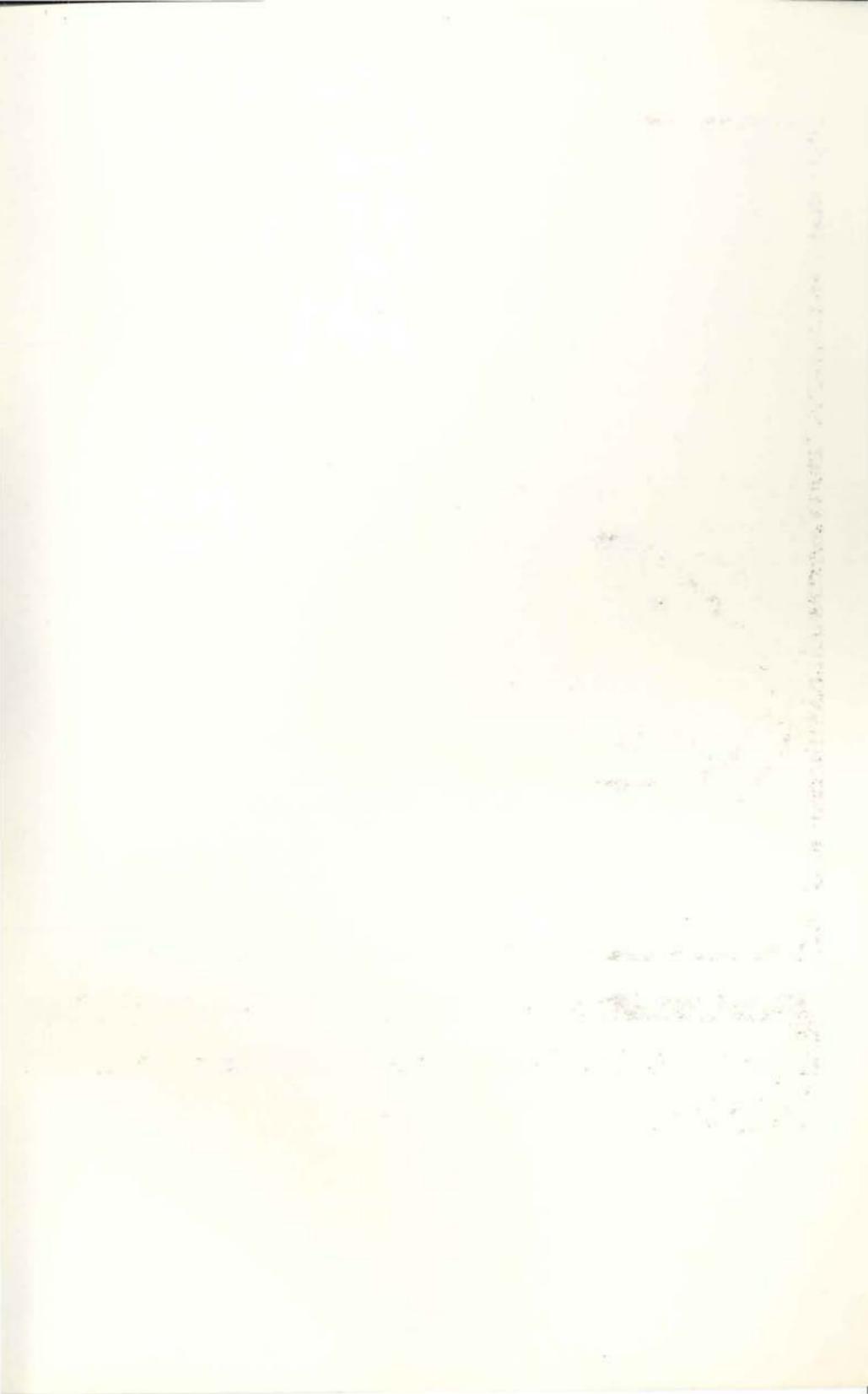


KIOSK





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MORNINGSIDE COLLEGE
SIOUX CITY, IOWA 51106

