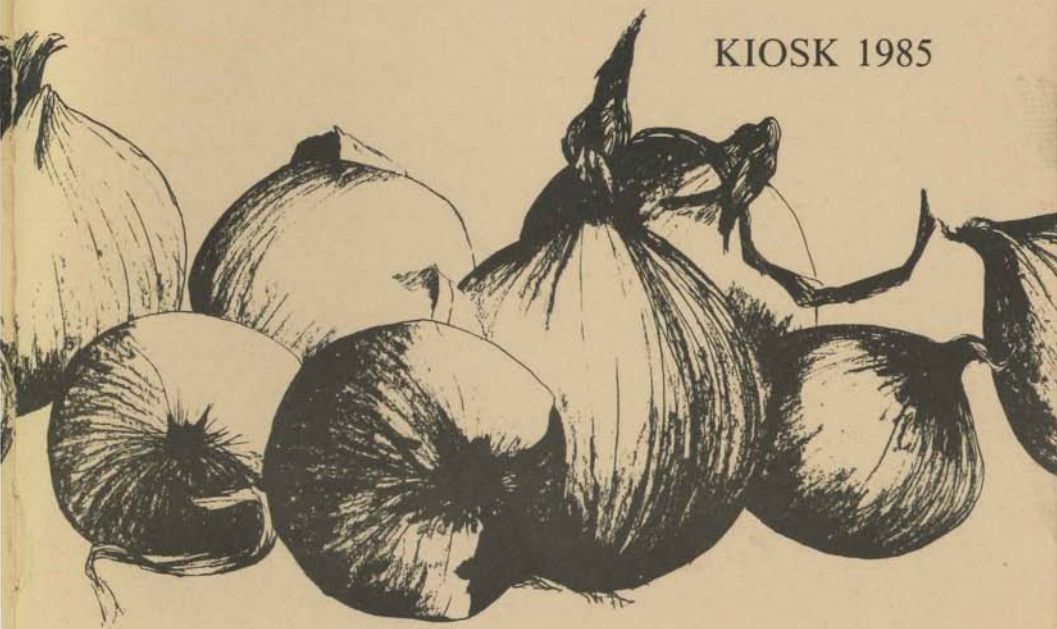


KIOSK 1985





# *KIOSK*

*Morningside College  
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*Spring 1985*

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*The 1985  
Sigma Tau Delta  
Kiosk Awards for Writing*

*go to*

*John Knepper  
for "Ligne Drawynge,"*

*Jim Marshall  
for "The Schleswig Nines,"*

*and*

*Paul McCallum  
for "A Vertical Reflection"*

*We wish to thank those who served as judges:  
Dean R. Franklin Terry, Dr. Bill Knepper, Dr. Marty Knepper,  
Dr. John Doohen, Dr. Robert Buchheit, and Dr. Dave McAlpine*

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"Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose."

—*Gertrude Stein*

"Rose is a rose is a rose is an onion."

—*attributed to Ernest Hemingway*

*Words for You Who Read Me*

-I-

I catch your eye—  
You look down at my simple form  
And laugh, seeing my words  
But not what they try to say.  
The shadow you've thrown on me  
Retreats only as you do.

-II-

Then there is you—  
You watch my words  
Move around each other,  
Never quite meeting.  
You hold me up to the light  
But cannot see the message I contain.

-III-

Now **you** have found me—  
My words are hours to you;  
They are seen  
And heard.  
The lamplight catches your smile  
As you leave me for the next.

—Diane Griswold

### *The Third Generation*

Silver silos spit their bullets  
Into an irrevocable sky—  
That word once had a pastoral intent  
But Strontium 90 has a half-life  
A hundred years too long for farming.  
Hiroshima's spark fanned into flame  
Engenders eternal night.

T. Rex, proud ruler of earth,  
Brought down by a nordic meteor,  
Once suffered a similar  
Fate; earth's inhabitants were  
Made for sunnier climes. All  
Wither and die and freeze under the  
Relentless black-choked night.

Spawned after the demise of the  
Reptile lords, unique creatures  
Filled the earth once more,  
New lords ruled the lands. Alas,  
As we join those ancient kings,  
Their fate is enviable: their power  
Lay not in their understanding.

There will be time, O mother earth,  
To scrape off this latest crust of  
Black and grime, before the  
Far, far nova-filled future,  
And to engender yet another rebirth—  
Cell built upon careful cell—  
Descendants of T. Rex and me.

—Vickie Knudsen



*Roy Becomes a Poet*

Roy became a poet  
on the day his chainsaw  
leveled the last pine  
in the woods  
where he used to play.

—Jim Marshall

*Absolute Truth*

The bald guy  
waxes his head.  
I've seen him do it.

—Jim Marshall

*After the Burwell Rodeo*

Grandpa with a hoe  
chases the neighbor's dog  
away from Grandma  
as she hangs her linen  
in the summer yard.  
Ronnie bends over his car  
and tightens the plugs.  
Dale and me out back  
smack tomatoes with baseball bats  
and splatter them against the shed wall.  
Little Lea runs her hands  
over the cool melons  
in the shade of the garden.

—Jim Marshall

### *Tintern Abbey*

A lovely filigree of ancient stone  
loomed from the mist in an anxious moment.  
I stopped,  
the arresting impression mine alone.

But walking in its silent space  
did not evoke the storied past.  
I looked.  
I saw the stone but not the place.

That first glimpse had all the wonder,  
the ghostly image truer than the actual stone.  
I mused,  
the nature of reality once more to ponder.

—Bonnie West

### *Eventide*

Darkening skies descend on  
purple grasses interspersed  
with shards of light,  
and the herald shadows  
stalk the late-sun daisies  
which prolong the myth of sight,  
till the wind sweeps clean the hour:  
from the train roar depth of silence  
comes the cello sob of night.

—Bonnie West

### *Despair*

A rainbow  
with the color washed away.

—Daneen Olsen

## *I Alone*

I alone am sane.

The people around me make no sense, fit no pattern. Not one of them is predictable, not one is logical. I cannot understand them.

The biggest puzzle is my wife. She married me for my money, I'm sure of that. She denied it, of course, but I know it's true. I don't mind at all—I married her, didn't I?—but the woman *still* denies she did it for my money. She talks about love and casts adoring stares at me, which I find repulsive.

