

A LITERARY MAGAZINE OF CALIFORNIA

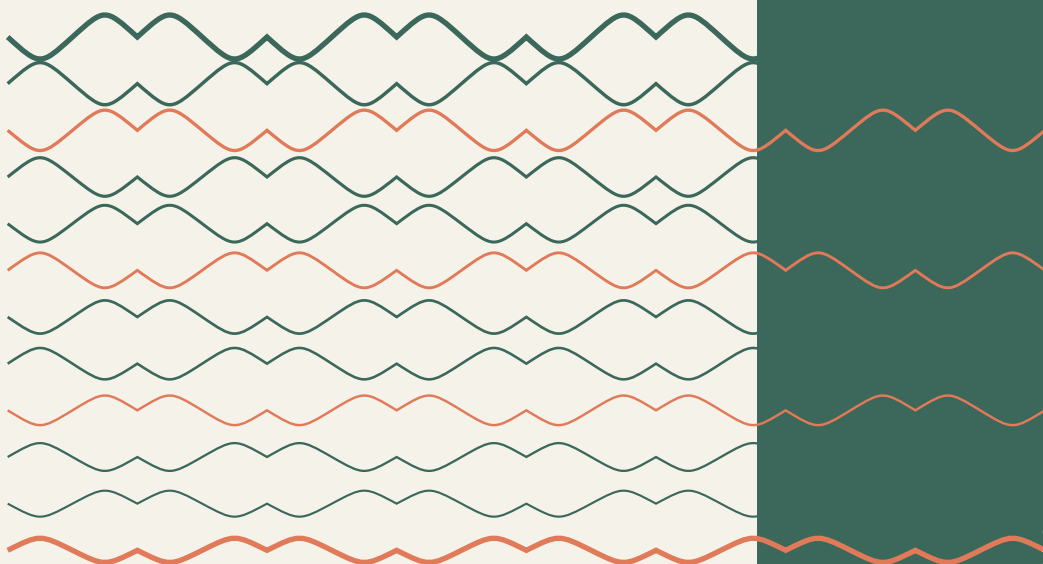
COAST LINES

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A Literary Magazine of California

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EDITED BY

Gene Frumkin

A CLEAN READING EDITION

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GEORGE ABBE has been widely published, particularly as a poet. He is a past recipient of the Shelley Prize.

A native of Vienna, FELIX ANSELM came to this country as a refugee in 1939 and has been writing poetry in English for about six years.

HENRY BIRNBAUM is a previous contributor to *Coastlines*, and has been published in the *Literary Review*, *Poetry* (Chicago) and elsewhere.

Also a previous contributor, DAVID R. BUNCH has added short story appearances in *Southwest Review*, *Nomad*, *San Francisco Review* and *Olivant* to his credit. Writes science fiction, too.

ALVARO CARDONA-HINE's book of haiku, *The Gathering Wave*, has been published by Alan Swallow, Denver. He recently became poetry editor of *Coastlines*.

JOHN CIARDI's latest book of poems is due out near the end of summer. He is the author of *How a Poem Means*, and is poetry editor of the *Saturday Review*.

CLAYTON ESHLEMAN has his first book of poems, *Mexico & North*, ready for publication, and a second one on the way. Has done a chunk of Neruda and Vallejo translations.

STEPHEN GELLER is a Los Angeles resident, attending Dartmouth College, where four of his plays have been produced, two of them first-prize-winners.

Another poet with a first collection on the market is HAROLD GRUTZMACHER, whose *A Giant of My World* has been issued by Golden Quill Press.

A resident of San Francisco, DANIEL J. LANGTON, at last report, was planning a move to Ireland. A previous *Coastlines* contributor.

MIKE METH has been a merchant seaman since 1956, got his B.A. in philosophy from Berea College, Berea, Ky. This is his first publication.

PABLO NERUDA needs no identification from us.

FELIX STEFANILE, the editor of *Sparrow*, is planning translations of Umberto Saba. Has been widely published, including *Coastlines*.

CARL THAYLER is having a play produced soon. A poem of his has been selected by Louis Untermeyer for a forthcoming anthology. This is his first literary magazine publication.

IRMA WASSALL is an oil secretary in Wichita, Kan., also a singer, dancer, guitarist. More than 600 of her poems have been published and two of her stories received honorable mention from Martha Foley.

KINGSLEY WIDMER had a poem in *Coastlines* No. 16. Has had articles in the *Partisan Review*, *Kansas City Review* and *Twentieth Century Literature*. He is at work on a book of criticism.

MILLER WILLIAMS has driven stock cars, played in a dance band, worked for a publishing house, taught biology in several colleges, and is now selling air conditioners and refrigerators for Sears, Roebuck. His wife, Lucy, is a jazz piano player.

*Grandeur and Magniloquence**Alvaro Cardona-Hine*

when lemons bloom
when lemons flower
when in the sound of more sound's birth
two deltas summon riches upward and the sunshine down
to one accord of acid as quietly and green
as any look that love's between
and when the seas
flooding a brook of lightning
lodge their plaint
in flimsy girlish scarf-like valleys
there'll be no other man
calls earth the bluest orange
after me

oh damage done after the flash
and long before the peal of thunder
damage done the season of a leave and absence and returning
when all his former stays dissolved the pending stranger into encounter
with shapes of life that have a star for seizure
since time availed itself of always and of dawn

to youth to the clamor of youth a magic labyrinth of force and splendor
in all its ways most strange most baffling and appealing
and fifteen or as you are and lost in a branch of nectar
to come at all to come on shoulders of the crowd of one
it'll cause you to walk alone
hearing the lonely echoes
brief and suddenly brief and sudden

one may survive the skin-permitting limelight of the years to come
unaware the weight of ghosts or trapped
in the backwoods of the first cruel questions
one can and does survive slide through the speechless grammar of a piano
scamper over scaffoldings of odd leaves sighted once
past the verboten dogs engrossed upon their plots of sex
and never hear the nervous laughter spilling on the paper waters
as life wraps up its yield of welcome to the fish

unaware of death and in the whirlwind of a trigger at man's height
one can invest the harmful doom of an ancient axis
or wed a golden step on its two handsome roots
deep in the grottoes of its lovely shame
till tenderness and horror come leaping out of caves
out of the breast of tide at bleak day's rise
scattering an ash of sweat upon the roar of sleep

our eyes then fall upon the cold grey nest
upon the sticky mask that gloves the world and foxes
and knives into subservience
knives to limbo through its amber suede
our use of words slips the tongue of rulers
our match of lovers in the park begins to blaze
we walk the madness of this glad surfeit amazed at poverty and at friends
amazed at trees familiar with the nomad skies
and tender faults of the cage and custom of the hawk
we nurse an ache for a shack of gales
where men man replicas of women over billowing beds of foam

the enigmas of oneself made possible before
no longer carry you past doors of actual toil
but frame all of a day's sweet miser wake of night
to burst in human limbs that wander and go lame

everywhere the same sad miracle of agony on sight
the street a narrow margin burrowing in the tight mortal length of its fine coffin
a windlass stream in ignorance of how and when its finest gown
is apron to an alley when the hollyhock dons light

and endlessly this way we grow or simply walk
and come and go with ink or voice upon the path of sun

one goes away only from those already away
the no-one that nobody can rule

remembrance calls and all reward scorches the sycamore with frost

today a leat and yes
today
a leaf again
a leaf
and the wind
today
and the wind how slowly
the sun how slowly
and the sun and leaf and windy leaf and wind
at the language of a leaf

tonight the moon a moon
and brief in nothing
and again themselves how slowly but themselves
the moon where the moon is
where the moon has gone
itself a tame unutterableness
the wind harass

tonight an ache and trembling and a leat
in bent reply all bent all day with rain
till daily dawn its sunlight breathes
and glad thin sunlight breathes of steam
the green leaves all assuming
till down again to dusk again against

with darkness before dark allotting
its plural twig in drowsy thunder
to the same long tendency the saplings hoist and light
the slow night darkens
and a wind of miles in a mild bend buds and bursts
unwinding nothing but a touch

the killing scherzo
believing zero one the fuzzy pollen and a wing
two little pedal insects trust the bluejay
such saintly-paralleling worlds
no longer silent

and no longer silent the loud hill
its bell of apex and of pap
a flesh now shed of its sore silk
for gently skin and gently core and seed
descend or rise unto themselves
expand and curve their wound

allowing half a day a half itself
one green half raw the red half yellow
 both sagging fruit and earth diurnal
sending a sun in solace upward
and a boiling root in search of foothold rivers

humdrum and windless the wind hums dry
 past grass-punctured dung and sod
its milk perplexed through webs
that yo-yo with a spider
in its round of knees

windless the heat of trunk and middle leaf
propels its burgeoning disciples
through blue-maturing husk of timeless hush
and pensive night
and pennywise moon
and cool deep gulf and leaf by leaf set free
while birch-held leaf holds lightly
in bend of water of itself
and stillness on all sides

themselves
the stringless kite
the wooden child
goodbye above called autumn and the cold

III

this has happened lately
that I've sensed my release
through rain that fell in childhood
rain with no meaning
but for a dog a block from home
which would wake from its nap
as I went by each afternoon
and chase me on to school

unlikely
most unlikely
you will say
bound as he was
to a comfortable round
of rosaries and dinners
blessing him backwards
but then again

why that seamstress remembered from childhood onwards
 why that sunlit colonnade in Panama
 on a day of tremendously solemn clouds as lonely as

no
 my friend
 I come with stones
 as intimate as a cry for help
 with seedlings
 performing their lovely handsprings in silence
 and grandmothers to remind me
 of eggs and eucalyptus

these things come up at will
 the pictures of those saints avoided later
 but at that time
 dripping benevolently down the walls
 and onto the concave boards
 on the floor of the servants' room
 the marvelous pool silenced by swans
 in a cove of cypress and moonlight
 not five blocks from home
 but of course
 you don't know the pink berries
 that overlooked the town
 you simply ignore
 the armpit smell of flowers I've played by
 because
 naturally
 you had your own siege to contend with
 your own streetcars to flatten nails
 and crush all other hubbub into burly halves for you

it is precisely by that token
 by this our common ground of separate delight
 that I am allowed to utter my salvation
 state great things of my volition
 how eating that second luminous and most clairvoyant pear
 I lapse into the grit

tremor
 football

spike
 bloom
 and game of grass

between father and his loneliness arriving
 while each reserves a single point of reference

