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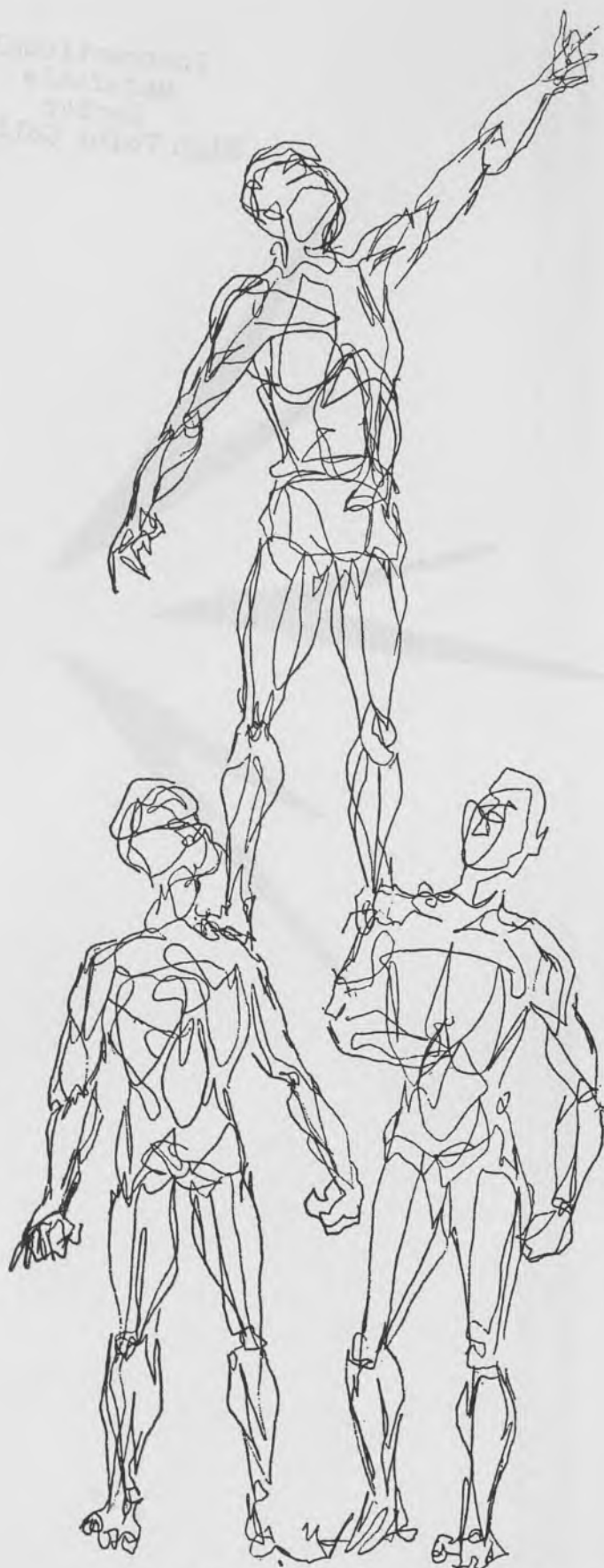
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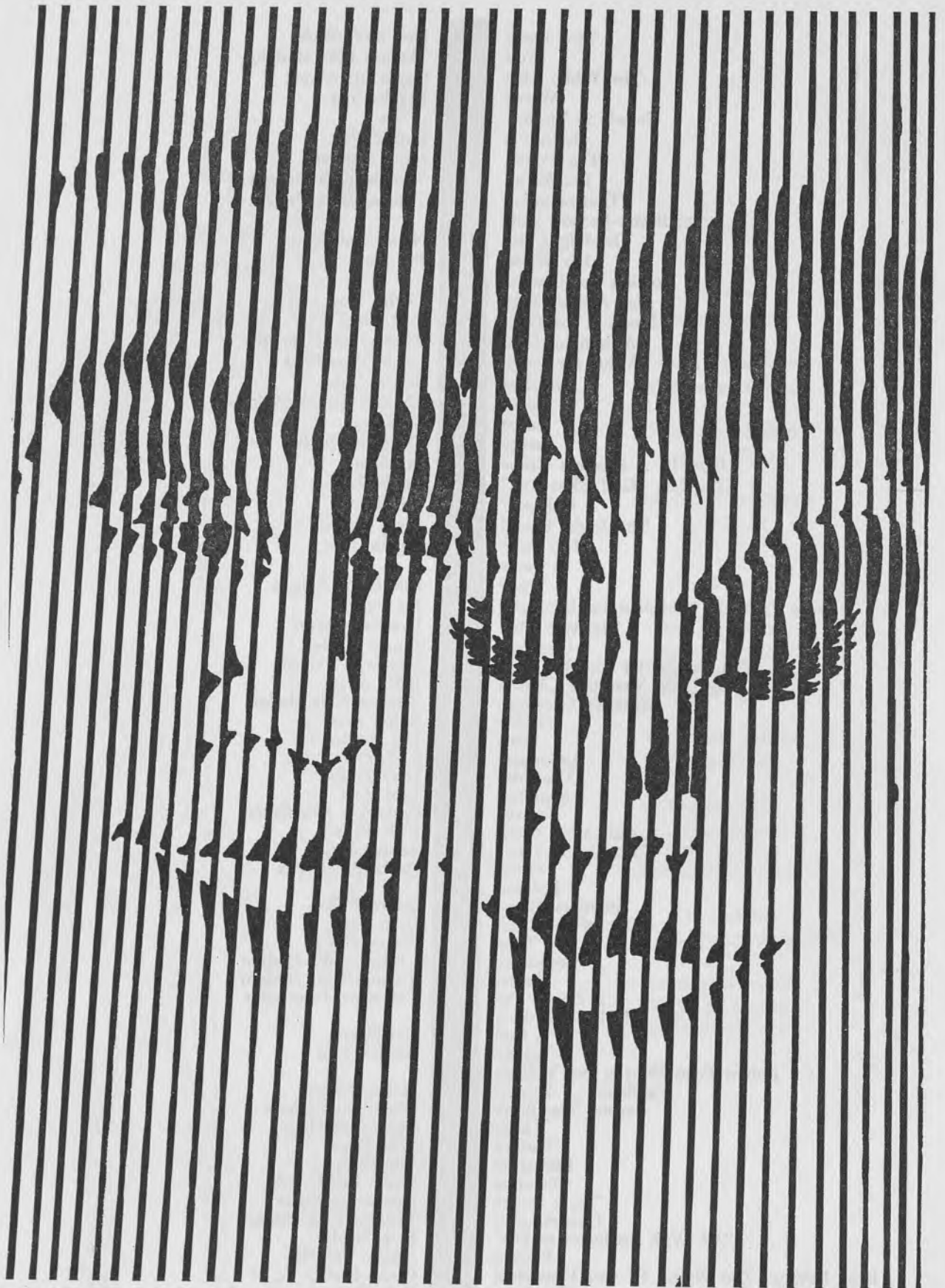
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Doc McCulloch from High Point, North Carolina, is worthy of recognition for contributing the cover for the 1965 *Apogée*.

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TWO FACES

—DOC McCULLOCH

YOU

This day has been much
Like a child's candy,
Sweet to the taste
Yet fast dissolving
As a peppermint shaft
Striped with sun and shadow.
And I — like a raptured child
Give to it one last kiss
And all is gone—
All but for a moment
That is mine always.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

The White Line

It was 7:45, but it was already hot. The new black asphalt glistened, and the newly-painted white lines winked importantly. She pulled into a parking place near the rear door—not a RESERVED slot with her name stenciled on a plaque that glared out of the brick wall, just one of two or three hundred ordinary parking spaces. She pulled herself despondently from the little car and noticed absently that her left rear wheel was on the white line. “Oh, well, William’ll enjoy getting all excited and blustering around demanding that somebody MOVE THAT DAMNED CAR.”

The heavy door of the astute office building closed soundlessly behind her, and she stepped into a world of air-conditioning and plush carpeting. Her fellow employees strode diffidently to their already-clamoring telephones as she deposited her thermos bottle on the flannel-covered shelf beside her key-punch machine. She knew that from this machine I.B.M. cards were distributed to each part of the million-dollar upholstery plant. A mistake in any of the 99 symbols she punched in a single card could cost the company hundreds of dollars, and she punched over 2,000 cards every day. But in the past week, she had made only one mistake, and that one she corrected in “checking” — her own personal scrutiny of every card that left her machine. She was a good key-punch operator, and at age 21 she was taking home nearly \$500 a month; but she hated that machine with a malice that is born only of discipline to a routine that is re-

pugnant to its victim. She shoved a handful of cards into the machine’s hungry mouth and crammed the precision-balanced weight after them. She jabbed her thumb maliciously into the machine’s big red eye and moved her hands obediently to the keyboard as the first card jumped into position. “Damned precision machine; why can’t IT ever make a mistake?”

Her telephone startled her, and she jumped to deter its incessant and authoritative buzz. She answered with her name, and a high thin voice demanded to know how she was. She laughed aloud as she wondered what the old lady would say if she replied that THAT was nobody’s business but her own and hung up; but she smothered the impulse and cooed at the old bitch. “Yes, I’d love to play bridge with your club. Tonight? Eight o’clock? Fine. Thank you so much for thinking of me.”

All day she bristled at her machine; she thrashed the keyboard mercilessly, but the machine only hummed passively to itself. Why hadn’t she just said NO? She probably could have assuaged the other woman’s ire and enjoyed herself at Stephen’s house. But Stephen and his friends were too BOHEMIAN and her REPUTATION would be TAINTED if she continued to ASSOCIATE with them until ALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT. Stephen’s rented house was INFAMOUS among her mother’s friends, and anyone who was too individual (RADICAL) in his opinions was not to be tolerated. The machine hummed passively on.

But she would not go to Stephen’s house tonight. She would not listen to the young BEATNIKS speak of Thoreau, Da Vinci, Dali, Pater, Swinburne, Aeschylus, or any of the others. She would meet the bridge club and hear the old hens speak of who was sleeping with whose wife, who drank how much at the club last night, and who was separated from whom and for what reason. When she left the office at 5:00, she was still on the white line; and she knew that tomorrow, the machine would hum passively on.

—GAYLE BROOKBANK

Words

Words?
Wordsworth?
Words Worth What?
Are they really,
Willy - Nilly?

—RALPH HOAR

DARWIN IN VIRGINIA

From a First Family, huh?
Well, ain't that just grand?
Here we are — and you
So damned uppity I can't stand
it.
And me, I'm just born of "folks."
You've got it all over me, huh—
Me and the whole ruttin' world?
But me and the world have got an ace to your jack.
'Cause Charles Darwin warn't no ass.
And you can't shake *that* monkey off your back.



REFLECTION

Gently lapping shoreward, river wavelets
Snare here and there a glittering moonbeam,
Thus
Reflecting toil and trouble of yesteryear;
Then
With undulating motion,
Fade silently away to be encompassed
By the web-like velvet of unconscious night . . .

Remaining — an untainted landscape
Where youth and age find no distinction
—Where God's creations glow
Serene and pure.

—PHYLLIS FOY

The Tramp

—LINDA BREWER

As the old tramp made his way slowly down the cinder-covered embankment of the railroad track, the early morning sun was just beginning to show itself above the dirty, jagged outline of the city. He stopped a moment and watched as the long bright rays shone out from the burning mass and bombarded the city with daylight, and he felt again the vague, uneasy feeling that had been stirring in him for the past few days. He understood what it was, but it didn't make any difference to him . . . not really. He just shrugged it off as he had always done and continued on down the bank toward the little circle of ragged, rumpled tramps that were heating their morning grub beside the river.

"Hi ya, Joe," said the biggest tramp with a gleam in his eye. "Ain't seen you around these parts in a long time. Git lonesome for yer old pals, eh?"

"Yeah, I got lonesome," said Joe without smiling. "I come back jus' to see y'all."

He sat down heavily beside the fire as the others shifted to make room for him. He didn't talk any more after that — just sat there, gazing into the fire while the others began to gulp down their breakfast. He refused their offer of food, shaking his head that he didn't want any. The fellows could see that there was something on Joe's mind, but what business was it of theirs to

go poking around his private thoughts? If he wanted to tell them, he would, and if he didn't, he wouldn't. Besides, they all knew how Joe was. He didn't want nobody playing cozy with him. He was a loner in the real sense of the word. He just might cause a ruckus if someone tried to get cozy with him.

The motley crew went out with their morning clatter seemingly as oblivious of Joe as he was of them. Joe didn't move or take his eyes from the fire now except when a train rumbled by on the tracks above; then he would turn his gaze to the clanging steel monster and watch it until it rattled out of sight. When it was gone, he would turn his head once more to stare at the fire.

As Joe sat there on the ground, he realized that he hadn't been able to get rid of that uneasy feeling this time. It was still in him, just like when he had first come down the bank, except that it was getting harder and stronger all the time. He couldn't shrug it off. He knew what it was. He had prepared for it and had got things ready. He just wanted to come back here again and see the city and the river and the trains one more time. He had felt that he wouldn't be able to shake that feeling here. Somehow he had known that this would be the place.

A morning commuter train rumbled by importantly on the well-worn tracks. Joe looked up, and as he saw the pale plastic faces gazing out of the dirty windows of the train, he got sick to his stomach. The vague, uneasy feeling in him became unbearable, and his thoughts churned like dirty boiling water. He felt weak to his knees, but a terrible hot feeling inside pushed him to his feet.

The other tramps stopped talking as Joe dazedly stood up. They looked at his white, contorted face and calmly decided he must have eaten something that made him sick. No one spoke to him as he stumbled toward the path down by the river, and no one saw the black butt of the .32 caliber pistol which protruded from the hip pocket of his faded old trousers.

No one ever heard of Joe again.

FAMILIARITY

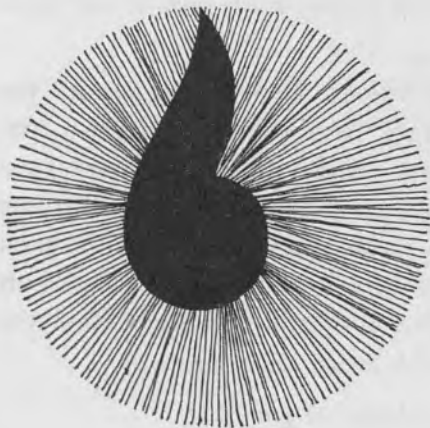
The mystery and magic
Of our first union
Has long since left us,
And the new found delight
And wonderful strangeness
Which we so often sought
Has changed to mechanics,
Leaving us to gaze
On myriads of bones
And curves of flesh.

