

A LITERARY MAGAZINE OF CALIFORNIA

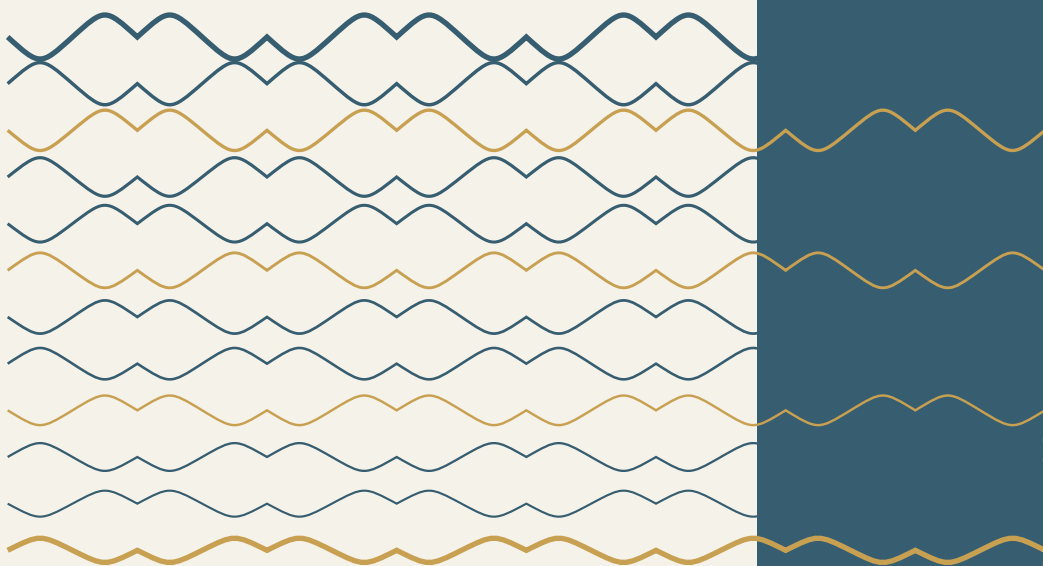
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ISSUE 16

A Literary Magazine of California

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EDITED BY

Gene Frumkin

A CLEAN READING EDITION

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JACK LINDEMAN is the editor of *Whetstone* with appearances in *Poetry*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Epos*, *Colorado Quarterly*, and elsewhere to his credit.

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Macmillan has accepted STANLEY NOYES first novel for publication. He teaches at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland.

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TRINO

Ramon Sepulveda

Trino de la Sierra, sitting on a limestone quarried block against the red-brick wall of the smelter ruins, disdainfully holds a rock half the size of a baseball toward Vidal Garruña.

'You still want to play the stupid game?' Vidal nods toward an islet in the middle of the river densely covered with cottonwood saplings and brush.

· Like you said, kid." Trino gently pats the quart bottle of red wine between his feet. 'A cap full of wine if you hit it.'

Vidal blinks his almost lash-less eyes at a newspaper wrapped bundle at the edge of the brush in the islet embankment. 'Hit or miss, guy,' takes the rock, 'a drink anyway.'

Trino watches birds dart into the brush, then, as if frightened, flit out. Sees old rabbit and squirrel burrows gaping desertedly in the embankment. Beyond rises a mesa, then ridges, and in the distance of the Blue Deer Range spine, snow contrasts on the shaded slopes.

Pale blue white balls of smoke hop out of Vidal's mouth, bob along the air, widen, face, and dissolve in the luke-warm sunlight. 'You sure the Pancho Gonzales smokes Bull Durham?' Looks dubiously at his cigarette.

'Not even in joke.' Trino grins. 'The Pancho smokes those with the twenty-thousand somethings in them.'

'Where did you see that, guy? Vidal flips the butt toward the river.

'In the television in the Catalina's bar.' Trino blows softly on the glowing end.

'What does he play?' Vidal spits tobacco grains.

'The tennis.' Trino spits carefully into the ash-white ground, jabs the lighted end of the cigarette in the spit, then covers it with dirt. 'I do not understand that game.'

'Well, how does he play it?' Vidal tosses and catches the stone several times.

Trino shrugs. "They say he is a champion at it." His voice is low, raspy. 'When are you going to throw, kid?'

Vidal reddens. Tenses his shoulders under the padded sport jacket. Spits insultingly toward Trino's feet, then throws.

Trino watches the rock plop into the near side of the river, causing small rainbow trout, mudsuckers, and minnows to scurry about. 'You would have lost, had you betted.' A very faint superior light flicks in his dullish eyes. "In throwing you are nothing, kid."

The small vengeful corner, where Vidal's pride sulks, flares up. 'Okay, guy. Now I throw for the drink and to show you I am a man and never quarter with no son of the ranked one.'

Trino grins. 'Anyway you wish, kid.' Picks up another rock, holds it in his large palm toward Vidal. 'Better luck this time.'

'Tell you what, guy.' Vidal looks sly. 'We both play this ranking stupidity of a game. Okay?'

Trino sets his battered Stetson back, revealing a high sloping forehead. 'But I appropriated the bottle.' Looks plainly superior now.

'You stole it, guy.' Most of the time he talks, Vidal makes a hissing sound. 'How much did you put in for the party yesterday. Tell us?'

'Well, nothing.' Trino waves a long, work-thickened finger at Vidal. 'But who spoke nicely to the Catalina? With that woman a man has to use words in a certain way. Ever try to make holes where gophers have dug?' Taps his forehead. 'One has to speak the very best Castilian to the Catalina if one wishes to get any credit at her store. Let one who knows say it. I sweated for this wine, believe me. This old one,' taps his chest, 'took the humiliation and you roosters got the credit. Think of that, kid, before you speak badly of a man.' Turns his head away, as if gravely offended.

*Okay, guy. That's enough.' Vidal makes a flicking motion with his hand. 'But do we play the game or not?'

Trino scratches the back of his head. Pretends he is thinking it over very deeply. Finally nods, as if having no alternative. 'Very well, then, kid.' Sighs, lets his shoulders sag pitifully. 'We play it your way.' Looks up at the sky, shakes his head sorrowfully.

'Your turn, guy. Here.' Vidal holds the rock toward Trino. 'With this one,' grins nastily, 'you can't miss the river. Throw. But watch the arm. Who can tell, eh? If you get to be a champion some day one may see you smoking the same kind of cigarettes the Pancho smokes on the Catalina's television.' Laughs tightly scornfully.

Trino stands up and touches the brim of his Stetson. Once his best hat when he went to town, but now much stained with ashes, dirt, and wine. Takes the rock and looks seriously across at the bundle wrapped in comic strips.

'Can you see it, guy?' Vidal grins openly derisively. 'Look at it through the bottle. Maybe you can see it then. Somewhere in the bottom.'

*I see the target very well, kid.' The corners of Trino's eyes pinch down. 'You look at it through the bottle for me.'

'If you can, then throw, guy.' Vidal nudges Trino's ribs. 'Or have you ever thrown anything but bluffs?'

*True, I can talk a lot. But I never bluff. And less in this. Also I will throw when I am ready. If you will permit me, kid.' Half bows mockingly at Vidal.

'That's all it lacked? Vidal makes a face. 'Christ, what a delicate.' Sits down on a cottonwood log.

Trino sighs and sits down, too.

Vidal's mouth spreads victoriously.

But before Vidal can enjoy his victory, Trino suddenly takes his arm back, then snaps it forward.

The rock strikes hard inches before the bundle, but in direct line, skips over, and glances off a boulder below. The sound tells Vidal better than anything he sees how hard the rock was tossed.

Vidal rises open-mouthed, looks across where the rock struck, then at Trino. 'How about that, huh? You must have scratched a little at the baseball, eh, guy?'

Trino takes his hat off, carefully remoulds the crown. His graying hair is so curly as to appear kinky.

'Why didn't you say so before, guy?' Vidal pats Trino's wide shoulder. 'How is one to know one is going up against a champion.'

Trino smiles pleasedly. Seems astonished at his good luck. 'The cap full

· in say you do. Buy: Vidal picks up the proe. Now I see where I will have to accent it in there.'

'Well, kid. You didn't know you were going up against a real baseballer, did you?' Trino breathes deeply, jerks his trousers up.

'You fooled this rooster.' Vidal unscrews the cap.

'Kid, believe it when I tell you it was no accident. You thought this Trinidad, Trino taps his chest, 'is just another wino. A nothing. A braggart, besides. Never was anything, eh?' Nods his head. 'I know all that. You and many others around this Roadrunner think that.'

'Okay, then, guy.' Vidal flicks his hand. 'Don't let it go to your head. That was only luck. I build you up to make you feel good, that's all. How's your arm? Bet you won't be able to lift a bottle for a week now?'

'Feels good, kid. Nothing wrong with my arm' But I threw too hard, thinks Trino, for not having warmed up or thrown in a long time. 'And I was a professional. Not an amateur.'

'That's all it lacked. A professional, he says.' Vidal turns to one side, as if telling someone else. 'Hear that?' Jerks his head toward Trino. "Now the rooster jives himself.'

'No, not flattering myself. Listen, Vidal. I played all over this territory. We traveled in trains and received three hundred dollars a month then." Trino's eyes light up in remembrance. 'Old Queli, they called me that.'

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Sierra. How can you make a Queli out of that, huh? Tell such to some other dummy?

* You make too much out of unimportant things, man. It was a nickname. Everybody in the nine had one. And we had a good nine?'

'And how was this nine you speak of called?' Vidal leans mockingly toward Trino.

'The Indians of San Clemente the nine was called. Trino says it loud and proudly.

*I can believe it. What other thing?" Vidal snickers.

*Do not joke it, kid. I tell you in all seriousness have some respect for what a man has done.' Trino's big hands fall suddenly and clamp firmly on Vidal's shoulders.

'Hey, now? Vidal is shocked and panicked to discover how strong the older man really is.

'For let me tell you, kid." Trino's voice quivers fiercely with emotion.

* We were more than competent. Had it been in these times, you might have seen this old one play with some nine in the major leagues.? Lets his hands fall slackly to his sides.

Vidal draws back and sizes Trino anew.

'You like the baseball, Vidal?'" Trino asks it from far off somewhere.

'Some Vidal adjusts his jacket, getting the padding to set on his small thin shoulders. 'Not much, though. Games bring me no cheer. Don't divert me much.'

· Didn't you play games in school?' Trino leans down to hear Vidal's answer.

*Oh, yes, guy. Marbles and tops. I liked to play that."

'Marbles and tops,' echoes Trino's voice. He blinks at Vidal as if he is looking at some minor riddle that might be solved before the morning is gone.

' You ever play marbles, guy?' Vidal asks it seriously.

* Sure, kid. In my youth I played every kind of game. Flew kites, too." And played house, also. Trino laughs hollowly in his thinking.

The listless mood of the hangover saps them and they say nothing for a while. Trino is disappointed. He wants to talk baseball. ' Well, we will have another, eh? ' Pours Vidal a cap full of wine.

' What position did you play in this nine?' Vidal licks his mouth with a small cat-like tongue.

Trino pours himself a cap full too. 'Catcher.' Drinks the cap of wine quickly. Smiles, feeling light and good again, 'I played catcher and I was a good one. But a good one, I mean. Now the Queli is tottering. Bald on top. Half his teeth gone, the rest in a hurry to leave, too. But then he was like a cat. Fast, like a racer, and he could club that ball nearly a mile. In my times, I was feared much. No lie, kid. When the Queli stepped up to that plate, they yelled: pass him, keep the ball away from him, he's a heavy hitter. Oh, you better believe it they knew who their father was."

' You must have been fair.' Vidal is openly unimpressed.

*Just regular, you mean to tell me." Trino imitates Vidal's tone of voice. ' Que va.' Spits to one side of him.

'Okay, then. I meant very good. Now that you tell me."

Trino looks at Vidal now as if he has the riddle half solved. ' Well, I was something. Then. Let me show you some things about the pitchers. You will like this, Vidal.' Rises, glances uncertainly at Vidal, then at the bottle. " Do not disturb the bottle.'

* Christ. What little confidence you have in one?' Vidal makes a flicking motion with his hand.

* Let us say this old one,' Trino jabs at his chest, ' knows with whom he associates.'

'You joke?' Vidal begins to rise. One of his hands starts to come out of his pocket.

Trino lays a shaky work-worn hand on Vidal's padded shoulder. · No. Vidal. Leave it. Permit the Queli to show you about the pitchers." Turns loose of Vidal.

'Okay, guy, this time we let it pass.' Vidal pushes his padded shoulders back in place.

Trino nods and walks over a few feet and stands on a mound built by red ants. His shadow stretches long and, because of his coat, lies oddly shaped on the ground.

Vidal watches skeptically and keeps making an inward snorting, humorless laugh sound. 'Where did you play?' calls from the wall. Did you play around here, guy?

'In three states the major part of the time. And also here and in other places.' Trino smooths the top of the mound with his toe. 'First, the Queli will show you the Arizona pitchers.' The mound is free of ants now, but later may be over-run because the winter has been mild enough this year. 'We go by the alphabet, you know.' Grins. 'Much simpler that way? Winks toward the river.

As Vidal watches Trino begin his pitching motions, he can not tell if the older man is serious or doing pantomime. Finally Vidal decides Trino is mimicking. Nothing convinces Vidal more of this than seeing the way Trino's long, black overcoat counter reacts to every move of the older man's.

'Hey, guy, listen.' Vidal nearly falls off the log with laughter. You beat the Cantinflas in this. Besides you the Cantinflas is nothing now."

'The Arizona pitchers wore their caps like this, see?" Trino moulds his hat for more emphasis. 'And they stood in this manner. Looking to first like this. With this kind of face. Do you see it, kid? And to third like this. And sometimes, when we got them rattled, they spun toward second like this."

Vidal, laughing begins to edge a hand down toward the bottle.

'Watch how they ran in for an in-field pop fly? Trino nearly runs on top of Vidal. 'Keep your nails off that, kid,' shouts, puffing hard.

'Hey, guy, watch out. I thought you were concentrating on the Arizona pitchers." Vidal holds his hand out for the tobacco sack.

