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PREFACE: TO THE READER

Last year, for the first time, on an experimental basis, *PERSPECTIVES* contained a ten page section of the year's best student painting and sculpture. The experiment was successful. This issue of *PERSPECTIVES* contains again a ten page section devoted to the visual arts.

Moreover, through the kindness of the Student Council, we have added two further departments: a section of critical essays, and a section of translation from a foreign language.

We feel that such developments indicate an unusually healthy climate in which the creative arts may flourish in the broadest, the only ultimately meaningful, sense. For it is a truism that any art tends to suffer through isolation from its peers, whereas all of the arts tend to flourish in a general creative effort. Certainly we feel that the usual departments of fiction and poetry have gained in significance through being set within a broader context of the creative mind at work. In essence, it is our hope that the range of this issue of *PERSPECTIVES*—the fiction, poetry, translation, criticism, painting, and sculpture—is personally enriching to you, as well as an important contribution toward the furthering of the creative life on our campus.

Finally, we cannot hope to guess what Queen Victoria might have said, but we are pleased, and we trust that you are pleased.

The Editorial Staff

The Celluloid Lamb

Marie Deel

A perplexing child, Gabrielle. To watch her sitting inert in that maple rocking chair, swallowed up in it nearly, clutching that pathetic celluloid lamb . . . baffling. Her parents are convinced she's a mystic. A mystery, most assuredly, but a mystic?

When I first came here my only involvement was the hospital. There is a stigma attached to women physicians no matter where they practice. But here especially I needed to prove myself, and I did of course. After that I became increasingly aware of the community outside the hospital, and a good thing, too. Here at the hospital we have the unfortunate tendency to withdraw. We have a strange self-sufficiency; even much of our food is grown by the patients on an acreage nearby. The staff, including myself, forgets that it is part of the world. So here we are, nursing our neuroses, functioning admirably enough in the eyes of an outsider, I suppose, but forgetting that each of us has a baffling syndrome of our own and no one to help to shake it off. Sometimes I think we need a moat to detach ourselves altogether. The pitiable aspect of psychiatry is not always the patient, but often as not the psychiatrist. Doctor Locke is a good case in point. A brilliant man and a gifted healer, but, like the rest of us, a cripple of sorts. His particular cross is a fear of feeling any affection for his patients. That's not entirely fair. A fear, then, of showing any affection. There are others of this persuasion. They feel a sense of dismal failure if, in spite of themselves, they slip and evidence a manifestation of their love and pity. Pity. That was my undoing. For a very long time I had the difficulty of translating my pity into action. But I am over that now.

The village is a fascinating place. Fortunately it is within walking distance of the hospital, only a mile down the road. A sociologist would find it doubly intriguing, but I enjoy it in a superficial, unscholarly way. The mountain people in this area have an affinity for Biblical names, and nearly everyone in the village is Hosea or Malachai or Naomi. But the village is a sad place too. Gabrielle is the only patient we have from there. Her father holds great sway over these poor, credulous people. Their ignorance is appalling. He is the prophet of the new messiah. Yes, indeed. Oh, and that's not all. Gabrielle of the enigmatic smile has been designated his handmaiden whence he cometh. It's only natural that they practice an occult religion, but there is something terrifyingly unshakable about the fervor with which the villagers and mountain folk follow Gabrielle's father. As nearly as I can define it, it's a kind of fanatical fascination for the gospels, a literal acceptance of the written word thrown into a shadowy mysticism by their utter lack of perspective. From it they gain a kind of static ecstasy, a god intoxication, as the Greeks would say. But what it's done to Gabrielle is what frightens me.

Such a plain little thing. Only her eyes are alive and she guards them beautifully. For a time I thought perhaps she was not quite bright. But she reacts normally to the tests we've given her; other than during one of her catatonic periods, of course. A classic manic depressive, I'd say. And now that she's been with us awhile, I see how truly alert she is. Nothing slips by

this one. She will sit for hours on end in that rocking chair, watching the others and gripping that lamb, often until she falls asleep. We haven't gotten her to talk, but this too will come. Doctor Locke says that when she does speak it will undoubtedly be to herald the arrival of the new messiah. Actually, I find no humor in the doctor's remark. How he can remain so detached from our people is quite beyond me. Tender, loving care has always achieved the best results so far as I can see. I've grown quite fond of Gabrielle. Doctor Locke insists that it's only stifled maternal instinct. Possibly, but I think not. How intriguing her eyes are. Sunk in that colorless little face, they burn with such intensity. She desires communication, I feel sure, but she is not quite ready for it yet. We are patient here. We won't prod her unnecessarily.

Gabrielle came to us nearly six months ago and only once has she been violent. Her father put up a dreadful fuss. Naturally his completely unreasonable performance made their parting difficult. As he left he whispered something to her and gave her the celluloid lamb. After he had gone, Amy, one of our aides, was instructed to bathe her and give her a fresh change of clothes. Gabrielle was completely docile until Amy took the lamb from her hands in order to undress her. Of course the lamb is Gabrielle's only tangible tie to her father and snatching it away is the same as wrenching her from her only connection with the past. We should have foreseen that. We are hoping that Gabrielle will eventually cease to depend so completely on the lamb as her sole comfort and companion; which will indicate, of course, that she is becoming more firmly grounded in reality. But as yet the lamb and the child are inseparable. I do wish she would relinquish it for a time at least. It really does need to be disinfected.

Three months ago today was the first time Gabrielle made noticeable progress in group therapy. Doctor Locke had succeeded amazingly well in drawing out Knudsen who related a dream in which he dismembered his father. This in itself is a minor triumph, for at long last he overtly stated his filial hostility, a crucial step in curing a rather nasty Oedipus complex. At any rate, Cummings, whom we were treating for senile dementia, began to weep uncontrollably. Gabrielle left the rocking chair in which she had been sitting on the far side of the room and walked across to her. She held the celluloid lamb aloft and smiled that strange smile of hers. Cummings ceased to weep and drew Gabrielle into her lap. They sat like that for quite a long time, and Cummings began to sing to Gabrielle after a while in almost a whisper. I remember the refrain:

Weep not my wanton,
Smile upon my knee,
When thou are old
There's grief enough for thee.

Gabrielle watched her as she sang in the breathy, tremulous monotone of the very old, and finally reached up and touched her face, softly, tentatively. Cummings was a sick old woman, and I wondered at the time if this newly established rapport between the two was the best thing for Gabrielle, but Doctor Locke seemed to think the relationship harmless enough. No matter. Cummings died some weeks ago and Gabrielle doesn't seem to have missed her at all.

It was shortly after Cummings' death that Doctor Locke called me in for a talk. He seemed to feel that my interest in Gabrielle was possibly becoming more than I could handle. You're a fool, Locke, you're a cold inhuman fool to think that I could ever isolate myself from my patients the way you have. Oh, Gabrielle, what have they done to your poor little mind? Walking down the corridor from Doctor Locke's office, I thought how remarkably well he had bathed himself in the detached astringent atmosphere of our profession. He was swimming in it. It would drown him.

Gabrielle's father is allowed to visit here twice a year. Soon he will see Gabrielle for the first time in six months, a thought which I don't relish. It may very well mean a serious relapse for Gabrielle if his behavior is consistent with his last trip here when she was committed. Pity, too, for I feel we've done well with Gabrielle. Perhaps if I speak to him and explain the difficulties involved . . . but one can't reason with these people. Logic is wasted on them, they are so thoroughly unenlightened.

Gabrielle is sleeping now, clasping the lamb under her blanket. Even in sleep she retains that vice-like grip on the soiled celluloid lamb. I could take it from her now and wash it. But no. Should she awaken and find her lamb missing, she would be frightened, so frightened.

Today is grey and sullen. The occupational therapy people maintain that our patients react favorably to yellow clay and red tempera on a day such as this. Assuming, of course, that they react at all. When I was in college I lived for days like this, I thrived on melancholy. I would sit alone in my room and listen to cello music and write despairing verse. Oh, life in an institution is much like living behind a glass silvered on only one side. You can see the world reflected but you can't reach out and touch it and it can't see you. It makes little difference if the institution happens to be college or a mental hospital. The same clinical atmosphere pervades and they smell much alike. Sterile.

Perhaps our people would progress more rapidly if it weren't for the antiseptic odor. If only they could forget where they are, if they weren't constantly reminded by so much ungodly white and the barred windows and the softened voices and the visiting days. I often wonder what prompted me to take up psychiatry. I suppose that by helping others to re-enter the land of the living I experience a kind of vicarious vitality. To be perfectly honest, I could never achieve a real appetite for life on my own. Perhaps healing others is a sickness with me, the worst sort of escapism. Physician, heal thyself.

I finished with Gabrielle a little while ago. Our sessions are so rewarding, from my end at least. I've established some degree of contact, I feel certain, but it's not enough for either one of us. Slowly, by degrees, never hurrying, never prodding, it's the only way. She let me hold her today, another small triumph. So painfully thin, and those tiny pale hands gripping the lamb. One day she will cast aside the lamb, reject it as an inadequate substitute for—for what? For me. Ridiculous! But is it really? Not for me as an individual, but for warmth and comfort, the sort only people can provide. not a celluloid lamb that vaguely links her with a tortured past.

How I've come to love that child!

There now, I've said it. A dangerous situation, admittedly. Never become emotionally involved with your patients. Never let them depend upon you as a person. Concern yourself only with their mental and emotional regeneration. And if you do love them it must be impersonally. A contradiction in terms, to love impersonally. Perhaps unobviously would be better.

Impossible.

Oh, and now it's raining.

Gabrielle must be sitting in the rocking chair on the rag rug near the fireplace as she has begun to do, stroking the lamb, caressing so much plastic plastic.

How real the rain is. More of a reality than I. What have I caused to grow? What have I soothed? What have I cleansed, purified, made whole? Gabrielle must give me the lamb. It won't do for me to take it from her. Of her own free will, she must give it to me and I will smash it to show her that it is only a hollow toy, nothing more, only a hollow piece of celluloid.

The lamb, Gabrielle, the damned lamb.

"Gray Walls"

Marie Deel

I don't dislike being impoverished. For a student there can be a certain pathetic charm connected to it if he knows how to use impoverishment correctly. Everyone loves the image of a threadbare, undernourished young man, doggedly pushing his way through academia, eating saltines in his room because he hasn't the price of a meal ticket, or hocking his Smith-Corona to buy text books. Girls will give you pitying glances and buy you coffee and ask if you don't get terribly depressed at times. At this point you have two choices. You can manage a sudden depression or you can feign a touching bravado; either will undoubtedly win you a doughnut and still more pity.

Herb, that's my old roommate, always told me I was bitter—but I don't think so. It's only that I see things in sharper focus than Herb because my stomach is always empty. Herb is constantly getting letters from his mother with money in them and often as not he will spend it on food. For myself, I prefer being gluttoned by knowledge.

I don't live in the dorm any more. But my new room is much nicer than the one I had. Herb kept a lot of photographs around and his desk was always cluttered with letter openers and stationery and similar junk. That always annoyed me because basically I am very tidy. I remember one afternoon after classes I went back to the room to sleep but everything was in such disarray that I cleaned instead. I made Herb's bed and stacked his books and put his pencils and eraser and slide rule in his desk drawer. I was putting his soiled clothes in his laundry bag when he came in and slouched against the door—he has very poor posture—and asked what the heck I was doing. "It is obvious, Herb," I said, "that I am removing your dirty clothes from the floor and putting them where they belong." He glanced over at his desk.

"What happened to my slide rule?" he demanded.

"In the desk drawer," I said, and I walked out. I could think of nothing else to say—I'm not used to being confronted with rudeness. It baffles me.

Not long after that our already precarious friendship began to deteriorate considerably. It was simply that Herb and I were unable to talk. A problem in semantics, I guess you could say. But it wasn't that I didn't try. Herb would be reading the latest from home and I'd say, "What's that, a letter from your mom?"

"It's nothing, nothing at all," he'd say, sort of crouching over his silly letter.

"Well, it's got to be something," I'd reply, mustering up a jocular tone. After all, I had to live with the guy.

"Mind your own business," he'd mutter. Herb always was jealous of my scholarship, I think.

Once, about a week before final exams, Herb was almost decent to me. We had just gone to bed and I remember the room was very nearly dark but not quite. I could see Herb's black profile against the gray wall. He always slept propped up a bit so he could breathe easier. Sinuses. Things had been strained so I was surprised when he asked detachedly, "How does it feel not to have any money ever?" I didn't answer right away. I was puzzling out his choice and order of words. Finally I decided he had meant to say, "How does it feel never to have money?" So I told him. I told him I was carrying on the proud tradition of the starving artist in the garret and that being poor was no problem, as long as I kept two things firmly in mind: never borrow money and don't bum cigarettes. Herb grunted, turned over, and said nothing. Sarcasm always was wasted on Herb.

I suppose I'm really very content in my room off campus. Privacy is so important to the true aesthete. It's beautifully depressing with grey walls and paisley drapes. Just me and my Botticelli prints. And with the money I save, I can manage a regular meal from time to time. I saw Herb yesterday in the Commons but he pretended not to see me, I think. Strange. He knows perfectly well I didn't take his money.

Katje

Marie Deel

Katje climbed the steps to her flat slowly. The thin fabric of her coat hung shapelessly from narrow shoulders and her face was shrouded in a black scarf. Fumbling in her pocket, she drew out a single key. She turned it in the lock and the door swung open grudgingly.

The room was large and ill-lit by the late afternoon light from the single window. A sofa of dusty green velour occupied one wall and a circular table stood in the center of the room. To one side was a single gas burner and a small bookcase filled with Dresden figurines and one book, the Bible. The rest of the furnishings were equally insignificant; they had been in the room for a long time and had been used by a good many people. A doorway led to the bedroom.

Katje placed her coat carefully on the table and lay down on the sofa. It was nearly dark now. She was alone once again, by herself in the flat she had occupied for five months, five months since Max had left. The war. Its cloying, death-like stench permeated even this room, there was no escaping it. In the street below people were scurrying about like ants on a wound. Katje pitied them. She pitied them for their hatred.

It was later now. The water boiled wildly in the copper kettle and Katje looked into its convex surface—her nose protruded bulbously and her chin faded into oblivion. Katje poured the water into a cracked blue teapot and stood for a moment warming herself in the rising steam. She walked to the window and pulled aside the curtain. It rained. She smelled the rain, the clean mineral smell, chaste yet earthy. If only they bottled its fragrance, she thought, if only they bottled it she would bathe in it, drink it, comb it through her hair. Katje poured a cup of tea and went to the table. The room, dimly lit by the streetlight outside the window, was peacefully gray and dimensionless. The copper kettle above the burner drew the little light there was and gleamed orangey-pale. Katje sipped the sweet strong tea. It was good, so good. She thought of her father, she thought of what it had been like when they had first come to this country. She had been so small. Pastor Müller. Even she thought of her father as the Herr Pastor. He had told her stories every night at this time, stories about her mother who was dead so that she would not forget her. Stories about Nuremburg. She could still remember Nuremburg, vague memories as though seen in a dream. Her mother was with her still. A dim warmth, a red apron, a lullaby. Katje thought of Max. She could think of Max now without the twisting pain she had felt when he was first gone. Katje was aware of a stirring deep within her. The child. She had Max within her as the child. Katje sang softly to herself.

Müde bin ich, geh zu ruh,
Schliese meine Augen zu.
Vater lass die Augen dein
Über meinem Bette sein.

Her mother had always sung that, Katje remembered. She arose from the table and went into the darkened bedroom. It smelled of cedar wood and rain from the open window. Katje undressed, closed the window, and slid between the cool sheets. She folded her hands. I thank Thee my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast kept me this day; and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong and graciously keep me this night. For into Thy hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Thy holy angel be with me that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Katje slept.

Katje moved in her sleep. She saw them entering the parsonage. Pastor Müller, they said, we have come for the Bibles. Katje moaned as her father said, You shall not burn them, you shall not! But Pastor, they said as one, they must be burnt. They are in German. The prayerbooks and hymnals also. Then you destroy them to your damnation, spat her father. He vanished with fist upraised and enraged god-like visage. It was no longer her father, but Katje's husband. It was no longer the parsonage, but the train terminal. Max, dear, dear Max, Katje moaned. He was bending toward her, Goodbye my Katje, he was saying, Katje, Katje, Katje. The people were running wildly, trampling one another, a small boy wailed for his mother, the sound of

the train was deafening, she could not see him, where had he gone to, she was in the midst of them, A German gone to kill the Germans, A German gone to kill the Germans, they were chanting. A German gone to kill . . . a small boy wailed for his mother, their faces masked with evil smiles came closer and closer, she caught a glimpse of his olive drab uniform. She fought her way through the vast network of restraining hands, the hot fetid breath of the locomotive, the roar, the wail, he turned before her. Where his face had been was a gaping, open wound.

Max! She was jarred awake by the sound of her own scream. She jerked upright in the bed. She was breathing in loud shallow gasps and her hands gripped the sheets. Her skin was damp. She left the bed and moved to the window. She sat in the sill and looked out at the wet street and wept soundlessly. Max, she whispered against the cold, foggy window, Max come home to me please. Please, please. She slipped to the floor, trembling and whimpering. Vater unser, der du bist im Himmel, geheileget werde dein Name, dein Reich komme—Max is dead. They would call soon or there would be a telegram. The child stirred beneath her heart. She stared into the dark. It rained.