Obviously, all wives make little sense, as I'm sure you know, but mine makes the least of all. Take Harold's wife, for instance—she married into his comfortable life and keeps herself out of Harold's way with parties, clubs, tennis and the like. They care nothing for each other but sensibly realize that it doesn't matter. Why my wife cannot do the same is beyond my comprehension. (Not that Harold's wife is completely sane—of all the men to choose for her affair, it had to be that dreary tennis player—but that is beside the point.)

My wife refuses to be sensible. She is always home when I return from my golf game, greeting me with a kiss, a cup of tea and a vase of roses for the dining room. My wife smiles and tries to hold conversations with me. My wife refuses to allow the maid to make meals or do the laundry. My wife expects to go to the movies with me entirely too often. My wife has an extremely spoiled cat which finds it necessary to rub against my best trousers, an action she labels "cute."

Worst of all, my wife wants a child. Only my wife could come up with an idea more unpleasant than the cat. I could never allow such a thing—I can imagine the reactions I would receive from my acquaintances. No, I cannot allow myself to be degraded in such a manner.

Yet my wife cannot—will not—understand. She insisted on bringing the topic up for the first time only last week. Naturally, I fixed her with a well-deserved icy stare—that always puts a woman, or a wife at least, in her place—and she burst into tears and shut herself in her room. (She tried earlier to convince me to share a bedroom with her but I told her it was out of the question.)

That was not the end of the matter, however. The word "child" has crept alarmingly into the woman's everyday vocabulary. Will I never hear the end of this ridiculous idea? I wish the woman would be satisfied with her cat. Perhaps a simple affair would be best for her—I notice that Harold has his eye on her lately. Perhaps he could get such foolish notions out of her head. He could show her that she has the perfect life—she needs nothing more.

I am fortunate to have you, Tiffany. I like you because you understand, you make no demands, you're here when I require your services. You must agree that my wife is incomprehensible.

What? Get out? Tiffany! You surprise me—I thought you were more sensible than that. I could have taken care of you for quite some time, don't you understand?

You thought my wife must be a nagging old biddy? Why on earth—Horrible? Why would you think she's that? A wonderful . . . oh, she's hardly that, as I've explained. Perhaps you misunderstood.

All right, calm down, I'm going. There's no call for such language, you ungrateful wench. But I'll have you know that you've proved my theory correct.

I alone am sane.

—Diane Griswold

### *Response to Descartes*

How do I know I think?

I think

I know.

—Edward J. Mazeika

*the game of war*

admires  
our men  
all in a row  
awarded  
purple hearts  
flashbacks  
nightmares  
blood and guts  
blood and guts  
exploded on  
a checkered field.

till a  
thousand men  
lie in peace  
unwillingly

(Rally up boys  
the gang's all here.)

—Greta E. Philips

*Colors*

My love  
is not  
as yours,  
for you  
paint love  
with blue  
and yellow.

My brush  
can not  
stroke light;  
heavy  
brown and  
clumsy  
dark green  
cover my  
canvas.

—LaMont Boyles

## *Ona Lee*

She totters on feet  
too unsteady for this earth,  
watches as toys  
slide from her open hands.  
She cannot know that  
she will never write a poem,  
read a book,  
count to ten.  
Yet when she laughs  
and laughs  
she knows a happiness I can't.

—Beth Quade

Snow dances down.  
Some lands on my face  
and melts to tears.

—Laura Gittins

## *White Spaces*

I would not be  
a fire in the night,  
nor a bird against a cloudless sky,  
nor a smear in Winston's diary—

So my sentence faded away  
Into very easy white space—  
And I found contentment  
In the crowd's melting face.

—Paul McCallum

## *Hogs*

They hug the earth  
with an easy repose;  
—an ear flicks a fly away  
—soil-flecked noses twitch  
but a memory from the electric wire,  
and snort  
—the dust rises lazily.

My father leans heavily  
upon his usual post,  
Watching them; watching them  
Until afternoon becomes evening,  
Until my mother's fifth call  
Makes him turn home  
for supper.

—Paul McCallum

## *The Vanishing Point*

My grandfather's afternoon  
Sags on my shoulders  
As I stand in a wool field  
Knitted of summer grasses  
And ragweed that makes me blink.  
Through itchy tears I see  
The years of young men  
in trenches  
in breadlines  
in rolled-up sleeves  
tossling their sons' hair  
As the sun filters into salmon pink.

—Paul McCallum

sky  
the  
to  
it  
fed  
hand  
an open  
with  
and  
laughter  
with her  
balloon  
a  
filled  
who  
girl  
the little  
I envy  
Sometimes

*A Vertical Reflection*

—Paul McCallum



### *Tar-Gnats*

All the world was a stooge  
In our caffeine dreams  
Of weary eyes and cups half empty  
with coffee grown cold,  
Of napkins shredded with idle fingers;  
We laughed, and called it "Fool"  
—and we were clean.

Then a tar-gnat of the stooge  
Lit upon our clean—  
We crushed him of course  
And joked as we flicked him away,  
But as we rubbed at his smudge  
It only smeared the more—  
Until we bathed in an ink  
As dark as our caffeine  
or darker.

—Paul McCallum

### *Stones in Flight*

Walking once in the woods  
I plucked a stone from the path,  
Rolled it between my fingers  
Then arced it deeply into the trees—  
I listened for its echo against the earth,  
But hearing no sound,  
I turned and walked onward  
Down the narrowing path,  
Pushing aside the brush and branches,  
My footsteps striking no echo.

—Paul McCallum

Marbelissa snarls at sinks and sinks  
herself in wafercoils; my curtainbloat  
blowing obelisks unbannister,  
rerivet Marbelissa, crave  
her quantum jowl,  
spitting salve and locomotives  
and umbrellas charged of grisly  
spoons; all bloom, all warp  
the canyon Merle.  
In Steiermark silver  
elk mouldings maim staticponds.  
The jades of flirting gasses goad my Marbelissa,  
shading nipples and sadinet  
from teething pangs, her backward  
bowl.