Trino gives Vidal the sack gladly. Maybe this will keep his hands busy,

with these treacherous Garruñas, anyway? In sending me these rankers forate any me or mothy in sending me these t mices for he thinks. Leans against the stone wall for breath. How did I get mixed up

friends, God is castigating me for nothing.

'You winded, guy? ' Vidal grins at Trino. "You don't have it anymore.'

'My lungs are all right, kid. Don't worry. And I'm keeping the wall from falling down on you." Trino grins, pats the wall, and winks, thus pacifying Vidal's mean little temper.

'You entertain me, guy. True. Get out there,' Vidal makes a flicking motion with his arm toward the ant mound, 'and show us how the Arizona pitchers throw the ball, eh?"

'The Queli will show you. Don't despair, kid." Trino pushes himself away from the wall and walks back to the mound with a slight swagger. 'Watch.' Makes wild motions with his arms, flailing the air, and then throws jerkily.

Vidal closes his eyes nearly shut, seeing the coat in a ridiculous blurred silhouette. 'What a clown that Trinidad, says softly. "Like that, guy?' calls aloud. 'They pitched like that in Arizona?'

· Sure they did, Vidal. So that I can tell you. Only the Queli wishes to

make it clearer, so he puts in a bit more action than is necessary."

'You're not clowning, then?' Vidal is puzzled.

'Clowning? How do you mean, clowning? What I am showing you is truly the way it was." Trino shakes his head, furrows his brow, and looks off into the distance. 'Clowning.' Everything is a joke to these Garruñas.

'Well, guy' Vidal squints, 'that's how it looks to me over here.'

Trino clucks his tongue once in futility. 'Very well, then, kid. Take all this as you want to see it. Still it is not clowning.'

'Okay, guy. Now about the New Mexico pitchers. Were they as funny?' Vidal grins. 'I mean, as bad. I would like to see them in particular.'

'Well, they were all funny, understand? Even in Texas. And bad, too. But none were really both, see? Only to our team all the other nines did things with no style. Do you catch what I'm trying to say??

On the mound, Trino looks sideways at Vidal and blows out air from his lungs in weariness. Then walks back toward the bottle. 'First, give us a cap full, eh, kid? The old one is running out of gas out there.'" Grins.

'Out of wine, you mean.' Vidal picks up the bottle.

'Sure.'" Trino shrugs. 'Same thing.'

'But you did not hit the paper that time.' Vidal holds the bottle close to him.

'So I did not. So what? Of no importance. The Queli was educating you out of what he has learned of his life. Be a good kid. This high country burns the alcohol out of a man before he can enjoy it."

Vidal shakes his head and grins. 'Well, you entertain out there, guy. Sure. But I will have one, too."

'Of course. Let them all have something in the bleachers, also. The Queli is buying.' Trino makes a grand gesture to the audience he imagines coming back again as it once was and almost like he tells it to Vidal. 'Set them up, Catalina. The Queli will pay you for all. Cash. This is not on credit, my wide-buttocked one. The man,' taps his chest, 'has money and he is a good payer. Is punctual and it is not necessary to send a collector up to his wood camp.' Raises his hand up and nods his head negatively. 'No. No credit, we said. We pay. And now.'" Takes out an imaginary fat roll of bills and peels off several very indifferently, almost disdainfully, and lays them on the counter in a formal gesture. 'And take a drink for yourself out of that, too, Catalina?

Vidal pauses pouring the wine into the cap. Looks open-mouthed up at Trino making gestures toward boulders lying on the slope back of the smelter ruins. 'You're crazy, guy, One drink and you act very strange.' Sees Trino turn and look down at him from far off in the back of his eyes.

"This ranker sitting here on this log is a nothing,' Trino says softly, as if to some one beside him. 'The Queli was a good ball-player. He had the stuff in him. When he caught, people came for miles around to watch him handle the pitchers and the nine. Because the Queli was good.' Knits his brows tightly. 'Listen, you, Vidal. Queli hit thirty homers one year. Women fought for the right to cling to the Queli's arm when he came out of the ball parks.'" Looks blankly at the ashy-white ground.

' Yeah, guy. Sure. I have heard all that before.'

* Not from me, you. Since I came here to this Valley of the Roadrunner,

Vidal taps the bottle. 'It's this, guy. This port reaches me faster than the moscatel. You should have set aside a moscatel last night instead. You were not thinking ahead right then.'

All are the same. Listen, kid. You don't understand. It never happened to you or to anyone you have known or seen. But such was my life. It took a good man to shine my shoes then."

Vidal jerks a thumb toward the bottle. This is really reaching you already, guy. Squat down before you get too dizzy?

'You ranker you. You squat, Trino shouts, then moves his head and shuts his eyes and words will not come. Puts a hand on Vidal's padded shoulders, feels the younger man bracing under his pressure, muscles twitching under the jacket. "No, no, forget it.' Pats Vidal's back. "I will show you how the New Mexico pitchers looked out there? His eyes look very far off into space somewhere now. I am well equilibrated, he thinks. I will be drunk without excuse later. *This is funny, the way you wish to see it, Vidal. Not as slouchy as the Arizona pitchers, you understand. But plenty slouchy just the same. Watch one who saw it and remembers how clowns played it.'

Vidal raises an eyebrow. "The clowns in the other nine?"

'What's that?' Trino brings his face down close to Vidal's. 'What did you say?'

'Okay, guy.' Vidal draws his head away. Show the pitchers from New Mexico.'

I heard you, though, Trino thinks. And that is not the only bottle I got hid. There's another hidden somewhere up in the house back of the smelter. And that bottle is moscatel, your favorite poison. Grins very lightly. This port is just to wash out my mouth. Excellent for the pyorrhea. Fortifies every germ in your gums. The kind of germs that hate walls of teeth. Shakes his head and hides a grin that wants to burst out in laughter. Winks at Vidal, then walks out towards the center of the clearing.

'We played in this and that town.' Trino speaks loudly and has some trouble with his tongue. This is how their pitchers moved toward the mound, see?'

Trino is quite serious about it but because of his long, torn overcoat it looks very funny to Vidal, who laughs without his eyes or his mouth really taking part in it. Vidal's laughter is muffled and has an inflective sound that reminds Trino of severe hiccougging, laughing at all and not with any thing or any one.

Trino reaches the red ant mound. They tugged at their trousers like this. See? Then rubbed the ball, or scratched the back of their necks, or pulled at their chins, or did other little mannerisms that annoy. Oh, you bet the Queli watched them all like an eagle. Before, during, and after the game the Queli joked them and I joke them now as the clowns they seem to be to you, Vidal. Oh, yes. Some were clowns all right. But not all. There were men in that little league. Tough rankers' Peers down narrowly at Vidal. 'Make no

mistake about it.' Not marble playing punks, thinks. 'In their way they were serious too. Only the Queli knows that to beat the other side one has to beat them first in one's head. The rest is luck. You see it, Vidal?'

'Some of it.' Vidal yawns. 'Some of it I see.'

The hell he sees it, Trino thinks. This Garruña punk won't see farther than that first bottle. The other is mine alone and my germ friends. 'Well, then,' says aloud, in his raspy holler-guy voice. 'Now watch the wind up. Look. They twisted like this. Or like this. And like this and in other spidery ways. A very simple thing to execute, the wind up. But they made it look very involved, understand? Anyway, after they did one of all those examples I showed you, and have not shown, they came out of all the complicated mysteries and threw thus.'

Trino throws almost angrily. The rock goes much straighter and thuds smackingly directly into the paper, causing a large tear in it.

* Only the clowns never pitched as straight, understand? Trino nods toward Vidal. *They were tougher than the Arizona pitchers, some years. But the Queli hit them all with equal prejudice. Here and in Arizona and even in some places in Texas the people did not like the way the Queli mistreated their pitchers.

'You were tough, eh?' Vidal glances toward the bottle, safely placed out of reach by Trino.

· Well, we were no amateurs and no boys, let me tell you that much, kid. We devoured other nines like you crunch crisply fried beans." Trino snaps his fingers. "Say, the Queli has a drink coming to him, que no?"

Vidal jumps up, grasps the bottle, quickly unscrews the cap. You know, guy, if we took the cork out of the cap, we'd have more to drink."

'How much more, kid?' Trino's eyes glint.

Vidal shrugs. 'How should I know.'

'Exactly, kid.' Trino takes the cap. 'The mathematics is too involved to even consider.' Watches Vidal pour wine into the cap. 'Besides, then we would not stop there. And this puts certain restrictions in the game.' Flips the cap up to his mouth. Some of the wine trickles down his chin. Makes a face between crying and surprise of pain, then wipes his chin with the torn sleeve. 'Maybe you should take it easy, huh, guy?' Vidal asks.

· Let the ranking one take care. The Queli plays hard, kid. You saw how straight and true I threw that time??

* Ill say, guy. If you had a rifle you couldn't have done better. You know, I'm beginning to believe you.' Vidal looks up at Trino as he would with admiration for anyone who can play the guitar more than just well.

'Oh, you can doubt, Vidal. I do not become offended by doubters. But you better believe it when the Queli tells you then they could not buy or steal or borrow until tomorrow anything from him between first and the plate. All of them who got on first had to get the rest of the way by pure accident. Feel this arm? Trino doubles his right fist and jerks his arm up tensely hard.

Vidal puts his small hand on Trino's flexed arm and squeezes. Trino is about six feet and large boned. 'What happened you quit, guy?'

Trino's shoulders droop. He turns his head sideways and looks at nothing in the ashy-white ground. Tears burst in his eyes. 'The women, kid. The Queli got careless and it cost to cure the sickness then.'

Vidal's mouth drops. He steps back.

Trino raises a hand. 'Oh, rest, kid. That is past. The Queli is all right now. But then,' shakes his head gravely. 'it caused much pain, was very hard to cure, and took a long time, besides. But the Queli wanted to keep on playing. You see, Vidal, the Queli was enchanted with all the wild noise the crowd made. There was a madness in their laughter when the Queli clowned and one of their pitchers crumbled under my ridicule. Oh, we were brutal, and probably the most foul-mouthed nine that ever streaked the mother to any pitcher of the opposition.' Trino shakes his head in a kind of regret.

*The Queli liked more than just applause whenever he hit one far over the outfielders' heads. Or when the Queli got some foolish rooster trying to steal a base on him. With our mouths and the way we played on the field we were insufferable and practically unbeatable. But we also knew how to have fun. That is speaking only of the comrades in the nine with whom the Queli played. More important is the knowledge the Queli had the necessary. Even some of the Anglos who saw him play said so. The Queli might. He might. Ay, if only now were then and then now.'

Vidal watches Trino clench his fists, bring them both down in a gesture of something great lost. Trino turns his face away again, shakes emptily, makes noises that cause Vidal discomfort because the younger man has never cried about anything or for anyone.

· Don't bawl, guy." Vidal says it in the only way he knows how to express sympathy or tenderness of any sort. "Take it easy. Here. Your drink.' Gives Trino the cap full of wine and does not stop to think it is Trino's second. 'Up with it."

Trino wipes his eyes then turns. *Thanks, kid. You are beginning to see it. Some of it, anyway.' Nods his head approvingly.

*I am making the effort, you know. I don't want to be a slouchy guy. Like many. This baseball was something important to you, eh?'

Trino looks at Vidal in that way he has of trying to solve some impenetrable riddle. 'Yes." Tosses the cap full into his mouth. 'All. It was everything.' Feels a sudden complete washout but nothing new in its place. 'Once.'

'Well, there it goes." Vidal makes a fatalistic gesture. · Now you will show us how the Texas pitchers threw? '

* Forget the others, kid. But watch this. This will help wipe off the bad memory of having watched the clowns. Go back to your grandstand, kid, take your seat on the first base-line, and keep your eyes on the Queli.' I'm all right again, Trino thinks. Half in this world, half in my own. But I am still well balanced. " Watch the way a serious man comported himself out there on the pitcher's mound.'

Trino waits for Vidal to shuffle back to his log. Then leans over and scoops up a larger rock. It, like the other stones, about the ant mound, has been fused by the high temperature in the old smelter, so that it looks green black and feels glassy. Trino rubs it in his hand. Blows on it. Watches how it

clouds, the reflection of things on it, though seen opaquely. His large hand nearly covers the stone entirely. When Vidal is seated, Trino, now the legendary nickname of Queli he once was, nods gravely.

* The Texas pitcher in our nine was a picture of dignity. Observe, Vidal. He wore his cap like this.' Trino reshapes his hat carefully, until he gets it the way he needs it for his presentation. 'His face he wore in this way. Neither angry nor clownish. He walked up to the mound sure of himself and-always after the Queli permitted him-took complete command. Not running or dragging his fear up there so that when he tossed the ball at the batter it was dispatched back to his teeth like a bullet of contempt. Or clowning to hide the fear and other things tightening up his backside or gripping and shrinking his counter-weights. No, Vidal. Our pitchers were none of those things. Our pitchers had eyes in back of their heads and so they looked only once to first and maybe to third if he was a lefty. But never here, there, and everywhere like something be-headed. And if he pitched for, And if he pitched our nine, the Queli, Trino taps his chest vigorously with one thumb, 'called every move he made out there. That was what made the Queli such a great catcher, Vidal. With these fists,' doubles up his hands, 'the Queli thrashed any pitcher who disobeyed his signals. It was a minor league few people ever heard about. But in those towns where we played the Queli was recognized as incomparable in the business.'

Vidal uncaps the bottle and takes a sip straight from it. 'Pitch, Queli. Pitch, guy.'

Trino watches Vidal through slitted eyes.

'Hit the paper again, eh, Queli?' Vidal smacks his lips. "Don't talk the juices away, guy. Pitch."

Trino spits out before him. 'All right. Now put your attention here. Our pitchers wound up like this. Never out of balance. See? But all motion connected all the way to the follow through. Even today some can't see it. But we saw it then and that was over thirty years ago. Before, I showed you slowly. Now watch the control of the body, the face, and the competition that is there all the time. See it? Everything necessary involved and all of it in one man and still done gracefully. Look.'