(and this
that varnish argues with recollection

mattress

bullet

gum

geranium

or whatever

that varnish argues in English
or grows quiet at the silver
that some garlic is a nickle's worth of
will do well for a start)

I am ready for some peace
for profound understanding
in connection with balloons and noodles
drunkards or seashores politic in girls
with long canonic legs
ready for that pain of paper
in two lines

crazed elegy
those who knew you
say goodbye to themselves

Clayton Eshleman

Evocation (from Mexico & North)

By burro-back and foot they come,
perch on tombs,
singing and weeping,
departing to leave bread-crust,
wine for the grass,
parrots in trees.
Woman, take this needle,
weave until the heir walks forth,
man, this flame to light a cigar
after a mile of plowing,
drink black milk of the madrepores
sieved on fiddler-crabs, bright eels,
tossing off Isla Rochetta,
unleash the stone lions
fixed forever
on Calle Madera and turn
the old woman's chair, her mice-colored hands,
that she may see her daughter
in my eyes
for ankle-deep in sand
I am bearded by surf. ' Eat good and drink but love
is your deepest know'
and she broke corn in bowl, gazed
in the pond,
her ten sons' hair mossed on the sleeping stones.
Mendoza lured them here,
set idols beneath virgin's feet, marched
through tall marijuana
of Michoacan, struck fear
in the black eyes
hunched behind la iglesia, perfume
crawls across
the lake-wall, the gardened streets. No dust
but a trail
of vaginal sap upon my eyes, bacon smell
and the town awakened,
shawls, fruit, whisper of knives beneath
lashes, a red horse
neighs, shoeless and radiant. Land your nets
fishermen, tumble forth

of Santiago, the murderer
 of bees I know from your singing Pablo Neruda,
your long sword
 is swinging above my married bed. Evening
will find our feet
 the green of corpses trailing through the water
our urine spreads its golden oil...

Danger

How can anyone love the snow?

A trace of footsteps
 is hard to follow on the rough stones of autumn,
 a wren of the skull seldom sings
 in summer

yet this whiteness
 is a perpetual noon, a chastity
 of obsidian, obscuring the twang of wires,

filling our alleys
 with the moccasin tread of ghostly invaders.

The hands
 fall
 like gulls: blend with white-breasted water.
 Head is too heavy for neck
 and with a last dream of bees
 bends to a leveling of cold linen.

In the absence
 there is a strange alliance between sky
 and water, the tyranny

of one form. A new language!
 Truly, for all whom we touch breathe heavily.
 It is an absence of chaos,
 momentarily

consuming the scorpion of your brow,
 the bull-cape redness of your lips

into quick syllables
of love.

flying between your shoulders. In the white snarl
of limbs

the wolf is seen. And we await
a black earth to steam forth like bread.

Three Poems

Pablo Neruda

(translated by Clayton Eshleman)

Serenade

The color of poppies rests in your forehead,
the mourning of widows finds an echo there,
O poor girl... when you run after the trains,
in the fields,
the gaunt farmer gives you his back,
from your footsteps trembling toads emerge.

Without memory the young man greets you,
he asks you for a kindness he has lost,
his hands move before you like birds,
a great dampness surrounds him.
He enters your fragments of thought
trying to reach you...
O searcher, there is a trembling of pallid eyes
in your net, suddenly shining like lost flutes.

O remember the first day of the thirst,
the shadow pressing against the jasmine,
the profound body that took you back
like a trembling drop.

Now you hush the great trees, and above the moon,
far above, you watch the sea like a thief.

O night, my soul fearfully asks you
for the metal it desperately needs.

Only to touch my heart,
to put your mouth on my heart,
your delicate mouth, your teeth,
 if you laid your tongue like a red arrow
where my dusty heart pounds,
blew on my heart, close to the sea, weeping,
 there would be a distant sound,
a sound of train-wheels rolling through a dream,
of tossing waters, of autumn wrapped in leaves,
of blood, a sound of wet flames scalding the sky,
a hush of branches, or rain, a foghorn
in a deserted harbor,
 if you blew on my heart close to the sea,
a white ghost on the foam's fringe at midwind,
unchained ghost, on the shore, weeping.

Like a long absence... a sudden bell,
the sea spreads the sound of the heart,
 a blowing rain, the setting sun on a lonely coast:
 night falls,
and silver planets crowd its blue flag of shipwreck,
 of despair
 and the heart sounding like a tiny snail
calls oh sea oh lament oh terror of misfortune,
 of toppling waves,
and with a sounding the sea attacks
 its falling shadows, its green poppies.

If you were suddenly here on a dark coast,
surrounded by the dead day,
facing a new night full of waves,
 and blew on my heart cold with fear,
blew into my heart's blood,
blew into its flutter of a burning pigeon,
 black syllables of blood would come,
red waters would swell and sound,
a sound of shadows,
a sound of death,
sound like a horn full of wind and tears,
a wine-flask pouring floods of terror.

And lightning would cover your hair,
rain would pour into your open eyes
 to draw out the tears you secretly held back,
and the black wings of the sea would windmill about you
 with huge claws, cawing and swooping...

blowing the sea's hollow sad horn?
 If only you'd call --
 the sea's prolonged wail,
 its treacherous shrill,
 its cadences of wounded waves,
 - perhaps someone would come,
 someone would come
 from the island crests,
 from the sea's red floor,
 someone would come, someone would come...

someone would come blowing with a fury,
 a sound like the siren of a crippled ship,
 like moaning,
 neighing mixed with blood and foam,
 waves smashing and howling.

In the station of the sea
 a dark shell winds like a scream.
 Sea-birds deny it and flee.
 Its stripes of sound,
 its naked rungs
 rise up to the shore
 of the desolate ocean.

Sick In My House

When desire, with its teeth of a rose,
 scratches sulphur that has fallen for many months,
 and the natural net, the sounding hair
 enter my extinguished house
 with hoarse steps:
 a wicked wire rose strikes the walls with spiders,
 broken glass chills the blood,
 fingernails of the sky accumulate.
 I can't get out.
 I can't take care of my affairs.
 The vague fog, shit on by birds, is heavy,
 it is such a heavy smoke that it changes to vinegar
 and sour air decays the stairways.
 In that instant
 when the day falls with its feathers tearing,
 there is nothing but crying, suffering,
 nothing else but crying.

For years the sea has been knocking the foot of a bird.
A salt strikes, a foam devours.
Tree roots seize the hand of a child,
 roots larger than a girl's hand,
 larger than the hand of the sky,
and the whole year grinds every day of the moon.
A girl's blood rises toward leaves stained by the moon,
there is a planet of terrible teeth that poisons
 the water where children have fallen,
and it is night, nothing but death,
 only death and nothing but crying.

The silence lingers like a grain of wheat,
but who asks for pity for a grain of wheat?
See how things are:
 miles of trains,
 hospitals with broken knees,
 stores full of dying people,
 why?
 how?

Who asked for eyes the color of a cold month,
for a heart the size of waving wheat?
There is nothing but wheels and considerations,
our food progressively distributed,
the stars put into line, goblets
 where nothing falls
 but the night
 and death.

We must maintain the broken steps,
we must pass between the roof and the gloom
 while the damp charred flames are burning,
 sad rags like the rain,
 something that burns and sobs,
 a symptom, a silence.
Between abandoned conversations and objects that breathe,
between the dead flowers that destiny crowns and abandons,
 there is a river falling in a wound,
 an ocean striking the shadow of a broken arrow,
 the whole sky piercing a kiss.

Oh help me, leaves my heart once adored in silence,
rough distances, winters in the south,
hair of women I have drenched in my sweat of the earth,
moon of the south of the torn sky,
 come to me with a day without sadness,
 with a minute in which I can bear my veins.

How tired a drop makes me, only a petal can wound me,
a pin prick rises a river of blood, I choke
in dew rotting in the shade. And for
the smile that doesn't grow,
for a sweet mouth, for
some fingers the rose
might want: I write
this poem, alone
a lament, only
a lament.

Bitter Lips

Wearing blue sunglasses, waiting for a bus
in the white hamburger stand on the corner,
I looked unexpectedly into a mirror
by the morning-bright east window.
I saw on my painted off-guard lips
the same expression of tired bitterness
as once I saw on the face of an ambulance driver
killed suddenly in a wreck,
and again on the lips of a Margot mask -
an Apache, eyes deeply shaded by his cap --
the same weary disillusionment
that I surprised on my own lips.

A stranger, looking over my shoulder, said,
"Take off your glasses, darling -
you have beautiful eyes."

- Irma Wassall

*Carl Thayer**Euterpe*

Every fish-straining nerve
From the tunnel of my sea
Strains towards the waters of your flesh
Stone bitch, bred for statues and metaphors;
Whose thighs move only
For the grand trees, that fall in dozens
And the flocks that move above the feather-crust ed earth.
For men to possess you, even in mind,
Is sure madness,
Forfeit of rhythm with bone
And dew on the mount of peace.
I have known more comfort and familiarity
With dawn women wed to transient tides
Than from you, sister-loved,
With your haunches bared at my cradle.

Salt

The mariner mending his sail of Time
Hummed
Collecting seaweed
Antique chants that raised salt on parched, cryptic tongues
Stood awhile to watch
The distant girls at play
Where Epochs had come down to wash their feet
Then moving on
Tasted their buds in his mouth.

Kingsley Widmer

I

In what is perhaps the best known and most earnest of Hollywood novels, Budd Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run?*, a liberal sociologist (slightly masked as a writer-narrator) provides the moral and aesthetic judgments; he concludes, in ultimate self-justification after having capitulated to the unscrupulous Sammy: "... I saw one of my own jobs [movies], a stinker if there ever was one, but with one scene in it that sang. ... Hollywood may be full of phonies, mediocrities, dictators, and good men who have lost their way, but there is something that draws you there that you should not be ashamed of." Since so many are drawn, including a considerable number of American novelists, we might ask just what is that 'something'?