SPRING 1986

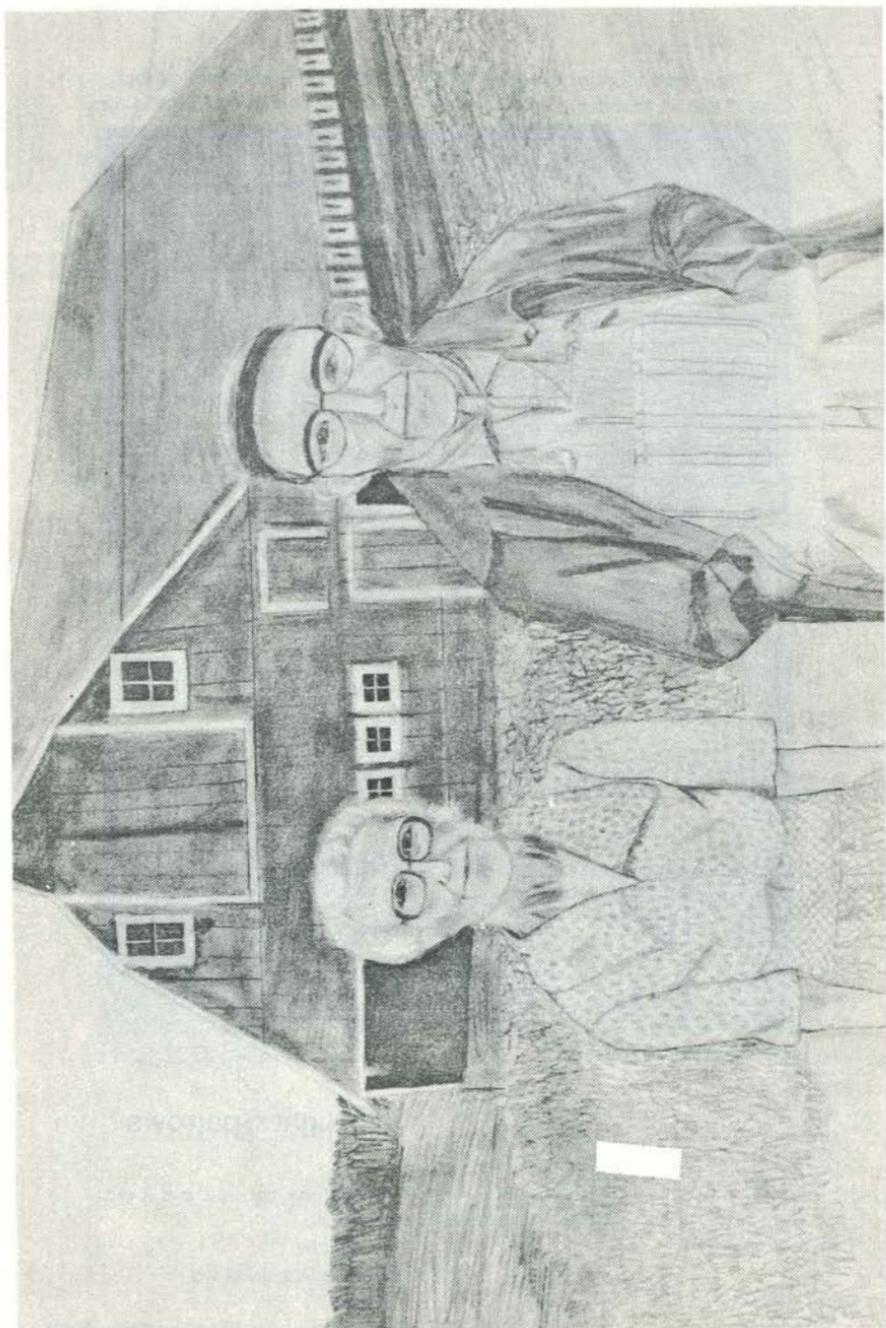
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Laura Johnson

Leo & Eva

Incongruity

There was thunder cracking with a rush like a whoooomb! almost. Only it wasn't thunder. I knew the sound of a rifle when I heard it. I turned on the light and looked outside. Next door the floods were on, and I started piecing it together. Maybe Mel'd just shot a rabbit, or maybe he'd just shot the Simpsons' stupid lab. No, it didn't look like the Simpsons' stupid lab. It was something smaller, looking feline-like and funny under the light. It was moving like you'd expect a cat would move with a bullet hole torn through it. It was dead, but still-walking dead, not quite ready to believe it yet. It did a little walk, like a dead-cat walk, like it had the heebee jeebees. It did a little death dance, then it did a little fade and flop; it did the catflop right there in the grass. No caterwauls, just fell'd fall'n flopt. Dead, and good rid too. Damn nuisance. Damn cats.

Then I saw my ten-year-old looking out the door beside me. My boy was looking out the door beside me, and he had seen it all. His whole face was looking like a worry, like a whole face looking like two eyes about to cry. Then with two wet eyes that he was not about to let cry he said, "Dad, which ones are God's creatures, and which ones aren't?"

Sometimes blood freezes, even in August.

--Perry Rasmussen

Haiku

White blends all colors
But doesn't make a rainbow
'Til it undresses.

--Paul McCallum

Night Sparrows

You pat the cat, and put it out
You smile,
We touch,
Entwine like quick ivy,
Giggle--
Yes, and I hear the sparrows singing.

--Paul McCallum



Randee Ball

Pencil Drawing

Mother

From his chair Samarov watched the cat bathe her nursing kittens with short, quick strokes of her rounded, red tongue. She paused frequently to peer over the edge of her box. Samarov returned her stares.

Prebelov's voice broke Samarov's gaze. "Samarov!" he called across the empty tavern, "we're at the last bottle--what should we toast?"

"Ah, to hell with him!" said Pezhinski, who stood next to Prebelov, his back against the bar. "He's been a wet rag from the start. Too damn loyal!" But his round, flushed face was grinning. "I know!" he exclaimed, slapping Prebelov's chest with the back of his hand, "Our toast should suit our patriot over there." He refilled his glass.

"You'd like that, eh, Samarov? All right, damn you--." Prebelov thrust out his chest, clicked his heels, and raised his glass stiffly toward the ceiling. Pezhinski did the same. "--To our great and glorious Mother! Who has taken us to her bosom--"

"For three years!" intruded Pezhinski.

"--given us fine clothes--"

"My rash is worse!"

"--good food--"

Pezhinski grimaced and stuck out his tongue.

"And fifty rubles a month to spend as we please! We thank you, Mother!"

They whipped their glasses to their mouths and swigged their vodka violently.

"Patriotism's not so bad!" said Pezhinski, smacking his lips.