Trino winds up with all the dignity he now feels those he saw doing it had, then pitches. It all looks very good, so that Vidal thinks:

That old guy must have seen some good ones when he was in there, eh? What is it they took him up there for? Oh, yes. Now I remember. Bootlegging. They took the Trinidad to the federal penitentiary for making liquor up in the Blue Deer Range.

As soon as the rock leaves Trino's arm, he steps off the ant mound. Trino walks away from it all with an air of disdain, sureness, arrogance, and still all of it controlled by his dignity.

They both hear the rock hit the paper and pass on through. Vidal, who watches, sees the rock cut the paper. Both men hear the dull loud whack. Trino hears it striking, something like the palm of a catcher who catches a fast ball bare-handed.

Halfway between the ant mound and the log, Trino stops. Stands still.

What a strange echo that sound left, thinks. Looks across at Vidal who also stands, open-mouthed, looking across the river. 'How did it sound to you, Vidal?' asks suddenly weakly.

· Like when you fight and hit the other guy. Something like that.' Vidal's voice sounds from far-off

Trino locks his forehead in furrows. 'There is something under that paper.'

*I'll cross and look.' Vidal squares his padded shoulders bravely. 'Maybe it is only a rotted stick under it.'

Trino's forehead is fully beaded with sweat, water glides down the worry-and-work-and-laughing lines of his face. 'Oh, leave it, Vidal.'

'Costs nothing, guy. I'll cross. Take your drink.'

Trino picks up the bottle without much enthusiasm. After you get back, Vidal, we'll drink." Sits down on the log, Trino holds the bottle as if cradling something animate.

In crossing Vidal misses a step on the stones and his shoe half fills with water.

'Don't get wet,' Trino calls out absently, numbed to the humor in which it sounds to Vidal who says:

* What news, guy, disgustedly. Vidal, now on the other side of the river, rolls up his gabardine trousers and looks regretfully at his black suede shoes.

Trino watches Vidal pick up a stick, walk up to the paper, and poke into it, unsteadily. After a moment, Trino sees Vidal step back, mumble something, and raise his empty hand halfway to his face. Trino sees Vidal's mouth stay open.

'What's up, Vidal? What passes over there? Trino pushes himself up to his feet.

'Cross, guy. Quick.'

* Ah, you have found something, eh? Maybe the Chori Polainas' buried money, huh?"

*Rank the Chori's money, guy. Cross over, I tell you' Vidal sounds strange.

The strangeness in Vidal's voice makes the older man hurry, stumbling, nearly tripping as he splashes across. "Somebody throw down a case of good wine during the night?"

'Oh, sure. That's all we lack.' Vidal shakes his head and looks blankly at Trino coming up the embankment. 'Some luck we got here.'

Trino has drunk enough and stirred up the sediments from last night to feel just-so-so, neither drunk nor sober. Both his shoes slosh with water. Even his coat has been splashed so that it makes a drip trail on the yellowish sand.

'What is it, kid?'

* Dignity, guy. Your dignity. There it is. Look.' Vidal holds the ripped paper up fully with the stick. "That's what you were pitching the dignity into.'

'My God.' Trino feels his face stretching tautly. 'How was I to know, Vidal' His mouth slackens, shakes his head, as he looks on. It's hardly any bigger than my hand.' His face flushes with a greenish hue. 'For the love of my little God, Vidal, cover it.'

'How old you think?' Vidal asks impassively.

'Needed maybe five or four months more, I think. I don't know. Cover it, Vidal.'

With the end of the stick Vidal gingerly touches the navel string almost as long as one of their arms. 'Wasn't ready to be born yet, eh?'

'No, Vidal. No.' Trino watches Vidal's coldness with the shocked discovery of one having finally solved a riddle, which, however minor, is very horrible.

'Boy?'

'I don't know. Trino's rubbery face is fully about to cry, scream, or both. 'Caray, Vidal, cover it, will you?' Turns away dazedly. 'For the love of your mother, Vidal, cover it.'

'Sure, guy. Here, take one.' Vidal holds the bottle out toward Trino, who has forgotten he crossed the river with it. 'For the dignity, guy.'

'Leave all that, Vidal.' Trino's face looks greener now. 'Who is to know? First I would have cut my arm off than toss if I had known. Leave me.' Then drops on his knees on the edge of the embankment and lets his stomach dispel all the wine. When his stomach is finally through with him, he sways weakly, and Vidal has to help him up. 'Let us cross back, Vidal. It is very brutal on this side.'

man s po take Arent you These rake us or o at are us,

looking for, guy?'

'Footprints other than our own.' Trino wipes his eyes, studies the sandy embankment.

Both men look about carefully.

'Nothing is seen, guy.' Vidal jerks a thumb toward the sky. 'Could be it fell from up there. Barely grins.

'No. Anything falling from airplanes from that high would be smashed. That one under the paper is not crushed at all, Vidal.' Trino speaks irritably. * That the shoes rot. Let's cross. All I want is to get away from this badness.'

'But shouldn't we bury it, guy?'

'No, Vidal. That is a business for the authorities.'

Both men, ignoring the stones on which they can step, wade slowly back to the wall. Trino leans both arms against the wall, lets his head rest on it, feels the stones cold, numbing his forehead, welcomes the sun heat on his back.

'Guy?'

'Yes.'

'Who you suppose left it there?' Vidal is very curious. 'Maybe one of the feathers who came last night to our party, eh?'

'Who knows.' Trino blinks his eyes. 'It is there.'

'Here, guy, drink.' Vidal shoves the bottle under Trino's arms resting against the wall.

'Vidal, I'm going to drink it all.'

'Okay, guy.'

'Games.' Trino leans sideways on the wall and uncaps the bottle. 'Some

games.' Tosses the cap down and steps on it.

'Who cares, guy.' Vidal shrugs. 'Later we'll go visit the Catalina and try our luck cheating her out of another bottle.'

'Sure, Vidal' Trino tips the bottle up. 'I'll talk the nice Castilian to her.' The wine bubbles and his adam's apple bobbles.

'Guy, I think we should notify the sheriff from the Bear's store.'

'Absolutely, Vidal' Trino breaks his drink off and gets a deep breath. 'The very correct thing to do' Then continues drinking, his eyes closed all the time.

'rio qi cly lovers tre boule bilo, Vida: Looks glassily at the younger man. "That's one thing we'll not do.'

'Why don't you want to stay, guy?'

'Because the dead do things to me, Vidal.' Through with the bottle, Trino tosses it away. "That and the loneliness at night perturbs me much."

'I remember. You sleep with the lantern lit all night.' Vidal makes a flicking motion toward the east. 'But the sun is out now.'

Trino begins to shake violently. "The dark and the dead and the loneliness. It is the idea, Vidal, which perturbs."

'Okay, guy.' Vidal nods toward the bundle. 'But what can a baby do to you?'

'An innocent, Vidal. True, an angel. I know. But the fear is in me? Trino's voice rises. 'Can't you see such things, boy? Can't you feel how a man feels about the loneliness, the loss of an illusion. We might-and think about this, Vidal-we just might have been something of worth. Not this' indicates toward his stained, patched, raggy clothes 'and that' points toward the empty wine bottle 'and all our miserable presentation. Small, yes, but something.' Trino is crying now. 'Ay, how can I communicate it to you.' Eyes closed, turns his face skyward. Why must the reasons for our failures sound so hollow? '

'Okay, guy.' Vidal is as gentle as he knows how. An entirely new thing for him and not only does he find it difficult to understand but feels it like a change of something in himself which, though intangible, yet because he lacks the knowledge of it, brings him an odd form of fear. Still, Vidal wonders if he will be cheated. "Let's notify the authorities, then, so we can beg the Catalina for credit.'

Trino shakes his head vigorously. 'I'm not going to Catalina's' Seems to have a hard time convincing himself. 'I'm going to my wood camp.'

"Then who will talk to the Catalina? Vidal appears worried.

'You kneel to her and ask? Trino's brow corrugates, sweat glistens on his lined face. 'Can't kill you." Moves his jaw muscles. If you stupify your self-respect first.'

'I kneel this to her, que? Vidal makes an obscene gesture. "Anyway, I don't know how to talk to her.'

* Then, kid, you will have to start to learn."

Vidal faces this future dubiously. But you have always asked for the two of us, guy.'

*True. And for your brothers and others, too. But the resolution, Vidal, is the great secret.' Trino shuts his eyes. 'Always remember that. With the resolution you can do some things of importance? Sighs. 'Perhaps,' mutters to himself, 'I am at last finding it.'

Moses

He spills his wine into his bread
Eyeing a pyramid through the corner of his sight.
He knows those stones are wrong,
The cranes which lifted them
Too human to be oiled,
But he's a prince (or else he'd now be dead)
And soon must wipe the part of him that's soiled.
(And who will tell him of the bullrush scene,
And what he once had been?)

He weeps upon those golden gifts bestowed on him
By the Pharoah and his queen.
He stains that costliness because he feels
A blacker stain, a dark blood clot
Disfiguring the scarlet of his heart.
But Miriam, the sister safety had him spurn,
Returns with maps and messages.
He's told to learn them better than his name.

His knowledge grows into a plan.
And God, through Miriam or voices in his head,
Has promised plagues for saws
To slice the metal chains.
His beard is nearly cleansed on the eve of frogs,
And secretly a pontoon bridge is being laid.
The seas will part that day:
The Bible will say God has miracles up his sleeve:
And the wafted Jews will walk
The seven bodies of water, like the swimmer Christ, unafraid.

- Jack Lindeman

Two Poems

*James Schevill**The Longshoreman**White, fuzzball hair*

Forks down the sandpaper forehead
Over the cartridge-shaped chin
 Dangles the fireball stump of a cigar,
 Lighting roses on his open sport shirt.

With a stovepipe arm

He signals and the heavy winch
Dips like a cormorant's bill -
 Up comes a black prune of a foreign car
 To squat in the hold like a landlubber's lump.

A gaping grin

Opens stained, brown broadax teeth;
Over the rusty rail
 He tosses his chewed-up hunk of cigar,
 Fizzing out in the garbage-greased water.

Whistles shriek

And ropes slide through the breeze.
He grimaces at Mars
 Set like an orange in the evening sky,
 As home he sags from his measuring worm task.

A Game Against Age

Slowly, the old men, bearded and white,
 Enter the towering, brick warehouse, crumbling
 In the industrial district like the Colosseum.
 Surrounding factories stand darkly in the evening,
 Only the rented warehouse is lighted against loneliness.
 The old men present official membership cards
 And greet each other with challenging glee.
 Eagerly, they walk into the gaping space
 and switch on a thousand, blinking lights.
 Each has his own electric train and tracks
 Running through a festive glare of space.
 Immaculate, with spats and cane, a flower
 Yellow in his buttonhole, a retired engineer

And roars his train across into a tunnel.
 These are no temporary trains for boys.
 The oldster in his sweatshirt has discovered Africa;
 Through lions and elephants by the tracks,
 His train chugs to the edge of a diamond mine.
 A Jew from Russia moves across Siberia,
 An Italian reconstructs the Brenner Pass,
 The son of a frontiersman puffs past Indians,
 Real wood burning in the furnace of his cab.
 Tall and stoop-shouldered, a bald head
 Builds a station for The Eternal City,
 Rome, where trains arrive and never will depart.
 For hours they work over beer and coffee and cigars,
 Twenty old men cackling at their projects.
 Late at night they abandon the warehouse,
 Close for a night their miniature game against age,
 And drive home slowly under the blinking lights of planes.

** O World of Fire and Evening'*

*The quaking aspen, the silver birch,
 a silver shaking, now a slow turn
 to the brown leaves, the red leaves:
 somehow the season's caught fire today.
 Where's the fire burns this color?*

The hand that trembles, the silver lines
 a bright eye threads in the slow dronings
 of children rowing silver boats to sea:
 all the streams of memory going to sea,
 the white sails filling with dark winds.

The fires die; a touch of frost whitens
*the darkening embers, the ship turns
 on a winter lake. Winds blow ice,
 a spattering of snow spots the dark day.
 The children sink into the soft snow,*

*their eyes languish behind the night.
 A gold fish haunts the fast ship,
 the children sleep the winter night,
 slipping like silver eels along
 the threads the old woman spins.*

the silver birch, the stilled branches.

The fires of autumn fall a white ash,
the whole world's like the white children,
sleeping, the loosed thread, silent winds.

- Walter Albert

Two Poems

Dorothea Walker

Mid-Century Pastoral

*In Lenten strength
And one by one,
Distracting crown
And robes removed,
Each must pace
The furrowed earth
Of man's erosion,
Winnowing truth
To save the seed;*

*We view the stars,
Including Mars,
From the contours
Of our fields;
Collective man
To raise the dead,
Apportion rain,
Or loosen a bud?
Then dare we trust*

*Adrift on waves of sound
Under divergent clocks,
Bodies flow through portals
Into the waiting planes:
Which winking, wandering stars
Point the way to home?*

*Aloft, the compass swings
The stars on to a course,
The question safe for a time,
Encompassed in the wings
In engine-driven sleep,
Below a turning sky.*

*Descent into the dawn
Dispels the midnight calm,
The question calls again:
Other dissenting clocks,
Han point hound the word.*

*So my druid thoughts
Turned in solitude:
I tried to read in skies
What human features say.
There is no Shangri-La
Waiting among the peaks;*

*Building stones await,
In town or desert waste,
Hands that move with love,
Emotion's guide and law.
Man's province is the world.
Time's hands say at twelve:*

*Tristan Derème**(translated by Michael Benedikt)*

You appear. But, fingers on the latch
You stand, with a disconcerted air. Then
Before some papers encumbering the table
You say: 'This house is becoming uninhabitable!'
And your cross-chain shakes in its three-hundred links.
It will be, soon, two months that we have quarrelled.
It will be two months soon since I met you
And that I learned of your native taste for sugared water,
Green apples, promenades, under-
Growth in October and quarter novels.
You grumble, but I know that in our worst quarrels --
When words bounded like grasshoppers --
That you are tenderness itself and that you smile in truth
In your heart that is more light than a mouse's tooth.

