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Contents

3	<i>Contemplating Creativity</i>	Don Staley
4	<i>Come let us leave the world below</i>	Bill Hatchl
5	<i>Morning Rain</i>	Barbara Peterson
6	<i>And ran away with the spoon</i>	Bill Hatchl
9	<i>Love-Four Seasons</i>	Barbara Peterson
10	<i>Memory and Dreams</i>	Gary Austin
12	<i>Morning Song</i>	Sherry Shaffer
13	<i>French Canadian</i>	Barbara Peterson
15	<i>One Man's God</i>	Bill Hatchl
18	<i>Pipe Dreams</i>	Tim Webb
20	<i>The Cold Wind Through the Leaves</i>	Barbara Peterson
21	<i>a cat sittin on da fence</i>	Dale Sakers
22	<i>The Hippie's Tale</i>	Ellen Lohse
28	<i>With All the Tenderness</i>	David Gilbert
30	<i>Professions Are Singular</i>	Bob Donovan
31	<i>Eternity, Inc.</i>	Steve Benson
33	<i>Puddles of Misconception</i>	Linda Smith
35	<i>Glory in the Flower</i>	Willie Shaw
39	<i>Death</i>	Linda Smith
40	<i>And Find in You These</i>	David Gilbert
42	<i>From Satan with Love</i>	Sharon Hall
45	<i>Of Love and Autumn</i>	Tim Webb



Contemplating Creativity

Cast a shadow
Over the acrid desert of mindlessness,
Through the wind-forgotten hollows,
And wrap my arms
Around my joy.

My love hibernates
Listlessly, sleeping unhappily
Dormant within a facade,
Dying barren and formless.

I by lamplight,
Elegizing an incoherent bliss
Distant from the shores
Of my dreams,
Compose

My hapless rhymes,
Crying, trying to create.
The flash of futility
Enshrouds me
With dismay.

Rain-pressed images,
Dimly reflected on a blank
Wall of indifference, betray
Nothing of my
Decaying sorrow.

Don Staley

Come let us leave the world below

The world seems like a prison
With rules we can't abide.
Just let us throw the rules away
And above the clouds we'll ride.
Don't be afraid we might be wrong—
In love there is no doubt,
So let us leave our fears behind
And roust the world about.
No worrying with the day's next meal,
No filling hearts with woe—
Come, let us fly above the clouds
And leave the world below.

Bill Hatchl



Morning Rain

Through the softly frosted pane
the rain-light filters in,
and beyond the glass
the cedar's smoky webs
detain
crystal rain
in silver
clear-eyed jewels
and let them heavily go
to infinite nothing
in the fog
below . . .

Afternoon Rain

This silent afternoon melts into steady rain
that begs me to come out beneath the trees
as the earth drinks.
And I remember . . .
 I remember . . .
 fleeting moods from long ago,
 fading faces, passing places,
drowned by summer-scented rain
and lost again
in evening . . .

Barbara Peterson

... And Ran Away With The Spoon

by **Bill Hatchl**

Jack and Jill, Charles de Gaulle, and Mary de Pumperknik all went to town to see what they could see. They were amazed at all the tall buildings; even Charles found something nice to say about them! They walked by a meat market, Jack sniffing all the way, but they only looked, didn't buy a thing, not even "pork-beef broiled twice on a nicely sesame-seeded roll." The butcher had really cursed them then, calling out, "bastard hippies!" And when they smiled back amiably, he cursed even harder and stubbed his toe.

They were all hop-scotching down 48th Avenue when they saw a sign, "Come on in, it's FREE!" and Mary said they should go in, and they did, even though Jill said that nothing was ever really free and that somebody would get their money somehow. There were all sorts of paintings and bent metal on stands, and a janitor who was not very polite. Jack said the paintings demonstrated man's disgust with his modern world. Charles said that it just proved that all Mid-Western gophers are neurotic and that he wouldn't even take the time to burn one. Then they all left and Mary was forever pestering Jill about how no one had gotten their money.

Then they crossed a few more streets and stopped to watch a stop-light change colors. Jill said that it was evil and that they shouldn't watch, so just to spite her, Mary stood in the middle of the intersection and watched until a policeman came and made her move.