Samarov's lips twisted into a smile. He turned back to the box of kittens. One grey kitten had stopped nursing and was sniffing over the edge of the box as if it were in a trench. Using its front paws it pulled itself up to the edge of the box, then scratched up the inside with its back feet until they too perched along the box's ridge. The kitten wavered there for a moment, then flopped onto the floor.

Samarov chuckled and sipped his vodka.

The tavern door opened and Slechta popped in briskly, nodding to Prebelov and Pezhinski as he passed them and went into a room behind the bar. The draft blew a puff of lint past the kitten. It coiled into a tight crouch, then pounced, clapping its front paws around the lint with a padded thud. It relaxed its hold and the lint was carried away again, teasing the kitten into a forest of chair and table legs.

The cat raised her head, sniffing the air. Her ears twitched.

Samarov watched too, snickering when the kitten bumped its head or lost its balance.

Slechta re-emerged from the back room, without hat or coat, and poured himself a drink from Prebelov's bottle. The bottle tapped frequently on the rim of the glass. The Czech looked up, caught Prebelov's eye, and looked away again. "Don't mind, do you?" he mumbled, turning away slightly to take his drink. Finishing it, he reached for the bottle, but Prebelov clenched it quickly with his thick, sweaty palm and pulled it away.

"Drink your own! This's the last of ours."

Slechta put his glass down. "You drank all that so soon?" he asked, running his glance quickly across Prebelov's face, then onto the bar top again.

Prebelov frowned. "That damn stuff of yours is half water, eh, Pezhinski?"

He nodded. "Took a lot to get drunk."

Slechta's mouth and hands twitched slightly.

After a moment Prebelov asked, "You got rid of it okay?"

Slechta nodded quickly, his eyes still averted. Prebelov reached over the bar and slapped Slechta's shoulder firmly. "Now that's a clever Czech for you, eh, Pezhinski?"

"Damn clever," Pezhinski agreed with a yellow grin.

Samarov, still staring at the exploring kitten, asked, "Did Slechta sell it?"

"Yes," answered Prebelov.

Samarov turned toward the men at the bar. After a moment he rose and crossed the tavern floor slowly until he stood in front of Prebelov. "So what do we tell 'em now? We sold our tank for vodka--you know what they'll do." His voice was steady.

Prebelov shrugged. "Doesn't matter. You know--our radio was broken, we were lost--night coming on. Left our tank, came here, Slechta put us up. Next day--we couldn't find it."

"They won't believe that."

Prebelov poured himself half a glass of vodka and shrugged again. "So? We could tell them the truth . . . doesn't matter."

Samarov looked at Pezhinski, then at Slechta, who was biting at a scar on the back of his thumb.

Slechta's eyes bounced briefly up to Samarov's face. "I'll report it just, just like that. Tomorrow morning."

Samarov met Prebelov's red eyes. "Okay--we got lost. Abandoned our tank. And we're all real sorry about it." He shook his head and took the bottle from Prebelov, who smiled broadly.

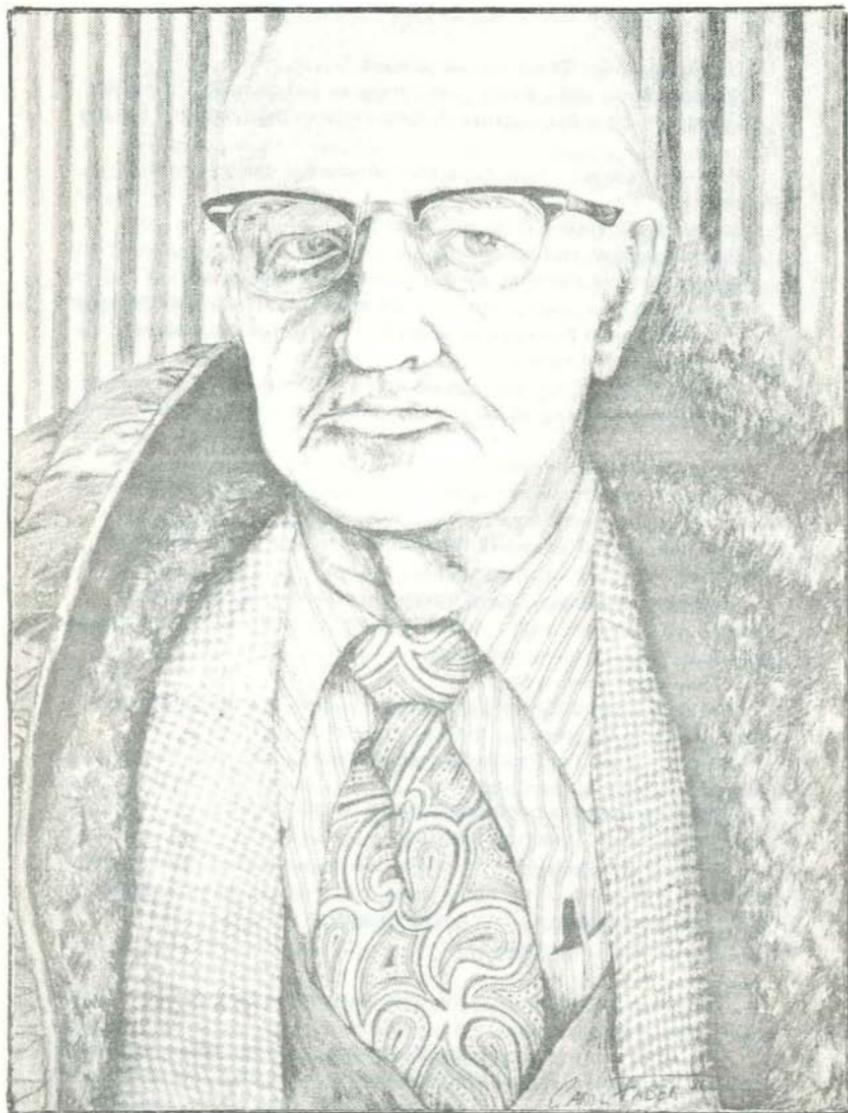
"Damn right!" he laughed.