When you will have gone from me (do not lift your arms)
When you will have gone from me, for you will, don't protest
I won't seek further for carnations at the florist's.
I will live alone with my sad fabulations
And I will say: ' Here is the room without you,
And here is the mirror which can't see you,
The mahogany table, the settee, the ottoman,
The footstool where you would set your slipper.
O gulf calm, where once excellence was anchored! ...:
And sometimes bitterly I will smile
While perusing my copper-cornered Racine
At the doodles -- men dancing -- you made in the margin.

No, it is not that which you have dreamed -
And the evening when you go to sit at the café
To read le Divan, la Phalange, or les Marges
You dreaming of sailing ships, which slide on large
Atlantics, in open azure, towards islets
Of candor, water-lilies which balance in the waves...
The drinkers glitter and shine. You are alone. You read. You cut
The pages. You are alone in the noises of saucers
And of these people whose hearts reflect no skies at all
Ignoring Gaudion, Royère, and Duhamel.
You are alone and under your smiles you weep a little, just once
Sad rose in the midst of a bouquet of onions.

Go, and let love serve you as mahout
Sweet elephants of my thoughts
O poet, you have not but
To follow lightly their balanced rumps
While hope weaves a white hammock.

You have wished to guide your troupe towards the summits,
Towards the glacier no living one has touched;
The elephants trembled at the edges of abysms
Or, while they nibbled the meagre wild-thyme
You took poses, sublime.

Go! start down again with your starved monsters
To sweetnesses of grassy earth.
It is the valley that you loved
The house with the shutters closed
The old terraces, and by the river, a flute.

Here is the green plain where you will settle
In the hammock, consoler of all misfortunes;
The night air will caress your slow limbs,
And the blue elephants will browse on lilacs
Under the clear warmth of the moons.

Undressing

Slowly, in the darkness
Of this shadow-filled room,
 On a quiet night redolent of perfume
Outside the wide open window
Facing the blue.
Sweetness.
Peace.
Thoughts.
Unlike yesterday
My shoes fall heavily
 From the exhaustiveness of marching
Across a life that is new.
Light
Rippling of buttons through warm fingers,
 A coolness about the neck and breast.
Eyes traveling from a star
To a remembrance of the past.
Older images,
A sense of things left behind
In the music of my time.
A woman dressed...
In lavender.
One sad word
And two young hands
That have left the imprint
Of spring on mine.
Tremblings.
Clothes that fall
Dusty and stained by contacts.
A soft mound of underwear
Still warm
And the body free, naked.
Chastity of a rounded life
Loving the breeze,
In childish joy,
Fondling my hair,
Like a friend, maybe,
But more like a woman,
Rising near my bed,
With semi-closed lids.
In her lashes a tingling light
Gathered by the air and held
Like lustrous dew.
Fresh scented sheets
And I before the night.

No questions;
 Only an endless love
 Between me and the leaves,
 Between me and the wind,
 Between me and the blue.

-- Luciano Folgore
 (translated by Dora M. Pettinella)

Vowels

A black, E white, I red, U green, O blue, Vowels ...
 Some day I shall reveal your secret origins.
 A, black band shaggy with dazzling brilliant flies
 Relentlessly astir round stagnant holes.

Gulfs of shadow; E, openness of ships and tents,
 Thrust of gallant glaciers, brave kings, trembling of flower clusters.
 I, purple spilled blood, beautiful lips laughing
 In anger or repentant drunkenness.

U, cycles, god-like vibrations of greening seas,
 Peaceful pastures where cows graze, wrinkles of peace
 Which alchemy imprints on foreheads of great men.

O supreme Clairon full of strange sounds,
 Silences traversed by Worlds and Angels sky-bound;
 O - Omega, violet ray from the eyes of God!

- Arthur Rimbaud
 (translated by Dora M. Pettinella)

Three Poems

Robert Burlingame

Parable

Into the grass
My hand like an old regret
Plunges to sickle a weed.

Too long we go without
Nature. Even to curb
Her in the name of yard care
Is a green experience.

The lady bugs fly.
I clip and prune. Watch!

*I dispatch a weed, dark
Interloper -- all spine and milk.*

What I have killed
Is the harsh root of life.
But -- pleased - I go in
And embrace my wife.

Silenus

*With affection I'm gone clean mad
tender I've grown down to the bone*
my gaze breeds quick with the couch grass
each blue fire-milked vein clips me-

Until under the holy sun and rain
I sprawl brave ungirded and drunk
a thing touched by all and feasting
full the wet splay of shameless earth.

How long all this will go on depends
on how long the sober world lives blind
to this deep water thrill of foamed love
to this old play between me and broad Venus.

Una Puerta

This is the bull.
And here is the man.
Two nights off is the lady.

Una Puerta! Una Puerta!

*Now is the blood, the slobber,
And the sword. But two nights off*
In Aguascalientes is the lady.

Una Puerta! Una Puerta!

Tercio: now and now and now
Sighs death in a caress between
Hot arms dark in the night in
Aguascalientes -- of a lady, a lady.

Una Puerta! Una Puerta!

FLAG FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

Stanley Noyes

The gate swung and the sorrel ducked his head and whirled out, making the first jump sideways, with Jingle bent into his rigging, free hand jerking high, his legs kicking out high and sideways, ringing his spurs into the now straight-bucking sorrel's shoulders. Twenty feet out the horse tried a twisting, sideways jump to the other side and skidded on striking and both horse and man went down in an explosion of dust. The horse appeared out of it first, head and neck wrenching upward followed by struggling forelegs then was loping away free. The whistle blew. The rider got up slowly, getting to his feet and testing his left knee, dusting himself and limping over to pick up his straw hat. He smacked it against his arm and put it on, limping back to the group before the chutes with his head forward so his hat covered his face.

NEXT RIDER, WHO'S COMING OUT OF CHUTE FOUR ON A BIG GRAY HORSE CALLED LOBO ..

In a strip of shade by the announcer's stand, he bent over and unhooked his chaps disgustedly, turning his back on the blare of the loudspeakers and the intermittent pounding of hoofs as horses and their riders issued from the chutes around him. Shaking the chaps he rolled them neatly and dropped them into an old barracks bag. After slapping his faded tight jeans, he straightened and dusted his white shirt, especially where he'd sweated through and dust had turned to mud. Glancing up, he noticed the kid looking at him. Although the other was about seventeen -- only a couple of years younger than him -- Jingle thought of him as a kid because he looked green.

"That's tough luck," said the kid. "You was going good till he fell. Will you get a re-ride?"

- I expect.' Jingle buckled the barracks bag and picked it up.
- Say, you know anything about that Mickey Finn bull?"

About to shake his head and hobble off, Jingle stared at the kid. He was a little guy with a peachy complexion and turned-up nose and had on a big black hat and cheap blunt-toed boots. He was trying to stand as big as he could, with his sleeves rolled and hands on his hips. Jingle felt faintly sorry for him.

· He's a good bull, not too tough to ride, but you can win money on him. If you can get past the first three four jumps you'll be all right. He bucks straightaway

"Thanks a lot."

Turning, he limped away between other riders before the kid could say any more. He was only chummy with a few buddies, the bareback and bull riders he traveled with. Far as he was concerned, everyone else could go to hell, especially kids. They had no business here, Harver's bulls weren't for beginners. In fact it was a bull called DTs which was causing him to walk, frowning, with a limp.

He hobbled into an empty alleyway back of the chutes, moving into the

shady corner, where he set down his gearbag. After wiping his face, he lay down, using the bag as a pillow, pulling his hat over his face. Now all he had to do was nap till the bull riding. Ha ha. After staring up at the inside of his hat and wrestling with himself (so hard he once or twice nearly groaned aloud) for a long time, he made up his mind to do something he'd never done, something he'd been thinking about all day, even before the bareback riding --alibi out of this bull ride. It was hot, he didn't feel good, and of all the bulls in all the bucking strings on the circuit, this was one he couldn't face today. It made him feel ashamed, but hell he had wrenched his knee a little. Sitting up, he wrapped it -- over the pantsleg -- with a dirty ace bandage from his bag.

Near the end of the second section of saddle broncs, before they ran bulls into the chutes, he limped into the arena to speak to the judges. One was Tommy Carsons. He told him he was going to turn DT's out, because of his knee. Tommy, who had flaring ears and a kindly bucktoothed grin, looked from the knee to Jingle and shrugged. But the other judge, Brock Pember, was another kind of man. Jingle had anticipated trouble with him. Brock was in his forties and had been rodeoing a long time and those cool green eyes bladed into his own.

'You can't. He's Harver's best bull. These here are ranch folks come to this rodeo. A lot of em paid money just to see that bull buck this afternoon.'

'The hell with em. I ain't getting on him with this knee.' Jingle glared at the judge.

'He's kinda rank. Ain't worried, are you?' said Brock with a little cold smile.

'Go to hell. I said it's my trick knee.'

'Ok, said Brock at last, slapping his clipboard against his palm. 'But this'll mean Al has to pay mount money. And he don't like to do that. He wants to feature that bull.'

Jingle had pulled a cigar out of his shirt pocket, licked and lit it. He tapped Brock on the chest with two knuckles. 'If Harver raises a stink, tell him to see me.'

*Ok, big shot. But if I was you I wouldn't get smart with Al -if you want to make any more of his rodeos.' Brock continued to stare at him coolly. 'Looked to me like you slid out of the way when that sorrel fell.

* Well, you seen it wrong. When you're judging, Brock, you ought to watch more careful? Turning, puffing on his cigar, Jingle hobbled away, having to jump a little to get out of the way of a saddle bronc that seemed to buck straight for him. "There's one sombitch thinks he's God," he muttered, leaning against a chute.

The shadow of the western grandstand poked long into the field. Dust had been bad during the calf roping and the saddle broncs and the steer wrestling. Before the team roping it was announced the arena would be wet down. After that the water truck came in several times before the end of the show. The grease-colored tanktruck would jounce around and around the field, making the Indian driver's straw hat disappear into the cab roof on bad bumps. When the water stopped sloshing out, the truck would exit fast.

All this time the crowd of ranchers and farmers and townspeople fought the dust and frizzling heat by buying beer and by hoping, individually, to win the Olds the Legion was raffling.

Each time the Indian loaded with water he must have also personally taken on beer. The last few times he circled fast, changing gears like the driver of a big semi. Slouched in the window of the cab, he flopped loosely with the bumps, glancing into the crowd with a lopsided grin, swinging the old tanktruck around corners like a hot rod. Twice he slid the whole rear end, raising a dirty cauliflower of dust which drifted laxly into the fiery sky. The last time he went out proudly half-standing on the running board. The crowd had been laughing at him and the announcer only had to say -- MUST BE BEER IN THAT WAGON - and a number of people could hardly stop chuckling. Even near evening the thermometer reached so high that grown, serious men and women leaned weakly back and giggled and gasped until they had only strength enough left to fan themselves.

The bulls were in the chutes. Jingle was leaning against the weathered, splintery boards trying by some internal pressure to repulse the withering heat of the late sun which hammered through his hat and the shirt that stuck to his sides.

*Say, Buddy, would you help me set my bullrope? '

It was the kid. His face seemed discolored and shrunken a little. Cursing inwardly, Jingle glared at him a moment. Why the hell had he picked on him? He felt like puffing smoke in his face and limping off, but instead asked him if he'd rosined his rope. The kid shook his head, with a questioning frown.

Jingle flicked away his cigar. 'Where's your bull? '

'Over there -- chute three. This is my second rodeo,' he apologized. Jingle grunted, taking the stiff new bullrope from his hand.

At the chute Jingle slipped an end of the rope around a post, stretched it and rubbed rosin into it with a sack made from an old sock. The gray bull stood restless in the chute, eyeing them through a crack. Climbing on the fence, Jingle let the rope dangle on one side of the bull. With a wire hook the kid snagged the looped end, where the bell had slid, drew it up to Jingle's hand. Adjusting the braided rope carefully a little behind the hump, Jingle set it loosely and left it. Later when it was time for the kid to get down on the animal, Jingle told him how to do it and pulled his rope for him, telling him when to close his gloved hand. The kid was pale, but he didn't look near as scared as others Jingle had seen. Finally he told the kid to set straight up and dig his spurs in along the rope. The kid spoke to the gatemen and the gate opened.

The bull whirled and plunged out a yard off the ground, whipping his hindquarters and kicking in the air at angles opposite his shoulders and thick-horned head. He clattered down to collapse his shadow, soared upward again, head thrown back, whipping his shadow along the dust like a hurt snake, rolling his hips to sunfish in the air. On the third jump the kid ripped loose, was catapulted dummylike through a gauze of dust to land hard on his side, free of the bull. Clarence Riggs, the clown, rushed in with his red umbrella,

but the bull only swiped at it in passing, bucking away until a leadout man galloped alongside and jerked off the flank. The whistle trilled. As the bull was loping through the catchpen gate, the kid finally got up, rubbing his butt.

Jingle climbed down, limped over and seated himself behind the chutes in a rectangle of shade. That's all right, he reasoned, but Clarence was getting old and couldn't run fast enough to keep with a bull which went far into the field. Which DTs did. He felt bad about turning him out, even if he was hung over and the bull was a doublerank sombitch. He squeezed his knee. After turning one bull out he might get to where he was chicken of others, then all bulls then bareback horses then he'd be washed up as a rodeo hand and end up working his ass off for next to nothing on some ranch or farm, or else driving milktruck or working in a filling station. He'd lose his buddies, no more traveling over the country, no more partying, no more romancing cowboy-crazy girls, no more carefree life. But the worst was he wouldn't be Jingle no more, just old Dave Jareck. This made him feel so bad he brooded on it till he lost track of time and looked up to find new bulls in the chutes. He recognized the biggest as DTs.

He twisted to see better. Back of the huge tiger-striped neck and fore-quarters he could see a rope. By God some old boy was going to get on him. The bull had his head down and made a low sound like a growl. Jingle grinned and scrambled up, limped over, climbed up on the chute and looked down, smelling the big brahma's stink. The dark hump came about a foot from the top plank. The bull stood still, his ears and loose hide occasionally twitching off the colony of gnats and flies that followed him. But what Jingle stared at was the rope. He reached down and felt it. It was almost white - brand new.

