the alarm clock goes, *Oblomov* lies among his cobwebs and his fleas, his books unread, his ink dry in the bottle, his letters unanswered. While we prosper, he is cheated ... thank heaven, Dostoevsky did not seize the character of *Oblomov*. He would have made him one more Russian Christ... *Oblomov* himself becomes one of those transfigured characters which have grown over a long period of writing, which exist on several planes, and which go on growing in the mind after the book is

Actually, because *Oblomov* does keep on growing in the reader's mind, and have something of his idle manner, there may who have but have

found that thinking about writing about *Oblomov* is in itself sufficient. It is no mark of great industry on my part that I have finally managed to mention the title and confess that I, too, am a victim of the pleasant malady *Oblomovitis*. How, then, can I go on to describe Olga, the character lost by *Oblomov* to his friend Stolz; a girl depicted in

hanging character with a skill superior to Henry James; or Zakhar, the scolding, wifelike, wheedling servant; or Agafya Matveyevna, whom Oblomov found to care for him - how describe any character without making it sound as though Goncharov is nothing but a know, Russian copy of Dickens? Is it interesting to know that Goncharov had a great success with his novel? That, in 1859, when the novel was published, Goncharov held the position of literary censor and is he really conservative? Perhaps it is useful to know that in 1867 he resigned his Civil Service post and two years later brought out *The Precipice*, reportedly a literary work. Thereafter he wrote very little, lived as a recluse, accused Turgenyev of leading a plot to destroy him and steal his material, and thereby, perhaps, he pointed the flaw in his masterwork. In his hatred for Turgenyev we see an emotion entirely kept out of Oblomov, he hero's feeling toward the perfectionist Stolz who constantly rescues him from himself. It is because of this, that he hero lacks the one human trait so evident in the author - because of this harming flaw we will carry Oblomov is a mirror to ourselves so long as we recall the struggle it is to live as soon as we get up.

-Lachlan MacDonald

The Inner Drama

THE MODERN PSYCHOLOGICAL

NOVEL, by Leon Edel; Evergreen Books, New York, 143 pp., \$1.45
STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN

THE MODERN NOVEL, by Robert Humphrey; University of California Press, Berkeley, 1958, 129 pp., \$1.25.

In his book Robert Humphrey has set for himself a three-fold task: to define stream of consciousness so that it can be used with some accuracy: to examine various devices characteristic of stream of consciousness techniques; and to interpret and evaluate several of the more prominent stream-of-consciousness writers, in particular, Richardson, Joyce, Woolf and Faulkner. Humphrey's conclusions regarding the characteristic devices of this genre are of the greatest

interest, particularly to the practising writer. Other critics (Daiches, Levin, Gilbert, etc.) have dealt with much of the material upon which Humphrey concentrates his attention; yet it is he who provides us for the first time, so far as I

with a detailed comparative analysis of both the linguistic and structural devices used by the above novelists. Edel, dealing with a theme similar to Humphrey's, states that 'ours has been an inquiry into the capacity of language to record inner experience, and the capacity of the novel form to convey it.' Yet Edel does not succeed in doing this. His consideration of the influence of James' *The Ambassadors* upon Richardson's *Pilgrimage* is well done, as is his fairly detailed study of Edouard Dujardin's *Les Lauriers sont coupés* (which Edel claims is the first stream-of-consciousness novel and its influence on Joyce's *Ulysses*. Edel, however, offers little that is concrete which would enable us to see how the various stream-of-consciousness novels are actually constructed, and he fails to differentiate one stream-of-consciousness technique from another.

Both Humphrey and Edel point out, rightly so, that the emphasis in this type of fiction is placed upon the inner drama of its characters rather than their external actions. We are more interested in, to name one example, the mental peregrinations of Leopold, Stephen and Molly than their physical ones. Moreover, this is the feature which distinguishes it most sharply from nineteenth-century naturalistic fiction: the latter was preoccupied with a minute consideration of the external forces and events which shaped the characters' actions; the former with equally minute consideration of the inner drama, the psyche, of the character.