I knowingly now think
Of how often you and I
Sought the tender comfort
Of the other — entwining
Our fires and quenching our needs
With our most wondrous love.

And I marvel still
At how stealthily
Our Eden was invaded.
At how the navel
Has become
As an empty scar
And the soft sloping hips
Have swollen into
Mere space fillers.

And how we one day
Amid feigned sighs
Gazed at our actions—
And knew them as lies.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN



TRANSPORTATION

I was sitting in Aram's Bar,
Glass in hand and watching
The multicolored throngs
Of people passing by.

When all of a sudden I saw,
I guess for the fifteenth time,
An old grey man and woman
Moving past the door.

This time she rode a "flexie,"
Though last time a pogo stick,
While he just moved along
On smooth and gliding strides.

One time, as I remember,
She had on roller skates,
Yet he just moved along
On never-yielding strides.

For a long time I sat thinking
And watching the two go past,
And I could not keep from thinking—
Why does he walk so fast?

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

Sacrilege – Second Shift

This job hates me
And I can feel it.
The lunch box glowers
Like all the rest
And bumps against
My thighs as I pass
By chain link fences
That pattern the ground
With checkered squares
From a late-coming sun.

This gate, soon filled
With mobs — all seeking
A short reprieve—
Will take me through
A corridor colored
By grime and wax
Where I will punch
And light the candles
Unto the god
That pounds and thuds
And buys my soul.

It is here I worship
Both tin and steel
And watch the hands
That climb so slowly
Upon the back
Of larger numbers;
And pray that god
Will blow a gasket,
Rupture an oil line,
And cause the world
To groan and shudder,
And grind to a stop—
So I can get off!

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

Goodnight, Sig

—NANCY FALLON

At ten o'clock she closed the book, switched off the lamp, and sat silently picking out patterns in the shadows created by a venetian-blind-filtered moon, cast upon the ceiling. When her eyes became more accustomed to the darkness and the shadows more clearly cut, Sig looked outside. The moon was full and illumined the countryside. The fog in the valley had spread to the mountains, but the mountains could still be seen even if they were blended with mist.

"Hell," she said aloud, then sighed. Her eyes deep, sharp, not misty like the world she looked at. Her eyes didn't dart, though; she carefully took in all that the moonlight permitted her to see.

Sitting in a creaky, glorious old bed in a large farmhouse, a large bedroom with three windows for the moon to flood through, didn't really put her in the dreamy mood it could have. She was warm, but felt a definite chill in watching the sleeping, misty valley. Twenty years isn't too long when you think of the centuries that echo in your ears when you're in history class. But, twenty years can be awfully long when you have seen

both glory in victory and death in decay before you have even reached that unmagical age.

The light breathing and warm fur beside Sig snuggles even a little closer. He is only five months old and already he knows what loyalty is.

"Little Phynque, I admire your devotion to Sig. To know true devotion in only five months is quite a feat for a dog. He presses his back even closer.

"Sig wonders how she can sit there and just say 'Hell.' I wonder if I should talk to her? It might scare the reality out of her if I did. But who else knows her as well as I? Who else cares as much as I if she just sits with deep cold eyes and says 'Hell,' then thinks and feels nothing. She should at least follow up the poor word 'Hell' with something!" Sig: Time is more than the past, present and future. That does seem to cover it pretty well, though. But, we can't hold onto any one of them. The past: we now realize what we should have thought and done. The present: who in hell knows what we are doing with our lives because we live them on a basis of past experiences? The key seems to be the future. If we knew what our environment holds for us, then we would know what to do now and when the future came we wouldn't have to look back, but . . . time, you little rascal, you trap me all the time; but, you are my friendliest enemy. I like you, I like your patterns tonight . . . the images on the ceiling flutter. The mist in the valley and mountains outlined bluntly against the moon, cold-heated sky. Phynque . . . Phynque beside me. He even gets along with Cat-Cat at my feet. She's grown stubborn after ten years, so he had to adjust to her ways.

I don't live just in this room; this is where I collect dishevelled clothes I've rushed through during the day . . . neatly folding them and hanging them up.

"Hi, it's me again. Sig left it at that for the night. She even got up and closed the blinds so that she wouldn't be tempted to get up on the ceiling and dance with the shadows. She's gone to sleep. The coward."

HIS WORLD

The old man saunters alone,
He merely ekes out an existence.
He does not live.
Why must he live where there is nothing?
In his world, built things of man are supreme.
The dirt and vileness he loves. To him there
is nothing else.
He breathes deeply and a contented look crosses
his face.
He inhales the acrid fumes of his world.
His senses are dulled by age.
He steps into the garbage-filled gutter.
He steps in front of a product of his world.
There is nothing more. There is no one to care
if he leaves his world.

—JIM SLOAN

NOTHING FOR CHANGE

It sits on a step in a steaming concrete inferno.
It is a boy. He wishes the sky were to be seen.
He feels without energy. There is nothing around
the air.
Hope is far away.
Change is an abstract quality beyond grasp.
He will try violence for diversion.

—JIM SLOAN

Man Against Fate

Once here,
n
o
w there blooms ethereal Spring
nurturing the illusion, love.

P-a-r-t-i-n-g
s
e
p to meet finality, we can merely wonder . . .
a s
r y
a a
t w
e

ABOVE, _____beyond,
Fate winds the everlasting web;
our star-crossed paths remesh.

NOW:
moments brief — all we know of once eternal spring
where beauty lived.

We grow sad that one moment cannot be forever
and we scream _____ HELLISH FATE!

Why mold our souls to meet their height
and then forestall
the 2nd coming?

Why manifest frustration
of a shrewdly fiendish mind
in our hearts?

She smiles placidly
and continues spinning threads of silk,
as if deaf.

Vicious sphere, your orbit nears the Stygian shore;
Aged spinster, weave faster.

—PHYLLIS FOY

Horace at the Door

—C. J. NEAL

They hired him on a Wednesday
(His references were good).
They thought he'd be attentive;
At least, they thought he should.

He promised to be faithful,
To stand for what was right,
To check all doors and windows,
To lock us up quite tight.

This man was small and quiet
And did his duty well.
But listen to the story
That frightens me to tell.

One night as we were talking,
We heard a noise outside.
"Twas nothing," said my comrade,
And "Nothing," I replied.

Again the noise resounded,
And nothing, we agreed,
Was wrong except the fire escape
By wind had just been freed.

We listened for one moment,
But nothing more was heard;
To think that we'd been frightened
Seemed now to be absurd.

The door was then flung open,
We shivered to the core;
A voice rang out in horror:
"It's Horace at the door;"

We laughed to hear the story
Of signs torn off the wall,
But knew within our beings
The cause was not the squall.

Why weren't the signs discovered
Upon the floor or bed?
The only answer — someone
Had stolen them instead.

Perhaps someone had dared him;
Therefore, he needed proof.
"But wait! I hear a noise now.
It's footsteps on the roof!"

We huddled there in silence
As if our stillness might
Discourage the intruder
Who came so late that night.

The footsteps soon passed over,
We sat without a sound.
We prayed that our intruder
Would very soon be found.

The next day all through campus
The word was spread to all
About the visitor we'd had
Who tore things from the wall.

The boys all grinned and mocked us
And said they didn't care,
Which prob'bly was the reason
Each eye was like a pear).

When next he came to visit,
A window was the place
He chose to do his peering.
His state was a disgrace.

A scream rang through the courtyard.
He had been seen, no doubt.
We'd seen the last of him,
For soon he'd be found out.

On Saturday they caught him—
The papers got his name.
The campus cop—our Horace—
Were one in one, the same.

There's silence, Alma Mater.
Your good name's not been smeared,
But whispers say that never
Can this mistake be cleared.

And now my tale has ended.
That's all; there is no more.
Remember well my story
Of Horace at the door.

A SUMMER RAIN

It rained last night,
And as I sat silently
Watching the summer heavens
Dress the earth
In shimmering silver,
I saw arise
From the ghostly vapors
A spectre of womanhood

Clothed in the flowing forms
Of the female
And garlanded with
The mother beauty
That is all men.

And she stood enveloped
In a pool of glimmering radiance
Wafting her words to me
On the soft summer air.

"I am of woman eternal
And have come to bring you truth,
The wisdom that old men know,
And that each man seeks in youth.
I have heard of woman's inconstancy
And deceit in her passioned sighs,
And I say that this is untrue
And merely a charade of lies."

But God, how could this be so,
This creature that speaks of lies;
For God, this creature in her splendid robes,
Dear God! — she had no eyes!

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN



Value For Value

—GAYLE BROOKBANK

She was recently divorced and, though not vindictive, as some think all divorced women are, she seriously doubted that such an animal as a "good man" existed. But then she met Eric, and the relationship that sprang up between them convinced her that she must have been wrong. He was big and handsome and intelligent; while she would probably have been repulsed by any move remotely physical, she admired his intellect, his uprightness, and, most of all, his initiative. They became very good friends without even holding hands. She never had any romantic notions about this young man, and as far as she knew, he never had any about her, either. The thought that a man could be platonic had never entered her mind, and Eric filled a very definite need, on her part, by being just friendly and selfless. She began to be able to say with conviction, "There ARE good men."

He was always courteous, never demanding, and after several months, she began to look at the situation realistically. He was TOO good. They were just friends, and he was devoting time to her that he could have been spending with the sweet young thing he had been dating consistently for months. He had given her a key to his apartment, and occasionally she went there to have dinner waiting when he got in from the office. He had done work on her car, and she had cooked for him. One day she finished work quite early and decided she would pick up a couple of steaks, but upon arriving at Eric's apartment, she had that strange intuitive feeling that something was amiss. Thinking she had better call his office to find out what time he would

be home, she unlocked the back door and deposited the bag of groceries on the kitchen table. She started toward the front of the house, intending to open the curtains and bring in Eric's mail, but when she was half-way into the bedroom, she thought she heard a noise — the deep intake of air and lazy exhalation that signal a waking animal. She stood still, her heart punching at her ribs like a boxer in training for a championship bout, remembering that there had been a strange car parked beside the house. When her eyes grew accustomed to the semi-light of the room, she saw a decidedly feminine form cuddled in the bed, draped apparently only by a sheet. She remained motionless, and she heard the girl whimper, "Not again, Eric; not today."

At that very moment she recognized the voice and the form; they belonged to a girl who had been a school friend of hers, but she knew that this old school friend was married. Standing there not a little bewildered, she heard a key turn in the front door, and wondering, "What next?" she retreated to the kitchen. Eric came into the bedroom, and the girl raised herself on one elbow. Intending to reveal her presence, she reached for the door knob; but the conversation, begun before she could come out from her hiding place, rendered her paralyzed from the chin down. She learned, her cheeks blazing, that Eric's office was a room downtown where he entertained not one but three matrons, that it had been pay day, that he was dating the sweet young thing to cover the tracks he was making with her former friend, and that all this had been going on for over a year. The matrons were becoming less willing to pay, the sweet young thing was making hints about marriage, her former friend was getting bored with the arrangement, and Eric was wondering if he should proposition HER, just in case he happened to be caught with nobody else on tap. She would never cease to marvel at his endurance. She had by that time more or less found herself, and the disappointment was not more than she could bear, but she would forever retain her original impression of Eric: he was not as other men.

DIRECTION

—SANDRA TATE

The hail storm ended. The farmer rose from the leather rocker where he had been sitting, rocking slowly, and staring at an almanac hung on the wall. Walking quickly out of the house, he did not bother to look at the hail stones which covered the ground. I followed him, silently and unheeded.

Upon reaching the first field he stopped and surveyed slowly the now battered and twisted young green plants. His shoulders sagged and his hands dropped helplessly to his side. But his jaw clamped tight and he walked on to the next five acres. There even worse destruction had been dealt. Life and growth had been battered from each young plant. All totaled, fifteen acres lay in waste. The whipped fields contained fifteen thousand dollars of now ruined crops. But more than that was lost. From the steel-grey look in the farmer's eyes, I knew he was thinking of the months spent in preparing the land and tending the plants. Each plant had felt the loving touch of the farmer. He had brought them all to life and nourished them upon good land. Now each plant stood as stripped and bare as a skeleton. They were gone forever and with them the dreams that the sun and rain had induced the farmer to dream.

He walked to the middle of the field and knelt down among the twisted plants. Taking hold of one of the naked stalks he jerked its roots from the ground. Holding it in his hands he said, "There is a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted." Coming to the edge of the field he handed the beaten plant to me. "Go tell

John to put the plows on the tractors. Then you call the hired hands and tell them to be here early in the morning," he said calmly, but with his jaw line still firmly set. "We're going to plant."

"But," I protested strongly, "we will be a month and a half behind. The young plants won't be able to stand the hotter weather."

Looking at me determinedly he stated again, "We're going to plant." With that statement he turned and walked away from the field. His shoulders were erect, and he walked with long, rushed strides.

So plant we did. And when it seemed many times that the crops would be sacrificed to the heat of the sun, the farmer walked barebacked across the fields. Each time he touched the plants with care and decided what should be done next that the plants might live. During the days and during the nights, he and his crew plowed, fertilized, and irrigated the fields. The work was never easy, and neither was it ever finished. Then one day the farmer announced, "It is time to reap," and the fields were slowly and judgingly deprived of their leaves.

That fall the crops were sold only three weeks after the neighboring farmers had finished selling the small portions they had managed to salvage from the hail storm. For the rest of the winter the farmer seemed to laugh easier and to be more relaxed than his neighbors. He knew he had fought a battle and won. Hard, tortuous work had brought him peace. He had not relied on crop insurance and salvaged remains. Nurturing the land he loved, he had gained his own respect from that same land.

The winter snows came and the land seemed to sleep. Rocking comfortably again in the leather rocker, the farmer dreamed of the coming spring. I watched him as he rested there. Once his jaw moved and set in a firm line and his shoulders stiffened. He was dreaming of other battles that would have to be fought. Some he would win and some he would lose. But Dad would never lose his love for the land beneath his feet and for the sun, rain, and hail upon his back.

Haiku

It does not matter—
The changing of the seasons.
Leaves will always fall.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN



Haiku

Pink water lilies
resting in beauties wetness
Jump, unkind green frog.

—JOAN ROOT



Vanity

—MARGARET HUNTER

ODE TO A SEEDLESS GRAPE

Hang there on your sickly stem
and cast your perverted image in the
stainless steel border of the fruit counter.