Leaping down before the chute, he nearly bumped into Brock Pember. 'You're not going to let that kid get on old DTs?'

Brock looked away, frowning, his eyes squinted. 'Harver's paying mount money, five bucks. None of the boys'll get on him.'

Jingle swore. 'Where is he?'

Brock motioned with his jaw. Harver's flankman and another chutehand were standing on the back fence of the chute now. The kid, wearing his riding glove, was just beginning to climb up the gate. Jingle whirled, caught him by the belt and dragged him down, leaning forward talking furiously into his face: 'You know this bull? Well, I guess you don't. He's one of the rankest around. And you're going to get on him after bucking off an easy bull like Mickey? You're nuts, boy.'

The bull rumbled in the chute.

The kid dropped his eyes. 'I can use the money. Anyway, they said all those folks are waiting to see him buck.'

'Listen kid,' Jingle said. It wouldn't be worth it to you for ten times the money. And listen to me -- you see them bastards in the stands and along the fence? All most of em come to a rodeo for is to see some cowboy hurt. Screw em. You don't want to get on that old bull for nobody?'

The kid stood looking at the dust, his face the color of poked ashes.

' All right, Jingle,' said the flankman. 'You turned the bull out. Come on, kid, you're holding up the show.'

' No, by God. You ain't going to put him on that bull'

The kid again turned slowly to climb the chute. The flankman stared at Jingle a moment, spat a streak of tobacco into the chute.

* Listen, you gonna get on this bull?' said Jingle.

*I told them I would.' There were points of sweat around the kid's open lips, but he turned and began again climbing the chute. Jingle jerked him down, crowding him against the fence with his fist clenched.

'No you ain't. I drew this bull. I'll take him. Hear that, Brock? You hear, Tom? I'm coming out on him, so get set to mark me.'

Brock looked at Tommy, who grinned and shrugged. ' Well, let's go.' He drew his clipboard from under his belt. 'Let's see if you ride big as you talk.'

'Let me use your bullopie, will you?' Jingle asked, climbing the chute. The kid nodded, looking relieved. ' Hey buddy, let me use your rosin.' The bullrider at the next chute tossed him a bag. Straddling the bull, his toes in the cracks between the boards, Jingle briskly rosined his glove, squeaking it back and forth along the rope. His heart was butting fast against his ribs, but he'd lost his fear. The flankman, chewing tobacco, pulled his rope for him. Gingerly Jingle squatted his rump downward. As he touched its back the animal snorted like an air hose and a horn clapped the side of the chute. He saw an eye gleam in the big head.

'He's all right once he feels your weight,' said the flankman, holding the free end of the flankstrap. Jingle's legs were spread wide by the back but he squeezed them hard alongside the rope. Ahead of his gloved hand the hump rose with the gnats on it violet in the sun. He heard his name on the speaker and saw the flankman's face, as he glanced back, and the awed face of the kid. The arena was a dazzling dusty white, except for dark streaks like harrow marks where the tanktruck had passed. The sky was white-blue. He made a grin and locked his spurs alongside the rope, his free arm high, and nodded at the gatemmen.

The bull jerked away so hard air bent across Jingle's face as they spun and birked through sickening glimpses of cowboys on the chutes the announcer's stand the field the bleachers and that dizzy patch of color the clown. Then they whooshed straight into the field and jarred so hard he saw white throughout an instantaneous sequence of swinging twists then saw earth then sky, grunting with each sledging impact. He knew only he was still with him going like wind too far into the arena from Clarence. He bobbed off toward the left and thought he was gone seeing the ground rushing way under him but the next wrench snapped him straight. He was now just being hurtled along, being carried, striking again and again so hard his spine and head were beginning to whip, slapping forward and back and forward until he glimpsed suddenly himself swinging at the rising horns and felt the bone punch on the chin and slid slowly, floating, down the twisting bull's side. A vision of blurred legs and his own feet struck earth and he sat hard as the wind passed.

Far off he heard the eight-second whistle. It was funny sitting slouched

forward the sun on his head and the bull trotting stiff-legged toward him. Going to eat me, he thought, like about someone else. There was the thud thuddy thud of hoofs as the head grew bigger eyes horns coming out of the -- ooof - dust he was down with it through his shoulder and had snatched a holt on the other horn, hanging on hard as they jerked along the arena, taking the shocks of the head on his chest, sometimes feeling glancing hammer-strokes on his dragging legs. The horn like a dental poker in a numb jaw and him with one thought to hang on. They bounced so hard the jiggling in his head was like a loose light, black then sunny dust and then black and blinding white then dust. They stopped and he glimpsed the legs of a horse and next the red umbrella and Clarence's track shoe kicking the bull in the face until there was a yank that sucked out his wind and the bull was struggling off, fighting a rope, being drawn by a leadout man's great roan, with Clarence poking the umbrella at him from the other side and the other leadout man whirling a rope. He lay there, resting, looking up at the splintering sun, then pressed his hand hard over the hole and sat up.

Far across the field to the left a group of the boys were standing out from the chutes looking at him. To the right was a grandstand, everything moving and waving arms. Suddenly it was like a bubble popped in his ear and he heard the shouting and yelling. He was thirty feet from the fence. He looked. The distance-little bull had busted loose and was loping back dragging the rope. The other leadout man was galloping after him whirling his loop. At once -- as Jingle swayed unbelieving -- a guy climbed over the fence and came running toward him. He seemed to run very slow. Then the purple-faced old boy was pulling jerking him up and with his arm around him rushing him toward the fence, as he ran trying to push a pint bottle in his face.

'Here, drink. Havadrink, quick, quick.'

* Ouch ouch ow Jesus God for Christ's sakes,' he moaned, trying weakly to shove him away. Glancing left he saw the other leadout man had snagged the bull again, and it was facing him with the rope taut. At the fence he kept shaking his head and bending his face away. But the guy kept trying to push the bottle into his mouth.

'Come on cowboy, quick. Take drink.'

Jingle pulled away, leaning into the fence, and tried to slug him but was too weak. The grandstand was yelling at the drunk.

'Let him alone! Somebody grab him! Hey fatso, lay off! He's hurting him! Get a cop!' Above the others a woman's voice kept yelling: 'Put away that whiskey! Don't touch him! Don't you dare touch him!'

The loudspeakers were blaring about keeping calm. The heavy guy was waving his arms for silence. He was wearing a sport shirt and on his forearm crossed anchors and a flag in color were tattooed.

*Jus trying to help poor cowboy. Poor cowboy's hurt, needs a drink..? he bawled, panting, at the crowd.

Jingle sagged against the fence. His belt was caught on something that partly held him up. The ambulance had started across the field toward him with red lights blinking. This seemed funny and except for the numbed hurt

he felt almost good. Still Jingle like the letters on his belt said. Good old kid... And old Clarence kicking the bull in the nose like that . . .

'Jus tryin to help --I'm a good guy!' the drunk bellowed at the crowd.

Someone booed and a voice yelled:

' You're a fatassed jerk!'

Jingle made an unsteady gesture. The other held out the bottle and Jingle took it with the shiny hand. Everything got quiet. More with his body than his arm, Jingle made a wavering careless movement that brought the bottle to his lips. Then with a swing of his body, he thrust it back to the drunk. There was laughter and some people clapped. Jingle paid no more heed to the drunk or the rest of the crowd. He looked at the shiny hand he hugged to him and watched the drops form then fall from his fingertips and go black in the dust.

**... IF EVERYBODY JUST KEEPS CALM. JINGLE SEEMS ALL
RIGHT AND WE'LL HAVE HIM RIGHT IN THE AMBULANCE AND
RUSH HIM STRAIGHT TO THE DOCTOR'S HE'S ON HIS FEET
AND I'M SURE ALL RIGHT . . . PROBABLY JUST SHOOK UP
SOME. WHILE WAITING TO CLEAR THE FIELD FOR THE NEXT
RIDER WE'LL HAVE ... HERE'S THE AMBULANCE, LET'S EVERY-
BODY GIVE JINGLE A BIG HAND . . .**

A white-jacketed man jumped out of either side of the ambulance and ran to the rear door. One of them flung it open and they began to drag out the chrome-canvas thing. Jingle shook his head, feeling suddenly stubborn. He spat and lurched loose and nearly made it. They caught him as he fell and lifted him and laid him down. The siren groaned as they pulled away and a pale fellow began working on his shoulder.

'Something make it stop,' Jingle gritted out. All at once the pain was catching up.

' Sure kid. You know, you looked good for a while.'

He could see out the window. As they crossed the field fast leaving rising dust, he was sure he saw the tanktruck bounce by going the other way, realized how dry he was and it seemed like him and the Indian grinned at each other -- the rain wagon passing the meat wagon ... made him feel better, glad that old boy was going to lay the dust, wet down the places where he'd bled.

Four Poems

*Judson Jerome**Descent of Man*

After a month in the Rockies Mike's arms hung,
his jaw hung, beard was matted black around
his stagnant mouth, his eyes, lumpish in membranes,
hung in their pods as he sat beside the fire.
Our burros, hobbled on the meadow, grazed like a pair

of Greeks relieved of animality --
but we had let centuries take us, sank
in the lunar ebb, the slime of the past. These blue
peaks had not brought the grandeur boys require
just at the age they sniff themselves in fear.

We had reverted: the fish we mostly fed
upon were fried, now, trailing intestines, pasted
with scales, and soon we would, with beak or paw,
lift them out wriggling, eat them raw. I broke.
A look at Mike at breakfast made me choke.

I shook my skinny arms and screamed (while silent
mountains averted their faces like polite
neighbors). I kicked my dew-damp bedroll. I
was going home. Home in my mind was sheets,
radio music, sanitary streets.

Bride-like, I had found exudation in
the exercise of life. I sought my dream,
where things are starched and done for one in kitchens.
Mike, huge in his blundering haste, packed up, agreed --
like one who had exposed what he should hide.

We rolled our stuff in tarps and scuffed the fire.
An hour later we were filing down
a cliff lip overlooking the glinting river,
Mike goading our two burros, their great packs
rocking our rhythm, winding past the rocks

with aspen epaulets -- just like the books
said outdoors ought to be. Civility
regained, we watched the leaves -- grace in their gold
going -- and how the woods decayed with pride,
and nodding burros took their waste in stride.

Clay

Give it self: tear off a chunk and pound.
Hand heat and pressure make it round. It? Round?

It. Round. For every squeeze an opposite
impression comes from you and makes it it.

So shape is negative: but fat and real,
and regular if turned upon a wheel.

Turned? Rather, though your foot impels below,
it seems to turn: you hold, and it would go.

You educate it merely, thin it down,
as verbally it spins into a noun:

a pot, a thing in space, with out and in
you gave it. You. Your hands and discipline.

The clay is damp and finely granular,
less pliable than you, and yet you are

except for something, like this clay, this pot,
a self imposed on nothing, shaped from not,

defined, a hunk of motion with a name,
for every pot you make, not quite the same.

Otter Point, Maine

More than a mile from the nearest rutted lane
was this spruce-tangled tip of granite knob
where life had given maybe fifty feet
to the chewing of the sea -- and God knows when
if ever otter might have been there: snails
were its conscience, and the million crusty-lidded
eyes of barnacles, eyeless starfish, stalk-eyed crabs.

Perhaps a nervous squirrel looked out where sails
passed pregnantly the only human hint
until blond pioneers, young man and wife,
hewed passage for their yellow Model A
which coughed and ground out to the edge of life.
They liked that fog-soaked view and straightway built
a camp: hauled lumber over the roots, rocks, by the snails,

the bristling trees, and agonized the air
 with saws and hammering. A measured, flat
 floor then imposed its reason on the tough
 and twisted wild. Beams diagrammed the sky.
 Now brandy, stove and window give the lie
 to waves crumbling cold, dropping like scarves,
 futile as instinct breaking upon the mind's rebuff.

Sour Grapes

Suppose that like a rocket our desire
 pursued its target electronically
 adjusting to each dodge. Ironically,
 infallible desire is not desire.
 We have a foolish pride in aiming higher
 than any object that our sights can see.
 We much prefer whatever cannot be:
 to get is not the point, but to aspire.
 Rockets are smarter; so was the practical fox
 who weighed grapes in the balance, found them green.
 Judas was not so wrong as out of season.
 Things wanted can be had: there are no clocks
 in Bedlam, raving of hours lost. Their clean
 hands click their needs away with timely reason.

Two Poems

William Harmon

Fishes in the Chapters of the Sea

In the third bar's darkness I discovered my love
 And a tumbler (double bourbon) on her table
 As beautiful as she was beautiful,
 But I could not tell how I felt about her.

Around, all rained. As the patrons sat
 Surrendered under umbrellas under the comfort roof
 To sapping evaporating happiness from glassware,
 I thought that they were spent by what they bought.

We proceeded to a fourth place where nobody was
 But us. The rain dropped round ponds on the floor,
 And my darling ordered a double bourbon : a rib
 In her ' terrible algebra ' and her umbrella.

Now in a last bar we watch our world labor
 Toward the foreevercast map of a damp dawn.
 Tires press along about their business
 Something like love that solves no problems.

One Letter Out of Many

One January afternoon I wrote
 The facets of the sea reflect the heavens.
 My stomach ached into my diaphragm,
 So I stopped and wrote nothing for months and months.
 Then, one bitter midnight, I remember printing
 (In bourbon on mahogany, a waste of each)
Happiness is a V-shaped matter
 That starts at nothing and then gets fatter.
 I relinquished whiskey and writing for a while.
 Then, a lovely lady took me for a ride
 In her exorbitant convertible
 Till my ears roared and my eyes streamed with speed.
 We stopped on a mountain at dawn, and I wrote
 (in the coat of dust on the hot hood of her car)
 The darling stars are the landlords of our love.
 Later, when she won custody of the child,
 I scribbled (in the margin of Keats's 'Last Sonnet')
 Stupidity is a Bitch that eats the South:
 Pity the little Children in her Mouth. -
 Then burned the whole works, even the fountain pen,
 In the furnace.
Lies sizzled like Cellophane.
 So I drink a little for my liver's sake,
 And whisper to my shirt, and write a lot.