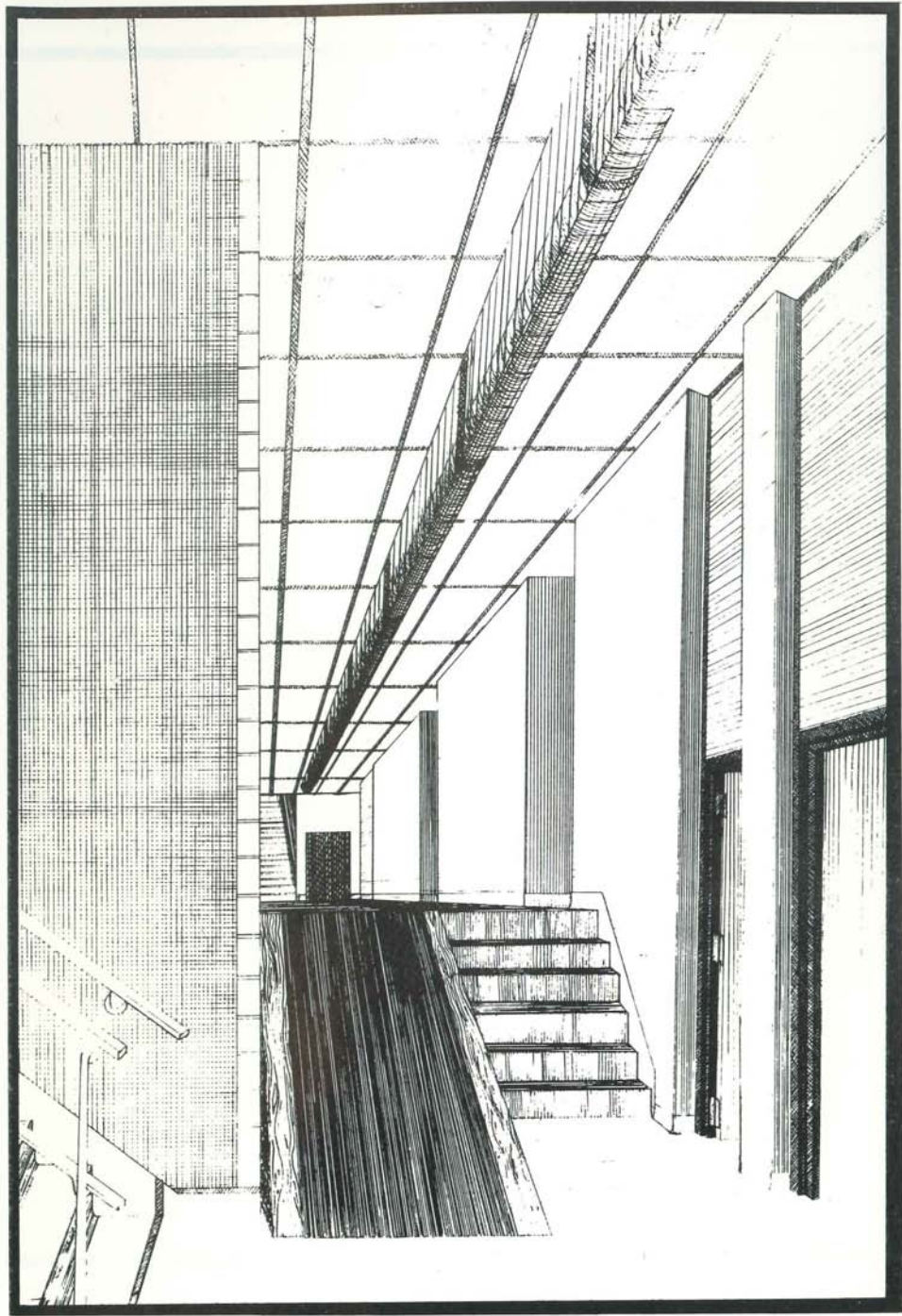
—Mike Langley

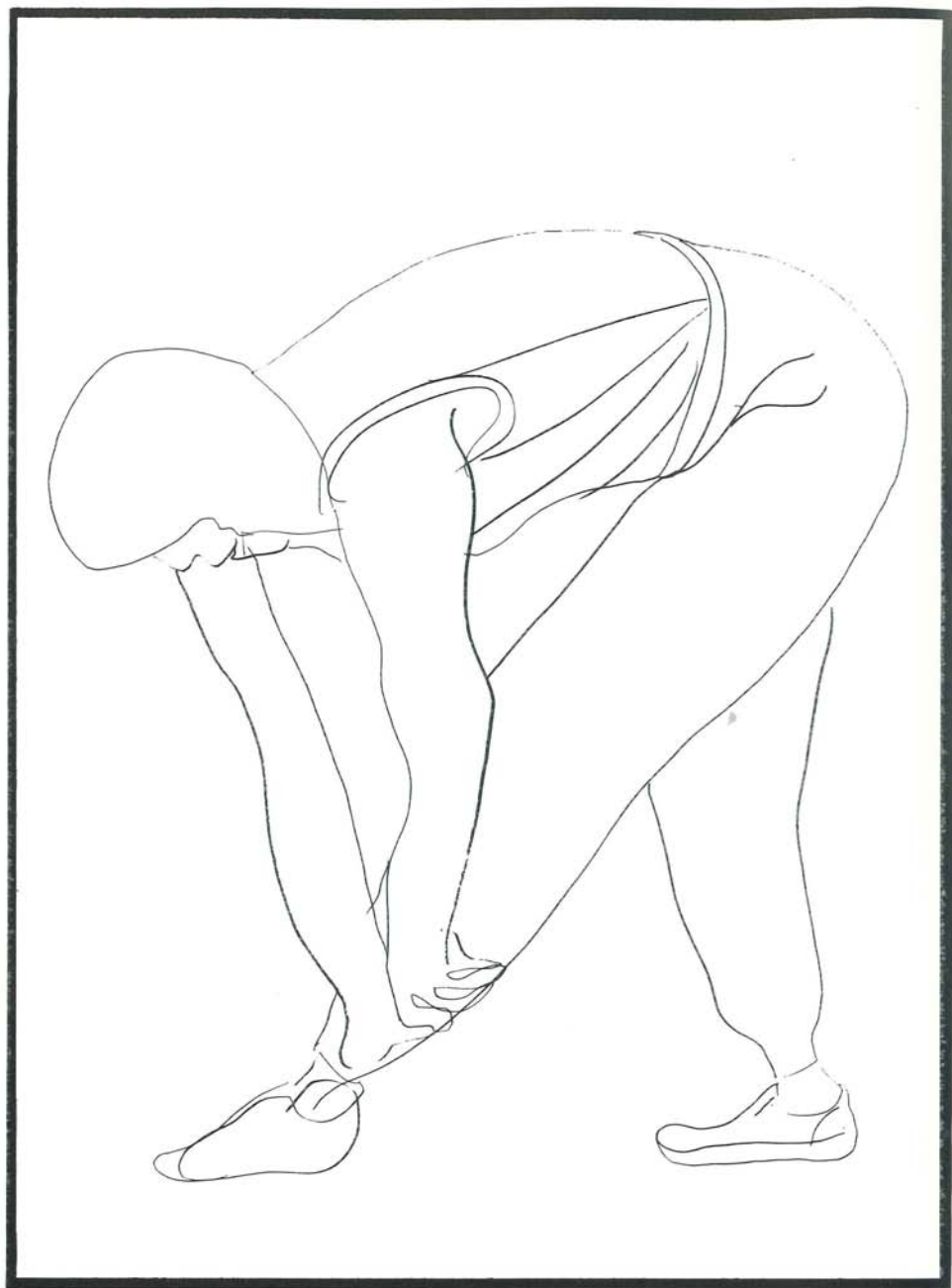
he just sat around  
all day  
and ate  
pâté  
but he stuffed a cedar  
chest of guessing  
gowns into his comma,