I will not decry your impotence,
nor will I speak of the paradox of
your soulless society.

I can but watch the building
of Babel

And sorrow in the knowledge
that

One does not speak of fertility
to a seedless grape.

—JAN SAMET

Limerick “God Bless You”

There once was a college professor
Whose nose was more longer than lesser;
Each time that he sneezed
It caused such a breeze
It blew students back a semester!

—LINDA BREWER

Collapse?

Remember in Britain an ancient wall
Built by the Roman legions of Gaul?
They crossed the channel, so write the scribes.
And conquered and enslaved the Saxon tribes.

To insure against the territory's fall,
The Emperor Claudius constructed a wall.
The remnants of it can still be found
Although much of it has fallen down.

Yes, much of the wall has passed away,
And ancient Rome is in complete decay.
In this is there a moral for all?
The bigger they are the longer they fall.

—JIM SLOAN

The Light Found

—MYRA MORRIS

The old man ambled down the deserted street obviously going nowhere, but simply passing time . . . time, an element he had once possessed in great quantity, but now slipping away, slowly draining his main strength. Time was once something hopeful, joyful, and bountiful; but now it had become sad, scarce, and slowly dying. In youth all things are possible, and one can be hopeful in searching for a meaning or for a purpose in existence; however, as age creeps on, the possible seeps into that which is probable, wistful so that it moves away and becomes a lost hope, taking with it time and youth.

Alone and weary the old man realized the complete uselessness of his being. He looked back mentally to his first years of manhood when he had boldly set out upon the open sea in an insane desire to devour life to its fullest extent in order to obtain some kind of purpose or meaning. From year to year and from port to port he traveled in the great search for life.

He saw the beauty in a scarlet sunset far out on the horizon and wondered if he had found the answer in that moment of splendor. He walked the streets of each new port scanning the faces of myriads of human beings for one that could help him. His whole being became possessed with the idea that he must find an answer. Seeing a happy child run in play, he would wonder if he knew the answer. His life was not happy; he was not satisfied, and he could see no reason for his being alive.

As the years passed, the sailor's yearning for adventure subsided. The "lost chord" was not

found, and defeated he returned home. No longer was there any youthful hope or constant optimism; still, he felt that there was an answer and that there was something there if only he could reach out and touch it. Now alone, friendless, and unhappy, the tired old sailor waited for his life to end. He had gained nothing from life, had not found any reason for his existence, and was exhausted in the quest for purpose.

The street was dusky except for a few lights from the drabby apartments which made shadows appear along the walk. Occasionally a car rushed by busily on its way to some important appointment. All at once the old man heard a voice call to him. Upon turning around, he noticed a little girl sitting on the steps leading to one of the apartments.

"Hello," she said. "Won't you come here and see my cat?"

He was quite surprised at this question, but walked back to the little girl. She was very thin with large eyes, straight brown hair, and a dirty face. Her dress was torn, and she had no shoes. The little kitten was equally pathetic with eyes like marbles.

"Don't you like my cat?" she began again. "His name is John."

The old man was at a loss for words. Never before had he talked with a small child. To him children were objects far out of reach. They were not human, but were happy little creatures that lived apart from the rest of the world. Somehow he had always resented their happiness because it was so natural. Finally he was able to stutter, "Why . . . uh . . . yes, that is a nice cat. Did you say his name was John?"

"Yes, I named him for our milkman. Do you have a cat?" she asked.

He thought for a moment. He felt so strange talking with a little girl. She did not seem unusual at all, especially talking about a cat. "No, I never had a cat. When I was a little boy, though, I had a dog."

"What was his name?" She put down the kitten, and it walked down the stairs.

"He didn't have a name," he replied.

"Didn't have a name? You're an odd person." With that she put her elbows on her knees and rested her chin in her hands. "I sure do like your beard. It looks like my uncle's. He's a horse trainer. How long have you had it?"

He felt his beard, never having thought much about it before. "Oh, I've had it a great many years, more than you have been living."

As he looked at her, he had a funny feeling inside. She was so sincere and so interested in him. She was poor, lived in a drab environment, and yet she seemed thoroughly content with her life. "I wonder what makes her happy," he thought. "I wonder if she has found a reason for living."

The little kitten was playing with his shoe laces. He bent down and picked it up. Immediately it stuck out a tiny, pink prickly tongue and licked him on the face.

"See!" she squealed, jumping up from the step. "John likes you, too. He doesn't lick everybody!"

Suddenly she bounded down the steps and came to him. Reaching up, she stroked the kitten. "You like him, don't you?"

All at once a glow rushed through the old man. The look on her little face as she looked up and the feel of the soft fur at his neck made him relax for the first time in his life.

"You have a very nice kitten," he said, sitting down on the stairs.

"Thank you," she replied, while beginning to hop on the chalk hop-scotch marks along the sidewalk. "You may come see him any time . . . Have you ever played hop-scotch?"

"No."

"It's lots of fun. Come over here and I'll show you."

Then for the very first time in years, the old man looked up and smiled. "Do you think you could show me?" he asked. "I used to think it was sissy when I was a little boy."

"Sissy? Of course not," she laughed. "You could probably do it better than me."

Immediately the old man was filled with a sort of childish joy. He had never understood why it would be so much fun to hop around between white marks, but now he was actually excited at the opportunity. As he got up, he let the kitten go. Then he looked at the little girl there waiting. For a moment his mind swirled. His whole life passed through his mind in one split second. He saw himself hurrying from city to city, running and running. His whole life seemed hurried and wasted. Now, he had sat back and let things happen to him. He was going to play the ridiculous game of hop-scotch! Was this it? Was this the answer? He began to smile, and as he walked to the little girl, he looked up and saw John running into the street, into the path of an oncoming automobile.

"John!" screamed the little girl.

She started to run into the street, but the old man jumped and pushed her back. He dashed out and grabbed the kitten, but instantly headlights blinded him. The car did not have time to stop.

Released by now lifeless fingers, the kitten bounded back to the sidewalk, and a sobbing little girl ran into the building and disappeared.



Silver Bells

North wind retreats
To his icy resort
Leaving the earth
To his consort
Of spring.

She with the gentlest,
Fragrantest breezes
Bathes barren earth;
With new life she eases
Its pain.

—PHYLLIS FOY

A Smile

A smile, a gentle smile
Sunkissed with animation,
Beckons all earth to bow
Before its master's feet
And glean the warmth, the charm, the love
Of its reflected rays.

Why?

—ELIZABETH OLDHAM

The Keane paintings are the latest rage of high school and college girls, each professing to have the most meaningful, the most significant in her possession. Whether to keep abreast of the current fad, to find superficial pleasure in this "different" style in children's portraits, or to feel a response completely personal according to the subject and its placement within the framework of the Keane gallery, a girl must have one of these paintings, or at least a variation of the style, hanging upon her wall.

Mine is "Pals," and I am the little girl dressed in red shorts and yellow t-shirt. My pal is a little girl dressed in blue. We are standing against a wall, and the wall could be that of a building—a school, a church, an apartment house—or it could be just a blank, bare wall. We stand as though we face the world looking at us two alone. We stare out, and the world stares in upon

us. The question in our eyes is reflected in the eyes of all who gaze back at us. Silly, why that questioning look? Perfectly obvious it is that we are really pals.

For those with analytical minds, our colors are symbolic. She wears blue, melancholy, retreating, futuristic as in a sense of infinity. Blues are cool, but why hot coolness in contrast to the warmth of red and yellow? Sometimes red and yellow warmth is only color-deep, not all in all within and giving out, but put on to suggest and deceive as a mirage does. Gay red and yellow colors splashed beside the still, sad blue do not clash with or erase that other mood. The two blend to complement, and the gaiety tries to hear, to lift from melancholic depths the color which gets its being from reality.

Red and yellow are also anger, love, passion, cowardice, defiant, but afraid. They contradict each other and do not look pretty together. Red and yellow dominate to protect. They shout not to hear the oppressive quiet of the passive, pallid defenseless. I love my big, loud red and yellow colors, but sometimes I get tired and want to quit because no one is listening or seeing, and my little pal in blue nearby knows why. She knows why I want to escape as she knows why blindness and dumbness afflict the watchers.

But we are pals in spite of her knowing and my persisting. My arm drapes over her shoulder, her hand reaching up to clasp mine. She does not resist me even though the eyes beg her to, because she cannot let me be less strong than she. The world does not know how weak I am, for it sees my protectiveness overthrown and at once appearing as the strength. But I am supported from beneath and close following the question in my eyes is the answer.

Prose Probably Published Posthumously

—JAN SAMET

I often wondered what it would be like to know I was going to die within a short time. I guess my damned deaf fairy godmother must have thought I was wishing instead of wondering and decided to get off her fat can and grant me a Cinderella-type wish. Funny, Cinderella was changed from an ash-covered kitchen maid into a royal matron; for my miraculous transformation, however, all I get changed into is simply ashes. Funny little problem, cancer. Somehow, it loses much of its humor when you have to rationalize death to find an answer.

If my introduction sounds facetious, it is. Don't worry, though. I do have cancer and I am going to die in several months. It's just that I have discovered how to rationalize death, and such a discovery is bound to make one a little punch-drunk.

If you're wondering how in the hell I can cope with such a dismal fate and even go so far as to laugh about it, the answer is simple. I intend to achieve immortality of a literary variety by telling the whole damn world how it feels to die. Sort of make my death an event in your life. Ironic, isn't it? Unfortunately, it is unoriginal, though; many others have sought the key to life eternal by an infinite variety of grandstand plays.

Death is a fascinating subject. College freshmen are impressed by it because it's so cool; preachers are repressed by it because all the dead are pious; morticians are supported by it, quite well, I understand; and modern poets are depressed by it because there is no market for ambiguous epitaphs. As for myself, I must admit I'm not over-elated about the whole damn thing.

There are, however, a few redeeming aspects about an early exit from these gloryless fields. I won't have to worry about the unemployment problem, for, contrary to popular opinion, the devil has no use for idle hands. My nation's unrelenting fight to purchase democratic enlightenment for the world by talking capitalism to death at home doesn't bother me. Why, in some of my more carefree moments I can even ignore a few of the obvious parallels between "The Great Society" and 1984. Women don't worry me, for I won't be around to see any of my fruits of their labor. Religiously speaking, all my conflicts have been resolved. Why, I doubt I would feel even a slight twinge of self-righteous indignation if Billy Graham replaced "Outer Limits" again.

Well, gentle reader, "The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea, The plowman homeward plods his weary way," and I have a wake to celebrate. I promised to tell you how it feels to die, and if I must continue in such an honest vein, I have to admit it doesn't feel too bad. And so I leave the world and the darkness to you.

The Wax Man

—DOUGLAS COMBS

"The gong on the clock done sounded, sir. Ya ain't got much time left, 'ave ya?" No, I thought, I 'aven't got much time left, only three 'ours. I guess my death is justified though, seein' as 'ow I killed me wife and all. She deserved it she did, the old bat. I don't really see 'ow I got mixed up wif 'er. I didn't 'ave no use for women no 'ow. I did sorta like 'er, though, and she did like me. That was until after we was married, and she found out that I was the one what made them murderers' wax figures for the museums.

"Algernon," she used to scream, "ya get 'ore-self outa that old cellar an' away from 'em 'orrible figures."

'Orrible was they? She should 'ave taken a good look at 'erself before she called anything 'orrible or ugly.

That old woman would yell at me for 'ours sayin', "Don't do this, don't do that, now ya be nice to mother when she comes." Well now, I put up wif that kinda talk for almost two years, and I wasn't goin' to take no more of it. I was goin' to do owoy wif 'er, murder 'er, I would. Me only problem was, 'ow was I goin' to go about me pleasant duty. Now there's right ways to do things and there's wrong ways, and I was goin' to do it the right way, so I wouldn't arouse no suspicion.

I got me ideas from them wax figures what I made. One killer cut 'is victims up and put 'em in acid. Another would smother 'em and put their bodies in a wall, and another would be so bold as to stab 'is victims wif a knife and leave 'em lyin' in the streets. All these murderers made only one mistake, they got caught they did. Not me, I weren't goin' to get caught. I was goin' to be clever about it, I was.

Oh 'ow I practiced; in the mornin' when she was shoppin', in the afternoon shoppin', when she was upstairs cleanin', and at night when she was sleepin'. My, but I was sly! While she was readin' the paper, I was goin' to come up behind 'er, put me silk 'andkerchief 'round 'er neck and strangle 'er. I didn't yet know 'ow I was goin' to dispose o' the body.

It was a clever plan, it was. Me old lady didn't 'ave the slightest idea o' what was goin' to 'appen to 'er. It woulda worked too if she 'adn't started an argument the night I was goin' to do away wif 'er.

"Algernon," she said, "I've 'ad about as much as I can take. Ya got to make a choice; it's either them figures what go or I go."

Well, I told 'er them figures was my life. Now that really got 'er mad. The next thing I knowed she was runnin' downstairs wif me right behind 'er. When we got in the cellar, she started to turn up the heat. She was tryin' to melt me wax figures, she was. I couldn't take this, so I grabbed the knife outa Jack the Ripper's 'and an' stabbed 'er in the throat. She didn't make a sound.

Now that she was dead, I 'ad to find a way to get ridda the body. Since she died tryin' to destroy the things she hated most, why shouldn't I, ya might say, bury 'er wif 'em?

That's what I did. I boiled the wax and set me wife in the position I wanted. If they only coulda seen me. I was so careful when I molded the wax around 'er. I even left the knife in as if it were part o' the figure. She was better lookin' dead than she was alive.

It were almost two months before anyone came to the house to check on the calls o' the neighbors about not seein' me wife for a long time, My, but I was nice to 'em. I showed 'em the upstairs, the downstairs, and even the cellar. While we was in the cellar, I showed 'em me wax figures, goin' from one to another tellin' who 'e was and what 'e did. Me greatest feelin' o' pride came when we got to Jack the Ripper. As I explained 'is methods to the officers, I stepped on the platform to give an illustration. Upon ascendin' the platform, I was confronted by me wife's waxed body. I used 'er for the victim. After me demonstration, the officers said they 'ad to leave. I agreed and started to get off the platform. As I did, me foot became entangled in the chair in which me wife was sittin'. When I fell, the chair and me wife came wif me. When we hit, the wax I 'ad so carefully molded about 'er cracked and splintered, sendin' pieces o' wax across the floor. There she lay, visible to everybody. I was betrayed by me own clumsiness.