Antinomy

Bird song and pink phlox near their end --
 I have grieved among the ironies of love
 And power, pondering ways to mend
 A day, an hour, I could not wholly save.
 Now color, music, weighted, hang from eye and ear --
 These parts of summer still belong
 Upon me - I cannot shear
 The season to some final wrong.

The tune of what country, bird,
 And flower, the royal colors of what land?
 Partial, I, by nature, have concurred
 And held my scraps with greedy hand.
 A bird, a flower -- see how day
 Once more my avarice withstood:
 I could not take enough to say
 I feel the weight of final good.

-Charles Edward Eaton

Two Poems

Tim Reynolds

*Recording
 for Harry Partch*

After the glossy vinylite whirlpool had subsided,
 dragging to the bottom spars flotsam buoys
 sailors bottles floating crates staved-in boats
 seawrack, in short after everything there was,
 after absolutely everything had been caught
 in that confusion of water and gone down,
 then I found myself heaved up on a still shore
 among eucalyptus and redwood trees
 far from that ferocious omnivorous ocean
 almost foundering again in a silence
 even the shrill crickets couldn't drown.

As I lay Dianne

the season also dies
 beyond my bedroom windows; its chill light
 but jells my clustered dark. One year of grace;
which year, like me, dies hard
 but, like me also, dies, fearing death as once I feared
the subway. I was eight:
 dreading the mounting thunder in my ears
 I fled the gloomy underground in strangled tears,

my pulse hard in my throat..
 That adder strikes like time along my wrist,
 is supple still, still venomous, still fast.

with antiquity's indifferent patience waits me out,
and I will last the end
 of summer, potent once, and plentiful:
 together we two stiffen into frozen ground.

The year, like me, lies bare.
 We two will share this last indignity,
 both tensed, enduring, as we can, our fall;
as this rigidity,
 this cancer in the cell, congeals until at last,
the serpent cane once more,
 I probe, then frozen stiff, a deeper hole,
 an obolus for the turnstile cold in my cold fist.

Goldfinches

Great bearded branches of Monterey cypress
Bridging the sky, sway in suspension.
 Brown leather jacket button cones are clustered
 With a snugness and smoothness hard to disturb.
 Wait! An olive green and yellow flower
Blooming at the tip of a branch drops
And perches below. Waxy wingtips
 Twitch as he twists and neatly biting seeds:
Peeps. An impressive theatrical event
 Is about to occur: Strung through branches
 Are hundreds of finches who were not there
 Until somebody chirped. Like a Japanese scroll
 Unaesthetically augmented, too many birds
 On too many branches eating too many seeds.
 At a cue from backstage all disappear;
Not one tremor of a cypress needle
 Testifies the truth of their brief presence.

- Melissa Blake

Robert S. Sward

The Wedding

' Yes, please come. Plato
will be there, Homer
the Paperclips, Gin
Jo-eeek, creepy St. Olive

* And Jesus knows now
about gin. O yes
there'll be wine, cream-
cheese, the Apostles

** And could you look the way
you look, writing? Please*
Jo'll have some prints
for us. Roman sonnet-scenes

' And Olive's girl friend's
Greek lover; a Swan
I think. Anyway
the twelve Apostles

· Yes, yes, you know them!
they're going to marry
their daughters; isn't it
really, it's just wonderful!

* Oh, and Zanthippe:
well, she & Petrarch...
he's composed the song
the Apostles sing

*'You will come, won't you,
and talk to Olive?
and Homer? And Please
shut him up about the war.'*

*Store**I*

The store was dark -- and solid window:
Cars, the street, pigeons, time, congested
Into glass. We stared, entered -- became
A kind of glass -- only nothing, white
Fluid: incapable of ever leaving.

The store, street, nor nothing of the store
Was on display. We were there, solid
And as the pane -- and then nothing, white
Again; -- and incapable of time.
My wife was but the street, blank, myself & cash.

We tried to think of business, of cash, of war.
The store was its thousand square feet of window --
Selling nothing; and we were glass, and white, there
Sensing darkness -- ourselves, an embodied reflection
Solidity, death ... an accumulation of stores.

II

Someone was heaving rocks; they bounced off
The glass. Perhaps the street, that was not
The store, aspiring to be the store
Had tried to shatter us, to enter
Into us -- and to become itself, again.

We were sensing through the panes, the cash
The sparrows, the color, the darkness:
The impressions of a reflection,
(The impossibility of self,
The impressions -- the reflections of oneself.

Impressions were an impossibility,
Impressions -- and an embodied reflection.
We were on display, the display of ourselves
The darkness a window. We were there, solid, the window
And facing in. Incapable of ever leaving.

Two Poems

*Milton Kessler**An Instant of Water*

Remember me, O father of beachcombers,
Tonight I walk beneath sea-sky;
Provide, for my rim is smooth
Teeth biting inward; I'm sleek as a fin;
Ill enter without ripples.

Below, the shells call,
Hollow as abandoned bells.
Downward, the crabs move like crippled hands.
I, kissed alive by the mouths of fish,
Follow the downward swim of eels.

The ocean is brown here.
In the underswellings,
By the gusts of inner silt,
My sharks are saddened.
Mine is the free-sway of kelp.

But my edges ache.
The screen jumps like a lung;
I hear the powdery lunge of a moth.
I wake with a red pain,
My head on a sea-gray table.

The Lynching

*Dragged through doorways of fragrance
Dense as embalmer's perfume, Parker,
Wounds deep as blossoms,
Died beneath magnolia.
He fell; then sky was
Grass, and the flash of quartz in stone.
Blood soured; the cage was not enough.
They hacked the white bones through.*

Tonight, in Poplarville,
The rain dies at the eaves;
Leaves fall face-downward;
The hill-shacks breathe on their stones;

*Tasting blood in their corners,
And three men sit on a fence
Only their odors alive.*

*But it happened, then there,
With flowers: jasmine, lily, magnolia;
And by the smell of flowers
He knew the place.
Now, beneath birds,
Licked by the water's drifting mold,
Parker, skin bleaching white,
Swells in the Pearl River.*

The Quitter

Having put two or three people in a book and seen how they
act perpetually, I will not put any other people
in a book.

They have their being absolutely and eternally.

They are always completely what they are.

But I have one, ten, twenty years left to me before I can be
absolutely and eternally what I am.
It is not mete nor right that the created should be greater
than its god.

- Marion Montgomery

Beauty on the Beach

Yes, you are a burnished gold
thing; and all admire the wise markings
of furtive white that crest your thighs
and trim the dark sun you so boldly wear.

*But is it the you that they desire?
Or is it the sun's impersonal glaze*
on hard wedges of sand and sea and flesh?
You but refract the light, ceramic lady.

- Kingsley Widmer

Larry Rubin

Unbridged

The draw-span settles into place so smooth
You'd never note the broken continuity
Unless you slid a knife-blade down the seam.
Such bridges arc superior to mind,
Whose jagged gaps
No synapse ever neatly splices.

The whistle speaks an unsuspected thought:
Obedient to an ordinance of mind,
The links unsnap,
Permitting clearance, floating penetration.
But alignment then is quite beyond recall:
Eternally askew, the span dangles
And to the honking line commends detour.

The Two Windows

There are two windows in my house: one
I know as well as my cupboard and chairs;
Its patches I can see, can feel where the frame
 is chipped,
But cleave to its solid sash, and sometimes unveil
Aboran vistas of tilted lyres.

The other I fear to touch, lest I fall through.
(For one thing, I am not at all certain
It's really there.) It vibrates when I approach
As though it will explode, shattering time,
Or fade into the middle distance of my brain

Where nothing can focus. When it flares,
I can reach it with figures, grasp the pane,
Almost draw frosty patterns in the glass
When the quivering subsides.

It's quite opaque:
To behold the view is out of the question.

FRAGMENT

Christopher Perret

... the name Adolph Hitler was already on small boys lips as they fought and writhed and shot pop-guns around corners, aimed at each other's eyes. The day before, Petain had spoken on the radio, and he had felt the first sure fear of war while sitting there, told to be quiet, in the crowded living-room, watching first his mother's face then his aunt's, seeing Julian, who lived in the small spare room but ate his meals out, pass his hand slowly over his face. Tears had come to his aunt's eyes, then to everyone else's, all grown-ups, save for his brother and him, who had crowded the room to listen to the unintelligible message from the aged Marchal's lips. The voice droned on, all eyes glued to the wooden case of the radio sitting unattractively on the ornate mantelpiece; then he had cried too when the Marseillaise, through the static, sounded the defeat of France.

-- notre pauvre France, someone had whispered in a hoarse voice. He had repeated it to himself: Poor France -- while the tears had coursed down his face. It was a grim summer's day with no one to talk to. That same afternoon, on the way to the park, he'd seen a coffin being carried through the black funereal cloth hung before the church door. He had felt like crying again, knowing it must have something to do with the aged voice, cracked and pitiful, which, over the radio, had announced the doleful news.

For weeks now they'd climbed down every night into a neighboring cellar, crowded-in with strangers, who had at last become familiar. The grown-ups had soon learned to make themselves comfortable, bringing their cards, their pipes, a bottle of brandy, a young bespectacled student strumming melancholy tunes on an old guitar -- they listened to the drone of the bombers, sitting around in bathrobes and slippers, the children huddled-up, their knees under their chins, on folding cots. Then would come the dull burst of the bombs which he knew were tearing up the harbor he loved so much. At one time there had been ships with green flags -- the only ones he knew which flew green flags --and he found out they sailed from Brazil. He'd watched the black men with burlap cloths on their heads carrying down the dusty, strong-smelling sacks of coffee beans and of cacao. Not far from his house was a large, yellowish building, the lowest windows being far from the ground and always closed. But in the daytime, huge doors stood open revealing sacks and sacks of cacao piled one on top of the other in an immense room. - From the beans they make cocoa, his mother had told him. One day he'd picked up some of the tan beans just inside one of the big doors. A man in a uniform had come towards him shouting something, and he'd run off holding a handful of the strong-smelling beans in his fist. Once around the corner, he'd bitten into one and had found it to be very bitter and not tasting like cocoa at all... but he had liked the taste and had chewed another, until it had become a habit to pick up the beans whenever he could and carry them in his pocket. He had passed them out in school, to his friends, until one day

the warehouse had been tight-shut, and the doors never open since.

He had gone back to the harbor and had found soldiers there and barbed-wire fences up.

-- Where are the ships from Brazil? he had asked the soldier on guard. The soldier had laughed: -- They don't come here any more! He'd looked very sad and the soldier had crouched down beside him, taking his slung rifle from his shoulder, and he'd gently put his hand on his arm and looked him in the eyes: -- They won't come back for a long time now.

-- What are those holes? he had asked, pointing to large rips in the concrete behind the wire ... further, one whole section of pier had disappeared, as if mysteriously fallen into the oily sea. -- That's the Boches! the soldier said, standing up once more. --I don't like the Germans, he had said earnestly ... and the soldier had laughed again. -- Do you like them? he asked the soldier, puzzled by his laugh. -- No, the soldier had said, I don't like them either.

Then the soldier had sent him to get a pack of cigarettes: -- You get yourself some licorice with the change, he had called after him. When he came back, the soldier opened the pack and asked him if he smoked. He'd blushed and said no. He'd walked along the barbed wire, looking at the orange-colored derricks and at the holes in the quais. There were a few complicated black ships still on the water, but they were more like the ghosts of ships he remembered, spectres of the life and the flash and the sunlight he had watched in all its intricate detail. One ship was half under water; a warehouse was a pile of rubble; and others had broken walls and glassless windows. The windows that remained were all taped-up to prevent the glass from shattering. He looked back from where he had come. The soldier was still there, but an indistinct black shape now, no longer khaki, but small and insignificant... he saw him raise his arm and wave slowly.

There was no one else. Just the two of them, at a great distance from each other. The sun was bright but there seemed to be no summer this year; and again he thought of the Germans... who had taken away his summer.

They were responsible, he knew.

In the park, he had seen two workmen leaning heavily on their spades as they dug a trench.

-- Why are you digging all those graves? he asked. -- That's where you'll hide when the Germans come, one of the workmen had said. -- Les sales Boches! the other had exclaimed, spitting expressively into the trench.

He had often been told not to spit. -- Well brought up little boys don't spit, his mother had told him. -- Are you well brought up? he now asked the workman.

- Hein!

- Are you well brought up? he repeated; my mother says it's bad manners to spit.

- In this case it's all right, the first workman smiled, throwing out another shovelful of dirt.

-- You mean when you talk about the Germans it's all right...

-- You're a bright little boy, the first workman said.

As he walked along the waterfront, it all came back to his mind. He spat. He spat again. That's what Ill do whenever I see one of them, he told himself.

But he hadn't seen any. Only in the newspapers Julian brought into the house had he seen pictures of them, standing in tanks above large black crosses, dirty-looking and with goggles on their helmets.

-- What are they doing? he asked Julian, who was worrying about when he would be called to the front. - In this picture, Julian said, they are conquering Poland. -- What's that Poland? he asked. --Poland! Julian answered bitterly. it's a country, like here... like France.

One afternoon he had just come home from school and had stood looking

Moke he black in aste to eaten he noticed bay
yelled to another boy: Stukas! hey Jean! come see the Stukas!

A small group of people had gathered in the street, their eyes straining upwards. He had watched from his window, the specks become streamlined, become small init green, gull-winged, roaring aeroplanes, swooping upwards into the small white clouds, come roaring back through at an angle just slightly less than the vertical, until the noise of their motors was barely audible, a high-pitched whistle or scream which set the dogs howling from street to street.

-They're bombing the harbor again, Julian said quietly behind him.

-- Aren't we going down in the cellar?

- No, Julian said, they won't come here.

Then he jumped up and down cheering: -- Look! here come our planes ... Seven French bi-planes had just droned into sight above the housetops ... -and there's only three of the Germans! he had laughed with elation. --Poor bastards, he'd heard Julian say behind him. He turned and saw tears rolling down his face. -- Why are you crying? he asked him as his spirits sank. Julian turned away and walked out.