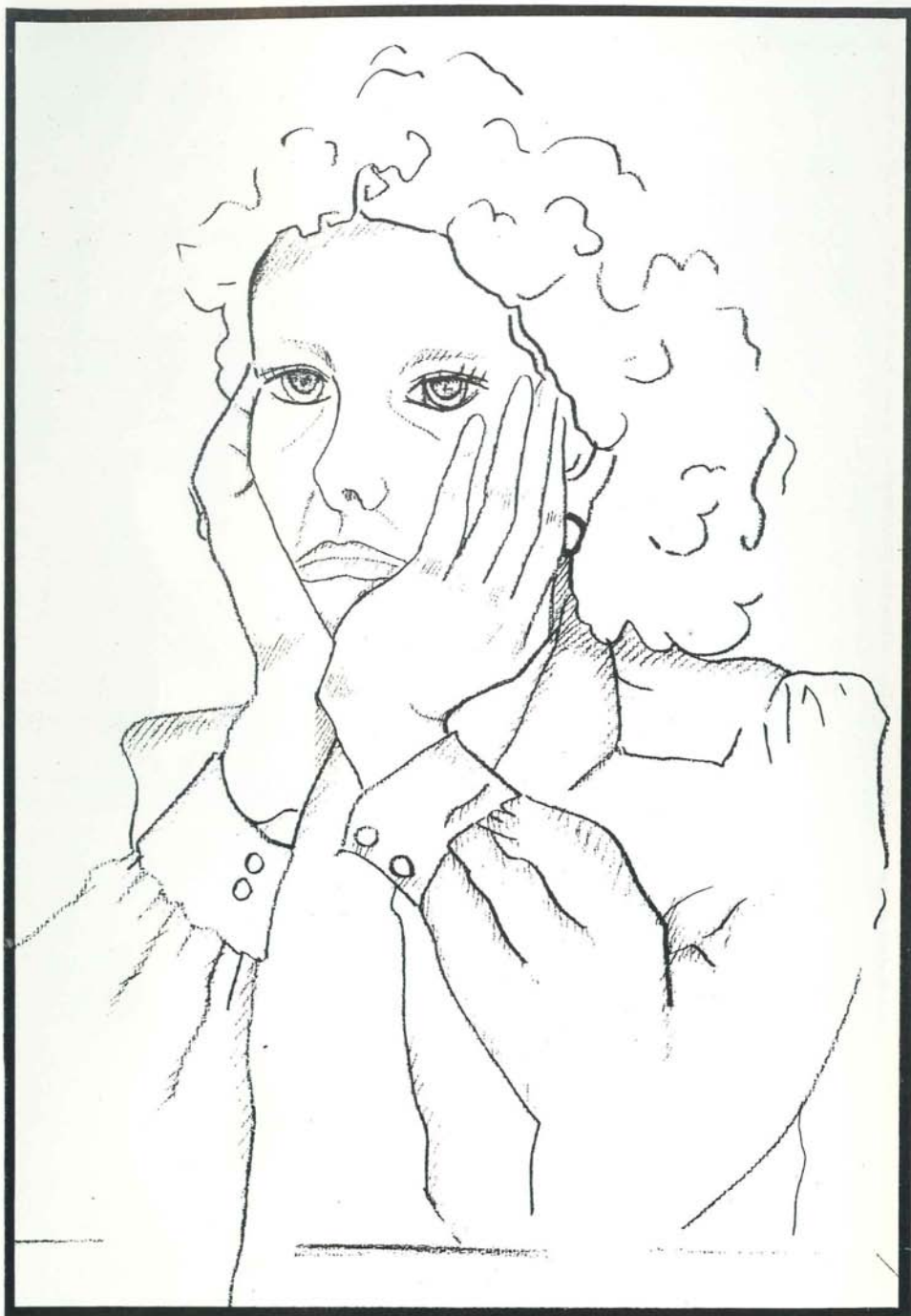
—Mike Langley

Chased, knavish, you  
are me, macabre voyages  
through Daddy's winters and world  
of makebelieve  
and how skiing can pianodark  
the mustard dreams, the beerhall pulsars,  
knuckle ovals lipprint blown  
with clotted sirens and flashlight suns  
in a cardboard ball.