The Harvest Is Ready

Patrick Detches

The desert rushed past the window of the coach. Outside, the air was hot, dry, unmoving. Vision was sharp and clear for miles but all there was to see was the scorched, rippling sand. Inside, a few members of our company were dozing in the gentle, swaying rhythm of the train. Three girls sat knitting, their jaws chewing gum in tempo with the clacking of the needles. Four of the boys were idly playing cards in a cloud of smoke. The rest were juxtapositioned into crazily strewn patterns on the neat rows of seats—some reading, some talking. Sonja sat next to me, her fingers interlacing mine as she dozed lightly. I gazed at the broad scope of nothingness flooding past the window. White, black, pink, blue, grey—a rainbow of colored tights hung on temporary clotheslines strung from one end of the car to the other. Tote bags, dance belts, toe shoes and crumpled lunch bags littered the aisle and suit case racks.

We were on our way to Albuquerque to play a five night stand in the older section of the city. We just closed in Phoenix and were looking forward to a brief one week rest before this next performance. However, this was not to be. We were asked by a committee from the Chamber of Commerce, who were sponsoring the event, if we would include another number in our repertory.

The festival was almost continuous in ancient Mexico and carried over to a large extent in the present. It was the middle of August—a time when the tribes poured into Tenochtitlan in a festive mood to celebrate the fall of the fruits. The Aztec rites to the fire god, Huehuetotl, during the same month were also certain to attract the holiday crowds. They were glorious and rollicking fun-fests of blood-letting. The people appeased the gods and their own superstitious minds by watching someone get drawn and quar-

tered or, even better, beheaded. The same festive spirit survived through the centuries but the dignity of human sacrifice had been reduced to animals, crops, and then to myths. It was now a time when tired farmers and laborers could laugh, sing, and dance, after food and libations of intoxicating octli.

What the committee requested was a brief ceremonial dance not to exceed fifteen minutes. They furnished the costumes, consisting of scant loin cloths, head bands, and bright colored blankets for the boys and not much more to cover the girls. It was to be a simple repetitive number accompanied by the huehuetl and toponzatl drums and conch shell pan-pipes. The manager, regisseur, and choreographer were happy to oblige—the rest of us were not. We had looked forward to a brief rest and an opportunity to soak up some Mexican culture and tequila. Now we would have to struggle through a week of pinning together a “simple” ethnic dance, polishing it, and brushing up our regular program. It was going to be hectic. The train continued to bear down on the work and sweat to come.

As the train rumbled into the station, mass confusion exploded in the coach. The tights, slippers, belts and other costume pieces were snatched up and shoved into bags and pockets or thrown over arms and shoulders. Suit cases tumbled out of the racks. Pulling, tugging and cries of possession created a sea of arms, legs and bobbing heads. We stepped off the train into a still oven. The sun slapped against us. The metal guard rails were hot to the touch. The heat ricocheted from the pavement. Breathing was difficult in the dry inferno. We had one hour to get settled, to eat, and to report to the theatre. Waves of pin-curlers and unshaven faces charged on Albuquerque. In a few days these same bodies, clad in tight, wrinkled pants and loose, sloppy sweaters flopping down the street, would reappear, almost like magic, in wispy tutus and elegant costumes flying across the stage. Sonja and I checked in, had a quick cheese sandwich and chocolate malt, and walked to the theatre.

Outside, it was a large humble structure of adobe brick that scaled and crumbled in the relentless sun. It was situated amidst other adobe buildings—churches, schools and a few houses. Now and then one could see the brash aluminum and glass of New Mexico jutting out of the aged remnants of Old Mexico. Quetzalcoatl serpents and Totonac laughing heads decorated the marquee and the main entrance. The theatre was built on the long-buried ruins of an old festival ground of the Totonac cultures. This fact was printed on the billboards and in the program notes and it was sure to draw the people in. It gave them an affinity to their ancestral way of life and a general feeling of nationalistic content. It would also fill our coffers.

Inside, the air-conditioner droned under its labors to cool the old theatre from the glaring sun. A stream of hot light poured on the stage through an uncovered window up near the catwalk. The fly gallery was emptied of all its trappings. They were being renovated for the show. Prickly jute ropes dangled like broken spider webs from long black travellers suspended high in the proscenium arch. The stench of earth, from the musty, dust-coated seats in the auditorium, permeated the air. The backstage wall cracked and flaked into small pyramids. Our dressing rooms were atrocious—small, dark, dirty, and hot. We changed quickly and set to work.

The rehearsals dragged on for about three days and a mutual feeling of disgust ran through the whole company. We hadn't accomplished a thing. The steady beating and the flat, discordant notes baffled us. We went through

the number over and over and over. Still nothing. A chorus of exaggerated sighs rose with the steam of our bodies when we were told to start from the beginning. Two of the girls retreated to the wings, the broken blisters on their feet preventing them from stamping out the incessant rhythms. The boys grunted purposely when they lifted the girls. The bright hues of our sweaters deepened as the perspiration spread from our backs and armpits. Limp, soggy sweat shirts hung from limp, soggy bodies. Listless faces weaved mechanically in and out of the intricate patterns. The choreographer snapped at us unceasingly as we stumbled into each other, crowded into sloppy circles and trudged through his carefully measured steps like amateurs.

Sonja and I screamed through a heated argument. Our semi-nude bodies were slick with sweat. Then my grip on her legs gave out and she went sprawling in the midst of the whole corps. She recovered quickly and pounced on me, her fists slashing the air and frequently clipping me across the face. She drew blood. After we quieted down, she sulked through the ballet, touching me only when she had to. From the orchestra pit, the musicians concentrated their attention on the foreign instruments, completely ignoring the happenings on stage. The tempo in no way matched our movements. The choreographer slammed his notebook to the floor and stormed out of the theatre. We collapsed where we stood.

Hollow footsteps broke the silence. A tall, red-skinned man was walking toward us from the wings. I wondered how he had slipped past the backstage doorman. Few people ever have. He carried himself tall and erect and walked ceremoniously into our midst. Shining black hair lay straight back over his head. His onyx eyes peered from narrow slits mounted on high cheekbones. A chisled nose jutted out and down from his straight brow. Faint glimmers of white, even teeth poked through his slightly parted lips. The sinewy muscles of his angular frame ripped beneath his close-fitting white shirt and white pants. His feet were bound in brown, glossy, leather sandals. We gaped at him as he walked through our loose formation on the floor. He approached the edge of the stage and bent low from the waist, his arms clinging to his sides, and whispered to the drummer and flutist. They nodded and the figure in white stood erect again, turned, and walked to center stage. He paused. Then one of the sandaled feet stepped out to the side. His arms shot straight out from his sides, fingers stretching, reaching. Gently, he pounded his feet, first simultaneously, then alternately. His lanky frame swayed from side to side. The drums softly beat out rhythms in precise accord with the dancer. The piercing screech of the pan-pipe reverberated off the brick walls. His limbs undulated like a snake to the wail of the conch shells. The drums grew louder and more insistent. Erratic spasms threw the dancer's head back. His teeth, bared menacingly, were long and glimmering. Our eyes were transfixed by the pendulous being quivering with reckless abandon. Drums, flute and body were fused into a marriage of primitive ecstasy.

Sonja slowly rose to her feet. She assumed the same initial stance, and her body, almost involuntarily, gently began to oscillate. Her blond hair matted to the side of her face. Beads of sweat spilled onto her forehead. Her jaws clenched, her eyes floundering in their sockets, her lips spread, she flung her head back, and lurched and fluctuated with savage beauty. The rest of us were drawn to our feet. Soon we were caught in the haze of waver-

ing to and fro, side to side. The cadence pounded in our heads. Unspent energy beat down on the dark wood floor. We felt an electrifying grasp, an ancient rite. Our arms and legs cut through the still air. The drums beat louder and louder. The flute shrilled high, dissonant cadenzas. A sea of humanity waded in unison, ebbing higher and higher. Now jerking. Now stamping. Now reaching.

The choreographer ran into the theatre, his eyes glazed with anger. He shouted at us. Sonja and Marcia suddenly grabbed his arms. Jerry and I lunged at his legs. We carried him to the center of the stage. The drums beat louder. The flute shattered the air. The girls pulled on his arms, stretching them out. Jerry and I lifted his legs. He was suspended above the stage floor, writhing in our grasp, desperately screaming to be let go. We swayed with his struggling body to the steady beating of the drum. The rest circled around us, their eyes fixed on the squirming body. The drums roared in our ears. The red-skinned man broke the circle and walked to the body we held in our tight grip. He raised his arm high in the air. The sun glinted off the short straight blade clenched in his fist. He brought his arm down with a sweeping arc. The knife plunged into the chest. He drew the dagger down, tearing open the rib cage, and exposed the palpitating heart. With the other hand he reached down and tore it loose from the arteries. He raised it high in the air . . . into the sun streaming from the window. From deep in his throat a harsh benediction riveted the air, silencing the drums and flutes. We dropped the limp body and he ceased canting. The now still heart slipped from his fingers and fell to the floor. He disappeared from our midst.

Sonja is crouching low—bent over as if in pain. Her hands are clutching the sides of her face. Her mouth is open and her head is vibrating as if she might be screaming. But I can't hear her. The drums are so loud.

In Five Circles

Patrick Detches

"Nectar and ambrosia! Morning, noon and night! I'm sick of it!" Hera slammed her goblet into a nearby cloud.

"There's nothing wrong with this batch, dear," said Zeus, sipping comfortably.

"It tastes bitter!"

"You think so?"

"And yesterday the golden apples were tarnished. Before that . . ."

"Now look! If you're thinking of getting a new cook, forget it. The last time you did that we nearly got ptomaine."

"Well, she was just trying something different."

"Arg!"

"Oh, you haven't progressed at all! You're as dated as the Parthenon. And have you taken a good look down there lately? They may forget you're still up here . . . if they haven't already."

"Forget me? Forget Olympus? Hera! These radical ideas don't become you. Of course they haven't forgotten. How can they, while the Sun Chariot flashes across the sky by day, and the Moon Chariot by night, etcetera?"

"That just proves how stuffy you are. Look!"

With an imperious gesture, Hera waved aside a curtain of mist, exposing the full view of the earth.

"Well?"

"They're harnessing the rays of your precious sun to power a generator! I certainly don't see any glory being rendered to you."

"Well . . . ah . . . I can't stand in the way of progress, can I? Besides, that's Helios' problem—not mine."

"Progress, you say? How far would they have progressed without us? Do you remember when they last offered a sacrifice to us? Do you?"

"Certainly! It was . . . why, just last . . . ah . . . no. Do you?"

Zeus and Hera sat in silence.

"Well, well! Don't we look contemplative!"

"Helios! Come sit with us," said Hera beckoning him to her side.

"What seems to be troubling you two? You look as if Hades had loosed Cerberus on the heavens."

"I was just talking to Zeus about that bunch down there."

"Oh, that! I gave up on those people long ago. You just can't evoke any adoration from them no matter how you try. And, believe me, I've tried."

"That's true," said Hera, "but doesn't it sometimes get on your nerves? I mean this complete lack of any respect. Not so much as a ripple of praise!"

"Why get worked up over it, Hera? If they've neglected us this long, you don't think they're coming back to the fold now, do you?"

"Helios is right. We may as well give it up as a lost cause," said Zeus.

"Maybe you two will sit here and do nothing about it, but I won't. Just who do those ingrates think they are that they can discard us on a whimsey? I tell you I won't stand for it!"

"Easy now, Hera," said Zeus soothingly.

"You shut up!"

Helios put his hand to his face to cover the small snicker he was enjoying at Zeus' expense.

"And you too! You're just as disgusting as he is. Sitting there, complacent, not budging an inch. Both of you make me sick!"

Hera got up quickly and stormed out of their midst. Zeus and Helios sat in embarrassed silence for awhile. After what seemed a painfully long time, Zeus spoke.

"You think maybe she's right?"

"What she says does carry a grain of truth."

"So?"

"What do you mean?"

"What can we do about it?"

Helios sat thinking for a moment. He got up quickly and started to leave. "I'll be right back."

Helios left Zeus and began to make the rounds of Olympus. The plan was fermenting in his mind. The pictures were vague but they pointed in one direction. The idea would not be entirely new. The gods had considered it before. But how to do it? Zeus would agree, he was sure. He would do anything to stop Hera from nagging him. The task would be simple enough but they would have to let it coincide with some event to make it look good. Helios couldn't help but think what a lovely pyre a nuclear detonation would make.

He talked first in committee to Hephaestus, Poseidon, and Ares. The gods of the Smiths, the Sea, and War would have to be in on the initial plans. He sent Hermes with a message through Olympus. The timing seemed right and this called for quick planning and execution. Hermes was swifter than usual, and soon Helios had his key personnel gathered about him.

There was a tense murmuring of excitement rustling through the assemblage. Helios was silently thankful that Dion appeared sober.

"Please let me have your attention for just a minute. This may not seem like anything of any importance to some of you, but it concerns all of us in one way or another. First, let me pose a question to one of you."

Confusion and bewilderment showed on the faces of the group gathered before Helios.

"Demeter—when did someone from down there offer you a field of grain?"

Demeter was perplexed. She could not quite follow the underlying query, but she thought for a moment and finally spoke.

"Really, it's hard to say, Helios. What I mean is, it's been some time since I've heard the rustle of so much as a blade of grass from there. Actually, I didn't know they were still there."

"Well, they are—in great numbers. And the ground has been broken and re-broken a thousand-fold since you last looked. And the same is true in your case, Pallas Athene. Battle after battle has been fought since you last blessed Theseus. There have been so many conflicts between them that it would astound you. Nations mightier and much more powerful than Greece have circled the globe in their struggles for dominance."

The two women were rather disturbed upon hearing this. They felt cheated and neglected.

"The same is true with all of you. Ares! Such wars there have been! What did you receive from all this? Nothing! The whole lot of you! You have sat back and let all this pass you by. Well, take a look. Take a good, long look at what has been taking place down there. And we've let them go on completely ignoring us. Not so much as a lowly goat has had its throat cut for our sake."

The gods and goddesses became indignant and angry at what Helios was telling them. Shouts for revenge rose in chorus through the gathering. Hera stood in the back of the crowd looking at Helios and gently smiling to herself.

Zeus was pacing back and forth in front of his throne. He was curious as to what Helios was up to and irritable at Hera's behavior. He looked up and saw a host of the deity coming to him en masse with Helios at their head. They came and stood him. Helios advanced forward a few steps.

"What's going on here? Helios, what is it?"

"We have just had a little conference, Zeus, and we are all in accord. So if you'll just sit down we'll explain it to you."

Zeus mounted his throne and gazed out at those gathered before him.

"Since none of us have actually received any of that which is due to us from those peoples on earth, why should we tolerate such behavior from that motley collection of ungrateful indolents?"

"Yes"

"All they are doing is causing unrest in the house of the Cloud Gatherer and serving no useful purpose."

"True . . . I can agree with you on that," said Zeus, thinking of Hera, "but what did you have in mind?"

"Eliminate them," said Helios, casually. "What good are they? What have they done to make you smile with favor upon them? Have they or have they not disregarded you completely for the last two thousand years or so? Can you sit back and not feel slighted at such carryings-on? I tell you, Zeus, something must be done and quickly. We won't even receive honorable mention in the histories in time. We mean absolutely nothing to these people. They're like little children who have suddenly discovered an uncle, and have forsaken their parents for another's favors. I say get rid of them. It's too late to try and redeem them at this time!"

"You realize, of course, that you're talking about annihilating a planet of peoples?"

"So what? They care nothing for us. Why should we care anything about them?"

"Yes, I suppose you're right. How do you plan to go about it?"

Captain Ralph Linton had just come on duty in the ready room. He had picked up a copy of *True* and he was thumbing through the pages. The sharp clanging of the bell started him quickly and methodically out of his seat. He grabbed his helmet and check-off list from the shelf and he was running down the flight line to his waiting jet. The slim, dart-like craft taxied down the runway and was airborne in seconds. He juxtapositioned his ship in formation with other identical crafts. Beads of sweat broke out on his forehead as his instructions were monitored to him through his earphones. This was not a practice alert. The enemy had declared total war.

Moment of Truth

Arthur Hall

The summons blared out of the wall speaker: "Doctor Benson, report to Superior Tarus immediately!" Dropping his pencil on his notes, Doctor Benson looked up from his work. His face reflected his annoyance at the interruption. Loudspeakers were meant for outdoor political rallies, not for quiet laboratories. But this was the new order under these brazen, alien overlords. What could be in Tarus' simple mind? He'd just held his weekly staff meeting yesterday. Well, it can't be put off; when they order anyone to report immediately, it is best to go do it. After scooping up his notes and tucking them into an inside coat pocket, he trudged down the hallway and up the stairs to the Superior's office. His knock on the doorframe was acknowledged with a grunt, so he stepped into the room, opened the gate on the low fence, and confronted Tarus. "You sent for me?" he asked.

Superior Tarus' massive upper torso seemed to almost overflow his small desk as he remained huddled in silence over a paper he pretended to be studying. He would let Benson stand there a while since he hadn't shown the proper respect towards a Superior. Benson had always rubbed him the wrong way.

"I say," Dr. Benson repeated, "Did you want to see me?" It was an effort for the older man to remain civil after this deliberate, rude treatment by a young bully.

"You heard the order to report to me, or you wouldn't be here," Tarus growled without looking up. "But I suppose you're in a hurry to get back to puttering around with that invention of yours." Tarus was one of the more arrogant Superiors. He enjoyed his position of authority over his captive staff of scientists who were much more intelligent than he was.

"As a matter of fact," Dr. Benson replied, "I need every available minute to complete my project by the arbitrary deadline you picked out of thin air."

At this bit of criticism, Tarus raised his massive head and stared at the Doctor through large, unblinking eyes. Benson had butted heads with him before. The sight of the red-headed Doctor only infuriated him further. "That's enough out of you!" he screamed. The back of his thick neck turned scarlet. Charging straight to the point, he continued with shrill, angry authority, "Your time doesn't matter any more. Your replacement takes over in the morning."