When he turned back to the planes, he noticed two of the Frenchmen already in flames... they disappeared and a dull roar came up from the sea. One of the Stukas was just coming out of its dive. There were a series of sharp detonations, and then the Germans turned face, became black specks again, and were lost to sight. Only four French planes remained. One of them, its motor faltering, disappeared first, planing down out of sight. The other three drew close together and like defeated birds, circled and lowered themselves slowly to earth. From the direction of the port columns of smoke were rising. The city was quiet, and the smoke, little by little, obliterated the fluffy white clouds. He watched the smoke for a long time before going down to play.

Another time, he had been awakened from where he slept in the cellar. -- Come on, we're going home now. They'd trudged down the street which was still dark with just a faint sign of dawn in the sky. No one spoke though there were many people going up and down the street and into their houses. He heard a voice from a window say -- They hit a house two blocks away ... He looked up at the voice: -the bomb went through three floors then exploded... He kicked something. He stooped down and picked it up: it

was a piece of metal, he had heard about them at school, about an inch long and very shiny, jagged, and with points as sharp as pins. He looked at it closely, and knowing it to be a find worth showing to his schoolmates. stuffed it in his pocket.

Contributors

Continued from page 2

DAVID SEIDMAN, who made his first appearance in print in Coastlines Los Angeles issue (No. 14-15), is serving as our drama reviewer, covering the L.A. little theatre beat.

RAMON SEPULVEDA'S story in this issue is a slightly altered chapter of a novel he is working on. Made his first Coastlines appearance last issue.

ANN STANFORD is now teaching at UCLA and serving as poetry reviewer for the Los Angeles Times. She has several books of poems to her credit and has been published widely.

Now studying at the University of Bristol on a Fulbright grant, ROBERT S. SWARD is making his second appearance in Coastlines.

DOROTHEA WALKER is a former student of Nelson Bentley's at the University of Washington.

KINGSLEY WIDMER has had recent articles in the Partisan Review, Kansas City Review and Twentieth Century Literature, and is projecting a book to be called The Edge of Extremity: an Essay on Contemporary American Sensibility.

A frequent contributor to Coastlines, PETER YATES is well-known as a writer on musical subjects in addition to being an important poet and essayist on art and

Editorial

The Debt

*When I read of worms slipping
through the skin of children's feet,
swimming in their blood with open mouths,
damning the currents of their lives,
my muscles thunder and my eyes
become the bells of a burning city.*

*When I read of peasants hands,
sweet for a sugarfield month
and dust for three in the desert.
my hand is an arrow quivering
in the white mango of this paper.*

*When I read of the grey canvases
in their brains, and read
how the shells have grown around their eyes
-- in a land whose mountains are a rainbow --
the falcons and peacocks of my library
ascend from my house and migrate to Cuba.*

*People, ploughed like the soil.
Because they are the hands of my clock
I must wear their clothes,
eat their food, think their thoughts
or I will forget
- forget I owe them doeskin slippers,
grapes and apples, cigars, wine, poems.*

This poem of mine is an attempt to make an important event of our time a personal matter. The problem of the poem is to get beyond Premier Castro's beleaguered truculence and the ignorant floundering of the U.S. Government vis-a-vis Cuba to a relationship with a long-victimized people. The point to be made is that poets with a social and political conscience may find this method useful and possibly more fruitful than submergence of the personality within the objective limits of the particular event itself. What it comes to, simply, is the gathering in of the towering, multi-faced and, in the end, ephemeral occurrence rather than the going out to meet the occurrence on its own plane -an effort by the poet to find what his involvement is with the factual transformations the world is undergoing.

- Gene Frumkin

Books New or Neglected: IV

It won't mean much to Franc Smith if every reader of this column rushes out to buy his cheap, trashy Harry Vernon at Prep, considering the limited circulation of Coastlines and the chintzy royalties to be paid on a 35c Signet paperback, but do it anyway. Vernon is a 30-year-old delinquent who faked his through Harvard without having gone to high school. The book opens with his escape from Canadian police on a stolen car incident, and his career at a Massachusetts prep school, Grey Hall (Hole. Allegedly, Vernon's Harvard career is dealt with in a book entitled *The Student*, which we haven't seen.

Smith's blurb claims this 'is one hell of a serious book,' so naturally it is a gasser, right up to the last chapter. Everyone will compare it to Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, chiefly because the language of the narrator is the locker-room, senior-dormitory lingo that stunned everyone who read about Holden Caulfield. But Smith doesn't waste sentimental compassion on the kids in his novel. He is playing it strictly for laughs, with a slight plot and a steady stream of profane incidents (maybe Franc Smith is Patrick Dennis alias something-something alias whozat woman). Curious, though, how the satire cuts deeper into the institutions and customs and types Salinger's so serious literary probe.

There is much quotable Smith, usually in whole passages too lengthy to be given here - and anyway the book is cheap. But here are a few shorter ones. On the Canadian Mounties: 'All those bastards have to know how to do is play horse-shoes and feed their vehicle at one end and shovel it up at the other' Harvard: 'a mental fly trap.' Intellectuals: 'Let me say right here if you don't know how these intellectuals talk, they are always interrupting them self to say "No, really " when they talk. Whatever the hell it means they all do it

On high school films, etc.: 'These intellectuals go ape over practically any movie that is about a hundreds years old. If it isn't even a talkie they practic-

ally slobber all over their seats. The real reason, though, I figure, is that Jameson (the headmaster) can get these old flicks practically free, so he specializes in *them.*'

Public schools: 'To teach in them you are supposed to take some courses, of all the half ass things, from some crock of old geeks in a school of Education who got to be teachers without them, but hated it so they quit, about how to teach. You should hear those bastards sling the old jive about core curriculums and methodology and adjusting learning to life and so on. What they are usually arguing about is how many weeks a year they can knock off from work and let the kids paste cutouts in scrapbooks or decorate the bulletin boards or act out the discovery of radium or criticize each other's news *reports or so forth.*'

Private schools: '*... where all the dizzy bastards paying beautiful big taxes to support the moronic public schools *send their kids.*'

Byron: '.. after a certain point just didn't have it, and the poetry was a *cover up.*'

'There is this poet Charlotte Mew, which is a stinger of a name, but a nice poet who likes to use this long line when she writes, getting it all laid out straight once and then going back and laying out a new one... There is one other poet who is not half bad amongst the ones writing poems now, and that is this crazy Rolfe Humphries who is also I found out a teacher someplace. That must be a whizzer of a school. If you want to get a bang, read this poem he wrote in a poetry magazine in about June nineteen thirty-nine, called *Ode on A Phi Beta Kappa Occasion*. It is all about nymphs and such you think, but the first letters in every line spell out the name of this famous certain president of Columbia University, New York and say - Is a Horses Ass at the end.' Tom Wolfe: 'Most of these big guys hate him because of all the stuff he spit out about the stuff that goes on inside of a big goon like him's mind about life and being big and clumsy and all.

They are ashamed naturally to have a lot of little guys know it about them. It is really these little tiny guys with the rimless glasses and like little girl's teeth who go around adoring Old Tom usually."

Vernon ranges through other topics with the same pertinent crudity: Zen, cops, monasteries, toilet training, Catholicism, women teachers, sports, the Navy, book critics, book stores, Alumni Day, Jean Harlow, etc. After being entertained throughout the book, a reader begins to wonder why he was taken in by someone who is just childishly rebellious and irreverent about anything he encounters. This is so often true of good enjoyable trash - once the heat diminishes the reader gets on his high horse and acts superior to the author. Kids excepted. They seem to take to Huckleberry Finn and Auntie Mame and Mad and Thurber and Thorne Smith and Salinger and Max Shulman with indiscriminate curiosity and pleasure. Which may mean that even trash like Harry Vernon at Prep will have a chance to become part of that body of 'literature' which is kept alive as transition reading for kids who are in the stages between Treasure Island and Ulysses -- which, come to think of it, is the stage when practically everyone got his or her literary education anyway.

- Lachlan MacDonald

Bone and Marrow

BONE THOUGHTS, by George Starbuck; Volume 56 of the Yale Series of Younger Poets; Yale University Press, New Haven, 1960, \$1.25.

One can always count on the Yale Series of Younger Poets to publish 'promising' young poets under 40. But for far too long a time now, the Series has published young poets who, while promising technically, were mostly tedious. What has been wanting in this series has been a bolder assertion of personality, greater conviction on extra-literary matters -- neither despairing nor cynical -- a reason for writing poetry. By publishing Bone Thoughts, the Yale Series has not only published a poet

with these qualities, but has itself once again become a promising outlet for *poetry*.

Starbuck's poems are readable, interesting, infectiously witty; he demonstrates much technique and deploys it spontaneously, and is ambitious enough to take on both significant and topical subject matter, all the way from the lower creatures on the borderline of intelligence, to the higher ones whose collective intelligence is rendered impotent by social and political stupidity. As the title suggests, the poems achieve, on occasion, the bone and marrow of life. They turn upon the macrocosm, upon man and animal with a belief in their existence. There is nowhere in Starbuck's poems any disclaimer, any doubts about the reality of existence; there is too much charm, anger and humor in them for that. It is possible therefore, to consider Starbuck a neo-humanist, utilizing satire and declamation against the emptiness and headlessness of modern society with its incongruous remnants of previous beliefs epitomized in Poets from a First Year in Boston,' a kind of elegy of New England, where

Poor pagan spooks, so gently
spoken of
in Boston - brainwashed beggar-
ghosts of love

rong our neoclassical facades oas
o painfully

In this particular poem, Starbuck evaluates the results American empire, unable to find in its soullessness an equivalent to the theism of Jonathan Edwards (to whom he dedicates this poem). Nevertheless, from Edwards, and modern day Boston, the energy for a modern vision, at least enough affirmation to come to a conclusion:

I have seen half
the sculpted heads of Boston make
the face
of one caged lion of a man their place
of weary battle; every day again
he must survive them all the
lettered men,
the men of means, the men of parts
and shares -

and if he seek's God's peace instead
 of theirs,
 God rest him for it: though I no
 more can
 stomach your God than you my faith
 in man,
 I too, must worship blindly, Jonathan.

If Starbuck cannot claim too much
 for his faith in man in the light of
 modern cynicism, his faith at least provides a view of the corruption of society, paradoxically, comparable to that of Edwards.

The specific of Starbuck's conviction follow: a marvelous group of short poems, quite socially outspoken, marking an end, perhaps, to the influence of McCarthyism on institutional poetry. These are poems of committees and unfriendly witnesses, of State Department culturalomania in 'Cold War from the Cultural Front, the vitriolic 'War Story' and others.

And as for sound and image, Starbuck reaches unexpected heights:

Full-feasted
 Spring, like an ill bird, settles to the
 masthead
 of here and there an elm. The streets
 are misted.
 A Boston rain, archaic and monastic,
 cobbles the blacktop waters, brings
 mosaic
 to dusty windshields; to the waking
 music.

In the light of such talent, one may well speak constructively of faults. In Starbuck, these are degrees of fault, insufficient to cause failure, yet, important enough to make a difference in the significance of a poem. Sometimes the poems are too caught up with stylistic devices to sustain an insight, and by an overplayed sophistication which often prevents consummation of the subject matter's possibilities. Although Starbuck emphatically asserts his individuality, he still sometimes echoes old sounds (W. H. Auden and E. A. Robinson, in particular) rather than sounding new ones. These faults, of course, are minor in a poet who has clearly demonstrated his ability to write significant poetry.
 - Mel Weisburd

The Essence of the Moment

A WATER WALK BY VILLA D'ESTE,
 by Jean Garrigue; St. Martin's Press,
 \$2.95.

In this, her fourth book, Jean Garrigue continues in the vivid involved style that has become her own. Her descriptive power reaches its height in the long poem 'For the fountains of Villa d'Este.' Perhaps statues and fountains have not before been so elaborately or effectively described.

The descriptions in most of the poems spring from a sensual preoccupation with the scene, but the poems also contain events-- waiting for day, black-berrying, the coming or going of love-- and they are supported by an emotional undercurrent, though the reason for it *is not always stated.*

Much of the tension in the poems comes from the attempt wholly to grasp the essence of the moment. For, whatever the subject, Miss Garrigue's poems are involved with the present. Where the past is suggested, it is to enhance the present - the glories of the ancient art of Firenze are summed up at the end of

*the book as a
 dazzle against
 The disrelations of time
 To shatter the eye with time's
 emblems*

Or then to go down to the river,
 to the old rowboat slopped full of
water

Ancient bed of the new waters
Of the old river.

And strew
 The flower of the moment upon the
river,
Our only libation.

Running through the collection and adding to its intensity is the striking and rich imagery of one of the most interesting of America's poets, who throws

speech over you in a mesh
 This chain-mail of running light and
of breath.
 - Ann Stanford

Ghosts and Strong Spirits

GHOSTS OF THE HEART, by John Logan; University of Chicago Press, \$2.75.

John Logan's second book of poems whets my curiosity. I am eager to learn which of the several angles he attempts in the job of trying to see the 'true vision will ultimately prove the most right. For while *A Cycle for Mother Cabrini*, his first volume, was of a piece in being religious, *Ghosts of the Heart* is not; although the Catholic Church remains the core of Logan's muse, there has been a broadening of both his material and his method so that this new book is, more than most second volumes by young poets, a second beginning. Because Logan is mature and extremely skillful, this 'prelude' is itself a substantial accomplishment.

Those angles of vision referred to above might be listed as: wit, lyricism, introspection and autobiography, narration, philosophy, biography, commentary and description of person and place, all mixed in varying proportions among the poems, and mixed with a sure hand. Only where Logan chooses not to choose, i.e., in the group of poems which are composed almost entirely of unalloyed descriptive images, might his success be questioned—which I propose to do a few paragraphs below.