Just as the sun was going down, they all stopped to eat. They went in some place that said "Eat" and through a microphone, sat down and ordered hamburgers and water. After they ate and the people quit staring at them, they walked out and stood on a street corner. Sooner or later, they weren't too sure which, as Jack had said that time was relative, a bus stopped and they got on.

When they finally got back to the farm with the half-painted farmhouse and the big barn, (Charles said it was an animal shed, but everybody else called it a barn.), they all went to sleep in their clothes and Mary giggled, "We're really luckier than most, I mean, after all, We've got a roof!"

"Yea," Charles muttered, "a roof!"

EPILOGUE

A bell rings from afar
A day has come and gone
The night sees its first star
The shadow leaves the last stone
A sparrow darts for home
The light has fled from the dark
And as the silent breezes roam
A firefly sets the spark . . .
Jack once said
that life was a wall
filled with paintings,
only the wall was burning
and the canvases were blank.
He also said that death
was like the falling of summer snow,
but the world
never quite listened.
Once, a dog ran down our block,
everybody stopped and looked,
but when it finally left,
they all didn't look anymore.
Yeah, Jack, life's like that
sometimes.



Love—Four Seasons

Spring

All that came before you
was a waiting.
and all that will come
after you are gone
will be but a remembrance
of your touch.

Summer

The lovers sit apart
in silence.
happy in the knowledge
that if they but reached out
would touch.

Fall

Look down, Love, See.
The leaves have fallen . . .
all the summer
floated down,
turned to brittle memories
of roses . . .

Winter

We've come full cycle
you and I,
from children
saying, "Hello,"
to strangers
saying, "Good-bye."

Barbara Peterson

Memory and Dreams

by Gary Austin

Memory is a peculiar power. It can bring tears of joy. It can cause periods of depression. It can also greatly affect the dreams of the future. Perhaps a classic exemplification of the effect of memory is shown in **The Glass Menagerie**.

Amanda Wingfield lived a large part of her life in the glories of the past. These glories were her many gentlemen callers. All of her reminiscing was probably not entirely accurate. Nevertheless, this memory played a large role in her dreams of the future. Her dreams were not of herself. They were of Laura, her daughter.

Laura was a reticent and highly sensitive girl. Most of her memories of the past were unpleasant. This accounted for the nonexistence of dreams in her life. Amanda, however, dreamed for Laura since Laura could not dream for herself. Amanda's dreams always were of gentlemen callers. They were her past. They were the subject on which she was an authority. Amanda's memory definitely formed the basis for her reveries.

Jim O'Connor was a complete opposite of Laura. His former years contained very little unpleasantness. His high school years, especially, were filled with honors and popularity. He was usually the center of attention. There was hardly a phase of high school activities in which he did not participate. With the possession of such magnificent memories, Jim's dreams could only be as splendid. It was true that six years after graduation he did not hold a very prominent position in the world. This apparent lack of success, however, did not put a damper on Jim's thoughts of greatness. No matter what he was at the present time, he still had his memory to spur his ambition.

Tom Wingfield had unhappy memories that caused him to desire a better life than that of the past. His memories were unpleasant because they were of his mother. He distinctly remembered Amanda's constant badgering. She was never satisfied with anything he ever did. Tom could not remember any love that was ever shown to him by his mother. Because of such a past, Tom was determined to live a life of significance. He could have accomplished such a feat, but memory played a trick on him. He could not do as he desired.

Yes, memory could play tricks. It was a dirty trick that memory had up her sleeve for Tom. Memory caused him no pain when he thought of having left his mother. Laura, however, was a completely different matter. She was different because love was in Tom's memory of her. Tom had left Laura just as he had left his mother. But Tom could not go without being affected because he loved Laura. She had not been one who found fault with all he did. Tom had left Laura to a fate that she did not deserve. Yes, because of a memory of tenderness, Tom could not accomplish what a memory of bitterness urged him to do.

Tom had tried in vain to push Laura out of his mind. Hoping that the forever-changing atmosphere would clear his mind of Laura, Tom kept himself on the move. But memory would not allow Tom to be freed from her presence with him. The past caused Tom to lose his dreams and ambition. The light of Laura's candles that penetrated his mind could not be snuffed out.

One may say that it is not advisable to live in a world of yesterday. But is this a wise statement to make? One has to have some memories in order to have any dreams for the future.