The problem which the stream-of-consciousness writers faced, briefly stated, is that the inner life of a man is private and chaotic yet somehow it must be communicated to the reader and made understandable. Humphrey distinguishes four basic devices which they evolved to solve this problem: direct interior monologue, indirect interior monologue, omniscient description, and soliloquy. Direct interior monologue, whose

most famous example is the closing pages of *Ulysses*, is the representation of the psyche of the character with little, if any, author intrusion. Punctuation the traditional sense is largely excluded, and the sentences' strive to emulate the seemingly chaotic wanderings of the mind rather than a graduate composition book. In indirect interior monologue the reader is aware of the author's presence. This seems to be the main characteristic which differentiates it from direct interior monologue. Employing the second or third person, the author guides the reader through the character's musings. The diction employed, however, continues to be that which the character normally uses. An example of this device cited by Humphrey is the opening passage of *Mrs Dalloway* (the section in which Clarissa is contemplating the preparations for her party that evening and, by association, portions of her past life).

Omniscient description is one 'in which an omniscient author describes psyche through conventional methods of narration and description.' Much of Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, according to Humphrey, is written in this manner. His distinction between this last device and indirect interior monologue is not clear-cut; rather it seems to be one of degree. To a large extent Miriam's are certainly in her idiom: however, noticeably more author intrusion here than in *Clarissa Dalloway's*.

In the use of the soliloquy Humphrey sees a means by which the psyche can be fused with external action, or plot. It differs from internal monologue in that it is more formal, more structured and, less candid and more limited in the depth of consciousness that it can represent; it differs from conventional stage soliloquy in that the thoughts are structured as they would occur in the psyche rather than as they would for verbal expression. One of the outstanding examples of the sustained use of this device is Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. Containing thirteen soliloquies, this comparatively short novel dealt with the consciousness of more characters than any other stream-of-consciousness novel up to its time. (Wright Morris' *The*

Field of Vision, 1956, not mentioned by Humphrey, employs a similar technique, dealing with only five psyches.) Furthermore, Faulkner accomplished what his contemporary stream-of-consciousness writers did not: he blended considerable outer action with the inner drama of the characters. In other words, he succeeded in fusing stream of consciousness with the traditional novel form.

Direct interior monologue, then, is the consciousness

greatest dramatic immediacy: it is the one which presents directly the psyche (as the author imagines it) with a minimum of structuring or other author intrusions.

The stream-of-consciousness writers borrowed from cinema technique montage (the psyche fixed in space yet moving in space-montage (various scenes depicted at the same time)). To preserve the chaotic impression of the psyche and still render it somewhat intelligible to the reader, they employed various rhetorical devices, in the main, image and symbol. From psychologists and mathematicians, particular William James and Henri Bergson, they adopted the principle of free association of the mind. Since their novels had no plot in the conventional sense, they superimposed their material certain previously accepted art patterns so that their novels would have some sort of framework. Prominent the seven patterns named by Humphrey are parody (or burlesque), the so-called classical unities and leit-motifs. *Ulysses*, of course, furnishes examples of all three: the novel is, in one sense, a parody of Homer's *Odyssey*; it takes place within twenty-four hours in one city and contains only three major characters; words and phrases recur time and again throughout the novel.

Although Humphrey's interpretations and evaluations of the writers are generally sound, they echo much that has already been written by Daiches, Levin and Gilbert. His definition of stream of consciousness is of negligible interest. He excludes both Henry James and Proust from this genre because the former did not depict the "pre-speech levels of consciousness and the latter

was 'concerned only with the reminiscent aspect of consciousness. Certainly one could contend that the psyche is revealed in sustained recall based on issociational material (Proust's method) and that this is a type of stream of consciousness. Everyone, however, interested in a comparative examination of the language and structural devices of early stream-of-consciousness writers will find this an essential book.

-George Betar

Two Heights and a Depth

A reverberation of America's cultural renaissance in the 1930's came to us this summer at the University of California at Los Angeles. It was in the seldom seen 'ensemble' acting, raised to a height during depression days by the New York Group Theatre.

In describing the first of the University's three productions, the Dylan Thomas play *Under Milkwood*, it is almost necessary to borrow symbols from music to properly convey one's feelings. To say the composition was harmonically orchestrated would not suffice; it was this and more. The outreach of the actors to the audience and the absorption of the spectators made for a complete fusion of the two groups on either side of the stage-apron. The absence of that commercial synthetic star was as a fresh breeze.