But it is merely justice to a good poet to begin with praise. Of basic importance is the vitality of a fairly loose three-stress line which Logan utilizes for the first eight poems, comprising Part I, of the selection, and in a number of poems thereafter. This line is remarkably pliable in Logan's hands and such, for example, such usually divergent avenues as lyric and wit. Here, a stark stanza, taunted by the internal rhyme (from 'On the Death of the Mother Thirty-three Years

July began with the Fourth
And the moon in a box
Like a flaming house in the grass
At the edge of the fair with the frames
Of the fireworks there, but next
It floats, like a carnival balloon

That drops out weights of men,
And turns the festival tips
Of the sparklers hot: fear
Shot up in a kite when it burned
My throat white - like an eye
My friend once cooked in his head, as
he mixed
Carnivals of fluids in a shed.

And wit-clear, incisive and shattering as the lines a 20th century Pope might have written [from 'A Century Piece for Poor Heine' (1800-1856)]:

Heine's mother was a monster
Who had him trained
In business, war and law;
In the first she failed the best:
At work in his uncle's office
He turned a book of Ovid's
Into Yiddish. And Harry's memories
Don't even mention the family's
Chill and scare at the chance
Of a fortune from a millionaire.

But a grown
Heine fainted and wept
If an uncle failed to provide;
And there was no money in the house
when he died:

Sometimes Logan will fuse the lyric and wit into a single stanza, such as the last from 'The Lives of the Poet', a nutshell biography of Rimbaud with pointed comments and conclusions. Describing Rimbaud's abandonment of poetry for the adventurous life in terms of an alchemical change, Logan writes

... so much the worse
For the boy who flies his home
And god and verse, for the brass
That wakes a horn. The weight
Of gold about his waist
Shall make him sick...

and ends the poem with a neat pun:

... And the apter alchemistries
Of God make one change last.

Any poet who can do these things as well as Logan deserves respect. Part I of the book seems to me his surest poetry and, therefore, the angle I hope he takes toward the enlargement of his vision.

It is in many of the later poems in

the book - perhaps they are later chronologically, too, I don't know - that Logan narrows his range to the selection of descriptive perceptions. The poet eliminates himself as the direct commentator, the satirist or wit, the lyricist, for the indirect role of an objective 'eye', the viewer whose place in the poem is subjective only in the sense that there is a sensory 'I' recording the various elements which make up the poem. These are truly imagiste poems of a sort the old crowd probably would have approved. 'Acapulco Canyon: Two Kodachromes' is the title of one such poem, and the word 'kodachrome' is an apt summation of their limits.

Logan's gifts are much greater than the camera's and, having tested the purity of his eye, it is to be wished that he continues to use those gifts with greater

Logan's attitude toward the Catholic Church and his own calling as a poet is an independent one. That is, in his work, neither of the two is subservient to the other. It is the failing of a fair number of Catholic poets to feel that their poetry is a duty, a homage, to Church and Trinity. It may be that as well, but I believe any poet's first duty, as a poet, is to his poetry and the vision which that poetry is able to encompass.

Logan declares on the back of the dust jacket, if some people find my subjects less religious now than they used to be the reason is that I now think poetry itself more religious than I used to do. A fair enough statement, and possibly not an easy one to make.

And one more (from * The Monument and the Shrine) maybe sums it up for John Logan, as well as for the George Washington of 'the monument':

Suddenly the lost
Ghosts of his life

Broke from the trees and from
the cold
Mud pools where he played
A boy and set as a man.

The sand glint of his boot,
The flick of his coat on the weeds;
His wheels click in the single road

- G.F.

Six Plays at UCLA

The foreign seamen who sometimes came to my mother's hospitable kitchen, brought news of a changing Russia, but neither they nor I understood too well what was really taking place there. In that house of my youth people came and went in the manner of a grand hotel. It was a shabby tenement down by the docks and in place of the declassed ne'er-do-wells of Three Sisters, we had the lumpen of a disjointed thirties. However, in my own time in these United States, there has been no Dr. Chekhov to give us the antidote of a Vershunin with his, 'If only culture were a part of industry.'

When I read the piece again it was without rhythm in its movement, but on stage at UCLA Theatre Extension in August, 1960, it came to life with tragic momentum. My first reaction had been conditioned by too much 'well-constructed' play concept.

Where *The Cherry Orchard*, for example, deals with the relationship of a family remnant to the ownership and use of land, *Three Sisters* is not so broad. *Sisters* was an earlier work and is gauged down to the mating misfortunes of two of them; this is all set within the frame of a depressed class situation similar to *Orchard*.

The sisters want desperately to live in Moscow, for they feel stifled in their small army garrison town. Olga, the oldest, is a teacher and an old maid Masha is married but loves another, Vershunin. The youngest, Irina, works in the local telegraph office and her fiancé loses his life in a duel. The fourth member, brother Andrei, without consulting his sisters takes a mortgage on their home and marries the cunning Natasha. She eventually pushes her sisters-in-law out and gets to the top of the 'heap' she herself has built. The Prozorov family, circa 1900, does not

make it to Moscow.

Once when a commentator was asked what should be the purpose of a play, he answered, ... to change the world." What catalyst of aspiration Chekhov may have provided the change-bringers of modern Europe can only be conjectured.

In Chekhov, as in most of the older playwrights, logic usually holds its own, but in recent years logic has not been so fortunate. Yet, for whatever reasons many of today's playwrights use illogic, we must admit that this is their prerogative as creative artists. In Lesson - one of the offerings of The Four Comedies of Despair' night at UCLA - Ionesco stands logic head to teach us the quite logical proposition that people have trouble communicating with each other. Repetition, inanity, garbling, sheer long-windedness and other devices we may not like are used to convey the message. One of the extremes of this method occurs in another Ionesco play, The Bald Soprano (not on the UCLA bill of fare), in which Mr. and Mrs. Martin consume pages of dialogue before they realize they are husband and wife. Ionesco makes his points, with burlesque and terror, and we should at least listen.

Thinking of another of the evening's one-acts, a painting by Lazar comes to mind. It portrays a bench-sitting, bearded old man and under it the title reads, 'Cast Us Not Off In Old Age.' In a series of strange flashes, Edward Albee's Sandbox dramatizes the same thought. How much more civilized than we are the Chinese who have always recognized parents as members of the household and do not deposit them in various kinds of sandboxes at age sixty-five to die. The only confusion in the Albee was the clarinet; it was difficult to see the reason for woodwind music in this playlet. And why was it necessary to make the Muscle Beach-boy a Hollywood star as well as an Angel of Death? Wouldn't Hollywood star have been enough?

Beckett's one-man mime, Act Without Words, has a punch-line ending. It is that little last effort the man dying on the desert needs to save himself, just one more hand-stretch to reach the life-saving water canteen. Like so many of us he fails to make that one last effort. Beckett may be indicating here that we are too soon dispirited. If so, this would raise Act Without Words one hand-reach above most of his other material.

The Tennessee Williams play, on the other hand, was entirely futile. This

Property Is Condemned was directed by Lamont Johnson using a cast of two Negroes, who performed well, but nevertheless were not as real as the two children who took the parts in a TV show some months ago.

An opinion we read recently about modern French playwrights could apply to the two Americans. They stand at the fringe of artistic expression, not the center. That is why their work seems only partially significant. -their rebellion is -- revolt in an orphanage'. I agree with Harold Clurman.

For its final offering in Three Evenings With Six Playwrights,' Theatre Extension gave The Prodigal, completing the rich variety of drama presented in the current series. Twenty-five-year-old Jack Richardson picked up the Agamemnon from the Atreus legend and rewove it in the values of his own time and

Agamemnon is a seeker after booty at the expense of others. This war-maker has been on a ten-year raid against Troy under the pretext of redeeming Helen's chastity. Aegisthus, the would-be peacemaker, wins the returning soldiers to his ambitions - the murder of Agamemnon and the throne of Athens. For as one of them says, 'We're tired of being strangers in our own homes'. The soldiers fear Agamemnon will send them off to another war. It also happens that the soldiers own an exclusive on a commodity useful to Aegisthus, physical force, one of the less obvious pivots on which the play quietly turns.

Richardson's flippant-escapist Orestes wants to be left alone to lead an uninvolved life, get married and raise fat children. His main conflict is his clash with custom; it will not permit the escape and comfort he wants. Custom demands he take revenge for his father's foul murder by Aegisthus. Conformity is compelled by the form and pressure of the time. The reluctant retributionist must finally take the eye for an eye from Aegisthus. At the play's end Cassandra speaks a humanist hope; that the prodigal of some future day will come back home with love as a weapon and *not hate*.

It is tempting to project this play in

another direction. For this, Richardson might have drawn Orestes as a man of great principle who saw the fallacy of retribution and stood out against it. This might have led to a play of the stature of twentieth-century tragedy and thus perhaps would have fulfilled Cassandra's aspiration.

The love and hope Chekhov had for humanity was so real he is often considered one of the fathers of modern realism and as such the other authors of 'Three Evenings' are indebted to him.

There is some difference, however. Chekhov dealt with symptoms, causes and results; the more recent offspring limit themselves to the relative safety of symptoms. This is part of the hold an inhibited era has upon the playwright.

- David Seidman

In the Wrong Direction

WRITE ME FROM RIO, short stories by Charles Edward Eaton, 1959; John F. Blair, Publisher, Winston-Salem.

Charles Edward Eaton, of South Carolina, student with

Robert Frost, Harvard, winner of a fellowship in the Bread Loaf Writers Conference, taught Creative Writing for two years, was Vice Consul at the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro for four years, Writing again several more years, has contributed poetry and prose to more than forty publications here and abroad, his poetry winning or nearly winning two awards, and now owns a country place near Woodbury, Connecticut, where he is working on a novel and a fourth volume of poetry.

At the end of this small saga of minor successes Mr. Eaton still writes well and thinks, sufferingly with his conscience and sensitively in the elaboration of his subjects. His conscience suffers with the plight of the American who has gone abroad but not to Europe and has seen himself and his fellows not citizens of the broad world but outsiders, culturally outside because incapable of transmitting culture to a land and people where the culture, however inert, is dense.

One observes the same thing in the pages of recent Life, where Ernest Hem-

ingway undertakes to share with us the bullfight and his typically Spanish friends. What was it Gertrude Stein wrote: He will go to Spain, and he will see Spain not as it is as we see it but through typically American morals, and he will report it to America and it will be a great success. I cannot offhand locate the quotation, so roughly I paraphrase. But then Hemingway was young, innocent, seeking, and poor; now, rich in corruption, he is destitute.

Surely Mr. Eaton, academically well provided, might have broken through to live proximately among the Portuguese-speaking strangers. 'The Edge of the Fountain,' a self-portrait as is each of the short stories, tells of the American professor, sent to Brazil on a cultural mission to teach American literature, who finds no need for the lectures he has so carefully prepared but instead an insistent, crazed refugee from Europe who pursues him believing he has the power to arrange her entry into the United States. 'A Morning Wake' presents the State Department's cultural envoy as a successful author, best-seller in America and Russia, trying the heavy popular approach with liquor on a gathering of Brazilian literati summoned to meet him at a morning interview. I wonder whether Erskine Caldwell

to Brazil during Mr.

Eaton's spell in Rio as Vice Consul. One has a feeling that Mr. Eaton, carefully recording, prickly sensitive, looks in the wrong direction at the wrong people. He himself repeatedly disowns the bright seaside hotels and apartments where Brazil becomes socially international, but he has never broken through to ask his way among the Brazilian people. He sees them, conscientiously, at second-hand, being culturally aware, not as they may be but as he ought to see them, foreign to his sensibilities as the jungle behind them that he tautly senses, a darkness lighted only by the fireflies of the international set. (Growing up in academe he has not seen America either). Not without humor, certainly not without self-consciousness, his own slight flick of the whip out of the Henrys - Adams and James: 'In any case, I classified my fellows endlessly, meticulously - I might

say fastidiously, a word more than any other I should like to have applied to myself. I compartmentalized them into Exteriors, how a man looked and what he pretended to be, and interiors, What a man really was, the contradiction of his behavior and belief, the fact, perhaps, that he was in Brazil for one reason when he said he was there for another.'

In this story he plays with the thought he might have fallen into an affair with a visiting American dancer.

One recognizes in him the fastidious fugitive from that other American Henry -- models T and A now fashionable and bringing collectors' prices -- allowing himself to object to and then be, however fastidiously, overwhelmed by a visiting American woman, a vulgarian but capable of management, with a passion for emeralds. The golden girl gets her man, who is not the author, and metamorphoses into a 'columnar glorious in a green world of staring: Brazil is still in tee background of this office yarn. On another occasion, as it were with the international help of a designing Frenchwoman, two of the lost fireflies momentarily encounter each other but it is no use.

The American motifs move forward from each well-proportioned story to the next, lulling me through an air journey, invigorating enough so that I do not put down the book but finish it, asking myself as I do why an author of so much relative skill, at the nadir of the short story, cannot involve himself with in a complex of motives that is not merely exotic in its setting but of its setting, real.

Once only, forgetting himself, he becomes an American woman, a from Sedalia, Missouri, a slight painter, come to see the Aleijadinho in Ouro Preto. Without looking at these radiant sculptures, these more than primitive evangels of the back-country hunchback that became churches, too many for one city, without seeing this city which survives as a work of art because of the presence of one man who lived there, the author confuses his lady by the attentions of an elderly pseudo-artist, who drives her silently screaming back to Rio, intelligence and virginity intact.

Yet here for a moment the veil does lift. She thinks of the dark, crippled, leprous man there on the scaffold working at this kneeling figure of rapt love as though each stroke could transfer his soul into the enduring stone.' And that night she receives a vision of her father telling of Elisha and the Sunamite's son, a raising of the dead. But the body that in the dream is laid upon her seems to her in nightmare the spiritually

body of the pursuing painter. Revelation for her can be only fear. She brings nothing to Aleijadinho; she can take nothing from the crippled, leprous man. She returns as she came.

The Ugly American dispirited but could be put off, because it is inaccurate. Write Me from Rio will not provoke the State Department, but it is accurate. It conveys the plight of the American who may travel the world over but can never go abroad. Mr. Eaton, his style, his insights, and his sensibility, has succumbed to his fastidiousness and chosen the suburb of the righteous in Connecticut.

- Peter Yates