It's almost the end o' me now, only a few more steps to walk. I do hope they make a good likeness o' me.



CLEAVAGE

—NANCY NOBLETT

THE DEMISE OF THE JEW-GOD

Head of Zeus? — stead-dead rocks rack
Like other god-GODS — now play toys
For weird little ol' boys; who, slant-eyed,
Gaze at Olympia on fire — where ooze rots
Snakes' guts in an outdoor toilet:
the jungle stinks.

Behold! sick Jupiter ——— or is it dead, too?
Look, Jehovah, look! Look past Past and see
Ol' Zeus and Jupiter fall. Jew-God Jehovah,
last past gods plod,
lone stone standing ——— none
But worms inhabit, insect's fossils remain; when
Gods die, smug bugs smile.

Once Great God, you old Jew — fast fleeting,
Winkled, great cataracts, You, too, Jehovah?
Go, Jehovah! Old folks' home down doom impending
About one mile and a half . . . Trod God, trod
on ——— you tried, you tried.

O Great God LOW-YIELD-ATOMIC-BOMB!
Gods rot . . . but say, are you new? Come, do! and
Reign over us O new and young God — sheer muscle!
And if you must — and you must — just
Rain down on this jungle some active dust; but,
We beseech, only club shrubs, steer clear of men—
those weird little men, slant-eyed,
Save them you must, O God . . . You just must save
those little men!

O Great God LOW-YIELD-ATOMIC-BLAST!
No god greater genius got ——— Clear
Smear, as rubbish shrubbery disintegrates—
but not them. Hurrah! Now, on
Stilt tilt ——— a real deal — to still kill, to thrill . . .
Ah! thanks for clarity; how much more fun to play
When one can see clearly, unobstructed,
the slant-eyed monkey he's aiming at,
pray.

—RICHARD T. MARTIN

The Little Mountain Church

—BILLIE ALLEN—

I rode through the Sunday morning silence of the little town which was comfortably settled amidst the great rolling North Carolina mountains. When I arrived at the Baptist church perched on the side of a gently-sloping hill, I slipped into the small sanctuary. I sat there on the crowded pew seeing the little church and its people as I'd often seen them — just another Baptist church and just another congregation. But suddenly I realized the beauty that this church displayed. I began to see its strength and dedication and perhaps understand the way of life it represents.

The sanctuary had no rich carpet, elegant furniture, or bright lighting. On the contrary, the carpet was worn, the furniture was abused, and the single light was dim. Most of the light in the room came in through the small stained glass windows. I noticed the quiet, unpretentious glow that this light cast on the old wooden pews. The pulpit and the choir loft looked as if they had been there forever and always would be. A bowl of perfectly fashioned roses sat on top of the piano. They not only cast an aura of beauty upon the room, but also reflected the tender loving care of an old man now gone.

As the organist played the prelude, people sauntered in to get the few seats that were still unoccupied. The large choir filled the loft, and the pastor seated himself in his chair behind the pulpit. We stood to sing the first hymn, and I turned to share my hymnal with the woman who stood beside me. She was somewhat shorter than I, and her kind face harbored many wrinkles. Her greying hair was pulled back in a little knot, and in her hand she carried a Sunday School quarterly and a Bible. She accepted the hymnal with a sweet smile, and we began to sing. And such singing! Involuntarily I thought of the reserved, unenthusiastic singing of the members of my home church and listened with wonder to the

bursts of joyful singing coming from these people. The woman beside me was as earnest in her singing as any of them. It's true, she sang loudly, and perhaps she didn't always keep the tune, but she made "a joyful noise unto the Lord!" A little girl in front of us turned once to see where the noise was coming from. But the lady didn't seem to notice—she just went right on singing.

After the congregation had taken their seats once again, the choir stood to sing an anthem. It was no great masterpiece, but it came from sincere hearts. I noticed one young man in particular. His brow was wrinkled in deep concentration as he sang, and he never once looked up from his music. As the choir sat down, the woman beside me sighed as if the beauty of the song was too much for her, and tears came into her eyes.

The pastor then began his message. In simple, direct language, he told what was on his heart, and the people, except the children drawing on the church bulletins, listened attentively.

Soon the service was over, and I was introduced to and greeted by several friendly members. Outside on the sidewalk, the people were talking to the pastor and to each other, and some were hurrying home for Sunday dinner. I stood there as the little woman who had been sitting beside me put her arm around me and presented me to the pastor. I realized that this woman represents those who are the foundation of that church. She never misses a church meeting and also that she represents a kind of mountain people and a way of mountain life. She reared four small children alone when her young preacher-husband died. She managed a farm and worked to make a home for them. And she succeeded—for her children are fine, useful human beings. She is one of the simple mountain people who have strength and faith and belief in the truly important things in life.

I left that little church feeling very proud. The church had shown me that deep-rooted, enthusiastic religion is still alive and that simple, believing people are still a part of our nation. I was proud because the little woman of my story is my grandmother. If some of her strength and love, her mountain way of life, is a part of me, then I am thankful to her.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Walking nightly through steel
And glue-sand canyons
I find that you
Come to me now
More than ever.

Or perhaps it is merely
That I invite
The lengthening shadows
Into conjuring
Phantasmagoric fantasies
To ease and calm
My inner hunger.

There — The tall girl
Walking past the shop windows—
She has your form
And your hair—
But gone so quickly!
Yet as surely there
As the fine snow
Which swirls
About the lights,
As would eddies of senses
Round a vortex
Of need and desire.

Only yesterday
Your hands belonged
To a shopgirl
As they flew
Like gull wings
Upon a package
Being wrapped
And rested like swans
Upon the final bow,
And I dazedly took it
And called her you.

It seems so strange
That I should remember
The coldness and ice
That was December.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

TWICE

Pink dogs always leave bloody trails.
They bite—again and again—their own tails.
Why should they tell those vicious lies
Which carry with them watered eyes?
“Her”
She was called, a single unknown entity
casting
 two shadows
a red wind-blown leaf
 falling
 earthward.

Twice stately ships sailed on.
O Sea — touch this vanished limb.
Grow forever and forever and take this
Face cloth from this visage.
O insects of an hour, rising race.
Earth may yet through ages past meet
Her earthly worst.
Yet Don Juan stands, bewildered.
The pink dogs continue their deathly dance!
 (Unanimous)

RALPH HOAR

ONCE

Ambition the height of restless minds
Lauded by present speed in the wisp of time.
Onward each presses through sorrow of wrong-doing
and within minutes, as relationships to eternity
are concerned, finis.
Why for on a trampled bed of ignominious souls
Does seething energy of lost direction
Consume the mass of all?
Then in the dusk of the last great dim of light
All will stop, for brief in the west shall appear
A flood of clouds in rising velvet vapor,
And amidst moaning winds we shall pass
 away

(Ominous)

—JIM SLOAN

Apogée

AWARENESS

I am aware of memories
That darkness makes acute;
Hill birches fluttering down to meet the road,
Sunlight spinning veils of pale leaf-shadows.

I am aware that hopes I gathered
And kept secret, in the stillness,
Seem as frail as tree-etchings
Shivering on drowsy water;
That this intimate silence with myself
Is vastness of sky no mountain knows.
This is eternity that slips by
With ominous swiftness of deep rivers
And leaves me alone.

—L. S. PALMER, JR.



The Trial

—JERRY PROFFITT

—“My God,” said the Duchess, “get your hand off my knee.” The Duchess loved to say things like that. When she did everyone looked at her. She liked to be looked at. The Duchess was well past the age that anybody would look at her unless she did something outrageous; so she did outrageous things all the time. I guess that psychiatrists would say that she was neurotic. She wasn’t, though. She was crazy. The family never admitted it. They simply snickered behind their hands and whispered that the old girl had gotten a little eccentric in her old age. They wouldn’t admit even to themselves that she was a looney. I knew she was a looney, though. I used to follow her around. Some days she would walk around repeating one phrase to everybody she saw. Her favorite phrase was “‘Nuts,’ said the Queen, ‘if I had ’em, I’d be King.’” The people she said it to would just smile and nod sagely. The Duchess would giggle about this and then go on. When the Duchess wasn’t repeating one phrase, however, she would carry on long conversations with people. Usually the people she talked to were

invisible. She always met them under the magnolia tree in the garden. One day when she wasn’t repeating a phrase I followed her out to the garden. I hid behind the lilac and watched her crawl up under the magnolia. I listened to her conversation with the invisible man for quite a while. I couldn’t hear all of it. I could only hear her side of the conversation. I think that the invisible man must have talked too softly for me to hear.

—“Now Nicholas, you naughty boy . . . now, now, behave. I have something I want to tell you. You remember that September morning that you and I watched the sun rise over the sea? Well, I’m pregnant . . . Nickie, what’s come over you? You need not worry, dear, we can be married immediately. What do you mean, Nickie? You can’t leave me like this, Nickie . . . You mean you don’t love me . . . Well! We’ll see what your father, the King, has to say about this. What do you mean, Nickie? What are you doing, Nickie? Nickie, no. Please, Nickie, I won’t tell. I’ll run away somewhere. Nickie!”

—Suddenly the Duchess was quiet. I peeked around the lilac, and she was sprawled under the magnolia. I could see the blood from where I was. People were running toward her then. The family had heard her screams in the house. When they reached her, she was dead. That’s the way it happened.

—If it please the court, this testimony coupled with the psychiatrist’s report should establish beyond a doubt that the defendant is not mentally competent to stand trial for the murder of his aunt. He obviously suffers from schizoid delusions of grandeur. Hence, I move that the court commit the defendant to the state institution for the criminally insane.

—Is there any objection from the Prosecution?

—No, your honor.

—Motion sustained. The defendant will be conveyed to the state institution for the criminally insane where he shall remain until the directors of said institution shall deem him fit to be released. Court’s adjourned.

SHADOWS

Listen—
 nighttime:
Hear the crickets,
The sound of leaves
 on a night of many winds
Two shadows heard.
The grey butterflies inside the flesh
 danced uncontrollable,
Two hands clasped tightly,
 entwining a sensation
 of dry rain.

A voice came,
 screaming in unkept silence.
A black cat
 walked on midnight.
Make a wish on clouded stars—
 unseen
Blue and greens melting
 on the unreal.
There was a sound of
 sifted stillness
It was a night
 that
 wasn't
 there.

—JOAN ROOT

FOREVER

"They brought in a new 'un today," he said.

"Yeh, I heard," said the other one who was rolling the cart down the corridor.
"Hit's a shame, too. Him bein' sech a nice lookin' feller an' all."

* * * * *

They'll be here. I can smell them and I smell the walls. Why don't they stay away? I smell the emptiness. The wall is cold and I don't feel it, but remember . . .

* * * * *

Don't take him away! He's all I have. He's a good boy, but . . . He didn't mean to hurt nobody. Just let me keep him. I'll take care of him, just please don't take

* * * * *

I smell the wet on the wall with my fingers. Oh, she was nice to me. But behind my back she laughed and laughed. My fingers warm. Her neck — pale and soft and my fingers — warm. I see it ringing. They're coming. I can feel them and their steps are here. The cold of it opening and I feel the light and I smell it and hear their breath.

* * * * *

"Put it on near th' door an' don't turn yore back on 'em," he said.

* * * * *

The cold of it closing and I hear the dark.

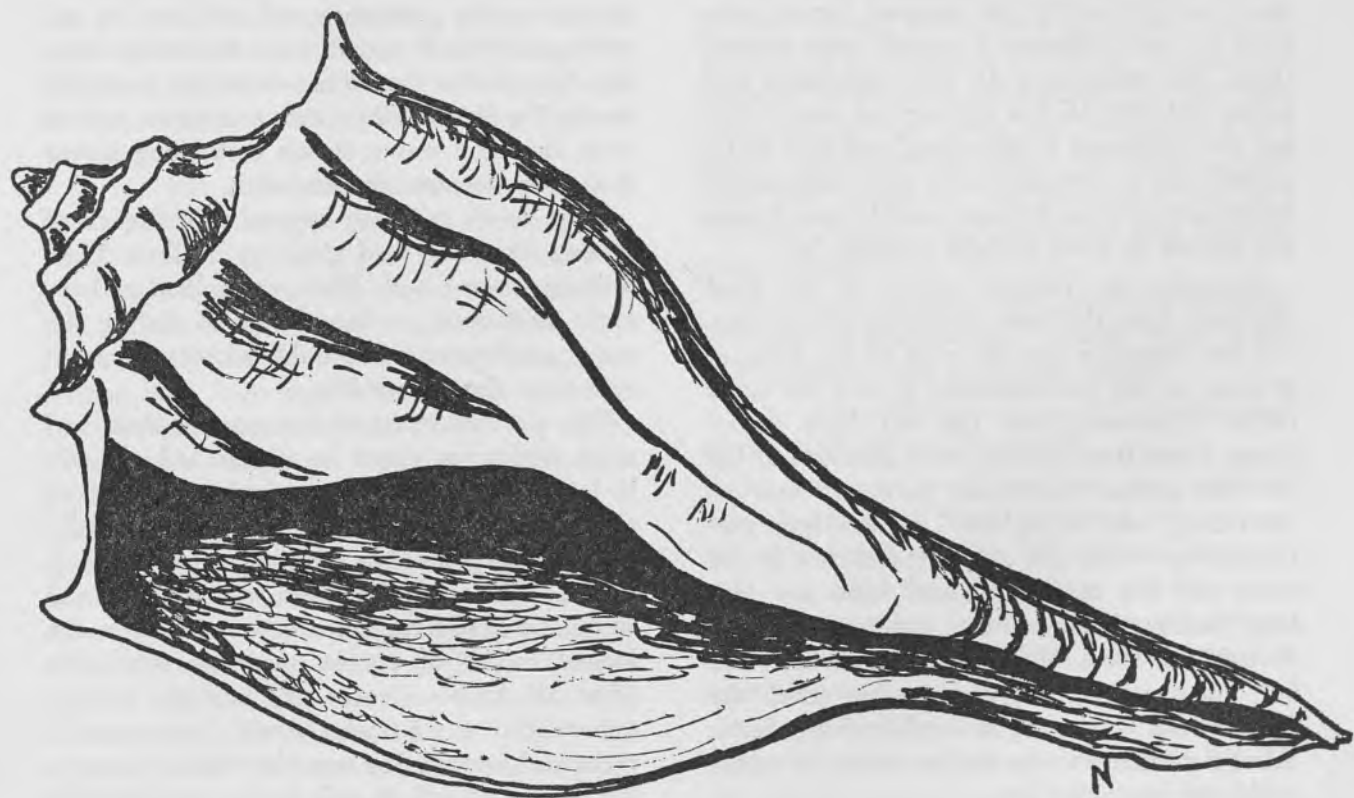
—CATHERINE POINDEXTER

A CALL AFTER YOUTH

Why am I calling after youth before
The years have told me that uncertain spring
Is gone? It seems a few young hours ago
That I could know a tall pine's breathless glimpse
Of sky, and walk through the woods in seeking dusk
With light fawn steps.