Surely it cannot literally be the one visual image, the single good scene (to which Schulberg's writer made only a small contribution) in a stinking bad movie, that provides all the meaning of Hollywood? While we need not argue the liberal judgment as to the proportion of art and odor -- say, about one to ninety - the unashamed and pious fascination remains mysterious. The mystique of the Hollywood image appears to be as widespread among those looking for a vision of genteel intelligence and goodness as with that larger audience more obviously looking to be distracted from distraction. Both palliatives require a weird distortion of the knowing eye.

The novel about Hollywood translates this aslant sense of reality into disjunctive images and scenes. The grotesque contrast between appearance and reality presented itself in the earliest of Hollywood novels, such as Merton of the Movies (1922). Harry Wilson's genially elaborate structural metaphor, upon which were loosely strung a series of off-hand comic reversals, centered on the discrepancy between the hero's intentions and the visual result. A doggedly simple Iowa boy plays his heart out as the great lover and sterling hero; by virtue of such moral intensity he succeeds in creating uproarious Sennett comedy (*500 laughs in 5 reels'). Sincere American idealism makes perfect slapstick parody. Thirty-five years later, in *Love Among the Cannibals*, Wright Morris's Hollywood song writer ecstatically suffers the Lawrencean love of his life; by virtue of such erotic intensity, he succeeds in creating a wry third-rate popular song. Romantic passion and wisdom makes perfect jingling nonsense.

Morris, we should hasten to add, shows much greater stylistic and sexual sophistication than the author of *Ruggles of Red Gap*; after all, the Cornbelt hero in Hollywood has aged a few decades, to justify a sardonic maturity, as has Hollywood and the novel about it. And in those decades, the comic action of the novel moves to the purlieu of the Hollywood scene, perhaps coincident with the decline of movie comedy. But the mock-heroic discrepancy between

appearance and reality remains a constant perspective for evaluating Hollywood.

Midway in time between Merton of the Movies and Love Among the Cannibals, we have Nathanael West's surrealistic contrasts between the 'masquerade' and pathetic fact in Hollywood. He, too, self-consciously uses the mock-heroic scene in *The Day of the Locust*, most traditionally in his elaborate description of the filming of the Battle of Waterloo: the disastrous collapse of the papier-mâché Mont St. Jean reflects a Hollywood director's misjudgment which is ironically analogous to Napoleon's. In other would-be serious Hollywood novels, unlike those of Morris and West, the mock-heroic joke sometimes appears to be on the author. No doubt the gap between the ideal and fact - between talent and star, rhetoric and idea, effort and product -- is so indigenous to the Hollywood subject as to be essential to its novelistic image. For tourist and novelist alike, the discrepancy between phony prop and gigantic illusion epitomizes Hollywood. Perhaps historically the mock-heroic image laughs away a dying heroism; if so, the pervasiveness of the mock-heroic in the Hollywood novel, as in Hollywood itself, suggests the end of all heroisms, all values, since Hollywood parodies everything.

Most emphatically in *The Day of the Locust*, and to only lesser degrees in the other novels, the social-moral order becomes an elaborate joke, no matter what the theme. In Fitzgerald's *Last Tycoon*, the crucial plot-unfolding image is that of two girls (later revealed as a prostitute and the heroine) riding on the gigantic statue head of the Goddess Siva in a studio-lot flood. Nor can Fitzgerald-the-moralist resist the comic scene that undermines any moral relevance, as when his sweet young narrator lectures her producer father about charity, then opens the closet and a naked secretary falls out. Such images are pervasive, and become the actual subject of the Hollywood novel. In Mailer's *The Deer Park* it is the love-struck narrator and the beautiful movie queen having sexual intercourse while she carries on a telephone conversation; the continuity of the prop-and-action discrepancy -- her later infidelity takes place in a telephone booth -- overrides any possible significance of the narrator's feelings, despite Mailer's wordy efforts to the contrary. And often, like Mailer's paternalistic great producer lecturing on American marriage and morals and then in the following scene dropping the prostitute between his knees for better (and moralistically purer) service, the sheer grotesqueness is the meaning. As with West's scenery of a lascivious dwarf and a gigantic prostitute, or his ex-vaudeville silver polish salesman putting on an obviously phony misery act for sympathy while actually ill and dying, the fantastic disproportion becomes the only significance even of love and death.

Not just the visual and situational images, but the whole pattern of the Hollywood novel depends on such disjunctions. Sexuality provides the most usual focus: the Masculine Hero who is really a homosexual, the Sweet Innocent Girl who is really a prostitute, the Call-Girl who is the most genuine person around (a refurbishing of the favorite old myth of the golden-hearted whore); add the Intellectual (writer) of dubious potency, the Community Leader (Hollywood executive) with his moralistic rhetoric and secret pervers-

sions, and the Modern Technologist (cameraman) with his irrelevant middle-class code of rigidity in the midst of Babylon, and you have an inverted Morality play, in which the only moral is the inversion.

The significance of Hollywood, that is, does not derive from its social actuality, which is both minor and a series of rootless imitations, nor from Hollywood's version of the cinematic art, which is both rare and derivative (either from an occasional exceptional movie, constantly parodied, or from the other arts, constantly reduced).

Nor does most of the sociological literature, and literary sociology, show an intrinsically interesting Hollywood: the reality of sex and service, the logic of opportunism, and the insights of disillusion, seem -- once one has had them, and even once one has read them -- dreary indeed. No, the reality resides somehow in the images of unreality, the bewildering or comic sense of absence, absence of proportion, of art, of relation, of love, of purpose, of significant goodness, even of significant badness. The core reality of Holly-

This does not mean that the several dozen Hollywood fictions at hand (there are probably many more have the same manner, or that they all equally acknowledge the same sort of phantasmagoric nihilism. Yet the reader of one or two Hollywood novels, and the purist critic who ignores fiction's impure dependence of form on subject, may miss several dimensions of both the gross material and the novelistic sensibility which tries to encompass it. Even in those painfully lengthy and detailed applications of historical romance to Hollywood, such as Robert Carson's *The Magic Lantern* and Harold Robbin's *The Dream Merchants*, the image of shattering discrepancy tends at times to overwhelm the more mawkish intentions of the author and his mechanical pattern of the ups-and-downs in fame and fortune of the naively vicious and shrewdly bathetic. So, too, with the Hollywood scenes of that large and popular group of sentimental realists, as in the genteel-thin competence of James Hilton's image of a 'democratic deluxe concentration camp' (*Morning Journey*) or in the stupid incompetence of Laura Hobson's image of a 'nice Hollywood' (*The Celebrity*). In noting a few imaginative peculiarities of the more interesting Hollywood novels, we are also talking about what appears in the semi- and sub-literature of Hollywood, and in novels of various degrees of minor competence and incompetence (Caspery, Dane, Gorham, Brooks, Graham, etc.). At whatever level, the novels image-forth the commonplace perception that 'Hollywood ain't for real'; but some labyrinthian possibilities reside in their, and our, enthrallment to that unreality.

A major impetus behind the Hollywood novel comes from the desire to expose the wicked and the bizarre. Such a tendency, always an important aspect in the history of the novel, enjoys a distinctive American emphasis. Whether it be the Puritan mind, whaling, war, the Midwestern smalltown, or, more recently, the revelations of the predatory side of such dominant institutions as advertising and academia, the novel-as-exposé would seem to be essential to the American innocence which it both reveals and fortifies. Puritanism, whaling, war, etc., are not reformed by imaginative exposure -- contrary to what the earnest middle-brow mind likes to believe about the function of the novel - but are, depending on art and audience, transformed by exposure into either symbology or titillation. Knowledge may justify innocence, or protect it by putting harsh reality into a pseudo-private fantasy which belongs on the screen, in the popular novel, or to the nocturnal mind.

Hollywood, so clearly exposed in many novels as the social and cinematic depository for the grossest images of sex and success, has also been exposed into unreality. For much of the audience, the nihilism of Hollywood sex and success does not belong to the daily world but, conveniently, to 'entertainment'. Since only the righteous and crude could be indignant about the unreality of entertainment, that genteel and optimistic naiveté which passes for innocence remains untouched, and untouchable.

But the Hollywood novel itself, and not least in its more ostensibly sophisticated forms, also submits to an amazing innocence. In almost every Hollywood novel, the most devastating pursuit of what was once called avarice and lust leaves character unchanged -- the exhaustive labors of the Hollywood heroine, for example, but make her a contemporary Moll Flanders. And, despite the novelist's wry efforts at a moral on Hollywood (see even the opening chapters of *Love Among the Cannibals* and *The Deer Park*), the exposure results in sentimental or comic stylization. Exposure and sophistication, so essential to the knowledge of Hollywood, do not directly render an image of human truth but only a more grotesque fantasy. Unreality inevitably becomes the principle of character and form; for all that happens in Hollywood, the novels tell us, nothing happens.

Just as each Hollywood heroism becomes mock-heroic, so each defeat becomes absurd disproportion. One exception in the Hollywood novel to this lack of significant loss is sometimes cited: Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*. The critical discussion of Fitzgerald's Hollywood novel often turns coyly on Fitzgerald's avowed intentions, his earlier novels, or simply the incompleteness of what might have been a study of heroic failure in Hollywood. But quite enough of the novel does exist to make this a curiously inappropriate view. Ranged against the spectrum of producers in Hollywood novels, Fitzgerald's producer-hero, Stahr, belongs with those of the most grievously sentimental novelists. Perhaps the subject was inherently unfortunate, given the type's almost total artistic nullity, second-hand commercial functions, and bureaucratic roles. However, Fitzgerald's personal insight into failure did provide a momentary understanding of what Stahr significantly represents, and of

what drives him in his petty manipulations during the final six months of his life: 'the urge toward total exhaustion'

Now such a total assault on one's sensibility, while it touches a larger American chord, applies especially to Hollywood: the exhaustion of sensibility, without other purpose, describes both the dominant Hollywood product and personality. Schulberg's clinical case in *What Makes Sammy Run?* of the deracinated, declassed, depersonalized producer's aggressions shows the same purposeless energy, though Schulberg muddles his images with doctrinaire political explanations. It seems that the producer is also the hero in most of the poorer Hollywood novels (rather than the director, the key to cinematic art) because he exhibits most fully the personal and productive grossity which gives the historical pattern of Hollywood. Whether his frenzy results from the end of what was once the American pioneer-and-Protestant ethos of God-driven labor, now godless, or from some more complex and pervasive modern loss of sanctity which has resulted in furious manipulation and expiation, what remains are mighty labors to exhaust all possibility of knowing, feeling and choosing.