Morning Song

Morning, I would catch you
in my fingertips.

I would run you through my hair and
deep into my eyes.

And I would capture you
for a little girl
sister in the city lands

Who will be rising to a
noise-shattered world
Where the sunlight filters through the fog
as she tramps off to school.

Then you could seek out a small
patch of green

And break the gray monotony of her day
with one dazzling beam of sunlight
too bright for anything but
wonder.

Sherry Lynn Shaffer

French Canadian

Off to the deep woods
alone,

to the river by canoe
when the sun glints on the pebbles
of the crystal river bottom,
and the tall pines whisper softly
to the sky.

and the mountains' rocky faces
brave the ragged lonesome wind
gusting cold above the valley
as the day weaves slowly by
like the trout.

and a camp for the evening
with an orange fire crackling
as it flickers in the darkness
full of coffee smell and bacon
in a pan.

then the solitude of sleeping
and the night sounds in the silence
and the day, end the world,
and eternity goes on
beneath the stars.

Barbara Peterson



One Man's God

by **Bill Hatchl**

The stage is completely darkened. A spotlight slowly illuminates a section of it, showing three armed wooden chairs and three men of dignified manner in robes. They discuss something for a moment and then the play commences.

First Judge—Next, we call one Heathen Heretic.

Second Judge—Come, come, son, step lively!

Third Judge—Yes, come to your salvation—or death!

First Marshall—(Softly) Here, look up, not at the floor.

Second Marshall—Damn it, boy! (strikes) Look up before we put out your eyes!

Prosecutor—Here we present the Heretic, your Honors, guilty of the most heinous of all crimes.

Defender—Objection, your Honors, the accused—

Second Marshall—Silence! Take that, swine!

First Judge—Yes, indeed, do try to calm yourself, Noble Defender.

Third Judge—Unless you should like also to be on trial.

Second Judge—There, that is indeed better.

First Judge—Now, most Noble Prosecutor, will you proceed with the indictments, offenses and the other necessities of crime?

Third Judge—And be quick about it. I want him burned before dusk.

Prosecutor—With your permission, Sirs, I shall endeavor to hurriedly convict. As my first evidence, I should call my first witness to prove the Heretic's ghastly and most blasphemous conduct in the market place.

First Judge—Call the first witness!

Second Marshall—Here he is, your Honors, here he is.

Second Judge—There, stand still and stop shaking.

Third Judge—True, and if you tell what you are supposed to, you'll be able to leave.

Prosecutor—Now then—

Defender—Objection, your Honors, the witness has yet to be sworn in!

First Judge—A mere technicality . . .

Third Judge—And would you challenge this noble man's integrity?!
Nay, proceed, most Noble Prosecutor.

Prosecutor—If you please, noble witness, tell us of the Heretic's actions in the market place.

First Witness—Indeed I shall, sir. I was but bidding my shop, a most beautiful shop too, your Honors, when this fellow approaches and just sits in front.

Prosecutor—Just sits, did you say?

First Witness—Indeed, just sat there.

Defender—Most noble witness, is that all that the accused did?
For truly, your Honors, to sit is no crime.

First Judge—The witness will cease to shake and answer.

First Witness—Well, ah, he—

Third Judge—Speak up, you haven't lost your tongue yet!

First Witness—He preached and—

First and Third Judges—Preached? Blasphemy!

Second Judge—Please proceed.

First Witness—Preached and then he forgave us all.

Third Judge—Forgave? Work of the Devil, this Heretic!

First Judge—So it would seem.

Second Judge—(aside) Is to seem a crime?

Prosecutor—Stay but a moment, your Honors, there is still more.

Third Judge—But wood for the flame!

First Judge—Proceed.

First Witness—Indeed, Sirs, he but forgave from himself and not even
from God! (leaves)

Third Judge—Enough, guilty to be sure!

Prosecutor—Please, your Honors, I beg you, allow me to proceed.

First Judge—And proceed you must.

Second Judge—(aside) Over the cliff to the very Gates of Hell.

Prosecutor—I would call my second witness.

First Judge—So called.

Second Marshall—A most gracious lady, your Honors.

First Judge—As one can plainly see.