—Mike Langley









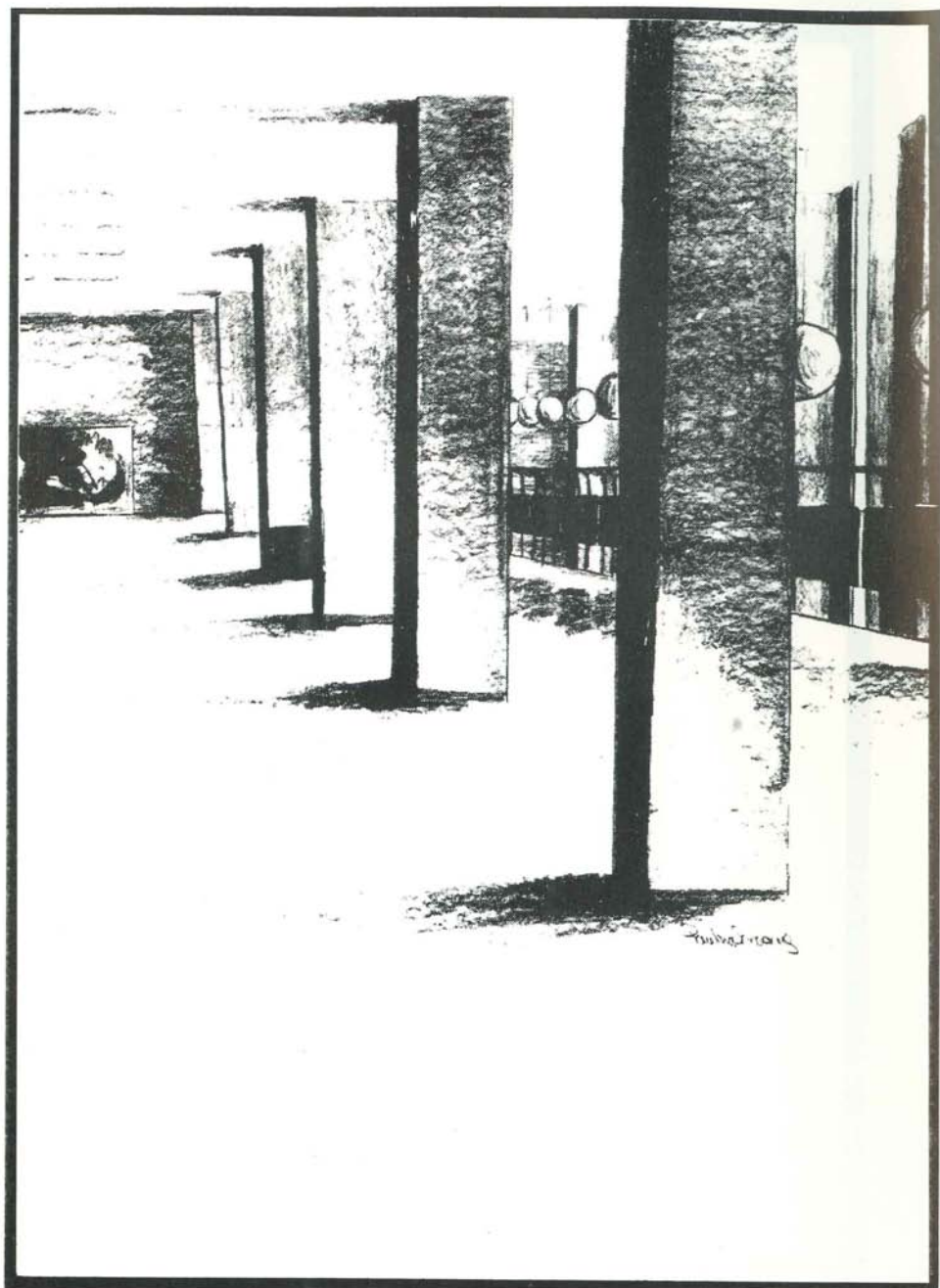












## *The Schleswig Nines*

*Zeppelin Field—Berlin, Germany*

*September 1943*

Eichmann lifted a long slicing foul into the upper tier of seats along the left field line to even the count at one and one. The fans, a thrill-hungry crowd of some 42,000 munitions workers, roared heartily as a pretty young fraulein outscrambled a gang of brown shirted Hitler Youth and retrieved the ball. A foul ball off the bat of the great Adolf Eichmann was truly a treasure to possess and the girl waved it wildly, clutched tightly with both hands, as she raced back to her seat.

It was a superb evening for baseball. The air was warm and sweet, filled with a slight breeze, and the moon was full and rising crimson beyond center field. In the distance, across the Havel, shone the lights of the massive Stehr Ball Bearing Foundry. Its furnaces were stoked and thundering.

The Nazi team trailed the Semite Condemned Polish Sympathizers 6-3 in the ninth inning. Reich hurler Julius Streicher had been soundly pounded in the opening frame before settling down into the form that had, in years past, earned him countless honors as the supreme right-hander in the league. Streicher was closing in on another outstanding season and word had it that this year the coveted MVP trophy would surely be his.

At first base, Hermann Goering danced away from the bag, flapping his arms ludicrously and crowing like a chicken. Only moments before, he had ripped a sharp single up the middle, just inches past the outstretched glove of Semite second baseman Manny "Ribs" Hirschstein, extending his personal hitting streak to 27 games, only 6 games shy of the Nazi national record. Nazi third sacker Martin Bormann had followed Goering with a towering infield fly for the initial out of the inning, and now the Semite pitcher, rookie Jacob Fineshreiber, was working carefully with the Aryan hitting champion and popular left fielder Adolf "Viel Kartoffel" Eichmann.

Eichmann was enjoying his best season since joining the Nazi nine in August of 1937. The master of deportation and mass exterminator extraordinaire was batting a robust .416 with 27 home runs and a league-leading 98 RBI's. Only a week earlier, in an afternoon game against the Auschwitz Casualty All-Stars, Adolf had electrified the Berlin fans with three powerful home runs and an acrobatic game-saving catch of Casualty Sherman Gottlieb's long blast that had sent him tumbling into the Nazi bullpen.

Now, the handsome Nazi hardballer glanced down at third base

coach Wilhelm Bruckner and stepped back into the box.

Fineshreiber, only 17, was perhaps the finest Semite pitching prospect since the emergence of the legendary Moses Herzl from the Emanuel Burial Association League in '29. Herzl had repeatedly carried the Semites to the championship on his strong left arm, but was dropped from the rotation, then disappeared under mysterious circumstances after he had three times whiffed the fiery Nazi infielder Adolf Hitler during a benefit game along the Eider in Holstein in the Spring of 1939.

Sportswriters throughout the Third Reich were unanimous in their agreement that young Jacob Fineshreiber was a future great, a bona fide Hall of Famer, a true pitching hero, if he could only develop the wisdom Herzl had lacked. Jacob threw a scorching fastball (official JUGS—116 MPH) and a huge breaking curve that cut like a sabre down through the strike zone.

Regardless of what the future held for the teen-aged Jewish prodigy, his gallant moundwork had endeared him to the legion of Semite fans throughout Europe. They followed his every pitch, glued to the ghetto radios or the camp loudspeakers whenever Jacob took to the hill.