The simple-minded novels about Hollywood display unconsciously what the more shrewd show ironically: committed energy joined with stupidity or cheapness or corruption succeeds in Hollywood, and most profitably. The happy ending contingent on success in proliferating the meretricious goes beyond the paradoxical rewards of vice over virtue. An intelligent writer in *The Last Tycoon* weakly laments, 'I keep wishing you [the whole movie industry] could start over. ... It's the mass production.' But he quickly succumbs to the ersatz argument of the tycoon (it is the same argument of the uniqueness of the cinematic image that we started with in Schulberg), and energetically succeeds in his part of that mass production. While the scene lacks dramatic persuasiveness, it represents a typical insistence that a personal and significant view and failure is the only success not allowed in the Hollywood pattern.

We might follow a bit further this motif of the writer in Hollywood, who so often is cast by the polemicist as the natural enemy of the producer in that contemporary intellectual allegory of the Artist versus Mass Culture. While the issue of the artist versus Hollywood generally appears, the plight of the artist is more wry than tragic. The tone varies from James T. Farrell's exposing flat sarcasm about the luxurious futility of an autobiographical writer in Hollywood ('\$1,000 A Week') through the urbane mannerings of exactly

the same point with Bemelmans' clever Maurice Cassard (*Dirty Eddy*); it so may ki and Al becomes didactically irrelevant with Schulberg's *Kit and Al* (whose salvation is union activity), or swollen into the mock-education-of-the-war-veteran-as-American-novelist with Mailer's *Sergius O'Shaugnessy* (*Deer Park*). Given a bit more comic displacement, the writer may turn the artist in Hollywood into West's surrealist painter, *Tod Hackett*; or Morris's "ex-cornbelt Shelly" turned songwriter, *Earl Horter*; or Fitzgerald's naively literary Bennington girl-narrator, *Cecelia Bradley*. Even if we didn't have biographical knowledge of the why of these figures, the insistence on unfolding the story from the artist's point-of-view (including the awkward situation that the artist-figures

in Schulberg, Bemelmans, West, Mailer and Fitzgerald simply can't know or plausibly present the material required of them would acknowledge the self-exposure and confessional fable. Yet, with the exception of Schulberg's ponderous historical melodrama of a neo-Fitzgerald (*The Disenchanted*), these are not harsh acknowledgements of defeat. It would seem that the artist in Hollywood admits the ancient rule that you must have corn to sell corn. Hollywood has no connection, encouraging or corrupting, with art as such; any confusion between the artist and the Hollywood corn-doctor - even if they be combined in the same person --exists mostly in the mind of Hollywood, which, with its usual sense of fact, expensively misleads itself.

Any success or failure in Hollywood remains outside of art; it is also personally ambiguous. The non-believer on the margins of an esoteric cult, advertising, or Hollywood, can hardly believe in the faith and the lack of real cynicism of the devotee -- until he suddenly finds himself acting out the ritual. Like the skeptic among the movie audience in the darkened theater, he suddenly realizes that he, too, is laughing or crying at the image in front of him because it has become himself. Like West's artist in *Day of the Locust*, he loves the vacuous Hollywood heroine whom he despises; and he ends as part of the mad crowd that he came to mock, even though he defies it by hurling, a coccilla verveiving me animo fees plye the is cOnce

imitates the Artist, and the Artist imitates the Mass Culture, though neither believes in the reality of the other.

m

Apparently essential to the mock-heroics, the unreality, and the exhaustion of sensibility in the Hollywood image is what has been erroneously called the love-story, and its energetic ritual with that inverted fertility goddess, the hard, glossy bitch. Little detail need be given here, for in reading of yet another Hollywood heroine, like seeing another Hollywood movie, one has that pervasive sense of *déjà vu*. The physical attractiveness which yet lacks physical variance, limit and solidity; the narcissistic egotism; the ruthless shrewdness embedded in a pervasive stupidity; the pathetic and sordid background which provides the root energy and ambition and snobbishness -- all appear with almost obsessive detail in Dos Passos's systematic but purely external portrait of the rise to stardom of the totally untalented Margo Dowling (*The Big Money*). The majority of the portraits since then are equally external, that is, 'naturalistic', and follow almost exactly the same pattern. Only the specialist can note one disputed issue in the novelistic treatment of the star-heroine, a modern adaptation of a legendary disagreement about prostitutes: either her sexuality is in precise algebraic relation to her career (as in Aben Kandel's Kitty Doone in *'You Twinkle Only Once'*); or her sexuality randomly spills over her shrewd calculus (Mailer's Lulu in *Deer Park*; West's Faye Greener - once). Otherwise, we find only the machined repetition inherent in the subject matter, and an amazing lack of personal dimensions and sensuality. Yet most of the Hollywood novels present the standard figure; it can only be an act of

faith, for all signs indicate that she is, quite unbelievably, both promiscuous and passionate. The fascination, then, with the glossy bitch must be generic; she is the image of Hollywood, the novelist insists, and then, too often trundles off to bed with his charismatic clichés. Besides exposing Hollywood eroticism, and perhaps his own, the novelist's detailing of the bitch's peregrinations, like the concern with the producer, centers on charades of production and immense energy ordered, and disordered, for practical purposes.

Though the narrative judgments of the bitch vary in the novels in degrees of fascination, repulsion, longing and disapproval, the figure's constancy suggests a more basic similarity of design and meaning. Perhaps Norman Mailer most consciously realized the amorality inherent in this eroticism, the intrinsic lack of principle and purpose, other than the vitalistic, which the extreme sexual microcosm reveals when placed in a scene freeing it from its traditional but irrelevant moral habitat. In his awkward but thoughtful way, Mailer is not using the sexy star for a moralistic vantage. Morality is reserved, in the form of the usual satiric devices, for the public realm's social and political (non-sexual) affairs: the sychophantish producer, the sanctimonious congressman, the hypocritical executive. Not just Mailer's Lulu, who partly degrades sex for practical ends, but his much more pure Elena, whose purity consists in being more promiscuous but less practical (a failure in Hollywood terms), leads to the narrator-artist's affirmation of life. In his concluding speech, Mailer's writer asks God, "Would you agree that sex is where philosophy begins?" And not only begins; for Mailer -- as he has also indicated in his long essay, 'The White Negro' -- the superlative sexual orgasm may be a proper aim and end of a disenchanted philosophy. The Hollywood scene provides the appropriate fantastic amoral extremity for such vitalism, as well as the overwhelming forms of corruption of vitality. We begin to suspect that the Hollywood image of sex has a demonic twist -- and not only in Mailer, who shows self-consciousness about it -- in which corruption is vitality.

Much the same focus applies to Wright Morris's very different *Love Among the Cannibals*. Hollywood again provides the staging, bizarre and amoral, for an extreme manipulation of the erotic allegory: beach love jaunt (Malibu, we should by now be convinced, is the national orgone box, the circus scene of sexual perversions a recurrent episode apparently indigenous to the Hollywood novel, and the urbane-pastoral paraphernalia of sun, liquor, resort, convertible, etc. The hard, glossy bitch divides into the Southern drugstore Honey with Hollywood ambitions, who remains comically and shrewdly chaste unto marriage, and the pure libido, the 'Greek' (goddess), who is all passion. The one catch to the erotic deity comes from the inhumanity of superlative passion -- intense, anonymous, promiscuous, natural and totally impersonal. In sum, the love-deity is as cannibalistic as the wilful conglomerate of female Americana: the glossy and avaricious drugstore Honey is the predatory law of American manners and morals; the desirably pagan erotic deity is the predatory law of passion itself.

But, despite his intelligence and style, Morris's work suffers from the novels. In contrition he comically shreds the national manner

of the drugstore Honey, his treatment of the sexual deity lacks all substance; a graduate student, a professional nursemaid, a freelance lover, a parody fertility figure, and a series of orgasmic sexual superlatives in the Hollywood manner, she quite lacks consistency, personality and inner life. (The same uncertainty of perspective between vitality and morality appears in Morris's following book, an essay on the American novel, in a weird double allegiance to Henry James and D. H. Lawrence.) Probably the author has failed to imaginatively digest the bohemian schizophrenic type so often associated with artists, professors and writers, in and out of Hollywood. Anyway, as with so many contemporary novels, we are given symptoms for symbols.

The attempt to use the Hollywood purlieus, archetypes and mythos to create a sexual microcosm would seem to be more than a mock-heroic *jeu d'esprit*. The Hollywood story still belongs, desperately, to the Renaissance traditions of the grand motifs: personal success, public art and heroic sexual romance. And this no matter how much the money-novel, the portrait of the artist, and the love story are grotesquely parodied in the luxuriously rootless modern milieu. The penultimacy of the Hollywood bitch depends on a metaphysical longing which not even the novelist can ever make quite concrete. Thus, to take but one of many examples, a heavily Arnoldian critic of culture, Richard Chase in his recent *Democratic Vista*, earnestly proposes Hollywood bitches as symbols of the inner temper of each decade of American culture. What strange wisdom have we attained when the onanistic rarefaction of adolescent ambition and fantasy represents the epoch?

The sardonic novelists (West, Mailer and Morris) grotesquely adore the erotic deities that the sentimental novelists (Fitzgerald, Bemelmans and the romancers) mawkishly adore. Psychologically defined, naturalistically exposed, surrealistically exploded, the bitch, no matter how machined and counterfeited, receives the same piety from the adolescent and the cultural critic. The worship of the erotic deity, as the moralist (unless he be an Apuleius) fails to comprehend, remains despite all knowledge of falsification and unreality, for it has an intense and phantasmagoric subjectivity which competing cults of traditional ritual or psychotic technology can never achieve. Perhaps the absence of love becomes heightened in its diabolic parody, and, as with the mystics' sense of deprivation, absence creates the reality.