"But," Dr. Benson objected, "I had another week until the deadline." He knew there was no real hope that Tarus would reconsider.

"In the morning!" Tarus roared as he banged a clod of a fist on the desk. "We've let you fool around down there long enough; now we'll put someone in there who will produce." Tarus went back to pawing through papers. "That's all, Doctor." The title was added sarcastically. Dr. Benson turned without a word and passed back through the gate. Tarus bellowed after him, "Tomorrow I won't be bothered by you; no one will!"

On his way back to the laboratory, Dr. Benson reviewed the situation. These aliens had infiltrated the society of his small country. After bullying their way into power, they established an aristocratic rule and named themselves the Superiors. They took complete control of everything, including research. When they learned that he was developing a mind reading machine, they conscripted him to continue the project, for such a machine would enable them to ferret out all opposition.

The chief opposition to their plan for complete subjugation of all men in Fredoma was a secret underground organization; the Libers. They were very difficult to deal with, for few of them knew each other and none of them knew who their real leader was. It was a good thing the Superiors didn't have the perfected mind reader, else they would find out quickly that Dr. Benson was this anonymous, troublesome leader. He had submitted to their authority for the past two years so that he could complete his machine and turn it against the Superiors. This new development changed his plans; the time schedule must be moved up. To do it, he'd have to work all night to install the final circuits which he had developed in utmost secrecy.

Early the next morning, the new man came in just as Dr. Benson made the last adjustment. "Doctor Benson, my name is Peterson; I've been assigned to take over your project." The young man seemed to be almost apologetic about it.

"I was told yesterday afternoon that I was being relieved today," Dr. Benson answered, "But I didn't know that you were to be my replacement." He had seen Peterson before and had talked to him on infrequent occasions but that was the extent of their relationship up to that time. He certainly

didn't know Peterson well enough to be sure of his political leanings; however, he knew that the fellow was a brilliant and promising scientist. With a slight air of defeat, he added: "It looks as if the Superiors chose a good man." He had no doubt that Peterson would succeed for the project was completed.

"I don't think for a moment that I can replace you, Doctor," Peterson replied with guarded admiration. "Most of what I know about the subject came from your reports." This was true, yet Peterson had also studied the device on his own and had noticed that one vital circuit had never been mentioned. The machine would never work without it. Had it been left out of the reports deliberately or was it that Dr. Benson had never developed it?

"I've worked all night on the final adjustments," Dr. Benson said. "I was about to try the machine one last time."

"Then you have only made adjustments?" Peterson asked, "You didn't add any new circuits?"

"No, I didn't add new circuits," Dr. Benson replied. It wasn't really a lie; he had developed the secret circuit long ago.

Peterson studied the Doctor's weary, stony face for some clue to his inner thoughts. Quite sure that there could be no harm in letting the old man have his last chance, Peterson offered, "Well, go ahead and give it another try."

"Thank you, Peterson," Dr. Benson said and then added, "You could be of real service to me if you would put this extra headset on to help me evaluate the machine's performance. I'd be interested in knowing what you think of it."

Peterson adjusted the wide, metallic device to his head while Dr. Benson donned the master thought helmet and turned the mind reading machine's power on. At this moment the wall speaker blared out, "Doctor Benson, report to the detention office in five minutes." The old Doctor ignored the announcement as he watched the power needle rise slowly across the dial to the "ready" position. He pressed the master switch to the "read" position. The reception indicator blinked. Dr. Benson suddenly wheeled on Peterson and charged, "So! You hope it never works, you traitor!"

"I didn't say that!" Peterson denied. The accusation caught him off guard.

"I know you didn't say it," Dr. Benson explained, trying to prime Peterson's mind.

Peterson's face revealed the realization that the machine was working for the reception indicator blinked at his very thoughts. Benson's reading my mind right now, he thought, he'll expose me any second. Backing away from the console, he made a move to rip off the headset.

The "hostile thought" light was already on. Dr. Benson had anticipated this sort of reaction and had quickly pressed the master switch all the way down to the unmarked "control" position. The strong thought went through the Doctor's mind as he turned again to Peterson: A Liber should stop and consider all the facts before he does anything.

Peterson's hand froze on the headset as he complied with the Doctor's mental order. At the same time, he knew that he had been exposed and this set off a chain reaction of thoughts; anxiety, doubt, and wonder raced through his brain. The reception indicator blinked furiously with alarm.

Dr. Benson smiled kindly yet with satisfaction. The machine not only read men's minds, he thought, but my secret modifications give it the capability of projecting thoughts for control. The closed circuit between us provides the final test. I regret that I had to put you to such a mental strain but time was short and I had to be sure of you. Now if you will take the headset off, we can work together to get the machine on the air and use it against the Superiors.

Peterson took the headset off. "Congratulations, Doctor!" he exclaimed. "You did give me a bad time there for awhile, because I didn't know for sure which side you were on until just now."

"I know," Dr. Benson agreed as he bent back over the control console. "However, there is no time for discussion. Turn on the transmitter."

"Of course," Peterson replied as he took the necessary action. "When is the moment of truth?" he asked enthusiastically.

"Right away, son, right away!" Dr. Benson spun the wave-length tuner to the lower order of the scale, adjusting it to the frequency of Superior Tarus' brain.

H. M. S. Jerimiah

Joan Neiman

Lt. Colonel Whitey Ratsman unbuckled the restraining seat belt and stepped out of the reclination seat. He reveled briefly in the familiar sensation of weightlessness, and then moved over to the control panel. All lights go. Whitey checked each listing and punched the corresponding signal switches.

"Baby's riding smooth as ether tonight. Good dependable ship. Yes sir, every bit as good as any of those the Russo-Americans could orbit. Like a second home to me now. You, too, huh, Metchine? Should be, we spend most of our time here."

Metchine swung out of his alloy pressure-protection chamber and pushed a button on the wall. The take-off rocket broke sharply and then died. Metchine raised his gloved hand, moved his eyeless head up and down, and squeaked, "Yes, Seir."

"Okay, buster, let's run the tests."

Metchine rolled over to the green wall, released the magnets, and part of the wall gave way. It folded into the ceiling of the master room. Whitey moved away from the panel and helped Metchine move the revealed cages up to the counters. He then began to assemble the equipment while Metchine arranged the white mice and rats in the proper sequence. This was a very important step in the studies and he felt safer letting Metchine do it. Metchine would set up the lists and establish the control rats precisely right. Control is the password of a successful orbitman. Without the control his tests would be worthless.

The tests took over an hour per set, and at the end of the run Whitey was disgusted with the results. Five of the rats had been unable to react positively to the stimuli even under terra conditions.

"They're useless baggage now, Metchine. Put them out."

Metchine carefully selected the deficient rats and removed them from their cages. He placed them in the decomposition chambers. The rays whirred for a few seconds and then automatically ejected the gases out through the exhaust funnels.

"Set the course for that small formation we passed back about an hour ago."

"Yes, Seir."

"We needed those five rats to get the proper control on the tests we're making. Maybe there will be some species on the formation that we could use just as well."

"Wheat do wee have to lose?"

"Rudder Rockets!"

"Right."

The ship cruised for fifty-five minutes and then the anti-gravity assemblators took over and H. M. S. Jerimiah began to orbit slowly around the old planet. Whitey was in the upper observation dome, waiting to see if there was any sign of life on the rock, and Metchine was in the rear section checking the landing equipment.

"All right, insert the landing tube," Whitey blared into the microphone.

"Let her fall."

Metchine took the cream colored cylinder and inserted it into the atomic reactor. There was a slight jar as the computer began to lower the ship towards the strong gravital pull. Whitey took the escalators into the lower observation dome and prepared to enjoy the landing. This was the favorite time for most of the orbitmen. The computer took over the responsibility of the ship, and the captain could relax. Once the tape was placed in the brain nothing could change the order, and the orbitmen were powerless until the ship reached a solid object and switched off of brain control.

"Mighty strange planet here. Has an unusual orbit, and I've never seen such smooth terrain. It's completely grey with no sign of vegetation; it looks almost like a glass-isotope substance. But I guess there's a whole lot in the ol' galaxy you and I've never seen, huh? Shaped like an egg. Suppose the Russo-Americans ran some tests on it? Humped it up? Ha! The Prime Minister'd get a vibration out of that one. Better get in the compartment, Metchine, boy."

Metchine whirred away and Whitey sat down in the reclination seat in the lower dome. He wanted to see this landing. He'd had land duty since last fall, and this was his first solo in nine months.

The rotary engines plunked on and the ship eased up, and de-acceleration began. The ship cut speed to a minimum. The egg loomed larger and larger until it covered the dome. Whitey could feel himself falling and delighted in the sensation. It always started that way just when they should be about ready to make contact. Then the center of the planet cracked open. Like a huge hand unfolding its fingers. The jags threw a shadow over the dome, and the last thing he saw was the red Abandon Ship sign flashing frantically on the wall. Large hand. Large hands, reaching, reaching out of the sky. Little hands. Racking up and down his back. Quickly. Slyly. Little fingers with dinner rings beckoning to him. Index fingers holding smoking cigarettes . . . cigars . . . pipes. The smoke begins to curl. Around the feet,

over the chest. It envelops the head, eyes, teeth. Whirling, whirling . . . and then it begins to slow and thin. It floats away and comes back. Thins, deepens, and then begins to disappear completely until there is only blackness. And then, slowly, light.

The cage was twelve feet high with a circumference of about fifty feet. The bars were vertically placed, and crossed at the center top.

Whitey lay in the corner.

He was lying on a soft, spongy mat fastened to the floor of the cage. It appeared to be a sort of bed and covered half of the floor. The only other object in the cage was a plastic container in the corner. Whitey decided it was useless. A large lock hung on the only door. It was composed of the same grey glasslike substance as the cage and ship. Four feet tall and three feet wide, it was too heavy for Whitey to budge.

"Bet that key would be a goodie. Me Grand nanny would never believe me. Must be some husky guy what carries that, huh?"

His head began to pound again and he sat down in the same corner. The cage began to shimmy and the sponge tossed Whitey about, jarring him one way and then another.

A tiny grey face peered through the top of the cage. A clawlike hand extended from the thorax of the being and held a large key. The key was raised to an even level with the lock. A slight twist of the claw removed the lock completely, and the door swung open. When Whitey dared look at the being's eyes he sensed immediately that the species had not mastered the art of telepathy as had the orbitmen. For he could surmise what the grey skinned vertebrae was thinking, but the other did not seem to comprehend his thoughts.

He realized that this would probably be his only weapon.

The gentleness of the grasp surprised him, but the jerky movements of the animal jarred him sharply and he could not move at all, so cleverly was he held.

The creature's brain patterns were a conglomeration of past experiences and recurring glimpses of some strange creature, probably one of the females of the species. So Whitey took a survey of his surroundings.

They descended to a lower level of the craft. This space was full of large grey boxes and some cages similar to the one he had been in earlier. Each cage had its own temperature control and atmospheric pump. Most of the cages were full. There were animals from all over the galaxy. A two-headed mascetonian from Venus crockled at Whitey as they passed the cage, fluttered its tails, and lay down on the cage floor in a fit of laughter. A twelve inch protozoa from Sun I swam around in the red acid solution Whitey knew to be its natural habitat. And a white rat from Terra sputtered at him from one of the grey boxes.

The being's brain waves altered sharply as he lowered himself beside one of the boxes.

"Oh, an empty one. Here, now, down you go. Now see if you are smart enough to find your dinner."

He stood up and trudged away to the other rooms.

The box was hexagonally shaped and very roomy. The walls were about fifteen feet apart and every surface was crystal smooth. Three doors led away

from the area where Whitey had been placed. Two doors were three feet wide and one door was two feet wide. He entered the first two and found only twisting corridors with dead ends. When he entered the third door he was extremely hungry and glad to see bread and butter on the table.

He gobbled all of the food. When he returned to the outer chamber he found a bed on the floor which was exactly like the one he had slept on before. As he began a search for a place to relieve himself he understood why the plastic container was in the corner, and the spongy mat looked good.

When Whitey awoke the grey man was making strange patterns and vibrations. He sat very still and concentrated on the brain waves. After a few moments he began to make something out of them.

"Oho Ho Ho. Oho Yo Yo. Jay. Jay. Ba Ba. Galinthians. Yah! Galinthians."

"I'll be," thought Whitey, "sounds like my school song."

He realized he was on a Galinthian Ship. He had heard about the Galinthians. Everyone had heard about them. They were a race from a distant galaxy which had discovered a new form of energy that enabled them to journey to any of the universes. Of course some people denied that they even existed. Called the tales about them "ghost" stories. But now Whitey was sure that they did exist. He had heard that they would travel from one galaxy to another, studying the inhabitants and testing their intelligence. When they found a mentally alert race they would enslave them and use them to work in their plants.

Whitey stared at the doors ahead of him. They had been shifted and the two foot door was now between the other two. He knew that his breakfast would be behind the middle door. But the Galinthians did not know that he knew it. And that was what they were after. They want to know if he had enough knowledge to open the middle door this time. And tomorrow what would they set before him? A shock system perhaps. And the light tests or series of locks and puzzles to test his mechanical ability.

"And then? They will go to Terra and enslave them all. We'll be machines."

"Perhaps there is a way. If they found that I was not intelligent at all they would destroy only me and let the rest survive. Not all of us. It is worth a try. The other way is hopeless. I'm no martyr, but *I'm* dead either way."

He stood up, threw back his shoulders and marched toward the left door humming a dirty song he had learned in orbitman's school. He made certain in every test he tried to show no insight into the problems. None at all, only coincidence and a little habitual trial and error sense. The waves kept beating: "You must have some intelligence. You made that creature. Try again. Come on. Please."

After a long succession of tests, during what Whitey surmised to be a week, the being picked him out of the latest maze and shook him. "Fool thing. You'll be of no use to us. All this time just wasted." He trudged over to the square object which contained absolutely nothing, and placed Whitey inside. He shuffled over to a control panel, sighed, and started the decompositions chambers. He grunted, picked up a microphone, and issued the final command.

"To headquarters. Alert."

"Rayo, go ahead."

"Tests are finished. All done. Negative. Absolutely no intelligence discovered. This last one was no good either. Destroying galaxy immediately per plan."

Nine . . . Eight . . . Seven . . . Six . . . Five . . . Four . . . Three . . . Two . . . One . . .

The rays whirred for a few seconds, then automatically ejected the gases out through the exhaust funnels.

My Rope -- My Friend

David Otto

I'm glad to have my rope. If it wasn't for this, I don't know how I'd get along. Everybody tries to boss me around but no one succeeds because I tell them where to go. But when I do that, I get mad. The only thing I can be happy with is my rope. It will do what I tell it to. It will do a double loop with a twist in it, or anything.

I hate cars. They are always trying to boss me around too. On my way home today I saw a car that looked at me just like those bullheads used to when I would go fishing. He said, "You scroungy rat; get off the streets." Then he just stood there and looked at me. I wasn't afraid. I just stared back and then walked on down the street. But he made me so mad. That's why I'm playing with my rope.

But it's time to go to work. I hate work. I guess I don't hate work; it's the people I have to work with. Have you ever seen a doughnut machine? I hate the one I work with. He just stands there for five hours and spits doughnuts at me. And I have to keep putting dough in so he can keep spitting them at me. Sometimes I don't put any dough in and he just stands there and makes funny faces. That is really funny. But I can't get caught because I am supposed to always have dough in it.

That doughnut machine is so dumb. He always spits them at me but misses and they always fall way down deep into the grease. Then the grease throws them back at me, but he isn't strong enough to lift them very high, so they just float around. It's kind of funny because that machine and grease have been trying to get me for over a month. But I still get mad because the motive is there. They would get me if they could.

The worst thing is that after all this I have to clean him. When he spits he splatters, and so after he is all done for the day I give him a sort of bath.

The other job I have at work is making chocolate coating. That is just as bad because the mixer I run hates me too. Actually, all four of the mixers hate me, but I never get close enough to the others for them to get a good look at me. But my mixer not only growls, he grinds his hands together, hoping to catch me. I can stop him by pulling out the plug, but I can't get caught at that either. When he gets especially loud (yesterday he wasn't too bad after I pulled out his plug a time or two), I get frustrated and want my

rope even more. Every night when I leave I go right home, get my rope and go to bed. My rope and I get along real well.

I just learned another thing: never go to the bathroom while at work. I just did and I almost didn't get out. When I flushed the toilet it opened up its mouth with a roar and sucked. I could feel the air rushing by me, trying to suck me along with it right into that toilet. Of course, I didn't fall. I am strong, but I think you can see the problems I have. I hate that toilet. And it hates me, but I am stronger than it. I just get mad. I wish I could bring my rope to work.

One of the things I really like is to sleep. I wish I could sleep more than nine hours a day, but I can't. Of course, I take my rope to bed with me. I practice tying all kinds of knots. I tie a sailor's knot around the bed post, and a square knot, and a slip knot. That's the one I like best. I tie that around the bedpost and when I get real mad I pull real hard and squeeze the bedpost. But he never says anything. And then I hate myself for doing that because the bed is so nice to me. I can really sleep good in my bed.

You know what I like? Nylon fishing line; the black kind. I like plain wire hangers for clothes too. And dirt; I love to pile dirt on top of plants and things.

Today's work was the worst yet. After the toilet tried to swallow me, that doughnut machine burned me. He still didn't hit me with his spit, but I burned my hand. And then the mixer growled so that I couldn't hear anything else. I couldn't even think. When I was cleaning him up, I happened to think of something (incidentally, I forgot to mention, I really like water too. I really like water): What would happen if I didn't come to work anymore? Those machines would go insane. The doughnut machine wouldn't have anyone to spit at or even anyone to feed it. The mixer wouldn't have anyone to plug him in. That's what I'll do. I just won't be around for these machines to pick on. I'll go downstairs and throw my rope up over the rafters. Then I'll tie it and make a slip knot. I can stand on a chair so that I can put the slip knot over my head and then kick that chair out from under me. That will squeeze my neck and I love to squeeze things when I'm mad. I'll show those machines.