The kitten peered through the chair legs that surrounded it. It mewed softly, then mewed again.

The cat's ears twitched forward and she stood up, kittens still dangling from her nipples. She pushed them off with her back foot and jumped out of the box. Her tail waved like a slow whip. She cooed. Her kitten answered. She went to it easily, sniffed it, then took the back of its neck into her mouth and carried it back to the box.

She licked it with slow, smooth strokes of her round, red tongue, then laid down and let her kittens nurse again.

--Paul McCallum



Carol Faber

"This is Art"

Girl with a Gray Parasol

It isn't raining
and the sun is setting.
It rests prettily
on her shoulder.

Two people passing
hand in hand by
glance briefly at her.

Twilight will die
the parasol black.

In a passing car
intent lovers
don't notice her.

She is alone here
with her parasol
for now forever.
It is a pretty gray.

--Jan Hodge

The Seduction

You are so beautiful--
No.
Your skin is like silk--
No.
Those lips--and your eyes!
No.
But your smile, your laugh--
No.
And if I said I loved you?
Especially no.
But I **do** love you--
Then kiss me,
And write no poems.

--Paul McCallum



Diane Griswold

Pencil Drawing

Zoo

She had always enjoyed paging through wildlife books, so I suggested that we go to the zoo.

At first she led the way, excitedly pointing out each animal she saw. Soon, however, she seemed content to follow me, and her attention began to wander from the exhibits.

Then, as we were gazing into one of the cages--I don't remember which--she suddenly pulled me away to watch a ground squirrel searching the grass.

Finally she asked to go, apparently unconcerned about foregoing the remaining exhibits.

I wonder if I'll ever understand her.

Tomorrow I think we'll visit the park.

--Diane Griswold

I Bought Oranges Today

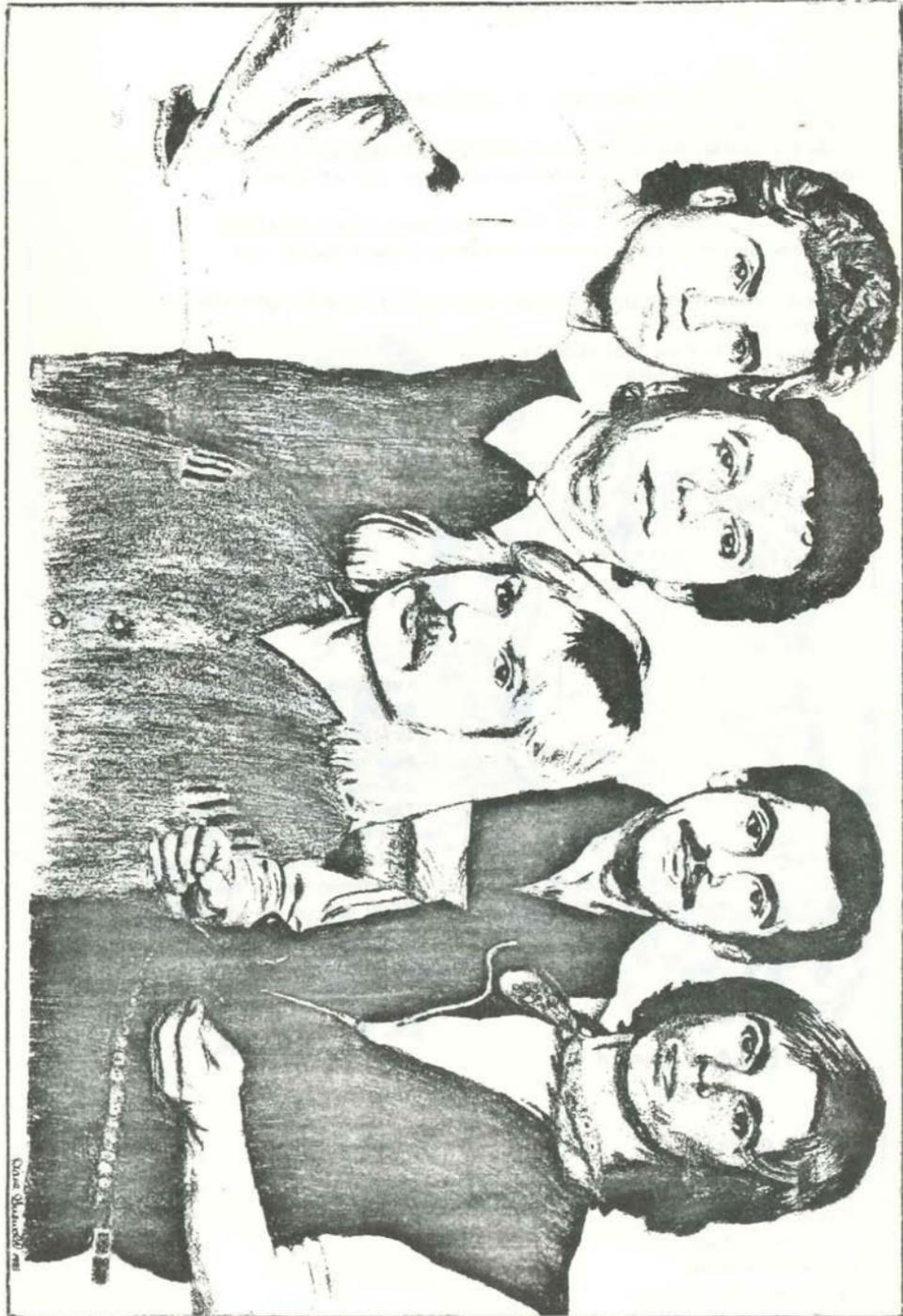
I stopped in the fruit section,
Staring at gleaming orange globes
Until I had to reach out,
Run my hands over them,
Squeeze them gently.
They bounced and jiggled
As I hurried to make them mine.
So I brought oranges home with me,
Wondering how to tell you
Until I saw on the kitchen table
A new bunch of ripe bananas.