WV

By a logic probably inevitable in our subject, we move, briefly, from counterfeit love to counterfeit death. From an innate conservatism of imagination, the English satirists take up the death image where the Americans take up love images. With a moralistic hand, Huxley has grasped at the refusal to die (*After Many A Summer Dies the Swan*) while Waugh has pinched at the refusal to acknowledge death (*The Loved One*). Once again, the touch depends on visual disjunction: the simply accurate descriptions of San Simeon and Forest Lawn provide much of the point. However, the English moralist's Hollywood image has a fundamental difference from the American novelist's; it is not just the moralist's prurience (Huxley) and snobbery (Waugh) - both

of which seem largely absent in the American Hollywood novel -- but a more general emotional as well as metaphysical contempt for the Hollywood image. Whatever the American novelist's technique, and no matter how aslant his image of Hollywood, we recognize his strategy as exposure by embracement.

The explanation derives from the obvious linkage of Hollywood with some essential America. Nor will it do to note that the English writers stay further away from the literal Hollywood - there is little reason to separate the 'Hollywood' and the 'Southern California novel'. The American novelists also displace much of the scene: for a Dos Passos or Schulberg what really happens lies in the sordid childhood and pathological rootlessness in the American hinterlands; for Mailer and Morris, the flesh lies most to view in the Hollywood resorts (Palm Springs and Acapulco) -- the novelist's usual insight that it is not the business office but the pleasure palace which reveals the art or artifice of a society; for West, like Henry Miller in *The Air Conditioned Nightmare*, it is the congregations of the audience and disassorted mad and defeated who are Hollywood. For the rest, Hollywood was, to the early novelists (and anthropologists), another American 'frontier' or 'Gold-rush'; to the later novelists (the anthropologists have not yet caught up) Hollywood is simply more frenzied than usual offices or more fragmented suburbs. After all, Southern California is just like the rest of America -- only more so; it is the ripe fruit of the larger American scene whose fruition, elsewhere, has sometimes been slightly delayed by an excess of history, or a lack of candour, which are now disappearing, and so make Hollywood lose its unique luster.

The American novel has its metaphysic within rather than without, unlike, for example, that of the English satirists who test Hollywood against a quite different moral image. The American novel, in what Richard Chase identifies as its 'romance' form, finds its ultimate meaning in the very texture of the reality of its subject: concrete images must reveal the Image, rather than the absence of some other true religion or morality, for no other Word has been given to fit this scene. Thus in the true picture of the West, the Frontier, the Town, the Movies, may be found some sort of final revelation. What else can cohere the visual chaos? The image of images, a final disjunction -- apocalypse.

Nathanael West's chiliastic artist, gathering his grotesque images for his masterpiece, *'The Burning of Los Angeles'*, ends with mad siren screams as he watches the violent pseudo-orgy of a Hollywood premiere mob. While in other novels about Hollywood the apocalyptic image may, by the very rule of disjunction, be displaced from the final scene of the novel, it generally appears.

fleeing and the fish floating belly-up. In the sentimental histories of Hollywood, the fall of a producer, a movie technique, a fortune, or a cliché, takes on magical and world sundering proportions. We repeatedly feel a surging bewilderment at the inhuman and suprapersonal calamity contingent on the break-up of a shoddy dream. As in Morris and Carson, the frenzy of disintegration in an alien pleasure-land gives an accumulation of destructiveness denying all comic ease. We cannot tell -- nor, apparently, can Norman Mailer

--whether the demonic pimp of Deer Park, Marion O'Faye, can actually create, beyond depravity and violence, "a sin so much greater, so terrible and enormous that God Himself must blanch ...' or whether the final horror is simply the narcotic dream of an ageing juvenile delinquent. But here, too, the nagging sense of unreality; in fact, the fatally bored and cheated crowds of West's apocalypse can find yet safer distractions, and premieres become tame; the traumas of delinquents end in the same mechanized passivity; and the emotional cannibalism of the alien and the passionate peters out in mere social malnutrition. Surely the mass productions of Hollywood, unlike other technological fantasies, can't explode -- even in the imagination. And yet the image of a total debacle remains apt, the only sufficient reason, in that insatiable longing for exhaustion and for some meaningful negation.

V

Such is the moral. The Hollywood novel has no other substantial satiric and didactic point. The mock-social and mock-moral texture of the Hollywood image has no more solidity than the chimerical hyper-materiality of the cinematic image. But doesn't Hollywood provide, as so often noted, a dense negative reality for the intellect of the gossip, the pathologist, the critic, the moral satirist? Apparently not. Satire lacks relevance. Even given the style of a Juvenal describing Rome, and quite probably Juvenal's vehement social nostalgia and bitter moral narrowness, something would be missing for the satirist in Hollywood -- no fall from Republic to Empire, no decline of morals and manners, no new corruption of power and desire. Indeed, the over-literary Hollywood novel tends to bog down in an irrelevant metaphor taken from the classical satirist; the pathos of Fitzgerald's Last Tycoon and the hipsterism of Mailer's Deer Park (and the hackery of Libby Block's Hills of Beverley) start with an assumption of power so as to spell out its defeat and decadence. But the heroics mock the mocker in his hard-put efforts to convince us that there was an authentic tycoon, monarch or high style. Even if we suspend our knowledge about the lack of any greatness and of any life-and-death power in the actual Hollywood, what imaginative focus can convince any but the collector of Hollywoodiana that there has even been a decline and fall?

Elements of satire, of course, in rather strange disproportions, but, as with so much American literature, the Hollywood novel depends on a not quite applicable traditional image drawn from art to give it form. The application of an art-myth to Hollywood provides a major intellectual pastime. Even the most intelligent critics of Hollywood and the cinematic form -- such as Dwight Macdonald, James Agee, Rudolf Arnheim - half-believe an art-myth of the rise and fall of the cinema: from obscure folk art origins (vaudeville, natural-mime comedy and melodrama, through the great creative period of high style and kingly directors (Griffith, Von Stroheim, and the silent films of classical images), to the final technological decadence (colored, scopic, literary, and full of pseudo-moral issues). Granted that the visual image provides the real nature of the medium, but its actual art, mostly in a few exceptional

images in otherwise poor movies and less often in an entire picture, has occurred with intermittent rareness throughout the entire history of Hollywood. The critics, like some of the more ambitious novelists, suffer from the culture myth of literary historians and the triune form-myth of ancient moralists. In Hollywood, good and bad were there from the start, or in the words of two of the earlier Hollywood novels: 'the art of the motion picture started']. plumb senile'; and Hollywood arose 'from a swindle and it never changed'.

The historical Hollywood may, perhaps, be tading away, or it may be shipping into yet another charade, this time of suburban virtue and industrial efficiency, but its end can come from no fall into technological counterfeit, artistic corruption, moral decadence, or synthetic emotion, for there Hollywood has always been.

If moral and social satire (and, it may be, the major forms of the novel) imply some return to commonsense, earlier virtue or primal reality, then satire of Hollywood - like almost all American satire - fragments into isolated and disproportionate images because it has no counter-reality to establish its self-violation. For the American, even when an intelligent novelist, the image of Hollywood, like the image of Babbitt, remains sentimental, no matter how harshly used. The Last Tycoon and The Deer Park, among others, as well as the more clearly aimed Day of the Locust and Love Among the Cannibals, reveal not ancient moral wisdom but yet another fragment of Trimalchio's feast -- the fantastically disinterested grotesques of a Propertius. The saevo indignatio of the novelist, and the critic, a la Hollywood, has far more hunger after an art-myth than after righteousness.

Like the Great American Novel, the Epic of the West, and all those other over-written but non-existent sub-genres of American literature, the Hollywood novel exists as a masquerade in search of its own primal reality. And as with attempts to realize in some way the distinctive American character, consciousness and sensibility, every image reveals all too much, and therefore nothing at all. At its best, Hollywood, in novel or film or fact, catches a fragmented and grotesque image that goes beyond authentic American nihilism to cosmic knowledge: the parody of the ancient metaphysical proof of deity from design -- that joke implies a master joker.

-....._I-a,,O-_

All in a dream of the time it was
(Kissing the corpse on its bombproof nose)
I winked at a peach that gave me a buzz,
But when I rubbed her she had no fuzz.
A sad chair stared, heaped with our clothes.

All in the light of the moon that came
(The bottles empty, the switches thrown)
I lost my wallet, I changed my name,
I saw the colonel go down aflame.
There stood the chair, our only one.

All in a heap on the chair that stood
(Polaris neither rising nor setting)
I told no evil, I saw no good
Except those sad few sticks of wood,
Like a ghost I had been forgetting.

All in a row in the law that wrought
(Some still listed and some still lost)
I sighted squinty, my tracers caught,
The sad chair blew up like a thought.
She snored her whiskey. I turned and tossed.

All in a dream of the thought that blows
The moon in the window, the ghost on the chair,
The one sad chair heaped with our clothes,
I kissed her corpse on its bombproof nose,
And left her dead and went out for air.

All in a dream of the time it is
(The colonels coming, the colonels going)
Since Tokio sizzled her star-spangled sizz,
I got a medal for writing this,
And an oak-leaf cluster because it was snowing.

All in the hush of the snow that fell
(Tojo dancing for everyone's crime)
We swung the hammer, we rang the bell,
But the only reason it wasn't Hell
We went to was -- we won, that time.

(The corncob rampant above the noose)
The sad chair stood, our only one.
I wish, now all is said and done,
We had shared that sadness, but what's the use?
- John Ciardi

Roomer About a Landlady, or Tale from the Boarderland

Room no sooner rented, door closed, her footsteps leaving my ear
and I leaning back on solitude's soft cushion,
than the leaking faucet of her solicitude
began to mother-milk-drip,
more insistent even than the radiator's bumptious gossip.

Breakfast always ready at pin-curled eight,
but the fresh egg of good morning spoiled
by, small-talk-sweetmeats,
and in the evening
my mail covered with the fly-specks of her prying.

Our thus tissue-paper co-existence
pierced one late afternoon by the doorbell
and her Hindemith-clef plaint, 'A lady to see you!'
Our (later) cold-turkey-to-turkey
talk featuring her vow, 'Not in my house you won't!'

I, consequently, going upstairs to wipe the apricot-jam-sticky
fingerprints of One-Hand-Washes-the-Other
off my paperback mysteries, then extracting the Rooms-for-Rent
section from the evening paper,
letting world events drop to the floor like orange peels.