But not this quietude
So soon, this tiredness trees must know
In fall, of rivers during droughts, this slow
Erosion of rich earth. If youth must go,
Then give the sea my crystal dreams to pound
Against highcliffs, and I shall listen for
Their broken music through the long, slow years.

—L. S. PALMER, JR.



The girl was slightly drunk. Her brain was becoming numb. She knew that if she were to stand up she would lose her balance, and her hazy mind comprehended that she was almost to the point where she would be oblivious to herself and her surroundings. However, she was still hanging on to whatever soberness remained because tonight, instead of feeling the usual drunken giddiness, she felt in a rather pensive and depressed mood. She had a feeling, quite undefinable, that something was inevitably pushing itself into her mind where she would be forced to think about it.

She was a college junior from a small Eastern college that was almost expensive enough to be rated as socially elite, yet in reality was upper middle-class, giving the girls a feeling of inferiority when they were in the presence of the Bryn Mawr and Vassar set. She had always resented the school for its second-class snobbishness and the girls for their superficiality and misplaced values. However, sometimes in a moment of truth, such as now, while the effects of her drinking tore down the sham and made her face reality, she resented herself even more for not retaining a natural pose around them, but conforming to their standards and tastes. But after all, her mother had always told her she “belonged in this class,” and that to be herself and to associate with girls who would accept her as an individual would mean lowering herself to those socially beneath her.

Suddenly she became aware of the loud rhythmic song that was pulsating in her ears, and her attention was diverted to the moment at hand to her surroundings. It was the week before Christmas, and the old high school group, home from college, were gathered at the one big annual Christmas party. It was an “everybody who is anybody” is there type party, and yet while she sat in the corner of the room she felt strangely apart from her lifelong friends, while at the same time drawn strangely to them. She did not know what she felt, but one thing was clear in her mind; she felt she was witnessing a horribly funny farce. What the farce was she did not know, or rather could not face right then.

“I’ll have another drink,” she said to herself; “maybe then everybody—I mean everything—will be all right.” She stood up and not too steadily made her way to the bar. Near the bar her date, Pete Hayden, was busily bragging to her friend Alice about some terrifically tough grade he had made in a philosophy exam. His lack of attention to her and his conversation with Alice did not bother her, though, for ever since the group had been going to parties they had been just one big group. All of the boys and girls of the socially accepted class of their small middle-class town had formed an exclusive clique where exclusiveness, not sex, was the focal point. Of course there were exceptions. Brock and Sally had always gone steady and were now pinned. However, finding love within the group was rare, if not impossible. It was as if they knew each other too well. They knew that they were all weak, ladder-climbing status seekers, produced by an upper middle-class parentage who had instilled within their children false goals for obtaining a higher status—a status that they, as parents, had gotten close enough to only grab and crawl and hope for admittance; for in the small town the middle class was large while the richer class was painfully small. The line of distinction was great, and to cross that line was a strong motivating power that soon became an obsession.

Even Brock and Sally seemed as if instead of finding love, they had given up on love. Their attitude toward each other was a kind of lethargic indifference, a knowledge of sharing the same weaknesses that would master and motivate them throughout life.

The girl looked across the room at Pete, and as he caught her glance he winked at her. Lately he had been more serious when they were alone, and she feared that he would eventually ask to marry her. They did not love each other, both admitted this, but Pete was a senior and would be graduating in a few months. In the logical course of events, marriage was next. After all, to be a successful business partner you needed a wife who would be a socially successful hostess. She was also feeling a creeping panic that college girls feel at the prospects

True"

—ANNE LEWIS

of graduating and going to work as a career girl—a slow road to being an old maid. Pete was coming back to town to take over his father's insurance business. It would be a comfortable life without a great deal of change from the life they were leading now.

Just then the door opened, and in came Lane Shore with the usual attention that always accompanied his entrance, even in his days as the Golden Boy of the high school. A dark, intense boy with an unusual attractiveness, Lane had always been known as the Romeo of the school. He dated whom he wanted, when he wanted, and what he wanted—dropped the girls as suddenly as he had started dating them.

"Funny," the girl thought, "his good looks are fading fast." He was the oldest member of the group, now in his second year of dental school, and his dark hair was beginning to recede. His face was fuller, giving him a pudgy look, and one could tell that within ten years he would look dumpty and middle-aged. His actions and mannerisms showed that Lane also had noticed that his good looks, which he had always relied on in the past, were fading. His boisterous laugh was a little too fake, and his sarcastic cutting remarks betrayed his inferior feelings.

As the girl stirred her drink, she overheard Lane talking to another member of the group, "Yes, sir, this is a pretty good little town we've got here. There's not all of the rat race you find in big cities. There's a peacefulness here. As a matter of fact, I've been thinking about coming back here and setting up my practice. I've been talking around, and a lot of our crowd plan to come back here. Yep, think I'll be coming back. Why knock a good thing?"

The conversation made the girl feel slightly ill, and she walked back to the bar for another drink. All of a sudden she remembered part of a poem she had memorized last year in school. It was a part of "Dover Beach." "What was it?" she thought. "Ah love, let us be true to one another, for the world that . . . 'How did it go? Oh well, it's not important. But why did I think of that poem now?"

It seems that things of connecting memory follow one another, for in that moment the name George Galt came into her memory in a vivid flash; a flash that comes when you try to repress a thought for a long time and yet occasionally, such as now, it over-powers you with all of the forcefulness of repression. She wondered why she felt that she wanted to run, that she should be running away from this party down a green hillside in the blazing sun to the road on the edge of a deserted beach where she first met him. It was the summer of her senior year in high school, and he was walking along the water's edge, smiling inwardly as he always did, like he possessed some intangible secret. She never found out about the events of his life, the schools he had attended, his likes and dislikes, even his age, although he appeared to be about twenty-five. They never talked about themselves, but only what they thought. Every day they would meet at the beach and just talk.

She felt an awareness of self and an intensity in her thinking when she was around him. At the end of the summer he left as quickly and strangely as he had appeared, and yet they both knew that he had given her something of the secret which he possessed. She didn't know what this thing was he had given her, but thinking back on all their talks, one incident stood paramount in her mind.

They were alone walking through the shallow tide when she asked: "George, what is the most deprived type of human being?"

"The man without a purpose," he answered plainly and without hesitation.

She had not thought of George in years. It was almost as if what they had shared was sacred and that to think of it now in her present life, with the materialism of the group taking over in her, would desecrate and destroy a part of her that only existed in her memory of what she could have been.

She was crying now. She didn't know why, except that she wanted to remember that poem; she had to remember it—"Ah love, let us be

true to one another for . . . for what?" She could feel the panic ensuing within her. She was trapped within herself, and she wanted to tell Lane and Peter and Brock and all the rest that their faces were just blobs of wet dough that passed for human faces. But what was wrong, and what could she say?

She was aware that someone had approached her. Looking up she saw Howard Hensley. She had not seen him in years. He wasn't really a member of the group, for he was about thirty years old, slightly older than they. He had a genius I. Q., and politics had been practically an obsession with him. He had graduated with honors from college and had gone to Washington with the ambition of becoming a senator. However, from there on, her knowledge of him was scant. He had had some sort of a breakdown and was hospitalized for a year or so. Now he was back in town working in his father's law firm. What exactly had happened to him that had turned him into only a shell of what he once was, no one knew. Now he stood before her, a rather tall, sad man looking older than his years.

"I've noticed you've been observing the group. It's strange, isn't it?" He said as he sat down next to her.

Somehow, perhaps by the tone of his voice or the look in his eyes, she knew that he was thinking about the same thing she was thinking of, and her heart began to beat faster in anticipation of a facing up to something that she couldn't quite name. She didn't respond. She only looked at him, and in her eyes he saw the look of a cry for help and continued:

"I remember the parties we used to have when I was in college. They were just like this. I used to come to them and somehow feel out of place. I felt sorry for them all because they were engrossed in their superficiality, afraid to look at themselves. I used to ask myself why they were like this and after a while the answer came. It wasn't a surprising revelation, just the fact of recognizing something I had known all along.

"You see, these are the ones who will never outgrow their high school days. It was a time of popularity and security for them, and they can't break away from it. They left home, certain of accomplishment and recognition in the world. When they found that they had to be-

come someone in order to survive, they came back home running scared, their purposes and their dreams flung into some ditch, traded for purposes and successes achieved in the past."

"Is that what happened to you?" she could not help asking.

"Yes, however, I gave life a struggle before it got me. I fought with all the strength I had, but it got me and I'll never be the same because of it. I'm back now, but there is a difference between them and me. You see, I realize what has happened, but they—well, the evening will pass without a thought of what is the matter with all of them as they burrow here in their winter hole. They never knew what hit them, and if they did they wouldn't admit it, for the next worse thing to having a meaningless life is realizing that you have one. Always remember to follow your purpose. Don't let the world cheat you out of your self-respect." With that he got up and left.

The girl sat there and tears came to her eyes. As she pondered what Howard had said, the poem she had been trying to remember came unbroken out of her mind:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle
and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.

It was a good poem and it was true, for it described the way she and her friends felt. But the poem didn't give any solutions. It only stated a mood and a feeling. It did not say at the end, "Give up, you fool, and withdraw into your shell like a turtle when the world gives you a blow." It only states that we are here and we are swept with confusion and alarm. We must find a purpose and then go after it with all our hearts. One must not be beaten by life but rise above it.

She was very drunk, now, but she remembered a windy day and a boy on the beach. "George, what is the most deprived type of person?"

"The man without a purpose."

VISION

Isn't it funny?

How what we WOULD
and what IS
so differ—

Take (for example) us;

I never MEANT to hurt you—
Did you mean to hurt me?

The Greeks thought Fate was blind . . .

We think Justice is
Ridiculous, isn't it?
Nobody knows we ALL are?

—GAYLE BROOKBANK

REFUTED

Would you like to read my poems? I said—

I ain't much on that stuff, ya know.

I've some stories?

My kid sister'd go fer that!

Perhaps you'd like to talk?

Don't know if I got much in common with a gal like you.

What do you do? for a living, I mean?

I work fer it; whadda YOU do?

I

shed

a

frustrated

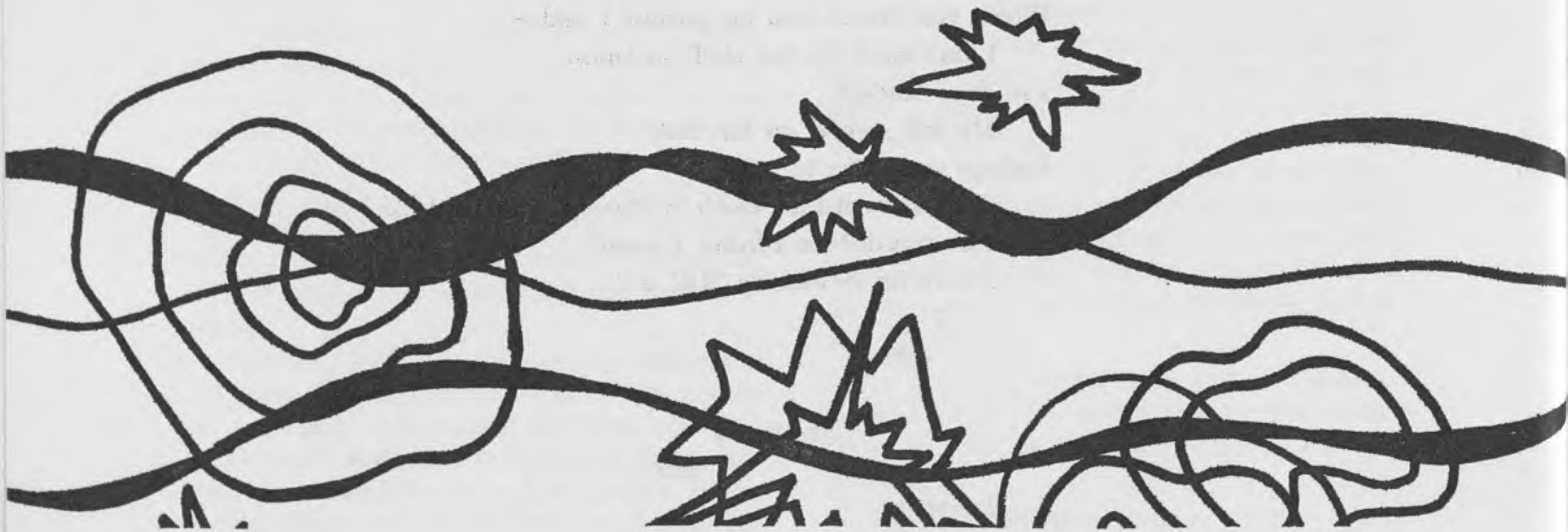
tear—

Privately.

RIDERLESS HORSE

Horses, hooves; dainty, small,
Beat sharply on the dead road.
Alone, bare, glistening in the
Morning sun.
A horse without a rider
Steps to the beat of the drums,
His nostrils flaring.
His velvet nose tingling
As the dewy air
Dries with the sun.
Every muscle taut; tense
The prance of the dead,
The dream of the dying.
Beyond—green fields
Where he once romped with
The butterflies.
Beyond—the cool shade
Of a familiar tree
The trickling of
A small brook.
Today I watched him as he
Proudly passed.
As he proudly placed each hoof;
His rippling copper body
His defiantly arched neck . . .
Right in step
To the beat, solemn beat,
Of the dying drum.
On . . . On . . . Gone.

—NANCY FALLON



Out of the Dark

Running down the sidewalk;
Skipping rope;
Chalk blocks and pebbles—
What is God?

One, two, three, O'Leary;
Ring around;
Red rover, come over—
Who am I?

I wish I had a little box;
Ten Indians;
Who put the cookie in the cookie jar—
Why are we?

London bridge's falling down—
The world is round.

—C. J. NEAL

TIME

A handful of sweet water
 Slipping through my fingers,
Plunging into the torrent of
 The little stream.
Being carried away . . . far away
 From my now cold hand.