--D. G.

Double-dactyl

Higgledy-piggledy
Titus Andronicus
Shot off his darts at the
Man in the Moon.
Nowadays lesbian
Postneo-Freudians
Argue this "fairy" feared
Coming too soon.

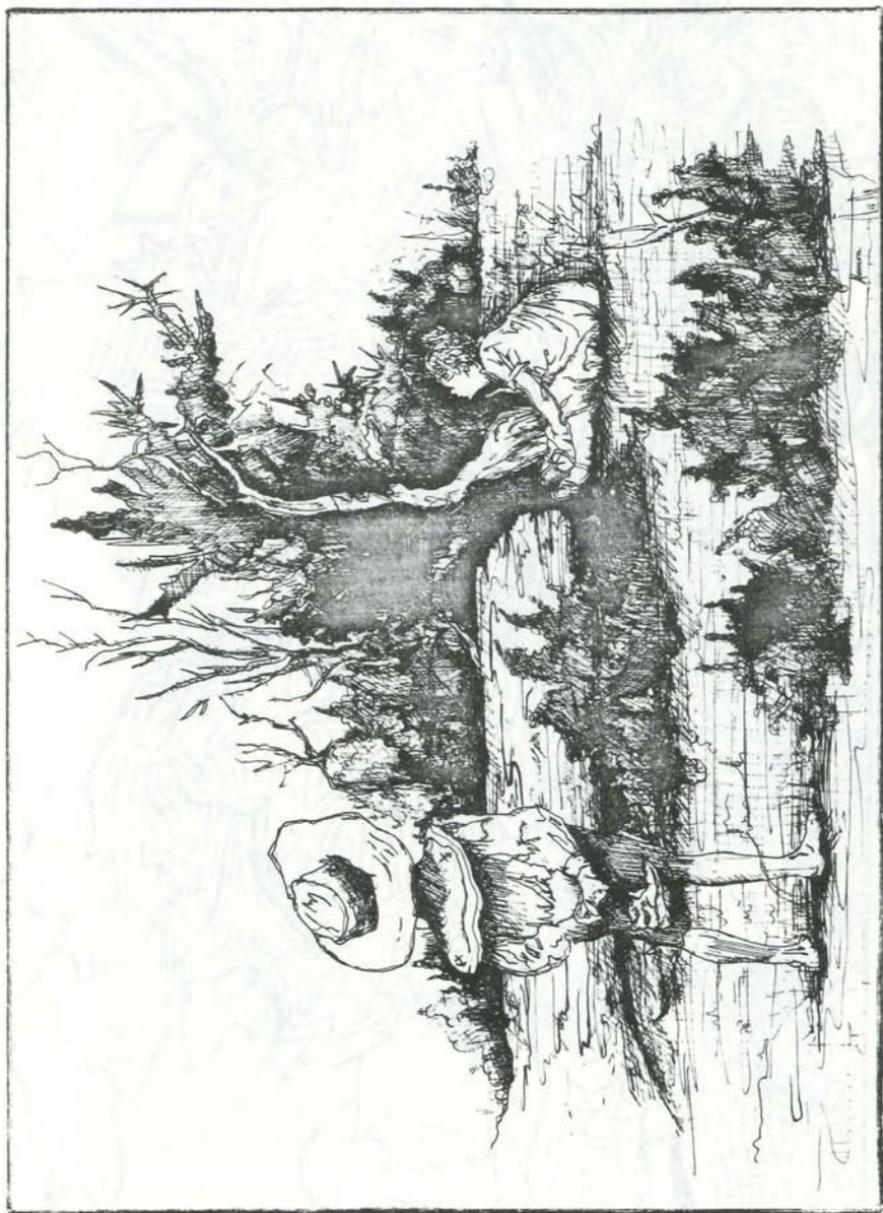
--Irving Telladew



Diane Griswold '88

Diane Griswold

Pencil Drawing



Jill Hanson

Illustration



Kathi Eyer

Pencil Design



Sharon Tornaton

Mixed Media

Toward a Biography of Abel

Book Review Supplement

London Times

April 15, 1996

Those of you who follow the progress of modern fiction writing are doubtless aware of the exploits of Abel Edwin Northrup. Born and raised in the London suburb of Norwich, Abel overcame his humble beginnings, and rose to become one of our greatest modern writers. I would say **the** greatest, but that might be stretching it.