The Idle Rich

David Otto

"Good afternoon, Mr. Welsh."

I cannot figure out how a man so young can leave for the golf course or wherever he goes every day at three. I'm here in the morning at least an hour before he gets here. And to top it all off, he must be twenty years younger than I am.

I wish old man Smith would be content with pushing that buzzer once. After all, this thing will only go so fast. . . . And here is another example. Smith leaves the office every day at three, and everyone knows that he is a millionaire. They say that he doesn't have a normal day if he doesn't buy at least a thousand dollars worth of stocks. But everything he touches seems to turn to money. I just don't. . . .

"Hello, Mr. Smith. . . . One it will be."

Smith is always telling me that if I ever want to buy some stocks, Smith and Sons is the place to go. I think he says that to make me mad. He probably thinks that I don't have any savings and couldn't buy if I wanted to.

"Here's number one, Mr. Smith. And I'll let you know if I want any of those stocks."

Why doesn't he just shut up about those stocks? I would buy them if I wanted to, but I would rather put my money in the bank where it earns interest. After all, I'm not one to just throw money away. That's proven by the fact that I saved over two hundred dollars last year. And besides that I am paid up on my thousand dollar life insurance policy.

That's the difference between Al and myself. We both run elevators from 8:00 until 6:00, but when Al is done he goes out to spend his money in a bar. Not me. I go to the bar too, but I work. With my new job at Penny's on Sunday, I can save even more money. I would think Al could see that. All you have to do is be willing to put forth a little energy and you can save money.

"Hello, Mrs. Ramlet. One?"

Even the secretaries don't work to five. And they don't work Saturdays either. How come they all seem to have so much money?

"Good night, Mrs. Ramlet. Did you forget something, Mr. Smith? Sure, I'll take you back up."

"Do you have any quick money makers today?" I wish I hadn't asked him that. I know he will tell me again how I am missing my golden opportunity to double my money in a short time. Boy, he burns me. And he always says, "This is the way I made my money in a short time." Sure it is! I know that his father was in this same business. You don't make money by paying one-hundred thirty dollars for a suit and thirty dollars for shoes and fifteen dollars for a hat.

"Okay, Mr. Smith, I'll wait."

I sure wish he would just forget the stock business when he is around me. If I could afford to lose a little money, I would play the stock market, but I can't. I know some people have made money at this . . . but a lot have lost money too.

"Get it, Mr. Smith? Good."

Elevator, go fast! Fast! Get this goof off here before he starts telling me what to do with my money again. I hate people like him. I know what to do with my money. I've done all right so far. He doesn't even know how to make money. He has had all his given to him.

"Good night."

He makes me mad! If he had to work for his money he wouldn't throw it around like he does. Anyone who's worked his own way up as I have, knows that you have to work hard and save your money. You can't throw it around like you throw sweeping compound on the floor. You have to give it out as if you were giving away a part of yourself. That's how to make money.

A Cetacean

Amy Russell

Leaping gracefully, body slightly arched and fins pointed outward in a continual waving movement, the torpedo-shaped porpoise snapped the fish out of Dr. Steller's hand. The old man studied the animal carefully. Its smooth, hairless body shone in the spring sunshine. The slipperiness of the water made the upper, black side an ebony blue and the whiteness of the underneath seemed a clear ice color. Rays of sun penetrated the smooth skin and bounced off with reflections, skipping over the waves each time the porpoise leapt high above the water for a piece of herring.

With each plunge, the animal's short, beakless muzzle with a blowhole between the eyes on top of its head, split the water, and the doctor examined it carefully. And, with each plunge, it made a low puffing, hissing noise, letting the air out of its lungs. The wind rippled the cold water, just beginning to warm in the early spring. Holding out the last of the herring, the doctor bent over and clicked off the recorder.

Then, clutching the recorder in one hand and the bucket in the other, the old man slowly climbed the steps of his cottage. Once up the bank, he looked down at the swimming animal. He felt almost like a cetacean himself.

For years now, hours each day, he had devoted his study and teaching to the porpoise. He had made a definite conclusion. It was the most intelligent animal next to man himself, and the doctor wondered if it wasn't more intelligent at times.

Later in the afternoon, he would give it the daily lessons. Swimming alongside the animal, feeling the closeness of its velvety damp body, he would communicate with it.

In the quiet of his library, he set up the recorder, opened the window to let the river smell and wind fill the room, and, adjusting all dials on the recorder, slowly and steadily as he had done numerous times for the past years, he clicked on the machine. The wheels revolving on the tape barely moved. He had set it back a little over ten times the speed of a natural human voice and had found it quite satisfactory to understand what others thought just a hissing, annoying noise.

Slowed down considerably, the words were clear and precise as any. At first it was just a phrase or two and maybe sentence fragments, but after years of recording his own voice and speeding it up on the recorder to the pace the porpoise hissed, he was able to get through to it. Once it understood him, he taught it math, science and all the medical knowledge he knew himself. The cetacean could figure the problems the doctor gave it over the rapidly playing recorder, and with the answers slowed down he was able to interpret them.

Dr. Stellers had had old associates from his past come in numerous times to listen, but, unable to understand the squealing tape, they would leave in confusion and with the convinced idea that he was losing his mind over the porpoise. After several attempts to convince others, Dr. Steller kept track of the recordings and scribbled notes of the advancement of his well-trained animal, filling notebook after notebook with his progress.

Today he felt successful. The animal was in a good mood and they had been spending some time on the space age and science. The porpoise

seemed to enjoy this very much. He kept in touch with the world problems, the struggle against communism; and with its mathematical mind, the porpoise seemed to be able to figure things out much better than the old man himself.

The doctor listened to the first several phrases. As the tape wound continuously around the wheel to about the middle of the tape, he jotted down the voice, discovering the porpoise was not only answering the questions given him in the last session, but was trying to tell the doctor something. Rerunning the tape over and over, the man, coughing from swimming in cold water and working tirelessly into the night, jotted down a mathematical formula the cetacean had given him.

The following weeks were spent questioning and testing the formula. In the end the doctor came to believe in it.

It was a chilled autumn evening when the doctor gave in. Putting on his swimming clothing, he walked to the bank without the recorder. He could see no other way. The porpoise had worked it out like a genius and he couldn't begin to contradict him. Diving in the river, he swam around hunting for it. Reaching out, he felt the slippery, hairless body and patted it. Without the recorder, they could talk in the hissing voice of the cetacean.

Birth Is the Beginning of Death

Amy Russell

She sat down beside the coffin. The man opened the lid. She shut her eyes.

"If you need me, I will be in the next room," said the man. She heard the soft swish of his shoes as he crossed the room. There was a pause, then the quiet closing of a door.

Slowly, she forced her eyes open. He looked alive. Sleeping. She could almost see his chest rise and decline as it did as he breathed in his afternoon nap. His hands were folded in the usual fashion of the dead. That was strange. He never folded his hands like that, even in sleep.

She had decided on his gray suit with specks of orange-ish pink through it. It was ugly, but it was the only suit he liked and he had picked it out. At Krig's Men's Store. That was back in 1938. He thought it was handsome. Several had commented on its simplicity and elegance. He always itched whenever he wore it. She recalled one time in church how he had wiggled, scratched, and crossed and uncrossed his legs a dozen times because of the suit. But he liked it.

And the tie. It was black. That she had bought new. Several of the neighbors had sent sympathy cards with money. She went to town the following afternoon and purchased a four dollar tie. With tax included, four dollars and eight cents. Plain black. With the money left she bought his gray socks. The usual heavy work socks he wore to the yards. She could have used a pair he had, but with money left over she felt she should really buy something for him. She wondered if they remembered to take the price tag off. It was on the bottom of one sock and rather small. They could have missed it easily.

She looked around the room. No one was there. She looked at the door the man had gone out of. It was still closed. She leaned over the coffin and quickly untied his right shoe. The had told her they didn't usually leave the shoes on, but she had insisted. They were his good shoes. She had shined them until they looked real nice. Slipping the shoe off, she lifted the heavy foot to check. The price tag was gone. Sighing with relief, she replaced the shoe and tied it tightly, then loosened it a little. When he had gotten so he couldn't bend over, she would hold his foot on her lap and tie his shoe. Usually she got it too tight, so she loosened it and smoothed the sock.

She sat and examined his white hair. She looked more closely. She noticed several dark hairs on top that hadn't turned. He always put lots of Wildroot on his hair each morning. That darkened it and made him feel much younger. She wondered why they had parted his hair on the left side. He always parted it close to the middle, but a trifle to the right. Never on the left side.

Looking around again, she opened her purse. Taking out her long comb she combed his hair all forward and, after three tries, to make sure the part was straight, she smoothed it back. She put her comb back. Moving his head around to the position it had been in, she noticed his cowlick stood up. She wet her finger and pressed it down. It flipped back up. She opened her purse again and got her small size Avon spray net. Holding the hairs down, she sprayed them. The sticky spray held the cowlick neatly in place. She felt much better. She straightened his head.

She didn't care for the pillow under his head. A deep red, flat pillow. It didn't look comfortable. She wondered if they would mind if she brought his white pillow he took naps on—the one with the brown embroidery she had worked on the nights he worked late. He liked it. It was soft and clean and not so drab as the red felt one they had placed under his head. He usually wadded it up right under the nape of his neck so he wouldn't wake with a headache. She would have to remember to ask the man if it was okay that she brought the pillow.

It looked like they had put a dark make-up on his face and neck. She leaned closer. Some had collected around his nose. She didn't like that. It was too dark. He was always pale, except in the winter when his cheeks and forehead chapped roughly from outdoor work. She pulled her handkerchief from her bosom and wet it, dabbing around his nose. It smeared a little so she wet it some more and tried to even it. She brushed the excess around his eyelids and forehead. It looked blotchy. She rubbed over it again and stuck her handkerchief back in her bosom.

She leaned back in the chair and sighed. She glanced at the big bouquets of flowers. Chrysanthemums, roses, iris and carnations. One had a long blue ribbon with gold trim around the edges. The gold inscription said, "We love you, Grandpa." She sighed again. Her hands felt damp.

Glancing at her watch, she stood up. She had a hair appointment. She was going to try her very hardest to hold up well at the funeral in the morning.

Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

Virginia Wadsley

Restlessly, she picked up the pipe from the little coffee table and hit it in her cupped left hand, just as she had seen him do so many times. Glancing over at the mantel, she once again realized how long the day was. Maybe the old clock was running down. But she knew better than that.

She put the pipe back in place and walked into the den, rubbing a speck of dust off the antlers over the mantel as she went by. Yes, that was a proud pair of antlers. He had always been able to get the best.

Oh, there's the phone. Maybe it's him. "Hello."

"Hello, Helen? This is Marge and I'm getting up a little card party next Tuesday at my house. Will you be able to come?"

What they won't do to dig up gossip! I know they're all just dying to hear my story. But if they think they're going to get it out of me this way they've got another think coming.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Marge. But I just can't come then."

"I'm sorry too."

I imagine.

"Do you have other plans?"

"Yes,"—not to come to your party. "I'll have to go now as I'm terribly busy."

"Well, bye. Maybe you can come next time."

I wouldn't count on it. I'll never understand why they can't keep their noses out of my business. And besides, the doctor said to take it easy for a while anyway. As she returned to the den, she looked out the front door and noticed the paper lying on the step. Hmm, it's rather early today. She picked it up and placed it by the leather chair where it would wait for him to come home.

She shuffled through the magazine rack but didn't see anything interesting. They can't even print anything decent these days, and his old sports magazines bore me to tears. What's the world coming to?

With an empty feeling of despair she wilted down into his chair and wept. Suddenly she looked up, blew her nose, and wiped her eyes. What on earth am I crying about? The doctor said that I'd have some depressed times but it'll be all over in a couple of years. Get a hold on yourself, lady. I just wish he wouldn't always go on such long hunting trips.

She examined her red eyes in the mirror, unable to avoid seeing the tiny wrinkles and the graying roots. But by the time she reached their bedroom she felt much better. Why, this new make-up really makes the wrinkles disappear! And I'll call Pat tomorrow for a touch-up job on my hair.

Now, I'll work on his socks. Goodness knows, he will need them for the pheasant season. And I can watch "Queen for a Day" while I'm doing it.

Finally, the rays of sunlight began to slant in the window and she got up to start supper. He's going to love these ribs. They always were his favorite. Tonight's going to be special. And she began to hum a little tune.

Time passed, the tune got less cheerful, then it stopped. The house be-

gan to get dark and chilly. I guess this isn't the night. Depression set in once again as she choked down a few bites by herself.

She moved back into the den, not even bothering to light a fire as she went by the fireplace. Tonight the comfort of his gunrack, his geese picture, and his bearskin rug was gone as she sank down into his chair to waste away another dismal evening.

I know I used to be more attractive but I'm not really old yet. The doctor said I'd be a new woman in a few years. Tears were once again streaming down her cheeks. But he'll be back. I know. He'll come back to me. Maybe tomorrow.

The Greening Spring

Karen Wolff

We had a place down by the river that we figured we had discovered. We got to it by going through the unused part of the cemetery, across the railroad tracks, and through a willow thicket. It was a shaded clearing—flat and grassy and all enclosed with trees and vines so that it was private and secret. Margaret and I had come across it one day in our tenth summer. We were so pleased with it, we vowed never to tell anyone else about it. We went there a couple of times a week that first summer and spent whole days. We'd take sack lunches and pretend we were the only people left in the whole world; or that we had run away and outwitted the sheriff and everyone who came looking for us. Some days we'd just talk the way girl friends do. When fall came, we borrowed the family rakes and cleaned the place up properly so it would be ready for winter, and then we sadly paid our last respects until the next spring.

The next summer was perfectly glorious. We fixed the place up with orange crate benches and tables. We even went to the Book and Thimble Club's white elephant sale, and for ten cents we bought a dilapidated old love seat which we lugged out there.

During the winter we kind of forgot about the place, what with the snow and school and all. But one day toward the end of April, I remembered it again. The snow was nearly gone, and when Mr. Richards opened the classroom window the soft breezes came in with the smell of the slowly warming earth, and I was near crazy I wanted to be out there so badly.

When the bell finally sounded, I hurried outside, and, not seeing Margaret anywhere, I ran home and changed into my jeans and a sweatshirt and phoned Margaret.

"She's not home yet," her mother said. "She's probably down at the drugstore with the kids." I thanked her, hung up, and sprinted out of the house before Mom found some work for me to do.

At the drugstore, I spotted her sitting in a booth with a bunch of older kids. They were laughing and talking. When I remembered my faded jeans, I got embarrassed. But I wanted to go out there so badly, I just went ahead and squeezed in beside her. I never doubted for a minute that Margaret would jump up and go with me.

"Hi," she said. "What are you doing in that get-up."

That kind of threw me because Margaret liked to scrounge around in old sloppy clothes as well as I did. But I ignored it.

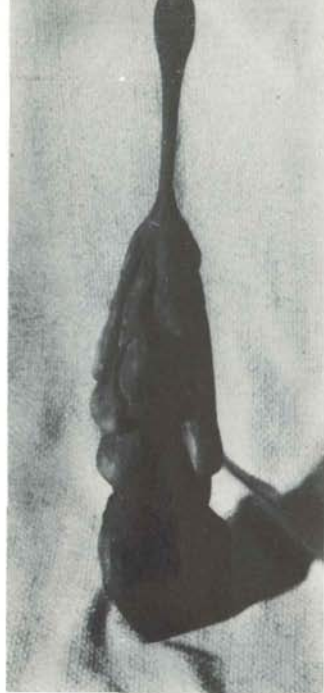
"Hey, Margaret. Let's go out to the place. It's such a nice day." I said it in an undertone because, for some reason I didn't understand, I didn't want the others to hear. She looked at me like I was sick or something.

"What do you want to go out there for?" she asked. "It's too wet. Besides, there's nothing to do out there." Then somebody started talking to her and she turned her back on me. I could feel my face burning and I eased myself out of the booth and left the drugstore hoping no one was noticing.

I just couldn't understand Margaret. We'd always done everything together, but now that I thought about it, it did seem like Margaret had changed. She was always fussing with her hair and worrying about how she looked, and as far as I could see she looked the same as she always had. Anyway, I was so mad, I just decided to go out there without her.

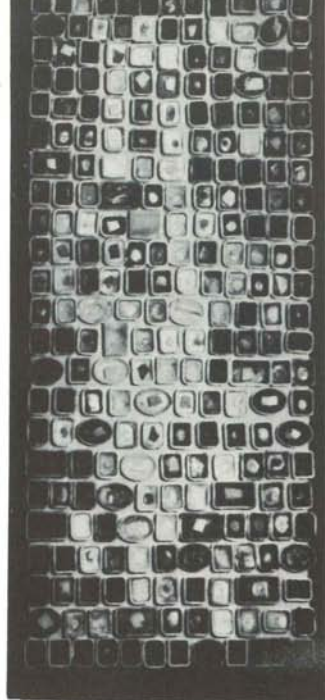
I walked fast because it was getting late and it would be dark in an hour or so. All the way out, the tears kept stinging my eyes and I kept thinking how Margaret had let me down. And I didn't even notice how the new green things were starting to sprout and how soft and lovely everything smelled. When I finally got there, I discovered that there was still some snow left because the place was so protected, and where the snow was gone the ground was mud with little rivulets of water running and dripping all over the place. The bad leg on the loveseat had finally given way and it was tipped crazily on its side with a pile of dirty wet snow covering one end of it.