—NANCY FALLON

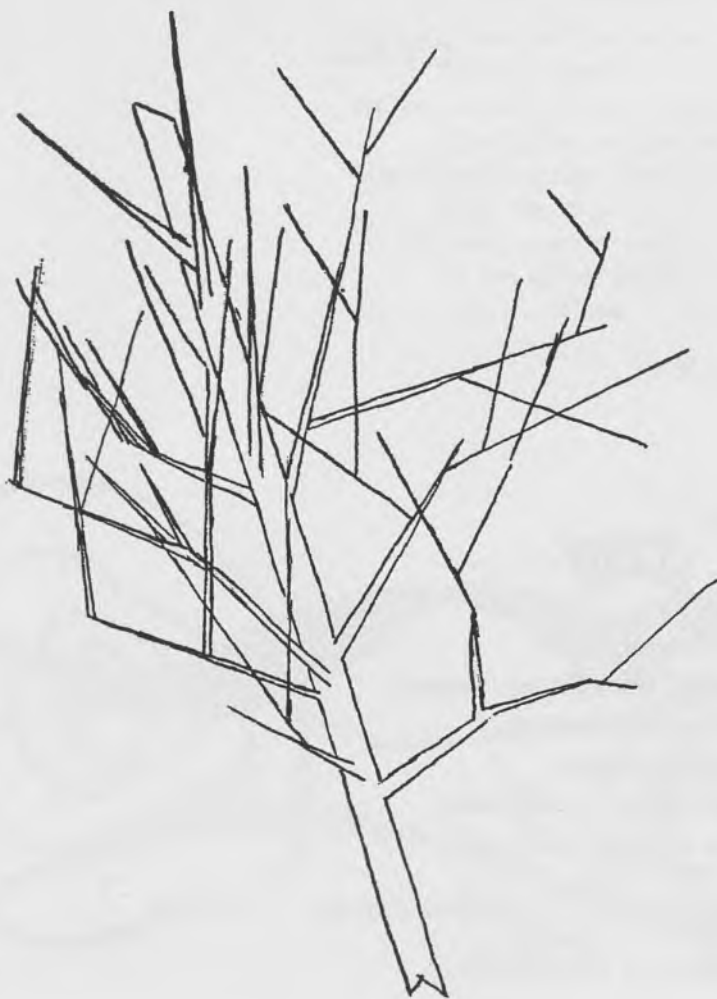
CEREMONY

Sometime within the night I woke,
Stepped ghost-like into your room
And stood watching as the coverlet
Rose and fell with your dumb sleeping.

And I knew that ever I strayed
A lifetime away or more, that I
Would ever and always return
Like a homeless stranger, chained
To my desire and to my need.

Yet on the dawning of the morrow,
Far from the day's unfolding sorrow,
I shall be gone—to Cytherea.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN



ILLUSION

I wake from dreams
In medias res
In medias res
Reaching for you—
To know your warmth
And the sweet musk odor
Of your hair
That calms my senses,
And the long curving
Warmth of your body
That cradles my comfort.

I knowingly now think
Of how often I've waked,
Each time knowing
That you were mine.
But now I wake and reach—
And you are not there.
You are gone—Yes but why—
Why stays
The fragrance
Of your hair?

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

A HAPPY PILL

She had a smile,
 A most wondrous smile,
And she worked it on me
 Quite often. Especially if
She knew I was blue and down.

It was witchery
 I call it
As I kissed her
 Full on her lips,
And her musical voice
 Crooned in my ear,
Melting my sadness
 And soothing my cares.

She had a smile,
 A most wondrous smile,
And she was mine—
 For a moment.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN



Of Mice and Men

—CATHERINE POINDEXTER

He walks slowly through the noisy streets of New York City, his lean, unshaven face a mere blur amid the activity of late evening. His shirt is dirty and smells of sweat and liquor; his jeans show signs of long wear without washing.

He stops and waits somewhat impatiently for the light to change and, as he steps from the curb, nervously plunges his hands deeply into his empty pockets.

The neon signs flickering on and off silhouette his lanky, trembling profile on the store windows as he passes.

He lengthens his stride a bit and begins a steady pace which he keeps up for what seems like hours. He is almost engrossed in a hypnotic trance as he delves into his own thoughts and hears the continual click of his heeltaps on the pavement. Suddenly he snaps back to reality when he turns a corner and is met with the glaring lights of Broadway.

His steps shorten, and he mingles unnoticed among the after-theatre crowd.

His eyes move anxiously over the faces of these well-dressed people in the "high-society" set. He seems to be searching for someone, no one in particular—anyone.

His wandering glance suddenly lingers on a small, timid, yet distinguished-looking man who

has just stepped back from the curb after failing to hail a taxi. The little man curses under his breath and heads for the nearest taxi stand. In his silent anger he doesn't realize that he is being followed at a very close distance.

As he nears a dark area near the taxi stand, a large hand gropes menacingly over his mouth and nose. He feels himself being dragged into the alley he had just passed. In sudden terror he claws desperately at the hairy hands that are now encircling his throat. Quickly he is overcome with exhaustion and suffocation and falls lifelessly from the deadly grip of his aggressor onto the musty, garbage-strewn pavement of the alley.

A hurried, desperate search of the victim's clothing reveals only two and a half dollars and a ticket stub.

With an expression of great shock and disbelief on his face, the offender turns away from the body and runs aimlessly down the street with the two and a half dollars clutched in his fist.

A mouse scurries across the alley, its search through the rubbish and filth proving as unrewarding as the murderer's search for his subsistence.

A CALL

I hear the thundering hooves of wind
Racing madly this November night.
'Tis the messenger of spirit wild.
Drawing me from this warm firelight.

... and fly free with me o'er lonely land
far from the haunts of men
for I am swift and there is no path
that tells where I have been.

A violent call through forest dark
Which speaks with savage longing
And answering back in leaping flame
A soul confined and wanting.

—JIM SLOAN



Lonely

—SANDRA TATE

Lonely . . . Man gropes alone. A step is taken . . . and retaken. A word is spoken . . . a head bows in humiliation. A hand is stretched forth, a slap is heard. The hand falls without purpose and answer back to the owner's side.

Away . . . away . . . from this cruel world. Let me hide. Darkness . . . secrecy . . . aloneness . . . Ah! The ecstasy of it. No more people with their cruel hates, their cruel loves . . . their selfish lives. Away . . . away!

Give me a corner. A corner cool and dusty and grey. Paint the walls black. A lock at the door. A cement floor to rest my weary soul. A dram of vinegar to satisfy my hunger. A spider with which to converse. Close the door tight. Lock it. Leave me. Leave me! Leave me here

alone. Let me rest my weary soul . . . I'll not mind the cold.

Alone . . . alone . . . four walls, a spider, a dram of vinegar. Silence . . . silence . . . Long agonizing cruel silence. Why doesn't someone say something? . . . It's cold in here . . . Terribly cold . . . and I'm alone. Alone with a spider and with my soul. No, this is not it. This is not what I am seeking. Let me out! . . . The door is locked . . . No windows. Hard floors.

Die? . . . No! Never . . . ! There must be a way. I have a will don't I? A will to live—beyond myself. Tear these walls down. Tear them down! Fling them away—after all—they are only my pretense of hiding from the world. Burst forth. Live!

Ah . . . here it is. Beautiful, glorious life! Yes, noise—turn on the hi-fi, turn up the t.v., put on some records. Paint the town . . . drink a few . . . sell your body . . . hook the needle. Crazy abstract paintings. Things, way-out, cool, beat. Bullets, movies, blood . . . Forget. Paperbacks . . . forget. Rhythm . . . forget. Movies, ice, dreams . . . forget. Conformity . . . forget

Stop! . . . stop! . . . selfish, foolish damned man stop. Pride . . . pain . . . sin . . . uncertainty . . . loneliness . . . fear . . . Why seek you your own becoming? Why hide behind a mask of pretense? Hide behind a wall of solitude, fear a slapped hand, or a snickering laugh? Why lose yourself in the modern city garden of see all, do all, be all?

Lonely man . . . listen . . . listen . . . "From without love comes to burst the barrier, from within love responds and hopes feebly." Listen, man, listen . . . Listen to the story of the ages. My story . . . yes, your story.

Robert Penn Warren and William Faulkner

A Parallel

—HELEN PAISLEY

I am quite convinced that there are very definite links between the works of Robert Penn Warren and William Faulkner. I believe that both writers are involved in an obsessive preoccupation with the South. This region serves as the setting for almost every work of both authors. Perhaps this is true because Warren and Faulkner have been intensely associated with the South and its problems.

John Aldridge makes an interesting statement in regard to the association of Warren and Faulkner with the South:

. . . I am absolutely certain that Charlotte Bronte wrote *Jane Eyre*, I am equally certain that nineteenth-century Calvinist England co-authored it. On the other hand, while I have good evidence for believing that a person named James Jones actually exists, I continue to believe, on the far greater evidence of his novel *From Here to Eternity*, that James Jones is really a pseudonym for the peacetime United States Army. As for Faulkner and Warren, I attribute the co-authorship of their novels to the South, which, aside from certain ailing portions of the moral universe of New England, happens to be the only section of the country left where . . . there is still a living tradition and a usable myth, where there are still vestiges of an entrenched class authority upon which it is possible, to the great advantage of the novelist, for Northerners to encroach, and where, against the background of Spanish moss, scrub pines, broken-down shanties, and deserted mansions, the suffering of the Negro provides the framework of guilt so essential to our peculiar brand of modern tragedy.¹

Naturally, Faulkner and Warren are concerned with the assessment of guilt on the South because of the slavery issue. Mr. Faulkner has explained that desegregation would result, but the process would be gradual. He states repeatedly in his work that the South was "accursed" by chattel slavery. Slavery was not a single act. It

was an evil which evolved historically. Faulkner saw, however, that the North was no great liberator or "bearer of light" — to use Warren's terms in his essay on Faulkner. Faulkner realized that this was a Southern problem and that the Southerners must solve it in order to rid themselves of their guilt.

Warren stated that desegregation will come when "enough people, in a particular place, a particular country or state, cannot live with themselves any more or realize they don't have to." That is when people realize that "desegregation is just one small episode in the long effort for justice. It seems to me that the perspective, suddenly seeing the business as little, is a liberating one. It liberates you from yourself."²

In an interview with himself Warren wrote the following:

- Q. Are you a gradualist on the matter of segregation?
- A. If by gradualist you mean a person who would create delay for the sake of delay, then no. If by gradualist you mean a person who thinks it will take time, not time as such, but time for an educational process, preferably a calculated one, then yes. I mean a process of mutual education for whites and blacks. And part of this education should be in the actual beginning of the process of desegregation. It's a silly question—Gradualism is all you'll get. History, like nature, knows no jumps. Except the jump backward, maybe.³

Both Warren and Faulkner saw that there was at least a doomed justice and a code of honor in the old Southern order. They realized, however, the incompetence of this order to deal with the new world infested with such individuals as the Snopeses, who have no sense of honesty, no code. These individuals represent the forces of "modernism" which Faulkner and Warren resented. Earlier in Warren's life, he saw the ruin and degradation of the South as a result of its change from agrarian to the capitalistic way of life.

Mr. Warren explains his own and Faulkner's

attitude toward modernism in his essay on William Faulkner:

. . . there stand . . . the forces of 'modernism' embodied in various forms. There are, of course, the Snopeses, the pure exploiters, descendants of barn-burners and bush-whackers, of people outside society, belonging to no side, living in a kind of limbo, not even having the privilege of damnation, reaching their apotheosis in Flem Snopes, who becomes a bank president in Jefferson. But there is also Popeye, the gangster of *Sanctuary*, with eyes like 'rubber knobs,' a creature with 'that vicious depthless quality of stamped tin,' the man who 'made money and had nothing he could do with it, spend it for, since he knew that alcohol would kill him like poison, who had no friends and had never known a woman.' Popeye is a kind of dehumanized robot, a mere mechanism, an abstraction, and as such he is a symbol for what Faulkner thinks of as modernism, for the society of finance capitalism.⁴

On the other hand, Warren represents a character who is not bound to society in any fashion. Frog-Eye, the completely free man in *Flood*, is almost despicable, humorous and entertaining though he may be. He has not been influenced by modernism in any way. Swamp rat he is and always will be as he lives his own type of life on a river boat. I would like to recall an excellent description of Frog-Eye:

The mature Frog-Eye is no ornament to society . . . He does not shave. He scratches when and where it itches. Which is almost constantly and almost all over. He has no marriage license. He has no divorce papers. When the time comes, he simply pushes 'em overside (the boat), so gossip has it. He drinks illegal likker. He does not give to the Community Chest. He has swamp-syphilis and does not hesitate to increase the incidence thereof. He does not pay taxes. He would cut your throat in your sleep. Unless, of course, you were his friend and he sober enough to remember that fact. He is not constructive in attitude. He does not have a Social Security number. In short . . . Frog-Eye does not believe in society. He is, to be blunt, free.⁵

Reading this description, one is able to realize that Mr. Warren sees the necessity for order and responsibility in society. Even though Warren

and Faulkner may be in opposition to modernism they perceive the evils of one who is not willing to become involved in the living experiences of ordinary man.

Warren and Faulkner are both masterful story-tellers. Both use history and nature as a backdrop for their stories. In the works of Faulkner, life patterns become collective experience. On the other hand, Warren's works are philosophical probings of moral life.⁶

At any rate, Warren uses more specific historical episodes than does Faulkner. *Night Rider* concerns the Kentucky tobacco controversy, *All the King's Men* is Warren's fictionalized account of the Huey Long story, and *Flood* relates the emotions involved in a town as a result of the Tennessee Valley Authority program.