The writing establishment first became aware of Abel in 1972 with the publication of his master's thesis, **Why Jack and Jill Went Up the Hill**, an expose of perversity in nursery rhymes. 1974 saw the publication of his first critical summary, in which he examined the works of Sigmund Freud and the Brothers Grimm and proved that they were indistinguishable from each other.

But it was as a novelist that Abel truly shined. His first three works were warmly received by critics, but did not sell. Despondent over his sorry financial condition, Abel despaired for a suitable interval, then wrote **The Real Story of Lot's Wife**, a somewhat seedy reinterpretation of the biblical legend. Churches throughout England denounced it as pornography. Sales quadrupled as a result.

Abel became a celebrity overnight, and his life was never the same. A shy and retiring young man, Abel was not used to so much attention. In his home town he made only one public appearance, speaking at the local ladies' club. An elderly woman asked him, "Why do you write?" Said Abel, "Conjury is my means of prophylaxis." He was promptly thrown out of the building.

Unhappy with the vain trappings of fame and fortune, Abel spent the next several years with the Guru Muhammed Steinmetz, under whose tutelage he studied life's eternal meaning and ceramics. Inevitably, there was a division between these two great geniuses, which is largely chronicled in Abel's 1984 autobiography **Let's Call the Whole Thing Off**. The work is a statement of the author's artistic philosophy, and is a monument to skepticism. Wrote Abel, "It doesn't matter what the trees look like, or where the people are, or what time it is. Who invented the formal novel anyway? I'd like to give the guy a good talking to."

On June 6 of the following year, Abel met Hildegarde Rutledge, a shy young woman who made change in his favorite laundromat. The pair fell in love during the spin cycle, and were married the next day. As it turned out, however, Ms. Rutledge was actually Francine Zepke, daughter of Ferdinand Zepke, sporting goods tycoon and owner of Scotland.

This sudden good fortune came as a shock to Abel and he was very slow to adapt. He refused, for instance, to quit his day job as a meter maid. But in time Abel grew used to a life of luxury and ease, publishing several novels over the next three years.

One day, however, the eccentric Mr. Zepke, encouraged by a profit-seeking astrologer, put the entire family fortune in a cardboard box and mailed it to himself, forgetting to affix a return address. The blow was an untimely one, but the Northrups soon restored themselves, living on Francine's income as a cheerleader for Norwich footballers.

By this time Abel was completely disenchanted with the writing craft. Influenced by Rimbaud, he renounced his art, and got a job scraping barnacles off the bottoms of ships. Just when we all thought we'd seen the last of Abel, he announced plans for an epic novel. He went into seclusion for two years, coming out only to eat and use the loo.

December 18, 1995 is a day which will live in literary and publishing history forever, for this was the day when Abel Northrup delivered what is truly his masterpiece. Entitled **Abel Northrup's Masterpiece**, the book consists of 312 numbered pages which are otherwise completely blank! Except, that is, for page 156, on which, in small type, the single word "bullshit" appears. One word. That's the whole thing.

Critics hailed it as a triumph of minimalist art: "Never has Northrup's message come through with such clarity." Orders for the book have come in from all over the world. The publishers are already into their third printing. Reasonably priced at twelve pounds, it may become England's best seller of all time. The French translation should be ready by next month.

His immortality thus assured, Abel has been largely silent, although he did grant one interview to a young Times reporter. Difficult and argumentative throughout, his responses were typically brief: "Fiction is stranger than truth. I don't care what anybody says."

It was this reporter who first brought Abel news of Helen Swidler, a young American writer whose recently published master's thesis was widely praised. In her paper Ms. Swidler examined the works of Abel Northrup and Mark Twain and proved that they were written by the same person. When Abel heard this he smiled for the first time in eleven years, and then broke the young reporter's nose.

So Abel lives today, a recluse, an artist, a recognized genius who knows his time, even if he can't seem to live in it. I think the following anecdote says it all. Abel's university writing professor Myron Huckle once said, "Great writers happen only twice in a century," to which Abel is supposed to have replied, "Okay, who's the other guy?" Confident author and a confident man, Abel Northrup is undoubtedly one of England's finest.

--Perry Rasmussen

The Best

(A man comes out of a large office building to a woman waiting next to a lamppost on the street corner. Both are young and good-looking, with tasteful clothes. Traffic rushes by as they stand side by side, maintaining a discreet distance as the man finishes pulling on his coat.)

SHE (after a pause): Why did you talk to him?

HE (looking at her out of the corner of his eye, with a faint smile): Why not?

SHE: Why not? It doesn't seem right, does it?

HE: I suppose you're right. I wanted to see what it's like these days on the second floor. Maybe I shouldn't have . . . You must really dislike him.

SHE (looking up at the building): Dislike . . . ? (Her voice fades. Then, recovering) Of course! (Hesitantly) What did he say?

HE (looking at the light post): Not much. He misses the tenth floor, I guess.

SHE (watching the traffic): I suppose.

HE: He asked how I'm doing.

SHE (quickly looking at him): What did you tell him?