I sloshed around there for a while and tried to get excited about cleaning and fixing it up when it dried out. I tried to think about the long summer days we'd spent there, but somehow I just couldn't get in the mood. Finally I gave it up and decided to go home. My feet were wet and cold and the sun was nearly down. Besides, I had my Latin to do.



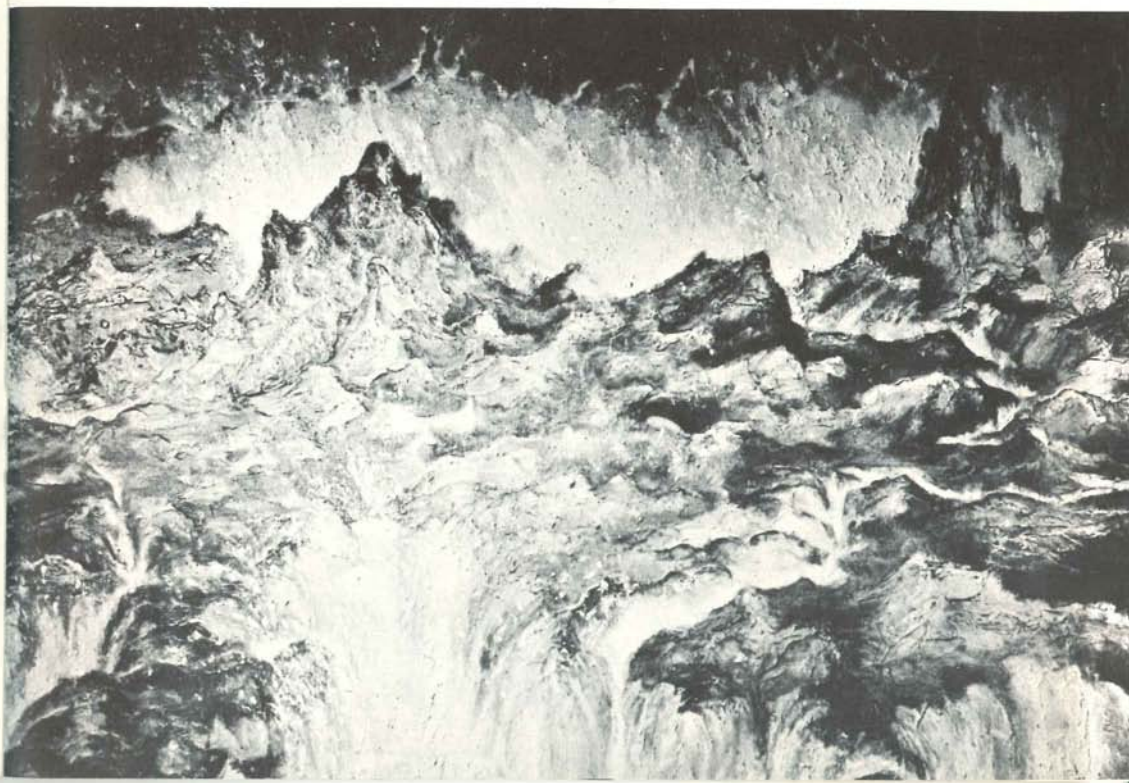
“I WAS A BIG MAN YESTERDAY”