As I have already stated, the works of Warren and Faulkner are set in the South. In Warren's essay on William Faulkner, he explains this fact in the light of Faulkner's work. I believe that this explanation may also apply to the work of Robert Penn Warren. In fact, this entire essay may be said to be an explanation of Warren's work as well as that of Faulkner:

The Faulkner legend is not merely a legend of the South but a general plight and problem. The modern world is in moral confusion. It does suffer from a lack of discipline, of sanction, of community of values, of a sense of mission. We don't have to go to Faulkner to find that out — or to find that it is a world in which self-interest, workableness, success provide the standards of conduct. It was a Yankee who first referred to the bitch goddess Success. It is a world in which the individual has lost his relation to society, the world of the power state in which man is a cipher. It is a world in which man is the victim of abstraction and mechanism, or at least, at moments, feels himself to be . . . As one of Faulkner's characters puts it, men 'had the gift of living once or dying once instead of being diffused and scattered creatures drawn blindly from a grab bag and assembled' — a world in which men were, 'integer for integer' more simple and complex.⁷

Faulkner is not saying that this was a golden age, nor was Warren implying such. Faulkner and Warren felt that this period of our history contained men who cherished an ideal, even if they failed to live up to it, and had a concept of

justice. Both men realized that this life was evil in many respects, and they saw that it was doomed. However, the present is not satisfactory because, as Warren puts it: "it is simply that no idea of virtue is conceivable in the world in which practical success is the criterion."⁸

Warren does not believe that Faulkner was so opposed to the present as to come to a dead end. Faulkner looks toward the future. Remember that *The Sound and the Fury*, "which is Faulkner's *Waste Land*, ends with Easter and the promise of resurrection."⁹

The constant ethical center of Faulkner's work is to be found in the glorification of human effort and human endurance, which are not confined to any one time. It is true that Faulkner's work contains a savage attack on modernity, but the values he admires are found in our time. The point is that they are found most often in people who are outside the stream of the dominant world, the 'loud world,' as it is called in *The Sound and the Fury*.¹⁰

Faulkner's world does contain many good people — people such as Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury* and Ike McCaslin in "Delta Autumn," who feel there are good people everywhere, at any time.¹¹

Perhaps Warren discerns a more hopeful future than does Faulkner. There is much hope for those characters in *Flood*. They seek a new life with a certain amount of nostalgia, but as Brad Tolliver awaits the flooding out of his old life in Fiddlersburg, he realizes that: "There is no country but the heart." Also, Amantha Starr, the heroine in *Band of Angels*, fervently seeks a new life as well as her own self-identity. Even to Jeremiah Beaumont's question, "Was all for naught?" Warren gives a hopeful reply.

I stated earlier that nature served as a backdrop for the works of Warren and Faulkner. Nature, however, is even more than a backdrop. Warren feels that in Faulkner there exists an interrelation between nature and man, something similar to the "Wordsworthian communion."¹² Studying Warren's works, I have found this same interrelation to be present, especially in his latest book, *Flood*. The fact is too not startling in view of the agrarian mind of Mr. Warren.

Man must learn the right relationship to nature, that of pride and humility. Faulkner's philosopher, Ike McCaslin, learned this relationship from the half-Negro, half-Indian Sam Fathers. In

Warren's *Flood*, Lancaster Tolliver was aided in learning this relationship by his only friend, Old Zack (a Negro). Through Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, we see that Benbow, the traditional man, has acquired this relationship, but Popeye, the symbol of modernism, hates nature and must foul it. He spits in the pure spring water and fears the woods filled with animal sounds.¹³

Warren continues to explain that there is a proper attitude toward nature and man:

The right attitude toward nature and man is love. And love is the opposite of the lust for power over nature or over men . . . For the rape of nature and the rape of man are always avenged. Mere exploitation without love is always avenged because the attitude which commits the crime in itself leads to its own punishment, so that man finally punishes himself.¹⁴

Of course, this is Warren's explanation of Faulkner's use of nature and man's attitude and relation to it. The preceding quotation, however, may be used to describe Warren's own works. For instance, Willie Stark, in *All the King's Men*, became the powerful tyrant he had always fought. He used his power ruthlessly and thus destroyed himself.

In *Flood*, Lancaster Tolliver, a man from the stock of the old order, such as Faulkner's Compsons or Sutpens, came "boiling out of the swamp and took Fiddlersburg." This town was in the hands of the Fiddlers, who were of the order of though not quite so detestable as Faulkner's Snopeses. As Lancaster Tolliver took charge of Fiddlersburg, he adopted many of the Fiddler characteristics. He forgot the old sense of honor and honesty.

However, he punished himself for his crime. When he became unable to live with himself and his family (he had married a Fiddler), he would go with the old Negro Zack to the swamp. There in the bowels of the swamp mud, "Lank" Tolliver would cast himself to the ground and cry until nature had reconciled his soul. Lank would always return to nature, to the swamp, from whence he came to find peace in his heart and to punish himself for his crime.

Warren's narrative style and ability have been loudly acclaimed. Mr. Bradbury has stated:

No other writer of our time, with the possible exception of W. H. Auden, has exhibited such fluency and narrative ability in so many styles. Only Faulkner has approached

his mastery of vernacular speech, and even Faulkner, whose highly personal flavor so permeates everything he writes, does not achieve the individualized authenticity or the wide variety of Warren's dialects.¹⁵

The skill of the dialects used by Warren and Faulkner is wonderfully expressed through their Negro characters. Negroes play a large and important role in the works of both men. Perhaps this is a result of their Southern life and their recognition of the Southern guilt which must be lifted by the Southerners themselves.

Warren states that the Negroes in Faulkner's fiction play the role of pathos or heroism. There is Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury*, who holds the Compson family together. She is the "vessel of virtue and compassion." Old Sam Fathers is the "fountain of wisdom" which Ike McCaslin finally gains. In *Intruder in the Dust*, Lucas Beauchamp, "the stiff-necked and high-nosed old Negro man," is accused of having shot a white man in the back. After averting a lynching, Lucas is proved innocent by an old lady and a boy. Lucas is the hero, "the focus of dignity and integrity." Through him a small boy learns a lesson in humanity — the recognition of grief as a common human bond.¹⁶

The role of the Negro in the works of Warren is very similar to that in Faulkner. Rau-Ra, the slave son of Hamish Bond in *Band of Angels*, is denied the father-son relationship. He is not sure, however, that he would have actually killed his father-master when he had the opportunity. Rau-Ru saves "Manty," the heroine, from the bushwhackers in a feat of heroism that he himself does not understand.

The same heroism and pathos are obvious in the Negro characters, Pretty-Boy Rountree and Brother Pinckney, of the novel *Flood*. Leon Pinckney, a preacher, was one of the most heroic and compassionate characters in the novel. Pretty-Boy Rountree had killed a woman with an axe, and he was electrocuted. There was, however, a certain dignity and pathos about Pretty-Boy that almost made me respect him.

Brad Tolliver, the hero of *Flood*, revealed a very interesting statement as he watched Brother Pinckney descend the thirty stone steps of the penitentiary after Pretty-Boy's execution.

His heart (Brad's) was, suddenly, filled with a dry, angry envy of that man. He wanted to be Leon Pinckney. He wanted to be Pretty-Boy. He wanted to be any nigger

[sic]. For he yearned for the simplicity of purpose, the integrity of life, the purity of heart, even if that purity was the purity of hate, that a nigger [sic] must have. That would be, at least, something.¹⁷

In his acceptance of the Nobel Prize, Faulkner told young writers that the only subject "worth the agony and sweat" of the artist is "the human heart in conflict with itself." Truly, Faulkner must believe this statement, for his style is consistent with this objective. He retains in focus his character, "the human heart in conflict," while evoking the ever-present past. Achievement of this is made possible through the rhetorical convention which paves the way for the psychological approach — projection of events through the mind of the character in the form of "interior monologue." This style may put a burden on the readers, but it requires an active correspondence between the artist and the reader in the same way as music and poetry.¹⁸

It seems to me that Robert Penn Warren follows the same plan as Faulkner. Reiterated in his work is the "human heart in conflict." Of course, there are the themes of Time's violence, of man's personal history, and of the state of lost innocence which may be found in the works of both Warren and Faulkner. I believe, however, that Mr. Warren is even more complex than Faulkner. His mastery of the language is so great that his work takes on the quality of poetic fiction. One may criticize this characteristic, but I maintain that this quality gives Warren added appeal.

The term "dark and bloody ground" may well be applied to both Warren and Faulkner. Because of their style, their rhetorical convention, and their use of the "interior monologue," they produce a dark and mystifying picture. Violence in their works allows the term "bloody" to be applicable.

It has been said that Faulkner is mystifying for the devil of it. Apparently, Warren has adopted this element as a personal quirk. This factor in the works of both men may be explained, in part, by the unusual chronological technique which they use. I think, however, that both men are quite capable of offering mystery as a puzzle or a challenge for their readers.

There are many other ties which bind the works of Robert Penn Warren and William Faulkner. Nevertheless, I feel that Mr. Warren is an excellent author of his own rank. Just as the

loss of innocence which the "alter ego" of childhood never allows the restless adult to forget, I will never forget the work of Warren. Needless to say, I have been greatly impressed by his artistry. As I read his novels, I can visualize the description of Warren related by Harvey Breit in *The Writer Observed*. I can see that "sculpture in granite" with his arms folded across that "hard-knit, barrel-chested torso" smiling that all-knowing smile. My reaction may be emotional, but I sincerely believe that the future will will embrace Mr. Warren with respect and praise.

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Beyond the Brink

—WEST LEIGH GLENN

So he sat there on the ledge overlooking the turquoise of a spring-fed lake, not knowing what the future held, only sure that with the hand of the woman whose ebony hair covered his thigh he could ascend to the greatest man-attainable heights of perfection. As he held the small warm hand and slipped the circle of eternal promise upon her slender finger, what thoughts of semi-meaningless incidents of infinite yesterdays—the age of decision the ancients called them—infiltrated his mind. Ah! how many blunders filled those seemingly never-ending hours; how many trees had he barked up—the wrong trees; why had simple, day-to-day living suddenly become such a complicated mess the cool June evening he had joined the mirth of his fellow-graduated high school classmates?

Had I only known then I was ridiculing simplicity: but who stops to analyze why he kicks the neighbor's cat, reads *Mad* instead of *Harper's*, buys weejuns rather than a non-popular brand name shoe? Maybe Freud, Jung, and all psychology wizards know the answers, but even they only after Fate has sanctioned the move.

* * *

There I sat some five, or was it six years later, boy turned man by trials and tribulations, care-free child turned philosopher by bucking the myriad of problems which implicate life. And there beside me on that smooth granite cliff overlooking the turquoise of the natural-spring lake—not murmuring the sweet meaningless nothings that sanction all other such climatic occasions, she reclined. Wisps of her dark mane fluttering in the evening breeze, caught a lingering ray from the reclining sun, and fell back among their companions covering my thigh. A pair of liquid black pools sought my face, my eyes, the serenity that separated us from humanity; they spoke all that emotional chatter fails to disclose. Gently, they tied the final knot in the bond that could not be broken—the bond 100 miles strong that would tear me from the reality of a moment among the gang at the Ivy Room, and warn me better of my next foolish move.

Oh laugh, you fool! Yet not with that same giddy, innocent laughter with which you once speculated your high school years. Oh no! those were the ultimate "faux pas's." The day you let yourself be initiated into the elite fraternity who

knew about, understood, and developed theories upon all aspects of the good life, and yet, adhered to the maximum baseness of which mankind is capable. Week-end you revolved around some misunderstood, ill-guided sex-pot who had fallen victim to the "man" you idolize yourself to be. Promises which were never kept, thanks to the wisdom of some higher power who had appointed you for better things. This was your real education, not the books, not the hours in the lecture hall; those only fortified you with fuel for your real education.

And that girl, that fascinating creature, that woman with newly-adorned hand then held by yours, her head resting lightly in your lap—she knew; she realized that your education was much more important than semi-consummated happiness; and she waited. She waited—there in the background, yet, always a silhouette on the horizon beckoning, "Come—join the sphere to which you belong."

At that glorious moment did I realize that my ego would no longer suffer me to pause in journey to let the glory of the anticipated moment fill my veins, encompass my soul. A minute! a second! The difference between failure and success. The ultimate wisdom acknowledged that the time for fulfillment was at hand. I was ready to graduate from the school of hard knocks—Phi Beta Kappa. The only sane course open to a being of my calibre lay in the initiation into the school of higher learning, LIVING, with the sole curriculum, BEING, and offering a single degree, Ph.D. of Perfection. I had but to enroll.

The figure beside me again became clear in my scope of vision. Her eyes were closed, the very constancy of her entire being summoning me to join, forever, the serenity of the stormy horizon—beckoning me to insure myself against the hazards of the future which could otherwise ambush me, and once and for all, send me sprawling—back to the pit of ignorance, meaninglessness.

We were married a year or so later as I remember it. Men aren't the perfectionists who remember the details. They remember it happened sometime in the infinite expanse of the past. They recall the sheer emotion the "Wedding March" resounding from the huge chapel walls welled up within them. They remember a madonna in white satin rustling to their side with a melody all her own, her eyes saying—"Yes, I've come to be consummated as your other half—till death do us part—but no! not even then."

Thus do I recall my enrollment into the School of Life. The road stretched forward—a tight-rope across a sea of blood-thirsty vermin. Many times I felt like diving in, ending all, giving up my pursuit of happiness, my constitutional right I had struggled so seemingly in vain to maintain. Yet, my madonna, the stronger part of my sphere, would always extend a word of encouragement, a hand to balance me, and I would proceed forward with smooth, graceful ease.



MAN

—SANDRA HUTCHINS

History

History in the broadest sense
Contains a little of all sorts of jumble.
Now and then it repeats itself . . .
Occasionally it's been heard to mumble.

—TOM PAGE

Literature

Literature is divided into different sections
Depending upon one's preference in selection.
Some adore poetry, others essays—
And many would set the whole lot ablaze.

—JIM SLOAN

DIRECTION

I stand on the brink of ecstasy,
My head back, lips parted, arms outstretched,
Yearning, praying, begging for that one second—
That one magnificence at my finger's tip.
There, I know it's there, God! I can feel it!
But grasp it I cannot, and know that I will not.

It will never be mine, but ALMOST,
There to haunt my days, and fill my nights
With *straining*, my soul searching for a love I cannot own,
My arms *reaching* until there is pain in my shoulders,
My chest *aching* with the crashing of my heart,
My stomach tight, my teeth in my lip.

I will stand forever on the brink of ecstasy,
Not knowing why I live FROM DAY TO DAY TO UNENDING DAY.
For if I stand forever almost there,
Is it not better to stand not at all?
Without that exquisite loveliness, why fret in a mundane world?
But I will stand, and go on standing,
And someday, perhaps, my loveliness will come.

—GAYLE BROOKBANK





THREE SISTERS

—DONNA GOETTSCHÉ

CONDENSATION

Please! Always!
I will, said I—
And I tried.

Never leave me!
I won't, said I—
And I lied.

Forget me!
I can't, said I—
And I cried.