- Felix Anselm

*Taken onto a horse,
forced forward into the trait,
I bent my head,
I said what children should.*

*But the branches beat
raw sweetness into my brain,
a rain of green whisked
the blissful foam of thrush-song*

*over my breast.
And I gladly went down;
I strung the bones
of the animal to mine,

and blithely felt the hooves
love me to thunder,
to wonder and savage grief
of the adult.*

*I sank along the floor
of roaring fear, the pace,
the savor of wisdom
wrung in sweat,

till jolt of stopping
by rocks as huge as towers
flowered me into words,
the thirsty-lost, the dimpled
in wisdom for all time,*

*like chiming thrush,
like rush of beast's volition.*

*My lungs flailed outward
with sound too big for lips:
'I did it! I did it!'*

*accents too huge for me
or any age. I struck
his neck with fists, leaped
to the fierce, black rock
to shock my feet and sinew,

to beat me out of timeless,
back to the child I'd been.*

-George Abbe

Stephen Geller

DAD, THE THOUGHT OF YOU

HEARKEN, the world barks for you:

with my father sleeping two pillows on his feet, one above (one below) his head, spinning among four-fanged monsters of yellow dream, watching them catch at his legs, crawl close to toes, creep, nibble, chew, vomit around him, unable to move, caught in that sleep of silent horrors, and brooding, that's what he does when they appear. There was always the brooding.

Once the cocktail parties began with the living girlie advertisements pressing close to his manicured body and the smiling boy-men simpering goodness and ominous jelly contracts floating in daiquiris; it was uneasy then, but not enough of uneasy to curl uncertainty on the self, and of course there were laughs: the gagwriters loud, simulation of child, amazing time-machines of wit pre-Ben Jonson post-Van Johnson, the actors flying Chagall-like above the upturn umpteen heads of the Industry, dropping golden turds of success on the front pages of Scandalsheets and letters to the editor: 'I think men should be like Rock Hudson, who is generos and handsom and sweet (sic)' and in this continuum flowed my father, piece of sad putty on Karma River.

Once he was Jewish (and is but with) a mellowed sentimentality which sits back and stares droopy-eyed and red-rimmed round the world, and knows how to cry and want to cry and love to cry with the sadness of the kind blind woman, so much could be cried about this, his rainy sundays of Beethoven tear. then

HARK! and the world barks at you:

with my father the marry-gore-round and trifle lusts for amusements which catch on flypaper and stick to private soul (though much laughter provoked in the business and lots of Luck, dad, bigtime babies claim your broozer for mucho gelt), this the cycle, the standard dig Professors call the 'tragic flaw' and authors claim as the last dignity of man, now the only dignity of our time

Times, though, when gifts flowed from baggy vaudeville pockets for stoic I'm Sorries and we'd head to the desert to find rocks him and me and dig in the red Mojave sands for quartz (he said we'd find big marbles, real ones) and howlite, which looks like cauliflower and ticks small uranium on portable geigercounters and when cut in half and polished make mighty fine book-ends, I've got four in my room and must admit they're pretty.

Oh and sinking lines off (for me) unknown harbors alongside hairhand Portugese fishermen and him threading the line, knowing most wond'rous how to get the fish just right and bringing it alongside the boat, pipestem chewed tight and him, how he smiled then, my Dad.

Oh yes, business going so fine and record dates and a pretty girl is like a melody (mama sitting sadly on fam'ly rockin' chair) and the presents without I'm Sorries and the disease is fast approaching, (and then you search yourself

and say is this what i want?) and the fight begins and ideas 'flow quickly' (gotta do a musical, i gotta do a play, i got ideas for many things, i got 'em in my funny head but want 'em down in ink) and the silkwind blows the paper out proverbial windows, and here we go again.

Now we're stuffing ourselves with Japanese prints, he buying the Netsuke ivory carvings and pursing his lips for the sheer honesty of the work, the sincerity of design.

happens too swiftly: Skip skipper skipping skiff splim, the harp rattles pretty and all America claps. A pillow on top the head when sleeping, and two on the feet.

So last he told me to forget the fight we had that summer, for 'I don't think you are a little baby and I am having enough trouble handling my own penis without being concerned about your nocturnal transgressions or bed-wetting,' and that he wasn't shouting, 'I must say that my voice was controlled at all times, except for a certain mellow quality that comes from years of practice,' and it had happened, the sophistovilification of all this, with hope (uncertain) at the end of his letter, pressing, as he did,

'Love is All,'

Dad.

THE GOODNESS BIT

- Look out ovuh yonder, out there in the pea-patch; see, out there, son, they got standing high the picture of the Old Man, turning away with a gesture you've seen dozens of times on one o' them tellyvisions. That's him. That's the Old Man. And it's all because of him that this party's been made possible. It's because of him that we're here, eating this food and drinking this liquor. Remember that, son. Don'choo ever forget it -- else I'll lick you something good. --

Scenes like that, or dialogue, stand as okiedoke reminder of our cultcher heritage, and are great, glorious and money-making when they take the form of corn-cob comedian-philosophers.

'How'd I ever do it? Well d'ja ever try to skin a snail in the cornhide?' Yocks. Or 'You gonna tell me thet again? Now ain't it just like you! Zingos.

Same such man held an After-All-These-Years cockentail party at his ranch, same such asked chorus girls, stagehands, writers to attend and so they did, the gagmen dressed a la Parka Avenue cowboy (Make your friends laugh -- spangled shirts. Great after hours,) the chorus girls all frocked and frilled and geese better hurry, chorus boys tight-ass cute in skinpanties, just enjoying the living hell out of Our Ned, the Old Man, All, mind you, just couldn't wait to high-tail out over to that there likkerbar and get some of them good ones in their bellies. All this the drinking in half hour after arrival, so in another half hour (just one more quickie as a topper) All Would Be Beautiful.

My attitude no different, plowed my way to the stars, then sitting under what someone (god who was it) called our tight little island, trying to sleep, the harhars too loud and quick for staccato-less me, then watched off-and-onnest Glick, the Writer, playing baseball with his children. 'Yes,' he began, 'Here I am, playing this baseball with my kids.'

'Aren't you a goddamned Saint!' muttered the wife.

* A large screw for my deareeoo,' whistled the wouldsman.

Eyes panned to other side of field, with drunken Joe Laserno, cameraman, miming matador with a cow. And, see, everyone was laughin' at Joe there.

Now, out in pea-patch stood picture of Ned, the Old Man, which, as the hours increased, grew largest and threatened to overtake the House and Ranch and swallow it up. Surrealistic threads among the bold, bold-bold.

'God, it's good to see you.'

This from Jenny, the Director's wife.

*I hate these goddamned things. Everyone so dressed-up and phoney."

Now also with Jenny I have been highballing on gin-wings, for we meet together at cocktail parties and neither of us but such is the nature of Thin-dustry and who are we to say? Sannyhoo I meet her and she starts with how much she hates the phonies (which is natural opening) then the faggots (everything in order) and, finally, how nice it would be to get away from this whole thing and shouts as Joe is bowled over by the cow -- do something really, I mean, really creative. The joy it would muster in someone's heart to see his little old book in print, his honest for real play produced. But this TV series, stuff and nonsense. This is only temporary. The excuse.

'I mean,' she says, 'Phil has the ability for something serious. To do something like that. Know what I mean? Something really serious.'

'Dramatic?'

'Oh, yes, dramatic. That, too.'

(Then, for good measure, pour out philosophy into a jigger of scotch, squeeze some tears into a large lemon, add a dash of ratbane and mandragora root.)

And then she began with goodness:

'Once I used to work quite a bit, you know, before I was married. And I

practice it then because life is so... so pragmatic. Now being married toractice it then because fe was never able to practice my philosophy. I mean it was difficult for me to

Phil has been great for me. He's such a wonderful man - and I've all the time in the world to practice my philosophy?

·It's a simple philosophy, I must admit. Just the idea of the natural goodness in Mankind. I can believe that now. I mean, it's opened my eyes. To so many, many things, you wouldn't believe it. All of it is Good. Everything.'

So shut eyes for me, nodding the core of all religious thought, heart weaving with simple message, wondrous voice of wife of Phil.

* I know, you're right, but it's so hard to...

* Now, now. We mustn't think of it in those terms. I used to feel that way myself.

'But I'm not married to Phil.'

'Ha, not cut out for my philosophy? Well, you don't have to be married

to believe in it, you know. This goodness. I mean it's not necessary to be married. But I've found that I had more time to myself, didn't have to worry about working, making money. I could sit back and realize right there that everyone was good, really. Basically. You know what I mean, this goodness.'

Around the other side of the house now they were having a rodeo, with hoops and hollers delivered (I might add) with greatest of professional punctuation by the Kewpie troupe of singers and dancers and, above it all, waving smiles and charm, The Old Man In The Pea-patch, looming fearful, immense.

*I believe you, but I can't look around here and feel that..

Shouts now from behind the barn, Phil waving to his wife.

*Hey, doll-love, got Rita Stanford and Billy Freehoff here; come on over and say hello!"

· JUST SECond! Listen, honey, we'll talk this whole thing later. Haven't seen Billy and Rita since they signed Phil for the spectaculars. You must meet them someday. Oh, HELLO, BILLEEEEE 'disappearing her goodness quick and, anyway, clowns destroy images so, later, why don't we talk about the goodness bit?

FOR CHRIS, A FRAGMENT

Chris caught the neon in her eyes, held it there, then sent it deep through her lungs to her feet. Now she was part of it, the sign blinking, toes the same, all of her charged with the hectic neon that lined the frenzy blue-red street. Chris caught its pattern in her face, and stood by the side of it, staring as emotionless as the power within her, stood staring at the wine-hookers crossing near on the street.

·I'm ten, going on twenty,' she repeated, and watched the men pass by.

· Show them a woman of ten, going on twenty,' she mused.

'Hey, you! '

He coughed, walked past her.

' Hey, commonnn, you! '

The other man turned, smiled, and patted her on the head.

' Hey, I'm a woman of ten, going on twenty, wanna be my father?'

The neon was passing out of her, and she wanted to run back, feel the streets slip against her, crush pull and tug against the dirty jersey that had tumbled upon her. But she waited; her father would arrive.

'One a penny, that's too many,

Two a dime, any time,

Three's a stick, so kiss me quick,' she sang.

Now the power was returning, and she let it run through her arms, she felt it flush in her face. Then she walked across the street, and approached the nice man.