Prosecutor—Now then, my lady—

Defender—Your Honors, I must again—

Third Judge—Silence or your tongue!

First Judge—If you please, noble Defender, there is a lady present.
Proceed.

Prosecutor—My lady, do tell us what occurred.

Second Witness—Well to begin, it did come to my attention that
the despicable Heretic that you see—

Defender—Please your Honors, I must object—

Third Judge—Marshalls! Marshalls!

First and Second Marshalls—Sir!

Third Judge—Escort the noble Defender from this court and
deal with him.

First (silently) and Second (shouting) Marshalls—We will, sir!

Second Judge—You will do nothing!

Third Judge—But sir!

First Judge—Indeed! But do show a proper respect with so delicate
a presence as here we have. Proceed, noble lady.

Second Witness—As I was saying, I discovered that this Heathen was in love with me.

Third Judge—In love did you say?

Second Witness—Indeed, your Honors, and when I did condescent to request an absolute denial by this Heretic, he refused.

Third Judge—Refused?

Second Witness—'Tis true.

Defender—Your Honors . . .

First Judge—What could you—

Second Judge—Proceed Defender.

Defender—As you will. Madam, you say the accused refused? In what manner may I ask.

Second Witness—True as I am he did, refused, refused, utterly—

Defender—If you please, in what manner?

Second Witness—Do you doubt my ability—

Third Judge—Indeed, but minus a tongue he would—

Second Judge—Silence! Answer, woman!

Second Witness—As a lady I must—

Second Judge—Speak while you may!

Second Witness—Indeed! . . . Nay, I will tell as best I can. He said it was true, that he loved me, that he loved everyone.

Third Judge—Sacrilege!

Second Judge—Will you not be silent?! Proceed.

Second Witness—He said he could deny love to no one, that we all are deserving of God's love and that thus he could not deny me his. He said that God's love was infinite, that no **man** can do evil enough to despoil him of His love. Only he said it differently, it flowed, or so it seemed. But he did challenge me! Yes, he did indeed!

Defender—Please, madam, how did he challenge?

Second Witness—He asked me if I believed in God.

Third Judge—Believed in—?! Did you hear?! Speech in such a manner!

Second Judge—Is that all he said?

Second Witness—Well, then he just looked down and mumbled.

Second Judge—What did he say?

Second Witness—I'm not sure. "It doesn't matter, He knows" or something. I . . . I'm not just sure. He . . . looked so sad, I . . . I.

Second Judge—Did he say anything else? Try to recall.

Second Witness—I . . . I don't know. Maybe . . . I can't remember.

Second Judge—You may leave . . . Have you another witness, noble Prosecutor?

Prosecutor—But one more, your Honor, but one more.

Second Judge—Proceed.