The only dissonances to American arts, in the beautifully cadenced English-Welsh dialect, were odd allusions and strange use of words which struck one at times like jabberwocky. In the most part *Under Milkwood* is a series of salty vignettes and lusty characterizations. In the last act much of this comes through the sharp-tongued comments of a blind old sea-captain who knows his neighbors and knows them well. Surprisingly, and fortunately, his play was not quite the concert reading it was publicized to be. Rather it seemed to strike out towards a new as yet unnamed form. The actors not only read script-in-hand, but at times left the printed page and moved about to form beautifully sculptured tableaux in the manner of Rodin's *The Burghers of*

Calais. At other times, when there was unison of speech, the group seemed to echo Kreymborg's mass chant, 'America! America! The acting was superb. The austere backdrop, the plain clothes of fishermen, the use of irregular platforms and pinpoint lighting added to a total of imaginative innovations. This play was creatively staged by

Lamont Johnson.

The second offering of U.C.L.A.'s Theatre Extension was the controversial *Mother Courage* of Bertolt Brecht, translated by Eric Bentley. This play put the audience sharply on one side or the other; of middle ground there was none. The intermission comments overheard were: 'boring,' 'doesn't get moving,' 'non-conclusive.' The remarks that were favorable came as: 'solid education,' 'the best Peace Play since *Lysistrata*,' 'good antidote to orthodoxy.' Brecht's horrible experiences in the First World War made him put down the gun and take up the pen that he might show his disgust with war. To this reviewer he makes good achievement of this objective in *Mother*

Courage.

Mother was a small-time merchant who, with her three children, supplied the canteen needs of the soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus. This was in the first half of the 1600's when, because of a so-called religious difference, the Thirty Years War swept forward and backward through Central Europe. Whichever faction was in the ascendant, *Mother* always made her gilder. The only time she ran into difficulty was when peace 'broke out.'

Though one might read a symbol into this woman, equating her with the middle-class, Brecht did not forget to make her a specific individual too. During the greater part of the evening she is just what she is supposed to be, a tough money grubber. However, human quality is dramatically pointed up at the end of the play when her mute daughter is shot to death. Catherine is put out of the way by enemy scouts as a punishment for a drum beat warning she had given her village of the impending approach of the foreign army.

Mother Courage takes the dead child into her arms and stares glassy-eyed out

the face and voice of this distraught mother makes one wonder that she holds on to war for as long as she does as the means of earning her livelihood.

Why, in this modern morality play, does the author give this enmeshed woman the name Courage? * The name Courage seems ... both ironic and sympathetic to the desperate plight of this woman engulfed in the corruption of war. This concept of humanity, corrupted and at the same time retaining its human worth and courage, is the theme of all of Brecht's later plays.' Could it be that this protagonist is the 'thee and me' of each day's heartaches, the knocked-about hero of a Chaplin

Eileen Heckart paced the role of Mother on the jocular edge; her interpretation seemed able to use a bit more intensity. The direction of Allan Cooke was good; the music composed directed by David Raksin was excellent. According to friends who have heard both, this music was superior to that used in the Paris version in spring, 1958.

Sodom and Gomorrah by Kazantzakis was an aberration of dubious travail and hardly worthy of the effort put into it. It was the only discordant point in an otherwise solid late summer offering.

This piece opens with Lot's temerity in bargaining with God against the destruction of the two fleshpots. The ancient story seen on a stage and measured with today's humanist values leads one to believe that the old rebel bad points on his side. In the ensuing unravelment we get incest, murder, resurrection, jealousy, retribution, and other such odd bits thrown into the kettle; a kettle that attempts to seethe but hardly ever bubbles and never boils.

are redundant, acting pompous and delivery declamatory. Apparently every name director must have his fall from grace and this was it for James S.

as propaganda is worthy subject for dramatic exposition but it may only be developed with artistry and craft.

Dr Abbott Kaplan and his staff at J.C.L.A. Theatre Extension deserve dark.'

ommercial theatre. A needed stimulant to the drama community has been added.
- David Seidman

Women Poets of the World...!

BEHOLD THIS DREAMER, by Elizabeth Bartlett, Editorial Jus, S.A. Mexico City, 1959.

Elizabeth Bartlett shows in this volume that she is able to evolve poems clearly, from start to finish. In this, she reveals the sure hand of a competent poet. She can conceive of the final direction her poems should take.