HE (his faint smile returning): Oh, not about that. I said he kept the system running so smoothly I haven't changed much there since I took over his position. (Looking at her) He laughed.

SHE (looking down): I suppose he would. Quite a sense of humor, you know.

HE (with a short laugh): Yes, until Management confronted him.

SHE (furiously, looking down again): Yes!

HE (shortly): I'm sorry.

SHE (playing with her necklace): He admitted it all.

HE: I can't imagine why a man like that . . . he should have known they wouldn't stand for any fooling around when they found out.

SHE (glancing at him): Yes . . . he should have, I suppose.

HE: And you! Why, the insult to you!

SHE (twisting her necklace, looking down): Me. Hmm.

HE (almost ignoring her): Treating you like a common--well, you know what I mean. He thought the roses, the candy, the theatre tickets could buy your love.

SHE (quietly): He was kind to me.

HE: Thinking you so stupid! He deserves the second floor. (Blinking, looking at her) But of course I didn't say that to him. He . . . he did ask about you.

SHE (quickly): Oh, did he?

HE (sternly): Still pretending, I suppose. Trying to make me feel something for turning him in. (His eyes roll and he quickly looks skyward)

SHE (grasping his arm): What? What did you say?

HE (wincing, not looking at her): I guess you didn't know.

SHE (releasing his arm suddenly): No, I . . . I didn't. I wondered why they confronted him after all that time.

HE: He asked me if you kept your job.

SHE (with a pained look): I almost wish . . . but it's so important to me!

HE: I don't know why he asked. He seemed spiteful, somehow.

SHE: **He** did? He did?

HE: Here now, calm down. You should know it was for the best. The insult to you . . . you know I did it for you.

SHE: As you do now, giving me nothing so they won't catch us?

HE: Of course. It's for our own good. They won't know this way. It's for the best.

SHE (bitterly): The best.

He (grinning carefully): Besides, you're such a good secretary.

(She looks up at him quickly and the lights go suddenly out.)

The end

--Diane Griswold



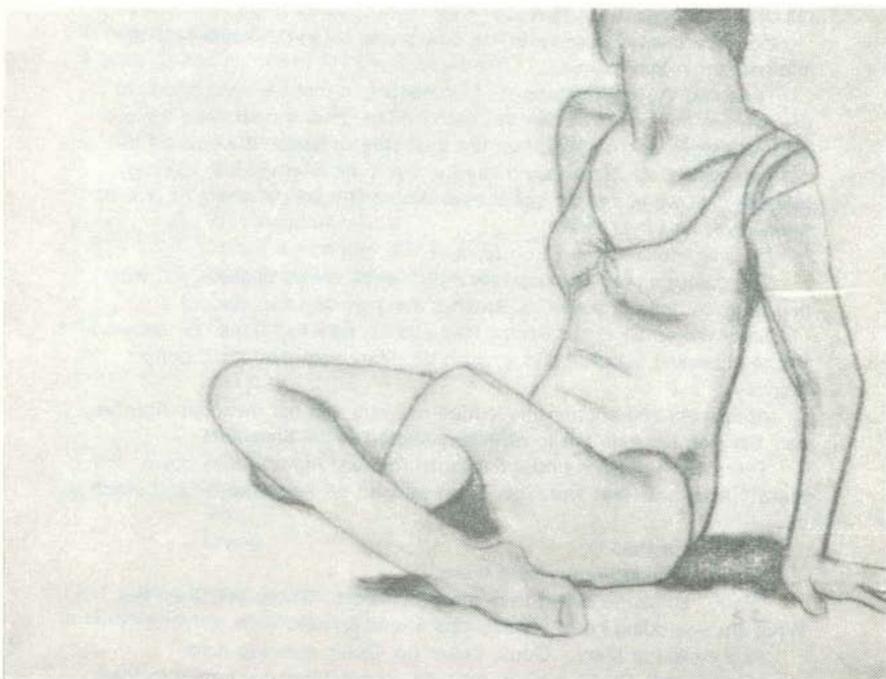
Jill Hanson

Charcoal Drawing



Amy Gerking

Figure Drawing



Sue Case

Figure Drawing

"And, Lord, help us all to be more like the woman who washed Jesus' feet. Amen."

The woman helped her youngest zip up his jacket, then put on her own and waited until everyone had filed past.

"Hello, Mary, I'm glad to see you in church this morning."

"I enjoyed your sermon very much."

"Good, good. Remember the potluck supper tonight. You and your children are very welcome."

"Thank you," Mary smiled, then walked her three kids past the small groups outside and got them into a rusty blue stationwagon.

She fixed macaroni and cheese for lunch, making extra for the supper, and sent the kids out to play. Then, getting out her new sweeper, she started to clean the yellowish brown rug. She put the sweeper back in its place and finished the other jobs she'd be too tired to do after work Monday.

When it was time, Mary called the kids and got them into their church clothes. Most people were already there when they arrived. She found a place for her dish on the table where women were talking and arranging food, then, keeping her children with her, went to a corner table and sat down.

"Hi, Mary. It's nice to see you," the pastor said.

"Paul, dear," his wife said, looking at Mary strangely as she started to pull him away, "You must say the prayer now."

After eating, all the kids went out to play. Mary gathered up their table service and her casserole dish and started to leave.

"Where are you going, Mary?" Paul asked. "We need everyone's input at the meeting."