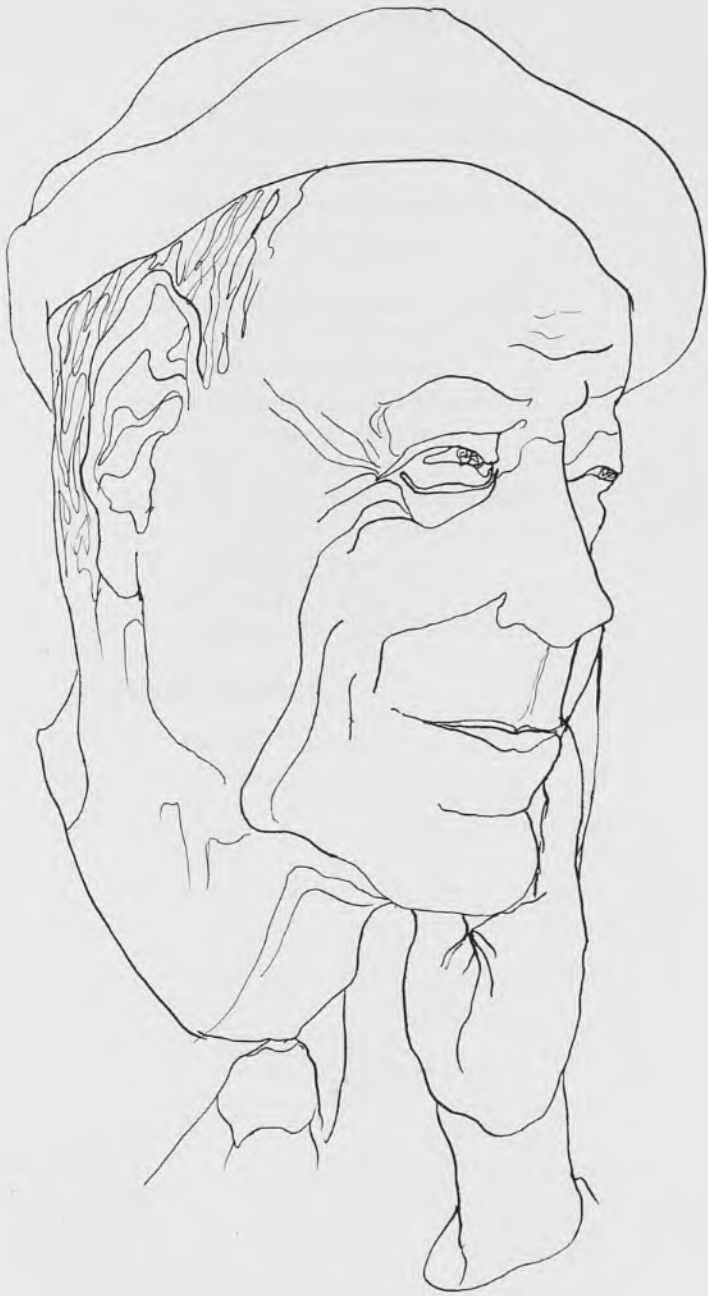
Pipe Dreams

I dream a lot
 of kings and things
and secret rings
 and witches stirring
magic pots
 drifting, dreaming
 swiftly scheming
I gayly grope
 or sometimes sit
 transfixed
 and watch
the elves of smoke
 who weave
and drape it
 across my mind

Tim Webb

"I've given you everything,
 if that's not enough . . ."
Ah, Lover, Fool,
 it was too much.

Barbara Peterson



The Cold Wind Through The Leaves

The cold wind through the leaves
sounds like waterfalls
 or seas
when I hear them in the night
 from afar.

And I sit and watch the moon
as it drifts,
 a white balloon
through the cotton-candy clouds
 beside a star.

And the darkness holds my hand
as I stumble
 through the sand
of the cold drift of the world
 to where you are.

Barbara Peterson

a cat sittin on da fence

a cat sittin on da fence
switchin he tail
payin no rents
see da fish in da pail
he gonna git it
come rain or hail.
second cat sittin on da roof
lickin he whiskers
eighty proof.
see da fish in da pail
he gonna git it
come rain or hail.
two cats lookin at da fish
who gonna git it?
third cat know!

Dale Sakers

The Hippie's Tale

by Ellen Lohse



My delusions all started from some pot,
That my hippie cohorts said they liked a lot.
Now many a trip I've journeyed through,
In past and present and future time, too.
An interesting one to you I'll relate,
Though as to the exact time, place, and date,
They'll have to remain like psychedelic;
'Cause my sole souvenir is a relic
That has no trademark or "Made in Japan";
'Cause the guy said, "It's from the Holy Land."
Now to get back to the story I'll tell—
Though the details I don't remember well—
A group of cats were traveling along.
But now understand, and don't get me wrong,
I wasn't with their cause to picket;
And thank heavens I needed no ticket,

'Cause marching to shrines in Canterbury
Sure is not exactly my mug of tea.
My observation of this company
Included guys from fief, church, town—all three.
(The fief system had representatives
Though chivalry today seldom lives.)
The town folk were typical—trade and craft—
But at the church CHARACTERS I had to laugh.
They definitely showed need for reform,
It was not as he said, "From Peter's boat."
I bet when he sold it he sure did gloat.
But this isn't the only quality
For which on him I'd shed little pity.
He talked of women, but with the men;
He cackled high pitched, just like an old hen.
He certainly loved to sing a duet,
With the Summoner, on this trip, his pet.
Their relationship is somewhat scary,
For the physical love between them ne'er varies.
This is quite unbecoming for two guys,
And definitely church rules this defies.
The Pardoner knows the art of oration,
Striking at folks in all of life's stations.
He knows how to hit and how to hit hard,
To get their gifts, lest they'd always be marred.
As a speaker he certainly was glib,
Though much of his talk he considered fibs.