Her abstractions are not new, but they need not be, if the 'shaping power' is at work. She speaks of the mystery of Creation, the fleeting nature of Time, the wonder of Nature, and the Vision of the Poet; and a poet may use such natural Mysteries till the sun burns out. They are certainly more time tested than such themes as Fall-Out and the Atom Bomb.

The problem she faces is the one raised by the old saw -that the more abstract you are, the more sensuous you must be. Now I am sure she feels she is sensuous, but if she rereads her favorite poets, she may see that she is general where she should be sensuous, or specific, or finally original.

And when her verse becomes more sensuous, more specific, she will avoid such over-used phrases as 'time's alchemy,' 'spectral stars,' 'sea pro-raptured flame,' 'golden thread,' 'transient strangers,' 'glowing fruit,' 'windward waves,' and 'coral shores.'

If she reread Henry Vaughan, who seems to be more her guide than De La Mare, she will find that he says of his departed friends:

They are all gone into the world
of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here;

and in the same poem, he speaks of Death 'shining nowhere but in the

Mrs Bartlett, though not dealing with the exact abstraction, is less dramatic, because too speculative, and less immediate and sensuous when she says in 'In his Image':

Who has not looked into the heart
of night

And seen the darker light,
Concealed like spectral stars
Beyond the rim of Mars,
If she reread her Thomas, she will
find:

Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like
the sea.

Whereas when she deals with Time, he fails to relate it to the immediate senses with enough freshness to make it take hold on our senses as Thomas does, enough again I am not suggesting she is doing exactly what he is doing. In 'All his, Before,' we have:

I raced, I rushed, I ran
to catch the empty hand of time -

Or in Thomas again there is 'the sun
rewound that very day,' which somehow seizes the imagination as 'the sky
heard its fire' in Bartlett's 'The Creation' does not.

Why do women poets fear the sensual, the immediate experience with which poetry should deal? They so seldom bring in human beings, speaking so seldom of a real lover, but only the ethereal floating on his sleeve. Even Emily Dickinson was petrified of mentioning her lover for more than a phrase, a name: and the lover was always a 'he' or the one? But if they do avoid the direct and let him lie in his great prison, and write of nature, they must still learn to crawl, like Shakespeare, into a rebellion. Or if they write of Creation, they must ape Milton and con their Einstein. Women poets of the World, be specific! Be sensuous! Before mystic night, do not go out of your flesh, into foggy blue blob of fishy, vague, wispy elings. Avoid especially the dim-green sea, the spectral moon, Mist, Ice, Wind, lame, and the floating petals of impression imaginings. - Donald J. Young

Abstract Wings

HE FLIGHT OF MR SUN, by John

Barkley Hart, Hennypenny, Redondo
Beach, California, 1959.

The Flight of Mr Sun, by John Barkley Hart, contains the title poem, a potpourri of T. S. Eliot, Allen Ginsberg, and True Confessions, and twenty-six shorter poems, some of which contain a quiet sensitive merit that is in no way foreshadowed by the writing (and one must say writing that is not poetry found in 'The Flight of Mr Sun.'

Mr Hart is not an academic poet, but, ironically, he falls into the same sterility which one feels his poetry is reacting against. In The Flight of Mr Sun, prosaically the search for identity of a high school teacher in terms of

"TRUTH GOODNESS AND BEAUTY,

Mr Hart evokes no images which order the intense sufferings of the soul into a formed and measured work of art.

THE TRUTH

**LET US REDEFINE THE TRUTH
HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW
HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW
HAW HAW
HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW
HAW HAW HAW HAW**

contains less poetic truth than a Gillette razor blade jingle. The closest Mr Hart comes to engaging his truth on poetic terms is when he says, 'I fancy myself a poet and that is very vain.' Like Ginsberg, Mr Hart confuses artistic sexual imagery with vulgar commonplace statements. 'Charles, this is the asshole of the universe or the mayor's daughter spilled ink on her snatch' are lines which are neither imaginative nor poetic. By comparison, one thinks of Yeats saying, 'But Love has pitched his mansion in/The place of excrement' and one sees that Mr Hart's poetry is both lazy and sterile.