Fineshreiber restored hope to their ever-waning existence.

Or so they thought.

Eichmann dug in, planted his spikes firmly, and swung the bat easily. Like a coiled snake he awaited the pitch.

Jacob delivered the curve—a sweeping beauty that broke and fell away sharply. Eichmann swung stoutly from the heels—the bat whistled—the crowd roared.

Strike two.

Goering yapped like a coyote and again took the big lead from first base. Fineshreiber paid the fat Nazi Gestapo Chief no mind and blazed a high hard one just under Eichmann's chin. The pitch cracked loudly in Semite receiver Myam Bottigheimer's mitt.

Eichmann did not so much as flinch, returning a steady gaze toward the mound, a half smile on his lips. Fineshreiber was equally cool, unruffled at having just "shaved" a Nazi hero.

Bottigheimer faked a throw to first and snapped the ball back to the mound. No one dared pick off a Nazi base runner anymore; the last Semite to have done so had quickly been assigned new employ at the Dresden Flame Thrower Test Range and had not been heard from since.

Fineshreiber kicked at the rubber, wiped his forehead with his shirt sleeve, tugged at the bill of his cap, hitched his pants, checked Goering, and offered Eichmann the fastball. Adolf's muscles



rippled as he unleashed his graceful, level swing, propelling the ball on a high arc through the soft German night. Semite centerfielder Anselm Ben-Avi chased the ball into the distant reaches of the park and pressed his thin shoulders against the planks at the fence but his leap was far short and the two-run shot was gone.

Goering pranced the basepaths ahead of Eichmann. Fineshreiber, head bowed, stared at the mound, wishing he could have unloosed all his fire in that last pitch, yet realizing that somewhere, in the grimness of a Nazi work camp, his kid sister would not become a sack of potash, at least for another evening.

Eichmann tipped his cap as he crossed home plate and smiled broadly at the tumultuous ovation that swept the stadium. Popcorn boxes and beer cups rained down upon the field. The scoreboard exploded into a myriad lights and sirens, flashing the magnitude of Eichmann's clout—146 metres, home run number 28, RBI's 99 and 100.

Six to five, Semites.

Fineshreiber shook it off and concentrated on the next batter. Erwin Rommel, newly recruited from the North Afrika-Balkans League where he had quickly established himself as an extremely cunning baseball strategist, played shortstop and wielded a dangerous bat. Quick on the basepaths and sound of glove, he was indeed an exceptionally fine ballplayer. Always the crowd pleaser, even on the field he wore the desert goggles and commando cap that had become his trademark.

Fineshreiber toyed with the "Desert Fox," setting him up with a couple of fastballs (aspirin tablets, the radio announcers called them), then changed up with an offspeed pitch that Rommel grounded weakly to the left of Sheppy Lefkowitz. The Jew shortstop neatly speared the ball and tossed Erwin out.

Two away.

Aryan center fielder Paul Josef Goebbels, the Propaganda Minister for the Supreme High Command, advanced to the plate. Goebbels was as clever a hitter as he was a liar, and he had gained widespread notoriety for his aggressive, cruel approach to the game. His peculiarly vulgar appetite for very young Jewish girls had made him a locker room legend throughout Europe, and his twisted sense of humor had endeared him to all his Nazi teammates.

On a 2-1 count Goebbels lashed a screaming line drive (a frozen rope, a blue darter, as popular sportscaster Halsey Hall would be known to say many years later) that ricocheted off the wall in right center and bounced into the stands for a ground rule double. The umpire signaled an automatic two bases, yet Goebbels raced around

first and didn't let up, sliding viciously into second, his spikes slashing Lefkowitz's legs wide open. Sheppy hobbled off the field and was replaced by veteran utility man Sol Heinsheimer as the crowd screamed approval at Goebbel's heads-up base running.

Fineshreiber tightened his lips.

Bottigheimer, ever the gamy backstop, slammed his fist into his mitt, readjusted his cup, and squatted behind the plate.

Absolute bedlam tore through the stadium as the next batter, plucky Nazi second sacker Adolf Hitler, approached the plate, lazily swinging three bats, giving no recognition to the adoration pouring onto the field. Hitler was the team captain, a natural leader, and though not powerful with the stick or sure in the field, his raging temperament and ruthless attitude had proven him to be more than capable at the game.

Adolf very carefully selected one bat from among the three, dropped the other two, and took his stance to the left of the plate.

Fineshreiber took his time, staring down at Bottigheimer. The invisible line between pitcher and catcher vibrated like a plucked banjo string. Jacob, out of the stretch, fired a rocket. Smoke seared from the seams as the ball streaked to the plate. It was the kind of pitch that made Bottigheimer's catching hand swell up for six days afterward. The kind of pitch that could set fire to the neat's-foot oil Myam worked into his mitt before each game. The kind of pitch that had been known to short circuit the JUGS gun. The kind of pitch German scientists had studied carefully, hoping to uncover the secrets of jet propulsion and the speed of light.

It was one hot comet, straight and true, and the umpire could call it nothing less than a strike.

The fans, already delirious, were on their feet, awe-stricken. Hitler stepped out of the batter's box and glared at the umpire.

"Right down the pipe, mein Fuhrer," the umpire said weakly, swallowing hard.

Hitler stood frozen, his dark eyes smoldering.

"Indeed, a very fine pitch," the Nazi dictator finally replied, a low terseness in his voice.

Rubbing a little dirt in his fingers, he slowly stepped back to the plate.

Fineshreiber again took his time. He pulled at the sleeves of his jersey, straightened his cap, shook the kinks out of his thin arms, went to the resin, then once more stared at Bottigheimer's big mitt.

The next pitch was faster than the first. Almost invisible. It looked like a B-B, a quick white blur that smacked into Myam's mitt so hard and sudden the burly catcher was bowled over

backward into the dirt.

The umpire sagged visibly, like air rushing out of a great balloon. Reflex had sent his right arm skyward and he managed a hoarse whisper, "That too was a strike, Herr Hitler."

The crowd responded with raucous abandon.

Adolf stepped again from the batter's box and slowly worked the handle of the bat in his hands. His blood, full of yet undiagnosed syphilis spores, pumped like steam through the valves of a churning German locomotive.

"Ja, of course," he said, "another strike."