—THOMAS ELLIS HODGIN

“AA WITH APOLOGIES TO POE”

—C. J. NEAL

Once upon a morning bleary
As I staggered weak and weary
Holding head in hand and thinking of the night before,
In my heart there was a sobbing
Keeping time with my head's throbbing,
Wishing I'd not been hob-nobbing
In that house beside the shore,
Wishing that and nothing more.

Flask of spirits, can of evil,
Be your potion from the devil
That has set my senses reeling throughout ev'ry pore?
I must make a resolution
To disperse all my confusion.
I will drink (here's the solution
That has come from my great lore)
Only milk and nothing more.

Cow-juice, medicine from heaven,
Better than that Seagram's Seven
That has caused me so much pain and so much woe before,
Will become the drink that saves me.
I will be alert, not hazy
(If at first I don't go crazy,
Stomping, raging, getting sore
From the lack of nothing more).



PIGEONS

—NANCY NOBLETT

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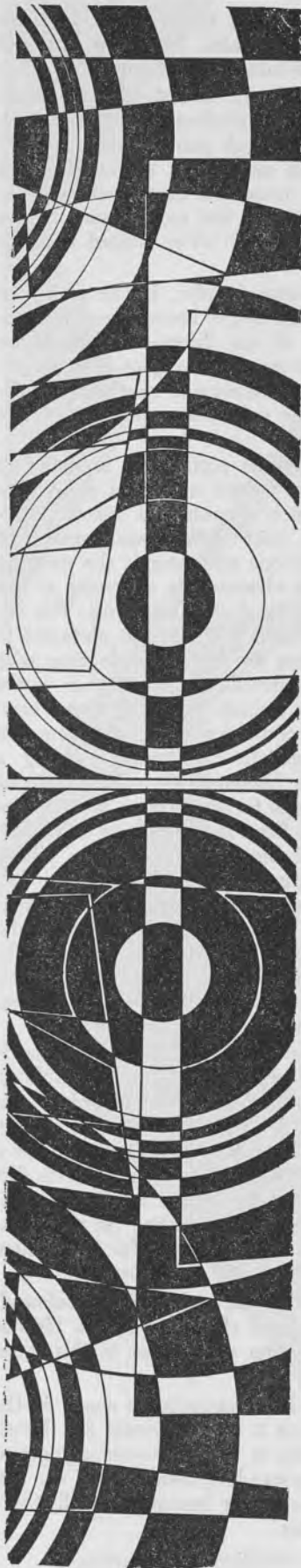
REVIEW: THE WINTER OF OUR
DISCONTENT

By JOHN STEINBECK

Reviewed by CLAIRE SCOTT

The problem in reviewing *The Winter of Our Discontent* is not in finding valid and interesting aspects to point out, but rather in deciding which of the many worthwhile aspects should assume precedence. *The Winter of Our Discontent* is a masterpiece in unaffected writing; brilliant character portrayal; dry, subtle wit; an exploration into the nature of man; and a revelation of man's aspirations and failures. I was captivated by Steinbeck's work through every page and without exception. By far the most entertaining part of the novel was the strange and amusing humor of Ethan Allen Hawley—from his affectionate names for his wife, such as "sweet fern," "cotton-tail," "bugflower," "duck blossom," etc., to the sermons to his canned goods. But even with all the entertainment and enjoyment I experienced in reading *The Winter of Our Discontent*, the final and ultimate sensation was depression. Depression at man's lack of integrity. It's difficult to express how one can so much enjoy the reading of a novel, and yet in the final evaluation, be so sorry he read it. Before I become too involved in paradoxes, I shall attempt to give my opinion on several characteristics of Steinbeck's writing by which I was most impressed.

The first characteristic which I noticed was the unaffected conversational style which Steinbeck so aptly employs. He begins his novel with dialogue, making no effort to give background information which the reader could use to aid his understanding of the conversation or to help him arrive at a true impression of the speakers. Rather Steinbeck plunges right in and lets the reader catch up. This definitely adds to the novel rather than detracts from it, but this style prolonged would become tiresome. Dialogue continues up to Chapter Three, where Steinbeck, at the opportune moment, begins his description and Hawley's introspection with a change in point of view from the third person to the first person. This continues to add to the conversational tone. The interweaving of these two styles



heightens the interest and adds depth to the novel. Many writers, in an effort to affect this casual style, trespass into triteness by trying too hard, but for Steinbeck, it comes as natural as talking.

A second outstanding aspect of Steinbeck's writing is his character portrayal, which in itself shows his amazing versatility. Each character is credibly typical, and yet unique in his own right. Perhaps the phase of character portrayal which struck me as most enlightening was the use of a few concise words to bring out the point he wishes to make. The meaning he wished to convey was made unmistakable by his brief, but comprehensive, statements. Take, for example, Joey Morphy, whom Steinbeck describes as a man who ". . . had a way of telling things that had happened to someone else in a way that made you suspect they had happened to Joey" (p. 10). Or take the promiscuous Margie Young-Hunt who had the look in her eyes that wives ". . . could never see because it wasn't there when wives were about." (p. 20). These are just two examples of how Steinbeck can put so much meaning into so few words.

There is one final point I would like to make --something which had a rather profound effect on me. I found that a parallel could be drawn between the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and Hawley's life. My attention was drawn again and again to the crucifixion by Hawley's seeming preoccupation with the symbolism of Easter. More than this, I was struck by the genuine sadness he suffered not because of Christ's agony so much as because of Christ's loneliness. Hawley seemed to identify with this loneliness—perhaps it was his loneliness of being an honest man. The crucifixion had deep significance for Hawley, and since reading this book, I also seemed to have gained a more meaningful perspective. I believe that the death of Christ can be compared to the death of Hawley as an honest and kind man—his sinking into dishonesty and unkindness. The causes of the deaths are not the same, it is true. One shows the highest morality and altruism, while the other shows immorality and selfishness; but the cause is not the object of comparison—it is rather the death of the two men, be it physical or moral. The period Christ spent in the grave corresponds to the dishonest and unkind acts Hawley committed after deciding to trade a "habit of conduct" for a "cushion of security." Indeed, it was almost as if Hawley's soul was dead, and a new and less good man had taken over his body. Hawley experienced a pathos of remorse when he discovered that his son had fallen into dishonesty. His regret and disappointment is so deep that he wavers on the verge of suicide. Here we find the similarity between the resurrection and Hawley's life when at the last moment, Hawley finds a new hope in his daughter, and she becomes his salvation when he realizes that he had to get back "else another light must go out" (p. 311).

THE SPIRE

By WILLIAM GOLDING

Reviewed by Betty Rogers

The British author, William Golding, created a sensation in 1959 when his novel, *Lord of the Flies* was published in paperback. Its influence was felt most strongly on college campuses across the country, and it became required reading in courses ranging from English to Religion. Most readers were startled by the horror of *Lord of the Flies* as Golding portrayed the gradual disintegration of a group of British schoolboys on a desert island. The desert island and the boys' regression to savagery is a symbol of the modern civilization and its more "sophisticated" inhumanity. Throughout his book, Golding tries to express a basic concept of man. It is an age-old one which man in modern society wants to forget. Golding sees man as basically evil. He knows that without the rules, laws, and mores enforced by an external society, man gives way to his powers of evil and destruction. Modern man, however, is saturated with the idea of progress; he feels that he is getting better and better in every way, including morality and spirituality. Golding is saying that, despite advancements in science and technology, man is basically the same as he has been for ages. This is not the only concept Golding sets forth. He sees man's goodness, his intelligence, and his sense of law and order. Man is a complex creature, both good and evil, but basically evil. This concept presented is the Christian concept of man. Christianity views man as a complex creature with many characteristics and potential, but man prefers to satisfy his own selfish needs, to do the evil because this is his basic nature. This same concept appears as the basis of Golding's latest book, *The Spire*. It was published in 1964 and has been read with great curiosity and eagerness by those who were so impressed with *Lord of the Flies*.

The setting of *The Spire* is the Cathedral Church of the Virgin Mary. It is a medieval church that has stood for many years. Structurally, however, it does not have the strength in its foundation to hold the spire which the dean, Jocelin, wants to build. There is a layer of gravel beneath the foundation, then nothing but mud.

The main character in the book is Father Jocelin, dean of the cathedral. All other characters are secondary; thus, the book becomes almost a character study of Jocelin. Jocelin believes that he has received divine inspiration to build a spire atop the

cathedral. He is determined to carry out his plan despite all efforts to stop him. Jocelin is obsessed with the idea of a four-hundred foot spire.

He was laughing, chin up, and shaking his head. God the Father was exploding in his face with a glory of sunlight through painted glass, a glory that moved with his movements to consume and exalt Abraham and Isaac and then God again . . . Chin up, hands holding the model spire before him, eyes half closed; joy—"I've waited half my life for this day!"

Roger Mason, the master builder, is the main obstacle of Jocelin's dream. Roger knows about foundations; and he is sure of one thing—the foundation of the church will not support the spire. He sees Jocelin for what he is, a disillusioned man with a foolish dream. Roger is the only other character of any substance.

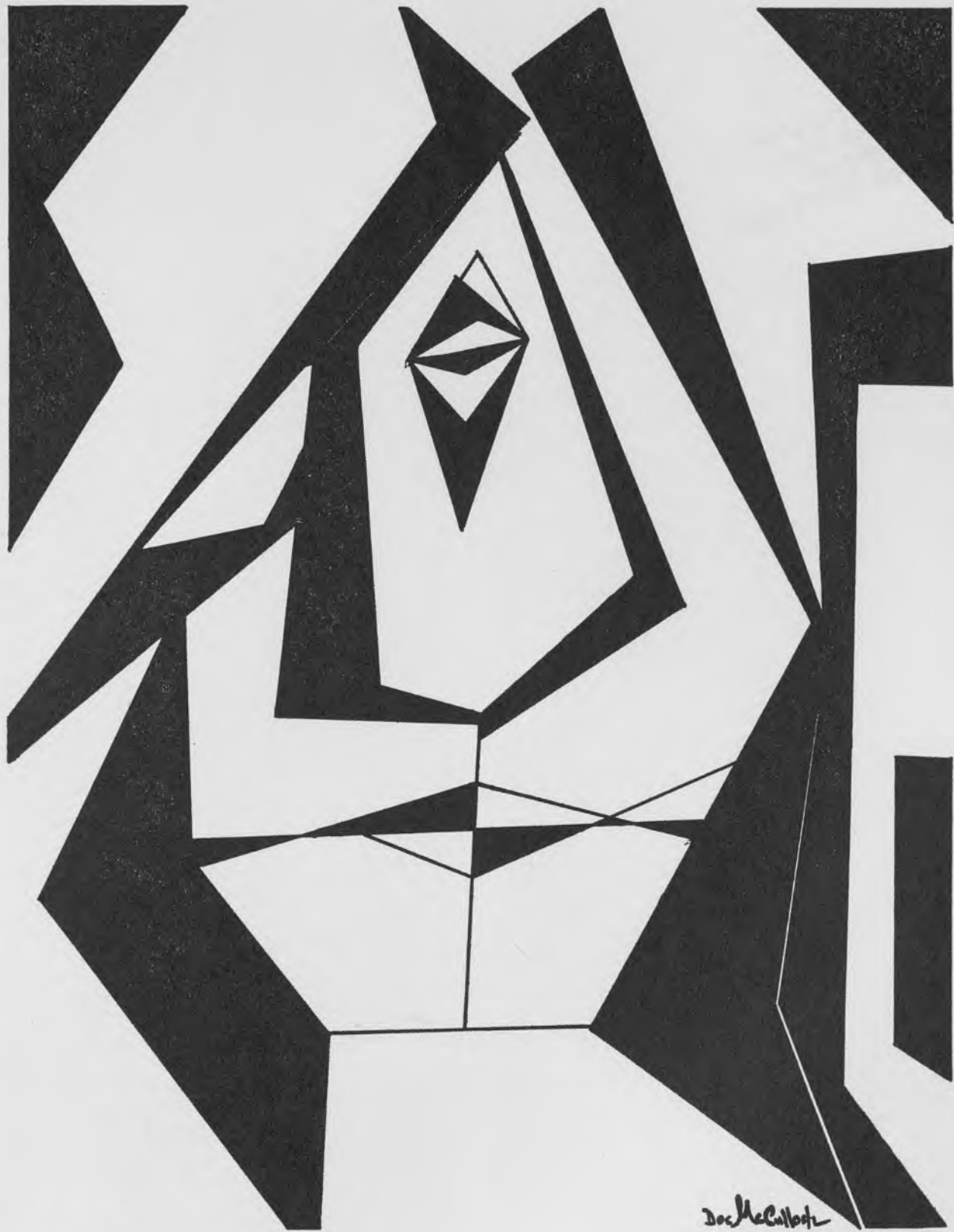
The book has very little plot as far as action is concerned. It has been written in a kind of psychological fashion in which dreams and visions intermingle with reality, with little consciousness of time. Plot comes when one understands the working of Jocelin's mind. His obsession is as strong at the end of the novel as it is at the beginning. The action between is concerned with all the obstacles to his dream. The builders are low and vile men who constantly abuse the priests. Roger Mason works only for money; he is against Jocelin in every way. The rain pours and pours for days, upsetting the schedule and leaking into the tombs, causing a terrible smell. Jocelin becomes ill with a burning fever and the work stops for some time. Jocelin tries to secure a Holy Nail from the bishop to drive into the spire as the final blessing of God; the bishop is not sure that the spire deserves the nail. Jocelin's conscience adds to his conflict because of his sexual relationship with the woman, Goody Pangall, who dies giving birth to his child. Despite all these obstacles, the spire is finally built and it stands. Ironically, it stands while persons died in the process. Jocelin is destroyed by his dream and he dies.

The concept of man expressed in *The Spire* is the same as that in *Lord of the Flies*; but Golding intensifies the concept by using the church as his setting and a priest as his main character. If anyone should be good and have foresight, it should be a priest; yet Jocelin is portrayed as basically evil. His dream is disillusion, but he cannot see it. His nature prevents him from seeing reality; he uses people for his own ends. He will go so far as to allow others to die in order to build the spire.

Golding, in all his works, expresses a profound, old message that has been all but forgotten. He has written about his intention as a writer in this statement:

In all the books, I have suggested a shape in the universe that may, as it were, account for things. The greatest pleasure is not—say—sex or geometry. It is just understanding. And if you can get people to understand their humanity—well, that's the job of the writer.

Golding has certainly fulfilled his intention.



THE KISS

Doc McCulloch

—DOC McCULLOCH



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