Furthermore, Mr Hart need not tell us that, 'I stood with my gods, Eliot, Patchen, and the rest' for even on the first reading of The Flight of Mr Sun, the reader is astounded by the apparent disinterest of the poet in using legitimate influences to produce something new. Lines Do I dare the

degradation? / When all things are considered and 'THIS IS THE TIME

THIS IS THE TIME THIS IS THE

TIME' are but sudden echoes of their originals in Eliot.

Philosophically, Mr Hart seems to be gasping meaningless statements in a mire of shoddy, half-learned theories. * Forget distinctions between appearance and reality, you may as/well, for they both exist' is a general and irrelevant statement. Metaphysically, Aristotle would say one thing, Nietzsche another, both of which would deserve deep and learned consideration. But Mr Hart manages to encompass and dispose of the whole history of western metaphysics with one pronouncement.

The most unfortunate aspect of the book is that Mr Hart is capable of

Fist Me Sin a boy

reviewer's comprehension. Consider one of Mr Hart's shorter poems, quoted in full, called, 'Cezanne's "The Bather"':

It's more than just a man
Gaging himself against eternity.
Such feelings come and go.
It's the suflering
Cezanne knew to make the thing,
It's the resignation
Of the slow walk
Into the cool waters
That ultimately cover the head

A repeat or cone an or lat
Here, Mr Hart reaches concrete poetic heights with economy of statement and

future, one hopes that Mr Hart will continue with the capturing of a mood in which he excels rather than the formless attempts at philosophy and credo which undermine his true value as a poet.

- Thomas M. Livingston

The Beating of Wings

THE LOST TRAVELER, by Sanora Babb; Reynal and Company, \$3.95.

The Traveler is a professional gambler who scrapes a precarious living for his unhappy family through the lean years of the Depression. The Traveler is lost because the code he lives by is hopelessly warped by contradictions. The

code requires a man to appear too noble for vices, but to live he must cheat. The result is a disillusioned loathing for life and an obsession for evil.

This ambivalence in Desmond the gambler is expressed in charm and devilishness, exerting an hypnotic effect on most of the book's characters. They move dimly in a Midwest Prohibition era of dusty whistlestops, unknown pockets of ingrained small town *mean-*

ness.
After a far-too-deliberate beating of wings, the book rises to make the point that Desmond is no worse than respectable financiers who gamble on business futures. The implication is strong that Des is not as bad as they, so the real enemy rears its horrendous head - The System. The System paralyzes the will, scourges the good, rewards the wicked, and thus absolves man of responsibility for his actions.

In spite of the compelling honesty, the over-drawn qualities of the book label it an example of left-wing literature that is top-heavy with social theory. As evidence for this label, the battle-lines are clearly drawn: all those with money are bad, the police are corrupt, all Negroes are saints, the husband as a male chauvinist must come to a bad end, the wife who finally sticks up for her rights wins out, and children who reject The System can look forward to *better days*.

All the requirements of class ideology are form-fit, but the richness and complexity of the characters cannot glimmer through the requirements of the social point of view. Towards the end, the author seems aware of this, detonating the story with a flash of unlikely violence at total odds with the characters *as so far pictured*.

The gross facts of social oppression are no doubt true as depicted, but blood and iron as encountered by the naked eye are far removed from the too-measured step of a novel brassbound by ideas that do for passions.

- Barding Dahl

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A BIRTHDAY EDITORIAL

With this issue, Coastlines becomes five years old. Sometimes we feel tired now, but never as venerable as perhaps we should, since five years is a very long time in little magazine circles. Possibly the reason we don't is that we began this magazine already having a sense of openness which is more commonly the attitude of men and women older than we were then, an attitude usually formed by long observation of good causes wiped out, of the brave man faltering, truth becoming lie, the 'masterpiece' turned to dust. I think we felt this way not because we were ahead of our ages, but because we belonged to our age. We have never been sure of ourselves, have always admitted misgivings about our taste, skill, knowledge and motives. Hardly the base room which to launch a crusade, supposing there had been one available. Yet I am not convinced we ought to censure ourselves for this now. The 'good causes', had they not already been overburdened and vitiated by too many back-climbers? And the cause, the theory, which we might ourselves have declared pointblank, wouldn't that have been artificial? So, five years of open-mindedness, taking our potshots as the occasion seemed to warrant, waiting for the happening that would justify our inception. We have published 'academic' writers and beat writers and, happily, quite a few who were neither. We have sought the human link, work that might uplift Coastlines and connect with later times. It is a source of pride for us that we believe we have received some of this work through the mail and printed it. But I don't think any of us are satisfied.