Deliberately, painstakingly, he replanted himself in the batter's box. The Fuhrer had pulled his cap tight on his head and his teeth were set. He swung the bat repeatedly and stared out at Fineshreiber.

The young pitcher turned his back to the plate, stepped from the rubber, and watched Goebbels on second base. He kneaded the ball calmly in his hands.

Across the Havel, a whistle sounded at Stehr Bearings. The ten o'clock shift was getting underway. Inside the plant millions of gleaming ball bearings clattered along on wide conveyors. Many would soon find their way into London and other European cities—special delivery in the guidance systems of Nazi firebombs. Many others would show up in the wheels of roller skates during the skating rage that captured the Continent in '44. A few would even find themselves in the pouches of homemade slingshots as Jewish children taunted cowering Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg in '46.

Albert Stehr III would one day become majority stockholder in a professional baseball club in the United States of America.

Unchecked pandemonium charged through the stadium like a bolt of hot blue lightning. Crazy Germans screamed and shouted until their voices were gone. Vendors abandoned the sausage booths and beer tables and strained at the railings, elbowing for a closer look. The German team stood at the rim of the dugout, silent.

The moon by now was high—clear and bright. It hung straight over the playing field, shimmering pure silver.

Rabbi Leman Freudliech, the Semite's ageless third baseman, offered some chatter. "Throw the dark one, kid. Weak stick, weak stick. Hum babe. Rapid fire. Come chuck. Atta way. Hey batter batter."

Black shirted members of the Schutzstaffel—the SS—shoved their way through the crowd and gathered along the foul lines in grim knots.

At second base Goebbels left the bag and leaned toward third,

anxious to run. At the plate Hitler cocked his bat and crouched expectantly. On the mound Fineshreiber toed the rubber.

Jacob examined the ball carefully, rolling it around and around in his hands, scrutinizing it as though he might never see it again. The young right-hander, bathed in moonlight and the piercing beams of the stadium arc lights, wiped the sweat from his brow with the sleeve of his shirt. Nodding slightly at his big catcher, Jacob swung his arms, kicked high, wheeled crisply, and delivered the pitch.

—Jim Marshall

### *The Day Gailen Hudson's Brother Died*

The day Gailen Hudson's brother died  
I yawned,  
For I had walked long the night before;

I practiced my lesson,  
And ate lunch—  
For I never knew Gailen Hudson  
or that he had a brother.

The next day, I heard the news  
With silence—  
He might have been a friend,  
—an old army buddy;

I sat down to think—  
I tried  
To make sense of a way of life  
That would soon consume him.

Then I committed myself to deep sleep.  
Gailen Hudson's brother would sleep no more.

—Brent DeJong



## *Afternoon Thoughts*

A low sun shines white  
through the gray sky.  
No wind blows  
to fill the spaces.

Across the yard pace tracks  
dusted with dry snow,  
new-fallen . . . days ago,  
when the I.E. man came  
to note the energy intake.

Icicles along the roof  
measure the heat lost there.  
Warm shingles melt the inner snow;  
water rolls down secret courses  
only to freeze  
when exposed to arctic air.

Along the foundation, drifted snow  
draws back from the warm brick.

Beyond the escaping heat  
rosebushes would hibernate,  
but their brown state is real death.  
A late January thaw  
coaxed the green sap to flow.  
A cold front, a quick freeze,  
caught the juice in budding leaves.

Pruning to the roots in Autumn  
prevents this winter death.  
Exposed growth won't take the cold.

Spring replanting is more  
than one can think about in February.

—Sandra Long

## *Nonsense*

Tonight  
I dreamt  
I lived with the starfish  
in the sky  
played blackjack  
with red aces  
and climbed a mountain  
to the

bottom  
of  
the  
sea

Tonight I dreamt  
I was a child  
again

## *No-Nonsense*

Today  
I wore  
my suit of  
chronic rationality  
and  
purpose-must-ness,  
cross-referenced  
my thoughts,  
and  
saw no  
children.

—Beth Quade

## *Upstairs at a Window*

looking across to another building  
where another student plays a trombone  
from memory:  
walking around the room  
moving the slide down and up  
soundlessly.  
A car slides by in the shiny street:  
dark, purposeful.

I find it silly:  
people making music without sound,  
creating empty cars,  
waiting for fulfilling moments—  
handed among each other  
like little girls' Sunday handkerchiefs.

—Gloria Thomas

## *Search for the Shining Telos*

Concentration diffuses.  
My eyes relax their grip on the grass's  
blades  
and use the general greenness  
as a backdrop  
for greater awareness and abstraction.

Meanwhile,  
my youth passes on,  
a blurred generalization  
spent  
on want of a telos—  
yes, a grand, golden telos,  
shining in polished splendor  
on a background of pure albescence—  
metaphysical white,  
the shade of supernatural serenity;  
in a numinous numbness,  
with a warm, winged wind.

I smile vaguely, pleased  
by abstraction's shell—  
the shell that holds the white and the gold  
and can't  
quite  
be cracked,  
but is pleasing in its presence nonetheless.

The gold fades and the white fades  
and the green comes rushing back, and  
the leaf and the blade engage the breeze.

—Gloria Thomas

## *The Throne*

Reclining upon warm, multi-individual fluff,  
His eyes glow: radiating yellow,  
Fluorescing at direct angles among blacknesses—  
God is a cat.

Rumination softly sweeps His countenance.  
Twin pools of golden mercury, downcast,  
Survey the steamy expanse,  
Slowly blinking at the pleasant massage.

He begins to purr.  
His voluminous body emanates the perfection  
Which He absorbs from below,  
Draining the cushion of its prickling.

(The cloud grows larger through multiplication;  
Its energy affords Him enduring comfort.  
Energy provides the warmth;  
The warmth prohibits precipitation.)

Drowsing lazily on the restful vapor-shape,  
Burning calories of security,  
He smiles with self-assurance at His fortune,  
Snorts at His sustenance.

—Gloria Thomas

## *Quatrain*

The moths, in awe, surround the Light  
Although they cannot see,  
But we, in omnipresent sight,  
Turn our backs from Thee.