' Hey, you wanna be my father?'

He stopped, his face reflecting the colorflush pastels of the neon. He felt it. then took her hand

They started to walk across the street.

Chris was gay now, and talkative. She held his hand, walked with him, not

* see my you a ones s got five kid, beaudes my l and and from di. fared,
guys and I know I got a father one of them, maybe you, but anyhow, see,
this is why I'm around here and holding your hand, we don't live close, but
my Ma said my Dad was a drinker and I know them all around here, the
drinkers,' she paused, smiled at the signs, " and so I wondered just what, you
know? But, see, I can trust you 'cause I'm a smart girl, with me I got an
I.Q. of 170 and I'm ten going on twenty, and my name is Chris and maybe
you aren't my father but, I mean, I know you are and anyway we'll always
love each other, anyways, so what's the difference?'

The man walked behind the store, fumbled for her dress. She looked up at
him, the black of neonless face working hard now, pressing hard with her
dress.

'Hey, commonnn, you, are you my father?'

The man nodded, his breath playing wind on her cheeks.

'It's all right,' she said, when he began, ' it's all right then if you're my
father, it's all right. We love each other always. Hold me tight, father, hold
me, love me tight."

When it had passed, she was standing by the side of the street, watching the
man leave. He had given her a dime, and she put it in her pocket, she felt it
small and cold in her pocket, and she started to cry.

He had fooled her, they had always fooled her. She, Chris, had believed
them and swore when the tears began to slide saltwet down her face, cloudless
and purelessly impure, that she would make sure next time. She would make
sure, she was smart that way.

But she had to prepare herself for her mother, when she walked back home,
(the beating, oh, she wasn't that dumb), so she walked past the store, into the
neon, and tried to breathe in the light, tried to entangle it in her nerves, her
muscles, wrestle with it inside her body, it would feel better that way.

It didn't happen, though. It never did.

BOMBAY TOWN

Mike Meth

Bombay -- Oh world of glaciers gone. Where now the clean, hard tusk of youth? World lost to the ripe mangoes, the overhead fans, the door-roving Bombay girls who held me sleepless in their tented, black hair. These gentle genital kissers. These spider-fingered testes touchers. How could they, whose breasts shaded even the dim red bulb of lust, sing -- and wash me, too?

And this is flapping, white-clad Bombay town where Indians never fold their tents and silently steal away. Always present. The night a street of encamped, brown-sacked lumps, heads pillowed on the pedestals of dead Victorian heroes. A night that never ends. A day that never begins. The restless sleepers rising on the spots of slumber. Bed rolls, spotted sheets hanging and airing like decorations for triumphal parades which never come. Yellow bean bred pa sands of one it, i ed scorts oh a day the

of India. Taxi cheaters and greedy buggymen. Rot gut gin drunk over the red potash waters of bent tin douche bowls. Pornographic ivory. Assume the position and on my soul, I knew it not before. Thieves market, and yet the thieves are not confined to the market; for the priced Parsee priest will tell you the vultures plucked the right eye first, and it is not so. The Hindu burners will use the sacred, charred wood for another pyre; the flowers will touch the cheeks of another 'dearly beloved'. Go, go my beggar woman. Kiss not my shoes. I haven't an anna for your professional cast. Go, my pimping boy. I'll not read the address of your two. I am satiated with four already. What, don't you believe me? Ask the Chinese girl of 97. We went around the world not an hour ago. Flower spotted silk from the hand looms of Kashmir and the worms nurtured on the dung from Bombay streets. Mincing 'Billy Boys', counterfeit whores. Bungo my boys. Cages of tiered, beckoning girls. Price, eight annas after 12 o'clock and a sieve of your prick. Sell me an Alexander stone from the shattered bottom of a prohibition beer. And everything encased in the name of a gone regime -- Victoria Garden, Prince of Wales Museum, Churchgate Road, Victoria Station, Prince George Street ---- Nehru and the Republic live in Delhi. I gave my lady a new washing machine the other day. What was it? A tub and a stone.' Have you seen the public laundry? For two annas they thresh your clothes. No one has heard of the new coin. The mongoose bit the water snake's head. It was quick. They say a fight between a mongoose and a cobra is better. Lasts longer. But the mongoose always wins. I wish I had looked closer at the cobra charming reed. It really held him. Wilson College is on Marine Drive out towards the bay and Juhu Beach. I cannot believe they teach the new doctrines there. Alchemy more likely. But the aquarium was nice. Especially the turkey fish weaving its gills like Sally Rand and her multicolored fans. Outside, in a field, the young boys play soccer. They say the old customs are dying; but I see the turbaned Sikh watching them, and I do not think so. A Hindu temple

with its silver wrought god -- a smiling neuter. All very Catholic. A devout chants. He has never heard a Gregorian, but that's what it is. We must go back. They may steal our shoes.

Bombay town. The rubbled homeless reclining on street diggings. Traffic rerouted for the cud-chewing bovine. The brown, dandy Moslem in the tight, white pants buying silver for his wide-hipped, parent-arranged bride. Shy, shy her look. So grateful for the trinket. The imperious spirit of the rajahs compounded with the two hundred year viceroy. I hate the Indian silver buyer; he'd snap his fingers at the messboy any time and break the back of a free citizen. 'Mr. Khamar will be back in an hour. He says he cannot sell the screen for less than 190.' I bought it for 160. Mr. Khamar complains he is a poor man.

The stevedore works in a jock-strop and piles the ore by hoe. He makes two ruppees and wishes the British were back. System and better pay. The customs man sits in the same room with me, and we stare at the fly-swarm face of a sleeping child as we drink our bootleg cognac. Outside, on the stoop of the urine running alleyway, a young girl picks cooties out of grandmother's hair

- unabashed, nonchalantly. Meanwhile, back in 95 Kamling burns the weed, blue burning, grey putty at the end of a stick, and soon we're blasting the stuff. One guy saw roulette wheels and said he knew what he was doing. The chink said he'd make it strong. But at the New Empire, the tight, western-skirted, middle class climb the steps regally for the nine o'clock 'Bridge on the River Kwai'. The Yamashita Maru comes to rest at the Alexander Dock near the Yellow Gate where the gold searching authorities lounge. The official governors live in the palaces of the homeless. The protestant clergy lived next door. Oh, they must have lived high off the hog of India and cared dearly for their daily bread. A London double-decker crawls crowded through the town. Are the streets never empty? Only on the Marine Drive they live my life and sleep cleanly in balcony apartments.

The Gate of India leads nowhere. It stands ornamental and casts a short shadow. And down the way Bombay town shaping the empty vessel of man, filling and over-spilling to the white flapping, sandal leather padding, brown brim.

If I could see innocence again, people again my ordered inane Park Heights world, uninfected by sore, defecating, bubbling Bombay town.

Henry Birnbaum

The Moment Is

*You breathing in a bath of darkness,
the silence lapping, and my ear
near the papal warmth of you
beside beside me.*

*2. Nature is not mine in me.
These hills that climb my hands
to reach the air
make farms of my cities,
and there I breathe
under Van Gogh's ball of sun
where fields are fields of force
under whose destiny I
appear
waiting the uptown train.*

*3. Your laugh is an escaping
nervous thing,
the leapest artifice,
undressing the moment
in a spill of lace voices
warm to the hand
friendly to the skin.*

*4. From the window, tiles
vary red in sunlight.
The mirror of my eye is
light.*

*Across roofs, distance
runs smaller across blue
skies. The moment is
light.*

*A bird is meant in time
trilled against the walls,
red feathered and day-
light.*

signified at the entrance where a cab
halts and churns a promise into another
reflection.

5. This neat and simple chance of you,
isolated by rings of time,
ridinghood among trees
skipping through myths
of leaves, of leaves stirring
in me here now
in the forest
red near you.
6. I leave to night
two chairs
brothers in the dark
and make the barefoot Indian
sound of stairs
and the regal wish
of sheets loving
in lightlessness.
Darkness and I, SO
richly allied.
7. In moonlight, flowers agree
in grey. The houses arrange
their sequence against
headlights.
- The quiet stroll along
this community of railings
spawns sidewalk flowers,
blue blue.
- A yellow light beyond
this street is lost.
among the strings of
a neighbor's recordings.
8. Whisper touch
believe.
This morning
behind the paper, who
would appraise
this whisper
touch,

- - -

Scar tissue. A mutter of annoyance falls
floating down into a waiting issue, falls
like the surprising snow about a murmur,
dust and snow mingled in sullen confusion
with gusts of the intolerant moment falling
upon the scald of crowds.

Outside the bus coughs in chill exercise,
broods via its moiling mechanical heart
on massive enterprise, a sputter of iron
transport declined at a waiting station,
and within the jagged edges of throngs
hang patience on broken headlines.

This is no quadrant of heroes with psaltery
freedoms floating to the tops of trees,
but the toiling park of bent profusion,
the burden of underbrush thick tangled
at the base of time, a wilderness
of shared devotions.

And sometimes like a load of travelers,
they fare into the arms of Lincoln who
receives them with great stone sadness,
or walk round the triumphant Jackson who
reared up on his courage and captured
a corner of their pilgrimage.

But those are Sundays escaping the mind
and then the gross return to waiting.
each standing around with his Monday
clothed in denim or the neat white shirt,
with ashes on his forehead and the snow
falling outside the window and the cold.

For Lucy, on not having written a poem

If I could speak in softer syllables
with half the sound
of old woods waiting on the hungry wind,
of winding coppers when the brooks are bound,
of ancient oak leaves dropping on the ground,
my words would leap like crickets to those rhymes
they mostly want to find, but many times
in Babel have I sinned.

to spell my brain
 to dance and clatter on the tinroof tongue
 and freeze across the drum like winter rain
 as frozen words like customary pain
 have lain half felt and haunting me for years.
 I will not melt them now into these ears.
 Yet am I yours, and young

if that is something. There is such a space
 across the mind
 from mood to music thought and simple speech
 as marks the memoried and unresigned
 newly darkened from the birthly blind.
 Silent I like some mute lorelei
 watching the last old clipper sail her by
 reach, lean out, and reach.

- Miller Williams

Certain Things Are Sure, It Seems

It is impossible
To believe in accident
(as in design)

To believe in
 Endless coincidence,
 Fortuitous chaos,
 Smacks of vulgarity,
 Of sly imperception.