Drew Miller



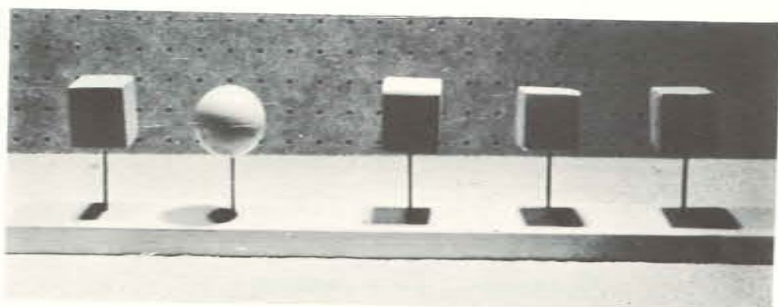
“THE KING” *Marybelle Jepson*

“LANDSCAPE” *Carol Joransen*



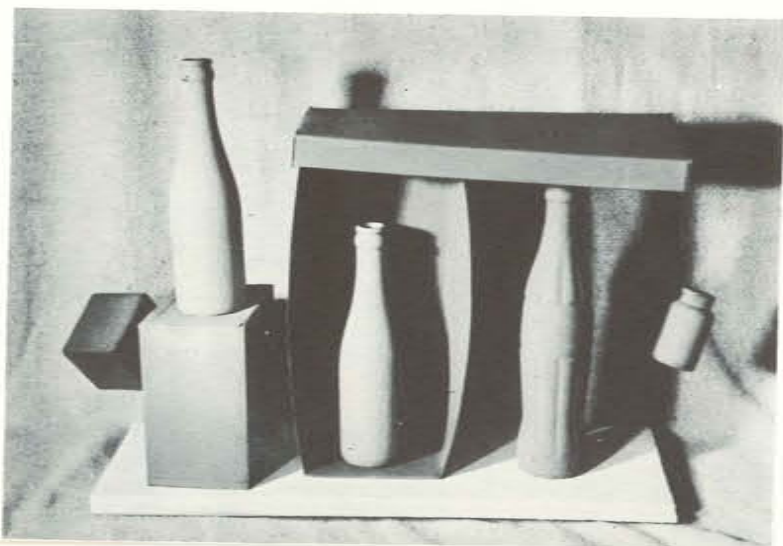


— "SEASCAPE" *Robert Frey* —



"THE INDIVIDUAL" *Karen Peters*

"THE FAMILY" *Betty Husk*



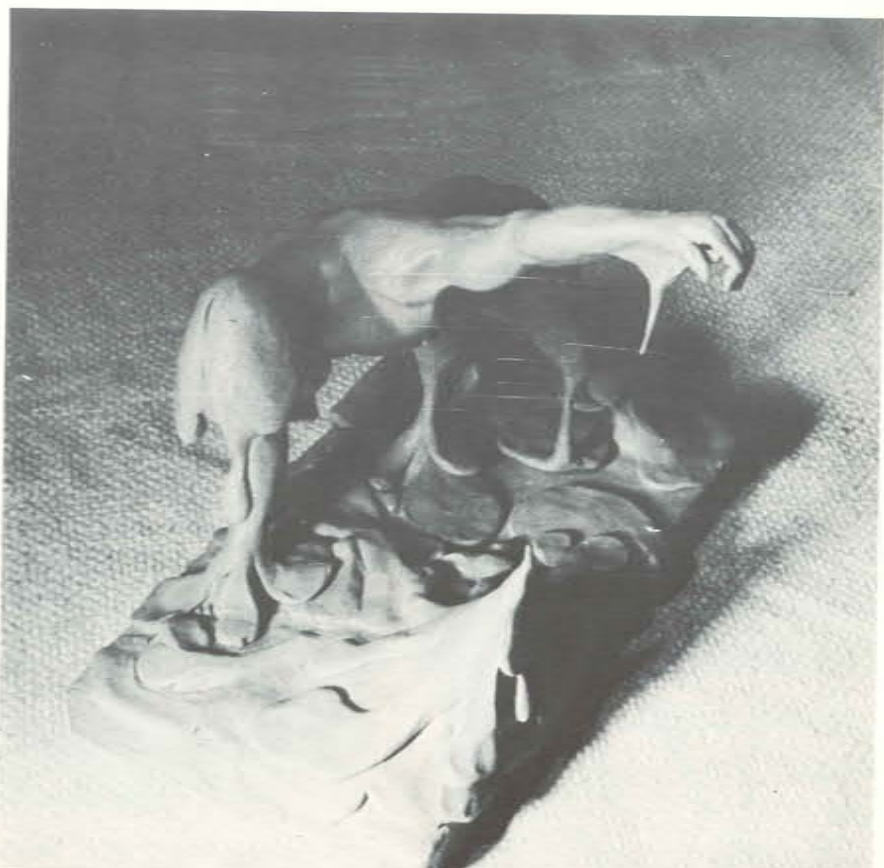


"ADAM" *Marybelle Jepson*



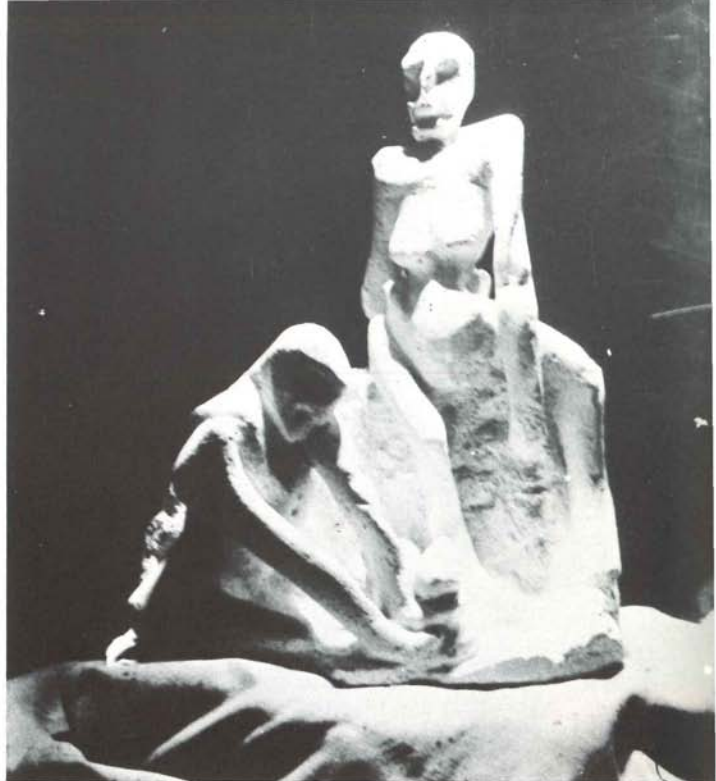
"AWAKENING ADAM" *Betty Gleason*

"ADAM" *Drew Miller*



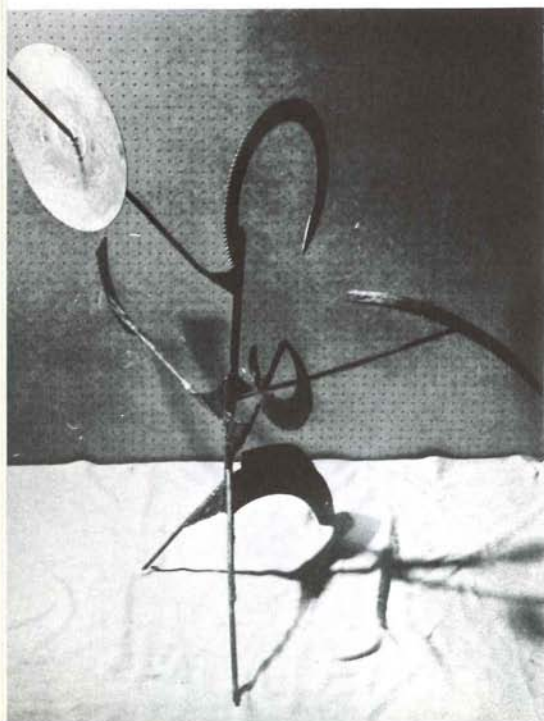


"SPRING" Richard Jacobi



"STARVATION" Avis Willer

"CORN" Paul Corbin



"TOUGLIOUS EVIL" R. R. De Vries



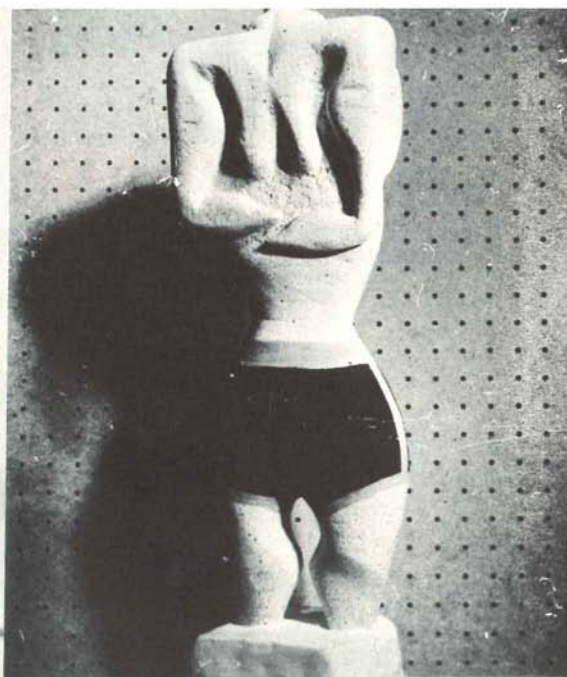
"BIRD" *John King*



"POOCH" *Avis Willer*



"CONDOR" *Duane Cole*



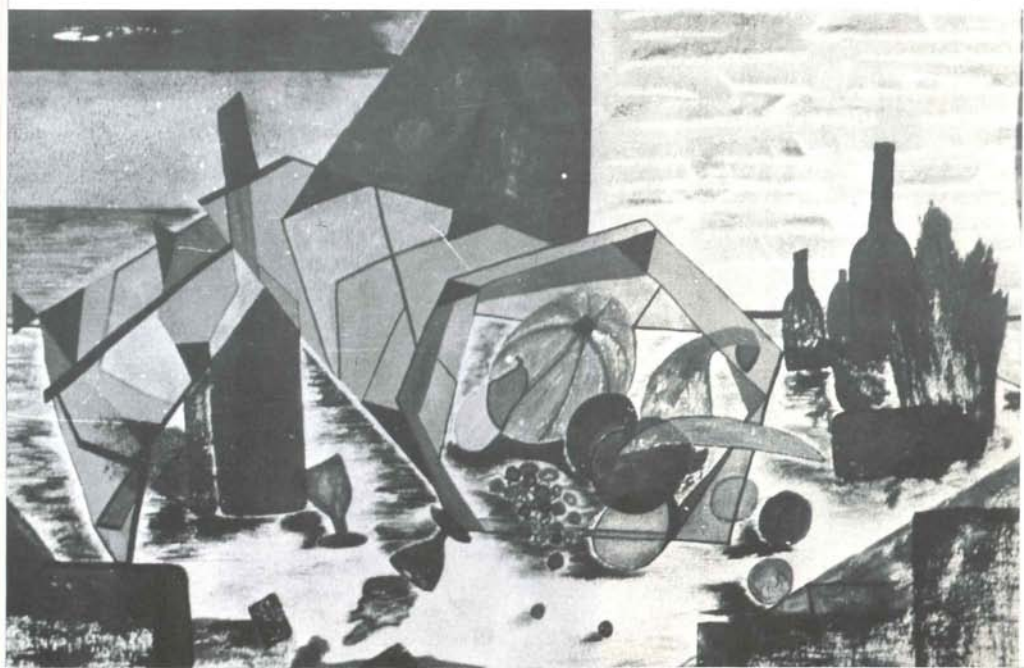
"WESLEY BUDDHA" *Robert Frey*



"THE RED HAT" *Celia Bird Bean*



"ROOTS OF FIRE" *Avis Willer*



"FRUIT UPSET" *Beverly Frazier*



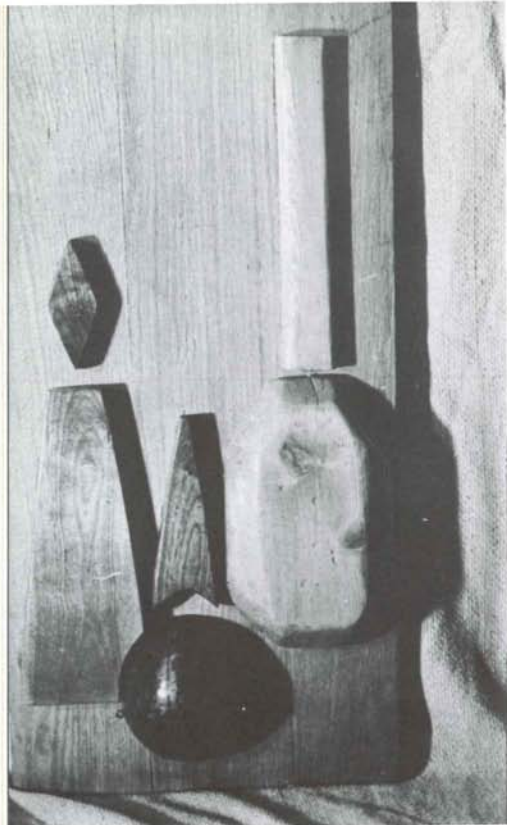
"ARIA DA CAPO I" *Tom Eklund*

"LANDSCAPE" *Celia Bird Bean*

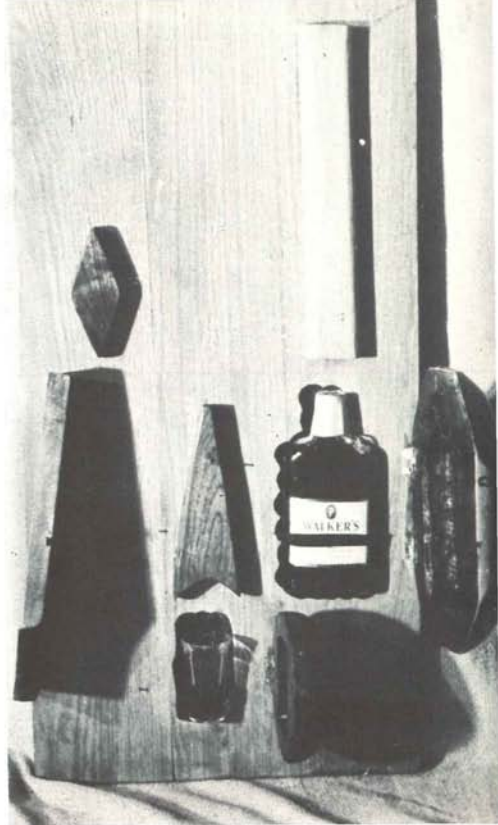


"RETICULITERNES FLAVIPES"
Avis Willer



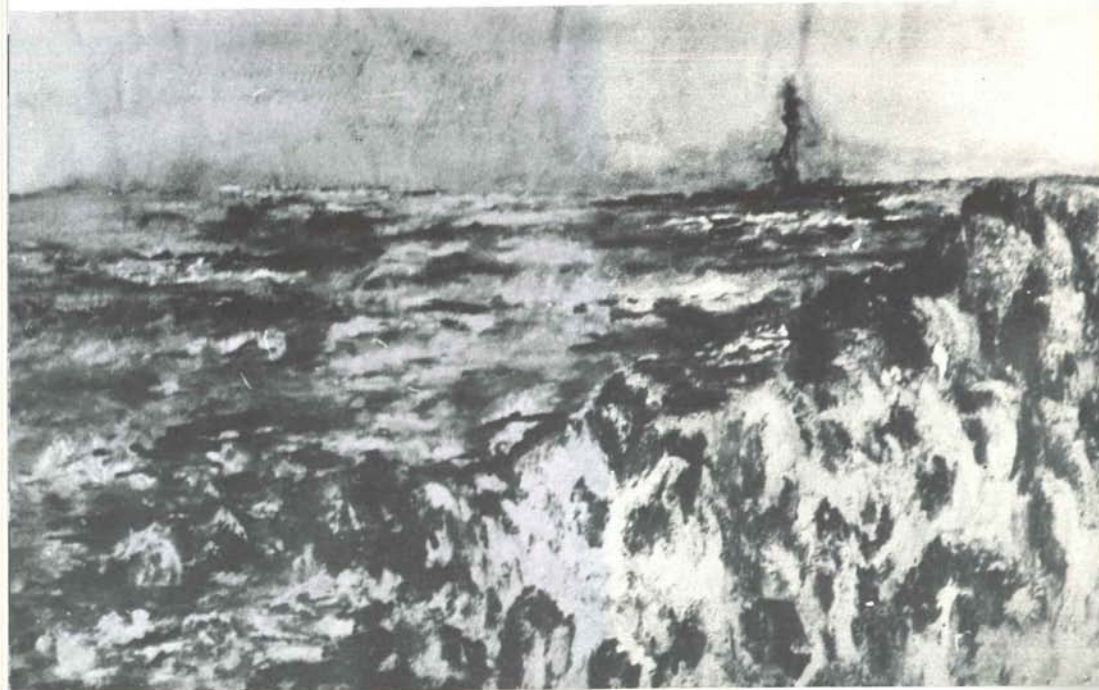


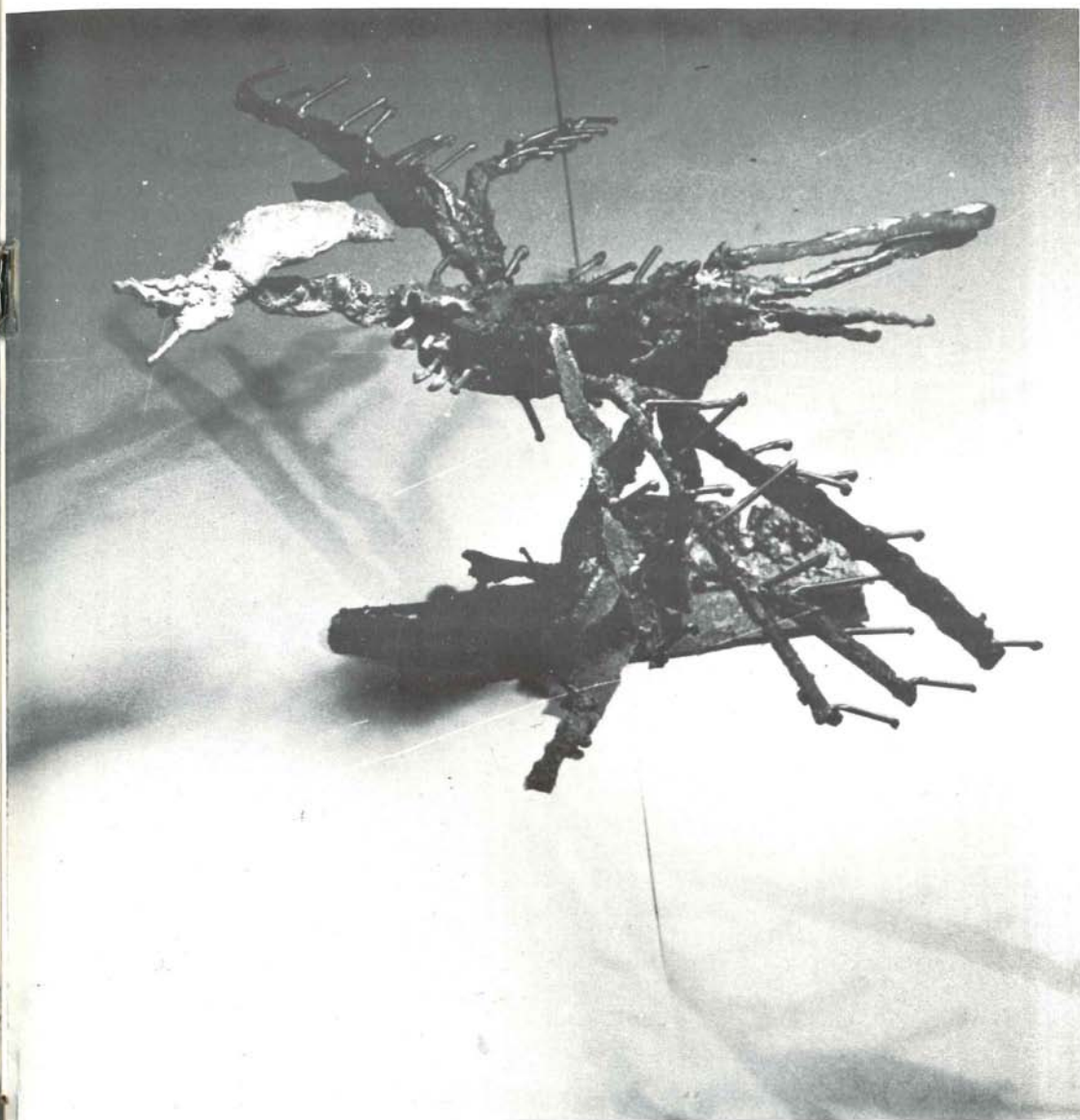
"DECADENCE" (CLOSED)



"DECADENCE" (OPEN) *Avis Willer*

"SEASCAPE" *Beverly Frazier*

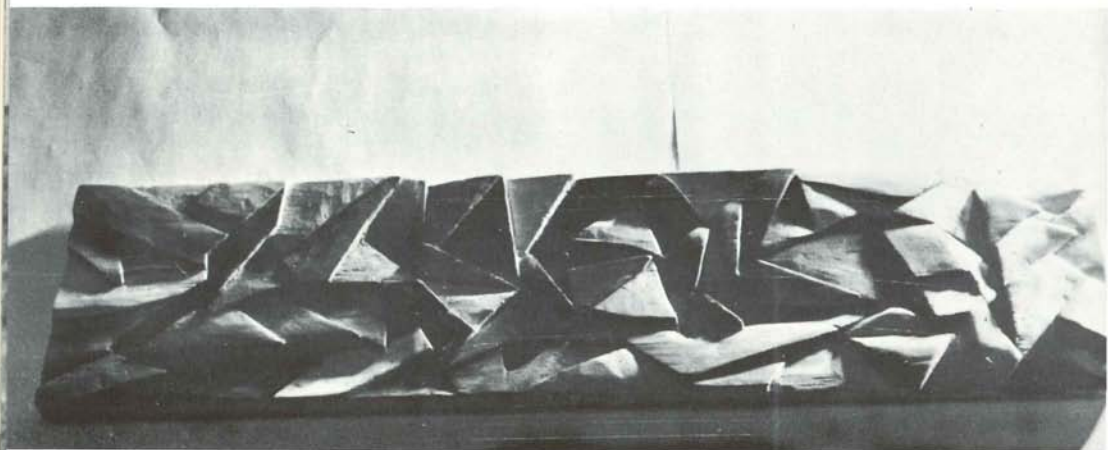




"DOVE OF PEACE" *Paul Corbin*



"TRINITY OF THOUGHT" *R. R. De Vries*



"COMMUNITY" *R. Kitterman*

A Hot Dry Wind

Karen Wolff

A hot dry wind blew ceaselessly across the flats of western South Dakota and raised small whorls of dust as it whipped around the corners of Ike's truck stop. A person could stand on that bleak crossroad and listen to the zing of the electrical power lines and once in a while a meadowlark. Every minute or so a car would pass by on the highway, and when it was gone the big, desolate emptiness returned and the inside of your mouth felt dry and dusty.

Out back, Addie Pine finished cramming the leavings from the noon meal into the garbage can and slammed on the lid harder than she needed to. She straightened up, wiped the grease and sweat from her face with her grimy apron, and headed for the back door. She felt cross on account of the heat and the dust, but, mostly, on account of the ever-present wind. "Good thing today's Saturday," she thought. "Tomorrow I can stay home." She waved her fat, white arms to shoo the flies off the screen door and went back inside the cafe.

The kitchen was stifling hot and had the rancid smell of countless orders of French fries and greasy, tasteless gravy. Addie went out into the front part and sat down on a stool. She was running the place alone today because Ike had taken his wife into Rapid City for a shopping trip. There hadn't been much business today and she hated not having anyone to talk to. Even Ike was better than no one. She liked it best when the place filled up with truckers. They laughed and kidded and called her "Tiny" for all her one hundred and eighty pounds. She laughed, too, even at their stories.

It was just two-thirty by the clock over the counter. Two and a half hours before Ike would relieve her. She knew she ought to get up and clean the place a little. The buzzing flies made her drowsy and her dress stuck to her back, making her feel wet all over, and she just didn't want to move. Pretty soon it would be time for people to start coming in for something cold to drink or a cup of coffee. Mostly they would be tourists or truckers. Webster, the little town she lived in, was set back from the highway a half mile or so but the two hundred odd souls who lived there weren't about to go a half mile on a day like this for a cup of Addie Pine's coffee. Not for anything.

She reached up and pulled down a sticky fly paper from the ceiling. It was covered with upwards of a hundred flies, their glistening bodies now held motionless by that sticky sweetness that was their undoing. She tossed it in the waste basket and poured herself a cup of coffee.

The screen door slammed behind her and she got into her car and headed reservation came in.

"Hello, boys," said Addie.

"Hi, Addie. Give us a beer will ya?" They disappeared into the darkness of the adjoining room which was the bar. Addie followed them. They sat down at a small table and waited while she drew two foaming glasses of beer for them.

"Startin' pretty early for Saturday night, aren't you?" she asked. She worried a little because Ike wasn't there. He'd be back at four but she knew that those young bucks would be ready for hell-raising before then.

She went back into the cafe and stared out the window into the dust and heat of the horizon fifteen miles away. The vast emptiness began working on her again. It always did by the end of the week. On Monday things didn't seem so bad, but by the end of the week the loneliness got to her and it seemed harder and harder to face the weekend alone. She wondered what she'd do with her day off, knowing well enough that she'd do exactly as she'd done every Sunday for the last couple of years since her Ma died. Quietly, desperately, she prayed that something would happen to change it, that something would drive that terrible ache away. But nothing would change. For a moment resentment and frustration seethed within her; then she relaxed and her face became placid. Why fight it? She was like a fly caught on the sticky paper.

A carload of tourists came in and ordered iced tea. It was getting noisier in the bar. She kept watching the clock, wishing Ike would come out a little early. It took Ike to manage the place come Saturday night. At last the familiar dusty blue car drove up.

"Hi, Addie. How's it going?"

"OK, Ike. I'm glad you're back though." She gestured toward the bar with her head.

"Well, I'll go write your check and then you can go," he said.

She hung up her apron and got her purse, wishing all the time that she wouldn't do what she was going to do.

"Say, Ike. You'd better deduct the usual from the check."

He returned presently from his office with the check and a bottle wrapped up in a paper sack. "Take it easy now," he said. "See you Monday."

The screen door slammed behind her and she got into her car and headed for town and home.

The back door of her house was open and she let herself into the coolness of the big, old kitchen. Ike often asked her why she continued to live in that big house all by herself. She couldn't tell him why, but she knew she'd never be able to leave it. She set the bottle on the refrigerator and went into the bathroom to draw her bath. She undressed slowly and sank her huge body into the delicious coolness of the water. With her head back and her eyes shut she let her thoughts wander, and whenever she did that, she ended up knowing the feeling of the aching void within her. She soaked a while, then climbed out, put on a wrapper and went to the kitchen for something to eat. All the time she fought the emptiness, but when she'd eaten she knew it was hopeless, and the time had come.

Slowly, as if in a trance, she went to the refrigerator and took down the bottle. She unwrapped it, neatly folded the sack, and set the bottle on the table. She went to the cupboard and gave great thought to which glass she would use. At last she selected a large one with red flowers painted on it. She sat down at the table and very deliberately opened the bottle. Her thoughts began to move faster and faster until they were racing through her head in wild disorder. The yen for the stuff came on with blinding intensity. She poured a glass and gulped it down in huge mouthfuls. And the round ball of fire in her gullet burned and seared her delicate insides, and in a

moment, the hole, the enormous void, began to close; and whenever it quit burning and hurting, she swallowed more and more and the tortured hours passed quickly. When the dawn came and the red ball of the sun, that parching heat, appeared on the horizon, she gave a low moan and slumped on the table.

When she awoke it was late afternoon. The sky was hazy with dust and the sun burned hot and the rushing of the wind was still there. She got to her feet and her head throbbed and she wanted water. She retched violently a couple of times but then with great relief she knew it was all over for another week. By and by she began to feel better.

The Secret Life of Mrs. Mitty

Anne L. Stephens

"Thirteen cannons, two hundred men—all lightly armed—planning to cut through Racheal's Creek at the northwest corner of the Caven place four miles north of town at dawn Tuesday, sir." The speaker was a slight woman with curly brown hair forming tight maverick ringlets around her face and drawn in a soft bun at the nape of her neck. She had a pixie-type nose and a spontaneous childlike mouth. Her face was young and perceptive; however, a stable maturity shone in her elfin, blue eyes. She was dressed in a dark cape with the hood carelessly pushed back. "Hmm, we hadn't expected the Yanks to come this way so soon. I've sent the bulk of my troops east of us to Magnolia to help General Davis." The humid summer air of July 1863 hung heavily and caused the little tent which contained the girl and the officer to be almost stifling.

It seemed almost an eternity of silence, broken only by the hum of the flies gliding lazily from desk to lamp and back, before either one spoke again. Presently the general turned around, his fingertips pressed together, and his brow furrowed in concentration. "I shall issue orders directly, ma'm. Why don't you go to the canteen and get some food before you prepare to return to Baltimore? You undoubtedly have been extremely instrumental in helping us to avoid complete disaster. At least they won't have the element of surprise on their side. The Confederacy can never thank you for all you've learned and passed on to us through your daring escapades among the Yankee soldiers, behind enemy lines. You will, however, be the recipient of"

"What is that smell? Have you got something burning? Where is all that black smoke coming from?" "Hm?" said Mrs. Mitty. She blinked her eyes and viewed the present situation. Her husband stood growling in front of her, and behind him great billows of smoke spiraled from her oven. Rushing across the kitchen she opened the door and, after the smoke cleared out of the oven, she pulled out—with horror—a pan with a little black piece of "crisp" in the center of it. Coconut cream pie—*Walter's* coconut cream pie. "Really, my dear, I should think that by the time one reaches an age . . . ahem, shall we say, an age well into maturity, one would be given less to day dreaming and would be able to accept the responsibility of remembering to remove bakery from one's oven!" With these words Mr. Mitty went

to take a nap, leaving his coat on the bannister, his galoshes in the middle of Mrs. Mitty's living room carpet, and his briefcase on the dining table—always empty but ever-present and necessary for "the correct impression." Mrs. Mitty began getting out the vacuum to clean up the mud Walter had tracked in. She recalled his explaining once to her in his paternal-professor-type tone. "You see, my dear, for hundreds of years men have had status-symbols. At the time of the American Revolution men wore long powdered wigs. The more important the man was, the curlier and fancier the wig was. In old Arabia men's importance was measured by the size of their harems. Oh, even in Rome and Athens, there were status symbols for men; the sizes of their houses and the number of their slaves . . ."

"Oh, what can I do?" A slave looked on sympathetically and, yet, intrigued. Her mistress was so beautiful in her flowing white gown. Her hair was shiny and black and straight; her figure was given of Venus; her features were resemblant of a cross between a seal-point Siamese and the Sphinx. Men from all over the Mediterranean came to see and woo her. Right now she was bemoaning the fact that she had been placed in a most unfortunate predicament. The leader of the Romans was coming to visit her, and the noble Antony was coming at the same time. This she had learned from a slave's gossip. What was she to do? Caesar and Antony would surely duel. Presently she heard a horse and at the door of her tent appeared a slave who announced Antony. He strode to her, a powerful, rather handsome man. He took her in his arms and murmured his longings for her and as he drew her closer, she . . .