With this Los Angeles issue -- one of the projects we have had in mind do for some time -- a sort of crux has been reached. Coastlines is, for the moment, perched on a ledge. To keep on going, this magazine must be born new. We must say something like this: 'True, the world is messy, humanity is fairly inept. We are doubtless up to our nostrils in unoriginal sin and probably incapable of improving. Yes, culture is up against the wall; the uninformed, miseducated masses have taken charge completely. To write poems is like painting polka dots on toilet seats. And novels, unless they are written in abridged form, are even bigger time-wasters. We agree also that Ike will continue to be President in the foreseeable future though his name will change. All of this fashionable gloom is disheartening, but part of our milieu. We -- poets, novelists, editors, critics -- are really quite cut off. We'll have to stay on our ledge, never sure whether we ought to go up or come down -- nor how to do either. But, nevertheless, Coastlines -youthfully scoffing at our milieu - will attempt the climb. Our hope will be laughter. Not happiness or suffering, not entertainment or amusement. Nor do we intend to "keep smiling".. But with enough laughter to sustain us, it should be possible to act, to be reasonably courageous, to make our happening.' Maybe this is a policy -- at least, a statement toward the beginning of one.

As a literary magazine, our first duty is toward the things of the world, for without these there is no literature, no art-just desolation. Among these things are the timeless human problems, public and private. We must try to

see them honestly, from the inside, in the material we publish and in our own commentaries. We must try to see them freshly, too, for otherwise we cannot see them honestly. But originality should not be our only value; it dare not be accepted as an abstract value cut off from the world's images. Abstraction - to the point where images are lost --is science, and we are against art that is born of science. That kind of art loses its identity and becomes a new hybrid, neither poem nor painting, but something amorphous like Self-Expression.

Laughter. Things. Freshness.

Part of a credo for our birthday. And we wish for ourselves an ever younger and more pugnacious temper.

- G.F.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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THOMAS McGRATH has returned to Los Angeles after a year in New York City, which he says is God's country. But he's still not a believer.

BERT MEYERS is a frame-maker at the Landau Gallery. Actor, artist, linguist, as well as poet. Also stands on head to amuse little children.

GIL ORLOVITZ, now in New York,, is what is called a controversial figure in the field of belles lettres. An enviable position, from which many have made a fortune after a sustained period of starvation. He is now well along in his starvation period.

WILLIAM PILLIN also went hungry before he discovered that his wife, Polia, had a gift for making ceramics. Now he is chief kiln-lighter and supervisor of shipping. Will soon open a gallery, featuring ceramics and poetry.

DAVID SEIDMAN is now at work on Lorca's poetic tragedies, but doesn't state what he is doing to them.

RAMON SEPULVEDA manages a hotel in downtown Los Angeles. Makes his first, but by no means last, appearance in Coastlines. Good man.

ANN STANFORD teaches at UCLA, has published widely, including several volumes of poems. Highly critical of the poor transportation system in Los Angeles, and the smog. Outspoken, in fact.

ROBERT VAUGHAN writes that he moved here from Texas for the climate. Presumably would rise to the defense of the smog.

TOM VIERTEL is listed in Haw's Haw and Poor Fitzhugh's Almanac; unfavorably, we might add. Which doesn't disturb him, since these publications do not exist. Viertel, however - although elusive - does exist.

ZACK WALSH when last heard from was about to get married. Maybe that's what cut off communication.

MEL WEISBURD is in the garage for repairs. Imagines that he hears himself rattling.

PETER YATES runs a program on the FM station, KPFF; also writes poems and articles on music. The only man we know of who can criticise Yvor Winters from above.

DONALD J. YOUNG has a French wife, an infant daughter and a neurotic dog. Educated by Princeton, Harvard, the Sorbonne and the Battle of the Bulge.

CURTIS ZAHN lives in Malibu, is widely known for his contributions to such near-charities as independent little magazines. Also helps sustain many by his work and artful cannonading of their canons.

BANG!