(as in design)

The spin reflects
 The size of stars,
 The wave leaps
 At the grave bid
 And even Time
 Is at last
 Outnumbered.

It is impossible
To believe in accident
(as in design)

- Daniel J. Langton

Lux

LIGHT,
the game that trembles in my brain:
bird in a gilded cage --

black streets,
 bleak bird,
and like a census of the poor
those cobbles -- bumping hippopotami
 in the niles of looking.

My name is napoleon:
I declare war on sunsets.
LIGHT, LIGHT, TREBIZOND,
the bug of asia stings me.

Jew of planets
 scooter of introverts
 alchemist
o earth! counterfeit coin of my life!
I long for the exile of angels
 scolding the night.

I told my wife
 I am Jenghiz Kan
slaying the black men of my dreams:
 I am jockey of empire; the sun is my horse.

I told my wite
 I am the mayor of hens
in the garden of the dawn.
 I told my wife
 to fry me the sun.

LIGHT, LIGHT, O ITALIES!
 my head burns
 the pillow hisses
my eyes smoke with seeing --

Watch
 how the rock of the sun
 falls. Such a sound.

I want the clouds for a flag.

- Felix Stefanile

THE MAN WHO PREPARED

FOR NO THINKING

David R. Bunch

He didn't look like pale-and-wan or crazy-as-hell-and-lonely. In fact he looked right ruddy there by that dry swimming pool in his suburban yard that summer day. The wire cage on his head and all those noisemakers attached to the cage, along with a dozen or so shiny megaphones glinty in the sun and fixed tandem to reenforce one another, made him seem like one-in-a-million.

'Hello,' I said unemotionally as I staggered by on my way to wine arguments with good buddies that bright Wednesday, the big questions of me and the world floating easy in my mind and not making my head reel nor my guts squirm more than the usual. "Is it the Fourth-of-July?" I asked. 'Or New Year's?' I thought it was Wednesday. And June at that. Are you on a toot?

He brought his little snap eyes around, brown they were as brown sugar, and he peeled them at me much more than greeting should. In fact he scrutinized me, he sized me, he thought he had me figured, I could tell. When his big flat face broke open, tanned from so much sitting in the sun by that dry pool, and his mouth scowled up and out to reveal those bright false teeth and the gums of some disaster in the face, I feared he wasn't of friendly heart.

'Yowhsir,' he growled, 'nice adjusty man on way to a deal. Rolls by in bright summer suit, says hello, sweet-sicky-sweet greeting, flicks little dust specks from polish-shoes, twirls silk handkerchief a couple of flips around, puffs up cigarette, flings it away, blows on nails, climbs in Eldorado. You, sir! Where is your Deville??

I began to doubt the vision of his eyes when he broke that in about the bright summer clothes, the silk handkerchief and the rest of it. I don't have time for polish-shoes or bright clothes or a silk handkerchief. 'Look't me,' I said, 'you're all wrong. I wear, summer and winter, these old khaki browns. And I'm happy wearing old canvas sneakers, see.? Then his next remark almost convicted him of a blindness. 'Your hair's on good,' said he. 'Could it be you've had all the manicures to keep you from a baldness? Yes, that big playboy head of hair I think has got a permanent. Hoarder pig! You've been to the best barbers and the best fitters because you could afford it!'

'Man,' I said, rubbing a hatless place where the June sun was cooking out little yellowish beads and there wasn't any hair for an awning, 'you must can hardly see at all and need a shift in glasses. I haven't had any hair up there for a dog's age, not since before the fire. But sometimes I sit thinking, and I guess thinking burns out hair.'

Hell broke loose on Wednesday! I saw him hunch a little in his beach chair, his left foot came up and then down, hard, and something that looked

like a dirty black ball, about the size of a softball, lobbed out and across that dry swimming pool. It hit a bull's-eye painted on a little plaque on a pole at the far end of the pool, and then the bells began to ring and the tubs to fall down and the glass bottles and the tin cans to fill the air from everywhere. And over it all was the grindy noise of small gravel hitting sauce pans. It was a sound to be avoided by common ears, and I shuddered to think what it was doing to his with those megaphones stepped-up in tandem and the noisemakers on the wire cage. It was all over in about one minute; everything had fallen, and he sat there as relaxed as a squeezed-out tangerine, a dreamy smile on his features. I was so aghast I could not say a word, and I could not move along either. I was surprised that I had looked so much at the demeanor of the man that I had missed all the noise potential he had rigged up in the scaffolds of his garden.

a bit, any the same to fil a prem a leos that red nd aguer to out look,
your highbrow lecture, my little up-and-at-'em friend.'

I gasped, I gulped, I tried to get enough air to say something. 'Why-why,' I finally stammered, 'I'm not little, I'm not up-and-at-'em, and there wasn't any lecture. You're in a state or something.'

He brought the brown eyes around, and they did not look menacing, and the big flat face was full of peace-and-friendliness now. 'I haven't been talking to you,' he said. 'In fact I'm not sure I've been talking. I hear very well. And you said a word I cannot afford to do, said you'd burned your hair out at it, and it'd been about twenty minutes since I'd let that noise loose anyway, so I was about due, you see. And if I don't divert myself -- EEEEEOowaah! Ohhh!! waaah!!! EEEEEOowaah! - And now I have to get ready for the next one, so if you want to come in here and help me, we can talk while we plan noise.'

When he climbed out of the beach chair, I saw he was an enormously broad man on very short thick pegs and tiny feet, and his little eyes must have been good when he wanted them to be, because he came straight and normally to the narrow whitewashed gate and let me in. 'It's like this,' he said, in a voice a small weight overloud, because I guess the tandem megaphones had done things to his ears, 'I'll let you do the easy jobs, like fill up all the sacks of gravel and put the tin cans in the tubs. To fix all this so it'll trip right off on cue takes a kind of genius, see.' And I judged by that he had us figured as one-two in the head when it came to brain muscles and I was definitely not his candidate for top man.

So we worked on there in the hot sun of that June Wednesday in the flowers of his garden, amidst the honeybees, hard by the swimming pool that was dry. Flanked on one side by broken garages with iron fishtails jutting up, and looking into a barbecue pit at the far end of a glazed path, I began to feel a little like innocence trapped in the ghost country in old ragged clothes. I did the easy things that he thought I could do; he did the highly technical ones of rigging the strings and the wires and the platforms and the trip levers so that all would go when the ball lobbed out to the bull's-eye. At last in all its weird intricacy it was almost ready, and I went to get the ball where it

lay in the middle of the dry pool. But he raced after me, screaming, ' Don't touch it, you'll jinx it, leave it alone!' So I stopped in my tracks and he puffed past me, running hard in the heat of June, his short legs pumping like broken-field, his tiny straw-shod feet churning up the fallen marigolds.

He stooped and lifted the ball in his soft weak hands that did not look like much work of lately, and he cradled the ball in his arms like it was something he cared for much. He looked down at it and smiled. " This is the baby,' he said,'that helps me to avoid it.'

We stood and looked at each other there in that dry garden in the great heat, and all the flowers were beginning to curl, and the bees were pulling out and not coming back much. I wanted to ask him a lot of questions, about his estate's ruination, how his fishtail cars were standing the squeeze, how his conscience was, how he slept of nights, and would the death notices speak of a widow; I wanted to debate things with him. But something in the brown eyes' insane glare and the granite way he stood cradling the ball told me no. We shook hands warmly, even sweatily, and he mumbled something about thanks for helping me with the stuff.'I'll be doing this all day, he said. " Maybe tonight I'll get so tired I'll sleep some.' Then he minced across and placed the ball in its catapult under his beach chair, and he came back and let me out the white gate without saying anything further.

I went on up toward the meeting place where there were some boxes under the trees, and maybe today we could have a nice talk about small problems, drowsily pull at the wine bottles and then go to sleep in the shade. On my way I met a black and white sound truck whirling through summery streets, its chrome shining brighter than a thousand polished coins, its grey speaker cones aimed at the four corners of the world, and town. It was blaring something about religion, or air conditioners, or color TV, or maybe telling the best place in town to eat pizza. I did not pay much attention. But down the street a way I heard the recorded voice almost scream at its general audience. 'The time is NOW for EVERYONE to think Think, THINK!'

Then I heard that noise go, that awful bedlam start up down in the dying garden... Pretty soon I found myself running, going harder toward the trees.

*Harold Grutzmacher**The Man Who Had Everything*

Salute the man without withoutness, triumphant
And Alone in needing not, whether sound and fury
Or gentleness in spring winds. Will it thus,
In all, that there be nothing over, no
Remainder to fret nights sweet with sleep
And all things necessary, and needless.

She, though she did not need to be
For him, was beautiful. Her sex
Inescapable, comprehensive, inventive,
From wiles of an inch exposure to perfume
Sprung from caves and Eastern subtleties.

She filled his nights with variegated flesh,
Days with laughter, his pockets with silver,
The man who had everything. He need only talk
And be, profound and human, to be nothing wrong,
To have everything. And there is moral after all,

Inescapable as dreams. The man who had
Everything lacked only sorrow, only tears.
So friends, thoughtfully benign,
Procured at auction and bazaar unhappiness in boxes
For the man who had sense in everything,
Who returned them unopened to have everything.

A parade should have clowns
In rag-tag and sequins
With improbable noses,
Varieties of nose
And alternatives upon varieties --.
A clown should have noses
As parades should have clowns,
For why is a clown without a parade
And imponderable noses?

There should be elephants
In colors and pettable tigers.
Oh, there should be proximity,
Necessity, charity! At any rate
A parade should have clowns
As a bar should have bottles.
Have you thought of saloons?
You've surely noted the diffused
Angularity of those rooms
With the amber light of joy
Faceted to some spectrum
Of joy and amber, have felt
The harmless floor, the leather
And the touch of gleam on glassware.

Clowns should have parades
And noses and one calliope
Bursting with noise, enough
Bursting and noise for chaos,
Enough clowns in riotous order.
Clowns should risk their noses
Kissing people, but, oh,
There should be clowns -.
Parades should have clowns
So often that one could not choose
Whether to be a clown or a parade.
Oh, think what that might do!
Parades and clowns for each parade
With one calliope
And a pettable tiger.

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