Ta rum-rum-clang-grind-rum-rum-rum-rum — She heard a grinding sound and just as she realized what she saw, the last of Walter's collection of campaign buttons, his Roosevelt/Barkley button, disappeared into the open jawed cleaner. Apparently Mr. Mitty had spread the election pins out to reorganize or catalogue them and had neglected to return them to their box. "Huh, it's about time someone devoured that 'new-dealer', anyway," muttered Mrs. Mitty. Nevertheless she carried the cleaner bag into the basement and proceeded to empty it of its contents and to sift through the dirt to find what remained of her husband's collection. "Just like a child, I say." Mrs. Mitty continued sifting and talking to herself. "Whoever heard of a grown man ready to retire, almost, collecting campaign buttons. Might as well collect bugs or rocks or matchbook covers for all the good he derives from these old things. Can't understand why he don't do things like other men his age—work out in the yard, putter around in the garden. But no, *my* Walter has to *collect* things and *clutter* up my house."

Seeing a pile of laundry, she decided to wash while she was in the basement. She filled the tubs and in a few minutes she was ready to put the first load through the wringer into the first rinse-tub.

"Alma! This water is *two degrees* too chilly! Can't you read the thermometer? Why I ever allowed Pogo to talk me into hiring a foreign maid I'll never know. Look, you can't expect *me*, Janyce Jaguar, the world's most talented and famous actress, to bathe in water that is *so* cold that she is endangered of catching a virus! Remember, I'm worth over a million dollars! There's the phone. Well, bring it in here, the cord is long enough. Hello. Darling! Today? But I can't possibly meet you today. I'm soaking right now and Pogo's due any minute to take over the travel plans to Rome. That's where Otto is shooting my next picture, you know. Well, really! You

may certainly have your old emerald back if that is the way you feel about it! Don't think you're the only man who gives me things. Why, just yesterday Tyrone sent me a Rolls; the day before that Frankie gave me a sable cape; last week Rock presented a charming yacht to me and just before that . . ."

"My shirt!" shouted Walter. Startled, Mrs. Mitty looked down only to see the last whole piece of Walter's favorite sport shirt—the left sleeve—being devoured and chewed into shreds by the machine wringer which was obviously on the "blink"—and had been for the last few minutes, judging by the appearance of the shirt. "Pogo!" exclaimed Mrs. Mitty. "What are you doing in my boudoir?"

"What?" said Mr. Mitty, startled. "I give up." he muttered and retreated up the stairs.

And facing her pink, heart-shaped bathtub, Mrs. Mitty, the glamorous Adventuress, smiled her undefeated, inscrutable little smile.

The Guest Performance of the Insurance Agent

Wolfgang Hildesheimer—tr.

Robert Iversen

"Des Sastspiel des Versicherungsagenten," the humorous anecdote which follows, is taken from Wolfgang Hildesheimer's first published volume of stories, *Lieblose Legenden* (Dentsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1952), a collection of satirical comments on the foibles of contemporary society, on the facade behind which we often hide, and on some of our pet "hobby horses."

Robert Leonard Iversen

Those who have ever heard the pianist, Frantisek Hrdla, will never forget the colossal impression they received (especially when they try to forget). On the basis of his charming temperament and his virtuosity, the noted critics of the century have compared Hrdla with Anton Rubenstein. Edward Watznik, the 104 year old "Nestor" of the composing world, once exclaimed: "When one closes the eyes, one imagines that even Liszt is listening to it!" In London, Cairo, Paris, and Williamsburg (Pa.)—everywhere that this gifted pianist has played, he has been praised with frantic applause as soon as the last tone has faded away. Then he slowly stands, modest and totally exhausted: truly a servant to the work of the composer. He bows deeply, while, as we say, a tired smile comes to the corner of his mouth. The impartial concert patron thinks him to be a genuine artist, a favorite of the Muses! Only a few, including myself, a childhood friend of his, know about his tragedy, the cause of his tired smile: Hrdla is a frustrated insurance agent!

Frantisek Hrdla comes from a musically-minded family. His father was a much-sought-after music teacher, who, through his arrangements of the works of the classical composer, in four parts, has acquired much note. (His own symphonies are, of course, forgotten today). His mother, a harpist, completely in her own right, was a daughter of Johann Nepomuk Hummel.

Scarcely after he had outgrown the cradle, young Frantisek was set on the piano stool. By the age of four he had mastered Schumann's "The Happy Farmer." Four years later he had grown into the little velvet pants of the child prodigy. This disquieting development was quickly brought to a standstill: by chance, the young Frantisek met an insurance agent, who aroused an interest in matters of insurance in the ten-year-old.

Now began the conflict in Hrdla's life, a conflict which can only be judged by those whose own youthful lot was a battle between a distant idea and a father with no pity and no understanding. One may well have sympathy for the young person who had to meet the agents and statisticians secretly and who later had a guilt complex because his overly strict father had forbade any communication with representatives of such a business.

Yet, as Frantisek once confessed to me, there was a time when he read Baumgartner's "Practice of the Courts in Matters Concerning Insurance" at night under the covers. He also wrote his own—by the way, quite good—essay, "Capital Reserve and the System of Tax Assessment" at this most prosperous period in his life.

However, nobody with genuine sensibility long endures such a continuing claim to his power of resistance. Thus, defeated and discouraged, the young Frantisek had to direct his own fate. It was then that he met his success through the musical world, in which he has reaped nothing but praise. Had he thus given up his secret longing? Mutual friends have assured me from time to time that he still flirts with insurance affairs.

Yesterday, for the first time in years, I again heard the returnee from a guest tour abroad. He played the ninth piano concert of Malinczewsky, which was just as dedicated the previous eight Hrdla concerts. He played so divinely that absolute strangers shook hands, and tears ran from my eyes, although I am a hardboiled expert.

In the pause before "The Eroika," Beethoven's Third Symphony, I forced my way with my umbrella through the autograph-hunters to Hrdla's dressing-room. He was sitting, tired and exhausted among the laurels, and appeared to me as if he had a stale taste in his mouth. I kissed him on both cheeks and suggested that his playing had been a revelation. "That's the only way one could properly play Malinczewsky," I cried excitedly. "It would be nonsense to claim that this composer required no rubato and no change of tempo. The meager touch of the so-called objective piano-school . . ."

He wasn't listening to me but rather was watching me from the side. Was this the lurking glance of an insurance agent on a new risk?

A little confusedly, I continued to talk about his rare combination of brilliant technique and sincere expression; it left him cool. I had the feeling that I'd been talking to the wind. I stood, shook his hand once, and wanted to get out of there in order to give the growing mob of autograph-hunters a clear path. Then he asked with a cautious deliberateness: "Tell me, sir, are you adequately insured?"

I acknowledged rather hoarsely that I wasn't.

His eyes shone; he became alert and excited. With a leap he was at the desk. He took a few policies from the drawer, and before I could say "Eroika" he had insured me against murder, accidents, hail, fog, and against everything that one can be insured against. I'll never forget it! His magnificent speaking ability and warm pathos actually came straight from the original

art of piano playing. I was upset (and insured).

With the policies in hand, I left. He called after me: "Send the auto-graph-hunters to me!" He then took a stack of policies from the drawer. He had tasted blood!

Similarities in Theme and Character Between Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter and Melville's Billy Budd

Gary Acton

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne and *Billy Budd* by Herman Melville are extremely complex, symbolic novels with a variety of themes. The two novels have, however, one theme in common which I am going to explore. This theme may generally be called the Unpardonable Sin, but more specifically it is the theme of the conflict between head and heart. This conflict results when head-centered characters invade the souls of heart-centered characters in order to understand or to control them. The result is evil and, more specifically, death.

The heart character is an emotionally governed person. This type is most often innocent and pure, both mentally and morally. The heart character is most often innocent of intelligence. The word intelligence in terms of the head-heart relationship does not mean intelligence in terms of accumulated academic learning, but instead a prying, probing mind.¹

When I say that the heart character is not an evil character, I do not mean to say that he cannot be a corrupt character. Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, for instance, is a heart character governed by his emotions, but he is as corrupt a hypocrite as one can imagine.²

When one considers *Billy Budd*, one sees another aspect of the heart character, which, while very closely allied to the lack of evil intelligence in Dimmesdale, is yet different from Dimmesdale in the area of moral purity. This similarity lies in the realm of a childlike quality. *Billy Budd* is almost an overgrown child.

But a young seafarer of the disposition of our athletic foretopman is much of a child-man. And yet a child's utter innocence is but its blank ignorance, and the innocence more or less wanes as intelligence waxes. But in *Billy Budd* intelligence, such as it was, had advanced, while yet his simple-mindedness remained for the most part unaffected.³

¹Richard Harter Fogle, *Hawthorne's Fictions; The Light And The Dark*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1952, p. 108.

²Ibid., p. 108.

³Herman Melville, *Billy Budd and Other Tales*, New York, The New American Library, 1961, p. 47.

Looking at this quotation it is possible to see just how close Dimmesdale and Billy are in their childlike innocence of evil. At first it is hard to see Dimmesdale, who is guilty of adultery and of fathering a child by another man's wife, as a childlike character, and yet on careful consideration of the story it is quite apparent from his actions and general demeanor just how childlike Dimmesdale really is.

Billy Budd and Dimmesdale are also similar in their inability to recognize evil. Dimmesdale, although he has a vague feeling of evil about him, does not recognize it in Chillingworth until it is too late, and Billy Budd does not recognize the evil in Claggart until it is too late, although he too has a vague feeling of evil about him. This inability to recognize evil, a thing which is alien to their heart-centered beings, is an important factor in their violation by the head-centered character.

Dimmesdale is definitely the heart character, while Hester leans toward the head or knowing intellect of Chillingworth, and is aptly summed up in the following quotation.

Hester Prynne is a combination of head and heart, with a preponderance of head. Her original sin is of passion, but its consequences expose her to the danger of absolute mental isolation. The centrifugal urge of the intellect is counteracted in her by her duty to her daughter Pearl, the product of the sin and by her latent love of Dimmesdale.⁴

The quotation is absolutely pregnant with the characterization of Hester and the correct placement of Pearl in the story. Pearl is pure symbol, and her only function is to reflect Hester and Dimmesdale's sin.⁵

Hester plays much the same role in *The Scarlet Letter* as Captain Vere does in *Billy Budd*. She is the intermediary between Dimmesdale and Chillingworth, just as Captain Vere is the intermediary between Claggart and Billy. She and Captain Vere are also much the same in the head-heart relationship, for both are essentially a combination of head and heart with a preponderance of head.⁶

For all this solid base to his character there is a hint of unworldliness in Captain Vere, recognized by his fellow officers in the nickname they gave him, "Starry Vere."⁷

Captain Vere is a stern man and a man devoted to the Navy, but as can be seen in the quotation, there is in him a quality that can only be described as heart-centered. Despite this quality of heart, Captain Vere has a preponderance toward head, and as a result, has learned to control this heart-centered part of him and can make the following statement to the members of the court martial board.

But the exceptional in the matter moves the hearts within you. Even

⁴Fogle, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁵Fogle, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁶Fogle, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁷William Ellery Sedgwick, *Herman Melville: The Tragedy of Mind*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1945, p. 235.

so too is mine moved. But let not warm hearts betray heads that should be cool.⁸

Besides his preponderance of head, Captain Vere is further controlled by the environment he operates in.

For the compassion, how can I otherwise than share it? But, mindful of paramount obligations, I strive against scruples that may tend to enervate decision.

But do these buttons that we wear attest that our allegiance is to Nature? No, to the King.

... in receiving our commissions we in the most important regards ceased to be natural free agents.⁹

The quotations indicate the imprisonment of the natural instinct of Captain Vere's heart by custom or institution.

Hester also is dominated by the head part of her character. This can be seen in the fact that while Dimmesdale, the wholly heart-centered character, suffered emotionally and passionately, Hester emerged stronger, surer, and strengthened. She emerged thus because custom or puritan prejudices forced her into a basically head-driven mould.

"When she puts on her gray cap and becomes a kind of social worker her color and passion, her indeterminate, instinctual being is curbed and controlled."¹⁰

Here then is another basic similarity between Hester and Captain Vere, for just as Vere's heart or instinctive being was controlled and curbed by British naval law and contemporary political history, so was Hester's instinctive being curbed by the mould of Puritan social worker which she was forced into by society.

The similarity between Hester and Captain Vere is very striking. They are both a combination head-heart character with a preponderance of head. In essence they play a role in the downfall or violation of the heart character because of this dominance of head. Hester in reality seduces Dimmesdale, and this leads to his soul's violation by Chillingworth.¹¹ Captain Vere must hang Billy, even though his heart cries out against it, because his intellect tells him that not to do so could cause a mutiny among the already restless crew.¹² Also it is Vere's actions of confronting Billy with Claggart, innocent though they were, that led to the whole mess. So in both instances the evil of the head character was brought to the heart character by the intermediary head-heart character.

The head character as represented by Chillingworth in *The Scarlet Letter*, is represented by Claggart in *Billy Budd*. A head character is one who aspires to be superhuman. He is a person who is governed by his intel-

⁸Herman Melville, *Billy Budd and Other Tales*, New York, The New American Library, 1961, p. 69.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰Richard Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition*, New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1957, p. 77.

¹¹D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1951, p. 97.

¹²Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

lect and not his heart; in other words, he is a "cold thinker and experimenter."¹³

The reason these head centered characters tend to be evil lies in the fact that they lack the warmth of native innocence, and therefore are cold inhuman men who cannot stop at pure intellectual knowledge but must try to know what goes on inside other men, to manipulate their lives, and to dissect their souls.

In *The Scarlet Letter*, Chillingworth, who was originally the wronged husband, becomes a demonic, evil character once he sets his intellect to the task of understanding Dimmesdale's soul.

In a word, old Roger Chillingworth was a striking evidence of man's faculty of transforming himself into a devil, if he will only, for a reasonable space of time, undertake a devil's office. This unhappy person had effected such a transformation by devoting himself, for seven years, to the constant analysis of a heart full of torture, and deriving his enjoyment thence, and adding fuel to those fiery tortures which he analyzed and gloated over.¹⁴

It is apparent in the quotation just how low Chillingworth had sunk into hellishness, but as with Claggart, he had a streak of the devil deep in his soul so that his complete evil sprang from internal sources.

Calm, gentle, passionless, as he appeared, there was yet, we fear, a quiet depth of malice, hitherto latent, but active now, in this unfortunate old man, which led him to imagine a more intimate revenge than any mortal had ever wreaked upon an enemy.¹⁵

Chillingworth became Dimmesdale's companion and physician in order to work on Dimmesdale constantly. Chillingworth analyzed and probed Dimmesdale's heart and soul:

He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner searching for gold; or rather, like a sexton delving into a grave, possibly in quest of a jewel that had been buried on the dead man's bosom, but likely to find nothing save mortality and corruption.¹⁶

The simile in the quotation is particularly apt, for as we consider the desecration of a grave to be particularly hideous and loathsome, so Hawthorne considered the violation of a soul even more hideous and loathsome, and it was in his terminology the Unpardonable Sin.

It is this alone that utterly demonizes and irrevocably damns Chillingworth. If he could keep Dimmesdale from salvation and so damn his soul too, his victory would be complete, but Dimmesdale in the end foils Chillingworth and purifies himself on the scaffold of redemption, causing the following illuminating speech from Chillingworth:

"Hadst thou sought the whole earth over," said he, looking darkly at the clergyman, "there was no one place so secret,—no high place

¹³Fogle, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

¹⁴Sculley Bradley, Richmond Croom Beatty, and Hudson Long. *The American Tradition In Literature*, volume one, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1962, 674.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 652.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 645.

nor lowly place, where thou couldst have escaped me,—save on this very scaffold."¹⁷

So in the end the heart character, though corrupt, found salvation in repentance; something the head character, sunk into evil, could not do. Hester, through a combination of head and heart, with a preponderance of head, also found salvation by joining Dimmesdale on the scaffold. Chillingworth, on the other hand, is beyond all hope of salvation, for he had committed the Unpardonable Sin.¹⁸

Chillingworth is also doomed to die when Dimmesdale repents.

Old Roger Chillingworth knelt down beside him, with a blank dull countenance, out of which the life seemed to have departed.¹⁹

Thus the theme that runs through *The Scarlet Letter* is complete. It is a theme of evil and death that result when the mind or intellect invades the realm of the heart or soul. The evil that results is worse for the violator than the violated, for the violation of another's soul is a hideous crime, far blacker than any degree of hypocrisy or lechery.

When we turn to *Billy Budd* in order to explore the similarity of theme and character to *The Scarlet Letter*, a problem arises. The novels were written by two different men, and as such, the characters, sequence of events, and the events themselves are not perfectly mirrored in the works. Despite this there is an area of similarity with regard to theme and characters that is great enough to share the same basis.

Melville, like Hawthorne, is concerned with the prying intellect as directed by one human being upon another.

Long ago an honest scholar my senior said to me in reference to one who like himself if now no more, a man so unimpeachably respectable that against him nothing was ever openly said though among the few something was whispered, "Yes, X--- is a nut not to be cracked by the tap of a lady's fan."

... I think that to try and get into X---, enter his labyrinth and get out again, without a clue derived from some source other than what is known as knowledge of the world—that were hardly possible, at least for me.²¹

Melville, in the quotation, says in essence that pure knowledge of the world or, in other words, accumulated learning both academic and worldly, is not sufficient to crack the wall isolating a person's soul, but that a spiritual insight or knowledge of human nature is. It is this spiritual insight that allows a person to understand another person's soul.²² Claggart definitely has this spiritual insight, for he immediately sees into the depths of Billy's soul, and recognizes him as an enemy.

In Melville's *Billy Budd*, the heart character is Billy himself. Billy and Dimmesdale are, as I have already said, much alike in their childlike ac-

¹⁷Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 730.

¹⁸Harry Levin, *The Power of Blackness*, New York, Vintage Books, 1960, p. 75.

¹⁹Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 731.