—Michele Davis

## *Ligne Drawyng*

A HODGE ther was of Michigan also,  
That unto logyk hadde long to go.<sup>1</sup>  
Unpreened was his beerd as was a blake<sup>2</sup>  
And looked fowl as it were a mistake;  
And yet it maad him seme ful scholarly  
As did his wood\* and poore clotheree,  
For hym had gotte yet no goode taste  
And seemed ever to had dressed in haste.  
Sownyng\* in moral vertu was his speche,  
And gladly wolde he moan and gladly beeche.  
He yaf\* ful vent to his solempne<sup>3</sup> spleen  
When atte councel fought he with the deen.  
Yet his condicioun were little matter,<sup>3</sup>  
For people did hym love and his lood<sup>4</sup> chatter,  
And when he taught, he taughte with sich vigor  
That sikerly\* his students joied his rigor;  
Hir\* mortal lives sure would be most dull  
Were ther no Janus Hodge to sprinkle gall.

\*"mad," "crazy"

\*"resounding"

\*"gave"; <sup>3</sup>"pompous"

\*"certainly"

\*"their"

The above portrait is apparently based on Chaucer's description of the Clerk in his "General Prologue" to *The Canterbury Tales* (ll. 287-310). Its subject is open to conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this line is ambiguous; (a) "he had desired to [i.e., "longed to"] study logic," or (b) "he [still] had far [i.e., "long"] to go in his study of logic."

<sup>2</sup> "blake" = "blacksmith's"? or perhaps "shoeblack's"; [i.e., one who shines shoes in a bus depot or men's room?]

<sup>3</sup> Again this line is ambiguous; (a) "his appearance was of little consequence," or (b) "he had little character or substance" [Chaucer's "condicioun" meaning roughly "moral character"]. The ambiguity, of course, is not made any clearer by the following line, which might mean either (a) "people loved him in spite of his appearance" or (b) "people loved him because of his lack of character" [something not uncommon in Chaucer's time or in ours]

<sup>4</sup> "lood" = "loud"? or "lewd"? [Perhaps knowing the subject would clarify this. Then again, perhaps not.]

—John Knepper  
(with editorial assistance and  
annotation by Jonathan Slow)

## *Train*

Young,  
At my grandmother's house  
I first heard the train  
And knew it would devour us all  
In the night.  
Soothing words had no effect  
On me in my bed—  
I put a pillow over my head  
So I wouldn't know  
The monster was there.  
Older,  
I raise my head from the pillow,  
Drawn to the window  
To listen to the train  
Pass by me in the dark—  
As it fades, it sighs,  
"How could you be afraid?"

—Diane Griswold

## *Moon Over Siouland*

When the moon is full  
an absence of life  
can clearly be seen  
on Fall-stricken trees.

A thick stench hangs in the dead air.  
The soul of the shit-filled river rises silently  
to offend those who neglect her.

Love is good on this night.  
She makes me forget, for a moment,  
the smell of the river.

On the night of the moon  
my dreams are in song.  
I dance to the music  
and ignore the words.

—Steven S. Boston

## *The Divorce*

We are like the boy  
whose tongue touched icy metal.  
The separation  
tore tender flesh.

—Shannon Robinson

## *To the Poet*

You could stroke  
my ego  
with your pen.

But I am no Helen,  
no Cleopatra.

My nose is okay,  
but no ships  
will launch for me.

—Shannon Robinson

## *Skyscraper in Storm with Birds*

What I want with you  
rides gale winds  
against the rigid form  
your living takes,

lies limp and broken  
necked, ignored among  
the feet that heel  
the concrete walkway.

—Jan D. Hodge



It  
looks a  
little thin  
naked in the room  
to hold much joy.  
But  
when in faith  
we place an ornament  
to balance an imbalance,  
hang icicles to fill  
a space our eye dislikes,  
and weave the lights  
among the reindeer, bells, and angels,  
we make of it,  
it gives to us,  
an image of our better selves.  
And always  
the  
star  
above

—Jan D. Hodge

Grab hold the traces. Life  
fast rushes to  
stillness.

—Jeff Satterfield



## Notes on Contributors

Mike Aguirre is a freshman from Sergeant Bluff, majoring in art and minoring in sociology.

Randee Ball is a freshman from Sioux City, majoring in art education.

Steven S. Boston, a junior mass communications major from Sioux City, is a disc jockey on the college radio station and enjoys writing in his free time.

LaMont Boyles is a 1983 Morningside graduate currently working in Washington, D.C. as a Congressional intern for Congressman Berkley Bedell.

Michele Davis is a philosophy and French major from Sioux City.

Brent DeJong is a mystery.

Carol Faber, a sophomore from Sioux City, is majoring in art and minoring in mass communication.

Laura Gittins, a freshman psychology major, is a native of Indianola, Iowa. This is her second poem to be published.

Diane Griswold is a junior English major from Lincoln, Nebraska, and really does listen for trains.

Jill Hanson is a sophomore art major from Milan, Minnesota.

Jan D. Hodge tries to teach English.

Keith Keesling is a freshman art major from Sioux City.

John Knepper, a 1974 Morningside graduate, has returned to take course requirements toward becoming a secondary teacher. He sometimes fantasizes that he is a former fashion editor for the *New York Times*.

Vickie Knudsen, a 1971 graduate of Morningside, lives in Sioux City with her husband and three children and works in the computer center for Banks of Iowa, where she likes to doctor up the memos her boss "writes."

Mike Langley was born on October 7th.

Sandra Long, a former English major and Kiosk editor, now resides in Marion, Iowa.

Jim Marshall was born in South Dakota. He weighs 151 pounds.

Edward Mazeika is Professor of English and linguistics at Morningside. He maintains a variety of interests, and is currently studying the nature of consciousness in hopes that he can help crack the Rational Egg of Western Thinking.

Paul McCallum is a sophomore English major from Omaha, Nebraska.

Daneen Olsen is a junior psychology/religion major who likes "wonderful" things.

Damon Peterson is a freshman art major from Sioux City.

Greta E. Philips is carrying a double major in business and computer science.

Beth Quade is a sophomore English and Spanish major from Janesville, Wisconsin.

Shannon Robinson is a junior English major and French minor. "How do I describe myself in two sentences? I don't."

Jeff Satterfield is a senior theater major from Sioux City.

Pauline Sensenig is the wife of Dr. Larry Sensenig, Morningside psychology professor, and the mother of two.

Gloria Thomas, a junior, has already switched majors from pre-engineering to literature to philosophy. She is currently president of Sigma Tau Delta.

Bonnie West, B.A. Antioch College (years ago), took her first creative writing class last semester. She is employed by the Social Security Administration.

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