So Mary went upstairs with the others and sat in the same pew that she had sat in that morning.

"Friends, the main reason for this meeting is that we can't afford to pay anyone anymore to clean the church. The council discussed the problem last week and decided that the best way to handle it would be to call for a volunteer. Now they'd have to use their own vacuum cleaner because last week the old one broke. Would anyone be willing to give of themselves and their time?"

No one spoke. Then, "I could do it."

The pastor smiled, looking relieved. "Great, Mary, I'll show you what needs to be done in a minute. Another thing we need to discuss . . ."

Mary waited till all but Pastor Paul and his wife had gone. He showed her the cleaning supplies and what to do. Mary said that she'd come Monday.

After work and supper she loaded her kids and her sweeper into the car. Sending her kids out to play, she started in the basement.

There were napkins under the table from last night. "Hello down there!" Mary saw feet and legs. She switched off the sweeper and stood up.

"Hi, Pastor Paul."

"You're working pretty hard there."

"Paul," someone called from the other room. "There you are, Paul. What are you doing here? Your supper's getting cold."

Paul smiled at Mary. "Oops, better go. Don't work too hard."

"Go on now, Paul," smiling, his wife watched him go, turned to Mary and hissed, "You stay away from my husband."

Mary watched her leave, unplugged her sweeper and left.

the Balance

Genesis was
in the beginning.
God was sitting there
bored
like Little Jack Horner.

He created a System resembling a watch
with erratic ticking
at first.
So he banged it a couple times,
till it saw stars,
grew scars,
and turned brown and blue,
with spinning ticks
and 24-hour tocks.

He watched it run.

Now and then it would go to getting out of balance.
So he'd pour in some oil
to help it run smoothly.
It goes he knows not where; he's nonscient.

In the workings of the System, way down,
(God is near-sighted)
the oil slides in
shaped like smiley faces, and
fake bouquets, and
"Have a nice day"s;
greasy pieces of gratuity.

The drops form
banners
and altar cloths

falling into joints creaking with
hunger
torture
terror,
crying.

God is lilted by his musical mechanism--
a nursery rhyme adulterated by perpetual motion.

--Gloria Thomas



Carol Faber

Bronze Sculpture

Peace

"Let us turn to our neighbor and offer each other a sign of peace."

Her fiance squeezed her hand, whispered, "Peace be with you," then turned to his parents. Michelle looked around and caught the eyes of a woman behind her. Smiling, she extended her hand. The woman lightly touched her hand with cold fingers and said, "Peace." Michelle was trying to get someone else's attention when Brandon's parents reached over, grasped her hand, and wished her God's peace.

"The offertory hymn is number 238 in the music issue, 'Saint Francis' Prayer.'"

As the organ began playing, a woman, sunburnt and sweating, walked in and plopped down two pews in front of Michelle. The straps of her sundress had slid off her shoulder, but the bodice was stretched tight across her freckled back. Michelle watched as the woman dug through her purse and found a kleenex for her bubblegum. The collection basket passed her by.

Preparations for the Eucharist began. When the congregation knelt, the woman remained seated. "She's not Catholic either," thought Michelle, then listened to the words she had almost memorized. Around her people alternately kneeled and sat, but when they finally stood, Michelle knew to stand also.

" . . . Let us pray together the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father . . ." All joined in. Michelle heard a voice clearly above the others. It was the woman, still sweating though the church was air-conditioned and cold.

"She's trying to show them she's been in a church before," thought Michelle, understanding.

" . . . as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

"For thine is the kingdom . . ." The woman's voice sounded even louder in the silence. Michelle grew warm and blushed for the woman, remembering how she had almost made the same mistake.

But no one seemed to notice her! Eyes front, they listened to the priest's prayer, then continued, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory now and forever. Amen." Michelle looked again at the woman, who seemed even redder as she pushed up her straps, grabbed her purse and left.

A few heads turned, then all eyes were front.

--Rhonda Baker



Randee Ball

Pencil Drawing



Candace Beeck

Pencil Drawing

Interlude in Istanbul

Last night we made cliché
and rustled the cobwebs;
Today we lie stillbraided
as the dust
settles
upon us,
Unmoved by Byzantium
or Constantinople
or Istanbul,
Though the winters are windy.

--Paul McCallum

A-men

"Hurry up and get your church getup off, Ma. We're hungry." The woman and her daughter went upstairs to change into everyday dresses, came down and went into the kitchen.

Tying on her apron, the woman said, "Mary Ann, you can put those boots outside and wipe up the mud before setting the table."

"Why should I clean up after them? Why couldn't they put their own boots out? All they've done this morning is listen to the radio."

"They've done the chores."

"Gene didn't even go to church."

"Just do it and go call them to dinner." Mary Ann obeyed. Her brother and father came in and sat down.

Gene reached for the potatoes. "It's Sunday. Wait till your ma says the blessing," the man said. "Go ahead, Ma."

The woman folded her hands in her lap and bowed her head. "Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing on this food that it may nourish our bodies, and we ask that you continue to be with us and lend us your strength in the days to come. Amen."

Gene reached for the potatoes. "Did you hear what she prayed for, Gene?" the man asked, nudging Gene. Gene grinned and nodded. "A-man. She wants another man." The two laughed.

Mary Ann looked at her mother. Her mother said, "Mary Ann, pass the peas on if you don't want any."

--Rhonda Baker