²⁰Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

²²Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

tions, but there is a slight difference in their characters. Billy Budd is a heart motivated character and operates much on his instincts as does Dimmesdale, but Billy has an innocence and lack of knowledge that Dimmesdale does not have, and while Dimmesdale is corrupt Billy is not. When I say that Billy is not corrupt, I do not mean to say that he is a pure, prissy puritan, who could never be accused of fathering a child by a girl, but that he is very much the "noble savage" who would not feel guilty about such an act.²³

While Billy may have done things that are wrong by society's standards, he is yet a good, pure being as free from the kind of knowledge that leads to evil as he is from pure academic learning.

For the rest, with little or no sharpness of faculty or any trace of the wisdom of the serpent, not yet quite a dove, he possessed that kind and degree of intelligence going along with the unconventional rectitude of a sound human creature, one to whom not yet has been proffered the questionable apple of knowledge.²⁴

Billy, then, does not lack the capability to commit sin, but he does lack Dimmesdale's hypocrisy.

Claggart is a head character just as Chillingworth is. He is cold, ruthless, and evil, but where Chillingworth's satanic evilness was dormant in his innermost being, Claggart's evilness is on the surface and his evil spiritual insight immediately recognizes Billy as an enemy.

. . . Claggart in whom was the mania of an evil nature, not engendered by vicious training or corrupting books or licentious living but born with him and innate, in short "a depravity according to nature."²⁵

Claggart, as an evil being, is head-dominated. From the quotation we see that his evilness was more mental than moral. We see this mentality that desires to understand and is fully capable of understanding another soul.

One person excepted, the master-at-arms was perhaps the only man in the ship intellectually capable of adequately appreciating the moral phenomenon presented in Billy Budd.²⁶

Claggart and Chillingworth are much alike in the way they set about ensnaring their victims. Both profess friendship in an attempt to gain the confidence of their subject, and while both Billy and Dimmesdale are aware of something evil about these two men, they cannot apprehend what it is.

Claggart sets out to trap Billy by setting up a number of experiments to see if he can entice Billy into an act whereby he can do away with him. The most notable trap that Claggart sets up is the one in which Billy is approached by a mysterious person in the night who offers him money to join a mutinous plot. Billy refuses, of course, because such an act is uncomprehensible to him. This mysterious stranger was a henchman of Claggart's, as old Donskey devined when he said:

"Didn't I say so, Baby Budd?"

"Say what?" demanded Billy.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁵Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 40.

"Why, Jimmy Legs is down on you."²⁷

Finally when all else fails to trap Billy, Claggart tries the direct approach. He goes directly to Captain Vere and accuses Billy of mutiny. The sudden revelation of evil is so shocking to Billy and his speech impediment so frustrating that he explodes, and with one blow kills Claggart; and so, as in *The Scarlet Letter*, death is the result of the violation of another human being's soul. Claggart is dead instantly, with no time for any repentance even if he would have repented, or if it would have done any good. He gets only perfunctory services before being dropped into the deep, deep sea where he will be forever lost in the dark depths.

Captain Vere is now confronted with a dilemma. Should he follow the dictates of his heart and help Billy or should he follow the dictates of his head and condemn Billy? As I have said, Captain Vere was a combination head-heart character with a preponderance toward head, and so after a brief struggle, Captain Vere follows the commands of his head.

"Stuck dead by an angel of God. Yet the angel must hang!"²⁸

After a short trial Billy is condemned to death. During the trial Captain Vere is completely head-dominated and says once:

"Well the heart here denotes the feminine in man and hard though it be she must be ruled out."²⁹

Captain Vere is racked with compassionate, heartfelt feelings for Billy, but his predominance of head forces him to go through with the trial and the hanging. Captain Vere, then, is partly responsible for Billy's death just as Hester is for Dimmesdale's death. Hester achieved salvation by joining Dimmesdale in his moment of salvation. Captain Vere also achieves salvation, although Melville shows it in a much more subtle way than Hawthorne did.

Not long before death, while lying under the influence of that magical drug which, soothing the physical frame, mysteriously operates on the subtler element in man, he was heard to murmur words inexplicable to his attendant. —"Billy Budd, Billy Budd."³⁰

This quotation, I believe, makes it clear that by true sorrow, Captain Vere was able to achieve salvation. There is, of course, a hint that Billy may have been Captain Vere's son, but it is a confused image, for Billy's death and subsequent idolization by the men of the ship also bears a strong Christ image.³¹

Billy Budd also achieves salvation by his actions once he is condemned. Billy, as the heart character, and a pure and innocent heart character, was almost assured of salvation from the beginning, but if he had become bitter and vengeful his salvation might have been lost. Billy, however, helped by Captain Vere, achieved his salvation by his acceptance of his fate.

But now lying between the two guns, as nipped in the vice of fate, Billy's agony, mainly proceeding from a generous young heart's virgin experience of the diabolical incarnate and effective in some

²⁷Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

²⁸Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 69.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 85.

³¹*Ibid.*, pp., 85-87.

men—the tension of that agony was over now. It survived not the something healing in the closed interview with Captain Vere.³² Billy's salvation, just as Captain Vere's, is completely symbolized in his last words.

"God bless Captain Vere."³³

Billy is buried at sea as was Claggart, but he does not go unmourned or unmarked into the water; for his loss is felt by the men of the ship, and the spot where he entered the water is marked by seabirds who drop down out of the sky to witness Billy's interment.³⁴

The basic similarities of the two works are, I think, apparent. In both works there are three major characters, one heart-centered, one head-centered, and one a head-heart combination with a preponderance of head. In both novels the head-centered character violates the soul of the heart character and the result is death for violator and violated. The intermediary or combination character also dies, but not from the act of violation, and only after a lapse of time.

The basic settings of the stories are similar in their compactness. In *The Scarlet Letter*, the scene is a Puritan village and its immediate environs, and in *Billy Budd* the setting of a ship at sea. Melville is more concerned with life than is Hawthorne and his characters are more obviously good or evil than are Hawthorne's. Despite these differences the similarities of character and theme between the two works are striking.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 76.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 80.

³⁴Melville, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

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Middle Ground

Marie Deel

In an alley a small dead bird
Fallen from a flowering judas,
Grey and naked, nauseating.
I stepped around it, fastidiously detoured
With a kind of delicate revulsion.
Pretend it is not there
With its queerly shut eyes.

Strangely, I could not leave.
I could not cry out in disgust
And so I stood there looking.
The sun sifted down in an oblique weave,
Unreal and very cold.
See its tiny curling claws—
They must have grasped the air for substance.

And this is the undiscovered country
That my cowardice refused to meet.
And this is the dream in the sleep that is death,
Aware only of death and sadly
Refusing to drive it away. Under the hard sun
That mocks and mocks anonymous night,
A cruel travesty.

Idle conjecture, unpleasant fantasy.
I am on the middle ground
And only a few tufts of brown grass
Between the cracks separate me
From this unknown dead thing, an obstacle
To the smugness of the young, gluttoned by life.
(See its belly—it swells.)

Shall I kick a little loose earth over it?
A cat might relish its mistake.
Soon the ants will swarm over
The spiny wings that were too weak to support it.
Foolish to venture far out on a feeble twig.
It died of arrogance, I suppose,
And arrogance will dispose of its remains.

Upon Hearing
"Eine Kleine Nachtmusik"

Marie Deel

A little evening music heard
From far away has softly stirred
Dim memories long since put aside
As childish things to be denied.
Warm rain, red silk, an ivory pawn
Upon a teakwood board, a lawn
Of darkened green where white feet sped,
Forbidden books, a sleep-warmed bed.
It fades, on ghostly breezes caught,
Too seldom heard, too soon forgot.

From Nothingness

Marie Deel

From nothingness, from void a slimy sphere
Still wet with primal dew on new cooled rock
Lay steaming, smothered in the atmosphere.
A stinking jungle grew as though to mock
The mother sun, first cause, that gave it birth,
And seethed and sprawled from some misshapen stalk.
And where the sullen waters met the earth
And were as one, a green and muddy bed,
Emerged a simple beast of unknown worth.
Earth, water, sun, and vegetation wed
To bring forth strange and terrifying life—
But watch. It splits, and neither part is dead.

Withdrawal

Marie Deel

Something is wrong. I can smell it
Moist and heavy in the air.
If only you'd stop staring so
And tell me what it is you fear.

Something has happened. Must you play
The martyr under
A shroud of silence? For I am
Curious. I wonder.

It blisters my ego that you
Will not tell me of it.
I can be discreet. Often
I've left candles unlit.

I am unhappy. You've withdrawn
From me and you will rust
In silence. Haven't you heard that
The meek inherit dust?

Peroxide Virgins

Marie Deel

Peroxide virgins lift no-color eyes
To neon icons high above the street
And glance about and practice wanton sighs.
Their faces bloat, and bothered by the heat,
But still resigned, they only stand and wait
With hips thrust out, and contemplate their feet.
Peroxide virgins meet the face of fate
And draw back purple lips to feign a smile
And all the while they send out silent hate.

I Remember From Last Night

Thomas Edlun

A quiet time descended down the stair
And met itself returning, unaware.

The house, alive with children and their fears,
Sought quiet sleep—and death, perhaps—sans tears.

But I climbed gently, for the time had come
When voices, words, were not a hollow sum

Of equally unwanted things—alone,
The night went on—how tragically we moan.

I cannot laugh at what I said, although
The morning shines in naked warmth below,

I run so fast and high above the earth
And fight a struggling, groping, private birth.

Solitude Pain

Thomas Edlun

The night-wind purred a melancholic content
And pushed the moon behind the clouds.
I lay awake, composing letters never sent
To nameless faces in the crowds

Who hated me as much as I detested them.
And very stupid, I supposed,
But how important then, when aspects of the phlegm
Of life had choked and reason closed.

I damned the night, the hidden moon I knew to be
The cause, at least, of some of this;
My sickness only peopled that autumnal tree
Where night-wind purred in endless bliss.

Why the Frog is Brother

(An Explanation)

Terry Ford

Other people move,
Ironical images,
What is this shadow?

A flashy wrist watch
Makes minutes which tocks must fit.
Are snail shells crowded?

The book is heavy,
Full of weighty thoughts;
Thoughtless leaves float well.

A woman's soft hair
Invites a man's softer touch.
Social rules rebuke.

Finals are over.
Again time for food and sleep.
Where's the next worry?

My canoe upset
And I saw a fish swim by.
Mammals also swim.

The arrow in flight
Soars freely without fear.
Few archers are left.

The smell of water
Makes the body cold because—
The Frog is brother.

A Young Fourth Street Indian

Terry Ford

In the still quiet of the hollow night
My lonely mind can still recall those times,
Those joyous times, when she'd recall her youth
And rest her battle-battered hand on mine.
I see her yet, in the harsh street light's glare,
Her wide-set eyes creating dewy tears
That beckoned forth my own for causing hers.
But even in the happiest of times
When we would drink beneath the neon lights
Her bucktoothed laughter through the stale beer stench
Hinted vaguely of a daemon haunted fear.
I see her yet, a thin, a slender girl,
Belligerent at times, and full of fight.
But laughing still with innocent delight,
With childlike joy that somehow failed to die.
The wasted love for Pete, who loved no one,
The months on junk that brought her no relief,
The alcohol that gnawed away her brain,
Conspired, but schemed in vain, to kill the child.

The Revolution's Come

Diane K. H. Taylor

In came Carnegie, Steel-maker newly made;
In came libraries, free for all;
In came laborers, hoping for a livelihood;
Out went time-to-learn; the Revolution's come.

Hail the little man, working for food-at-home;
Hail the wealthy man, progress, gold;
Hail to money-slaves, all for future now;
Mourn the past-that-was; the Revolution's come.

Shouts of liberty, and of "our" democracy;
Shouts for capital, no labor laws;
Shouts for good-for-all, automatic and untrue;
Cries from workers poor, the Revolution's come.

A Folk Song for Gittar

Terry Ford

Well, I heard this tale from an outlaw's lips,
But he swears by Christ it's true.
There lived one time in this very town
A man too known to you.
Well, the sun still shines, and the wind still blows, and your heart is
still your own.
So turn your face and don't think back. Sister, now you know.

The outlaw's brother worked by this man's side
In a plant to the north of town.
And with them both worked a pretty little girl
With timid eyes so round.
Well, the sun still shines, and the wind still blows, and your heart is
still your own.
So turn your face and don't think back. Sister, now you know.

This girl would sing and she would hum,
She never knew an evil thought.
But one day the man named Dick
Approached her, and God how they fought!
Well, the sun still shines, and the wind still blows, and your heart is
still your own.
So turn your face and don't think back. Sister, now you know.

Red blood was spilt and Dick sent off,
Off to find another job.
The outlaw's brother, who defended the girl,
Sent Dick off through the mob.
Well, the sun still shines, and the wind still blows, and your heart is
still your own.
So turn your face and don't think back. Sister, now you know.

Some men, respected, settled, and secure
Seem to be what they're not.
A friendly face can often hide
An evil that can hurt a lot.
Well, the sun still shines, and the wind still blows, and your heart is
still your own.
So turn your face and don't think back. Sister, Dick's not for you!

Endowment

Joan Neiman

Her first black dress lies
In a lumpy, ugly pile.
She has come such a way
In such a little while.

He said, love, be mine,
It's such a scented night.
She knew that wicked line
And said he had no right.

Sheer new stockings on the floor,
Torn gaudy petticoats in a heap.
Mother's stole hangs on the door,
And how she yearns to sleep.

Now watching the darkened sky,
She sits and hopes to cry.

A Chemist's Letter to An Old Love

Joan Socknot

Hypothesize a certain change in state:
Consider change in entropy, compare
To time; then (given delta) integrate
All increments and limit to despair.
Then analyze the tautomeric form:
Reaction favors alkalinity,
More base than acid when the flask is warm,
And flaunts a positive affinity.
When catalyzed, the steric-hindrance fades,
And single valence seeks the perfect bond.
Now cool not less than twenty centigrades,
Release the pressure gauge to correspond.
Surmise: To plot the limit versus time,
Record all products as they first sublime.

Destitute Tree

Dennis Poole

A bit of solid vegetation stands
Immobile, heedless, carefree, resting through
The whitened frozen Iowa winter. Hands

Containing buried buds, are stretched up to
The sky. A rough indented bark surrounds
Each twig to ward off winter blows. But who

Can look upon this tree and not expound
Upon, compare it with the eerie night,
And wonder why it has no sight or sound,

Save whining cry the wind bestows? Its height
Reminds me of a fortress standing clear
Atop some barren hill-lock showing might.

Or possibly it holds a hidden ear
And listens keenly when you're passing near.

This self-same tree, when hearing words of love,
Repeats to no one, keeping everything
A secret; only giving clues above

Our heads, by spiral stalks of new born leaves,
It signifies the coming summer dews.

Voices

- 1) The robin hops
Along the yard
And chases drops
Of dew and worms.

- 2) Rain drops
sticky
pine-smell
through
the needles.

Glorious Replica

Dennis Poole

Beneath the stadium, enclosed
Inside a silvery defense,
A locomotive lies deposed.
The leaves dropping show offense

By spotting its black paint. There's
A golden bell, avoiding work
So silently with kingly airs,
Serenely resting above. Plaques

Adorn the tender, telling me
Who dedicated it. A sight,
That was immense arose when she
Began rolling that first night.

Men sitting proudly, swollen with
Unbroken pride, formerly drove
This relic. I recall the myth
Surrounding it when children strove

To capture it in dreams. Now it's
Imprisoned on shortened railroad track,
And older men remember bits
Of history they can't bring back.

Nowhere

Joan Socknot

The restless freedom of a compass seems
To seize upon just one of two extremes.
Magnetic poles are mystic forces fixed
In space, yet somewhere opposites get mixed;
A Nowhere line exists between the two
Dependent axes, False and True.
And yet the mind insists that instruments
Must seek a purpose with some inborn sense;
Encompassed by demands to choose one goal,
The needle falters under man's control.

Winterspring

Joan Socknot

The Winterspring defers to Love, and tries
To supplement where paradox defects.
A crystal shell of frosted light reflects
The muffled world against a sun of lies.
The lonesome, fearless free cries out—denies
Her silent life—but shattered stillness checks
A second try. The wailing wind affects
Indifference, stifles frozen tears, and sighs.
The season Love—protagonist—begets
A wistful child whose mold of life is cast
From scraps of time that others would refuse.
Then Winterspring, the child, must pay the debts,
Protect the loved-but-losers from the past,
And foster apathy for those who choose.

Ashes In a Coffee Cup

Joan Socknot

As time dissolves and forms thin rings
Of filthy gray and tasteless things,
The perverse hours will filter up
Like ashes in a coffee cup.
The lukewarm culture of a year
Is tempered to be insincere.
A liquid locked in one round wall
Can only watch the ashes fall—
And hope the burning embers sting
The saucer of remembering.

War

Jane Little

Garrisoned by a facade of quotations
The pseudo-savant scowls and hides
From feeling.

He does not see the enemy —
He tries not to feel it,
Yet its warm fingers clutch —
Unmistakable
Encompassing
Almost speechless —

Then the counterattack —
Smother with lines from Nietzsche
Squelch with corrupted scripture
(Whose Bible?)

Silence
Another victory?
(He does not "know himself").

Rain Behind Windows

Thomas Edlun

The wind blows leadenly against the doors
Tonight where we have hidden from the rain.
Our candle light mocks back solid floors
And planes of watery nature — rooms that have lain
In silence for the morning. I had peace
Of its return, but now the rain warns us
That it is far away. Skies don't release
A single darkness; wet-revealed, timeless
Solitudes of drops in silent springs, undue
To us, this vision shatters storms to cut
A glassine path through all our doubts; and few
Have winter-splinters in their soul. The rut,
The winter path, is struck open by the rain.