His tongue was as polished as the gold plate
Passed for collection, their sins to abate.
Since he never did practice what he preached,
As I said, on the church he was a leech.
He was a hypocrite of the highest degree,
Passing around the Pope's bulls and decrees,
Preying on the town folks' stupidity,
Only to forward his cupidity.
This man's avarice is analogous
Only to his overpowering lust.
Well, experience is the best teacher;
And the sins he talks of as a preacher
Are all from first-hand investigation,
Rather than from first-hand speculation!

From this unscrupulous rascal we'll move
To an earnest church man, whom I'll prove.
The poor Parson was an educated lad,
Surviving with only the little he had.
He was wealthy only in holy ways,
For he knew his humility would pay.
In after-life he would receive his reward,
For he placed all his trust in Christ our Lord.
He always did practice first what he preached,
And to his followers this he beseeched.
The poor folk made up his congregation,

And in their beliefs he found elation.
Like the mail, the Parson was stopped by naught,
For his one goal in life—the Lord he sought.
A pious and pure man he was in deed,
The type of man a church needs it to lead.
The Plowman and Parson's relationship
Is a type of love that can ne'er be split.
It's symbolic of natural love—
The tie of the soil with that from Above.
The Parson's work was easily destroyed
By that of the Pardoner, a big void.
From these two opposite men we can see
How the church in jeopardy came to be.
One can see the cause of corruption
Inside the walls of the church construction.
Men like the Pardoner act as termites,
And crumple the structure, such parasites.
We certainly can be thankful for chaps
Like the poor Parson, who bore all the raps.
If the Pardoner's the termite, the Parson's
The rock foundation of the construction,
Upon which, during the evil and sin,
The Parson continued his flock to win.
Now that I've spouted about what I saw,
I'd best keep moving, because of the law.
It's about time—I need another fix—
Then definitely I'll have some more trips!

'Cause the church of this time rates only scorn.
The good guys were the poor Parson and Scholar,
Both poor church mice, but learned as Lollards.
A glutton and an irreverent cur
Is Friar Hubert, certainly not demure.
The Nun so prim and proper—what a fraud—
And the fat Monk would rather hunt than laud.
The summoner brought offenders to trial.
This was how he got rich and lived in style.
A character I now will analyze
Is only a thief in church-garb disguise.
After I tell what the Pardoner has done,
I'll show his opposite—the poor Parson.
Now, if possible, I won't be biased;
But this Pardoner, one of the slyest,
Was certainly out to feed his wallet
(A robber or whatever you call it.)
He was no more interested in church
Than Catholics on Friday are in perch.
I have definite proof of this statement;
'Cause in a deal I lost a whole month's rent,
From the relic 'fore mentioned that I bought;
And only after profit I sought.
I thought when I returned to present day
Many a soul twice my price they would pay;
Till at the museum, I found my wood
In a park nearby had recently stood.

EPILOGUE

If comprehending this composition
Is beyond your sense of ambition,
Consider the source, and keep in view
That what inspired me was not glue.

With All the Tenderness

With all the tenderness I
could muster in my
country-boy fingers,
I would caress the smoothness
of your city skin,
whisper the secrets of the meadow
To the sound of your
city laugh,
And place the smell of spring
in your hair.
The cleanness of fresh-plowed
ground would overcome you,
and the fertility of the soil
Would be your hope,
and mine.

David Gilbert



Professions Are Singular

Professions are singular, ordered destinies,
Guided by time,
Goaded by desire and greed,
Laced by insurance and pensioned security—
A constant yearning for neverfound change—
A weary chore of chartered travail.
The death march . . .

Bob Donovan

Eternity, Inc.

Run like everybody else
You'll get nowhere fast;
Have a drink, hasten things a bit
No where can hide you, love's a dirty word here.
Live a little, while you can; you're dead,
Never gonna make it, don't fool yourself, kid.
You can't find what you don't know;
Eat dirt, you crazy Fool, you will soon,
You'll live in it, too; get used to it!
Nobody's gonna help you, and your chances are gone.
Run faster, you'll never make it,
Only goin' straight DOWN,
Drunk, sober, or DEAD,
And your lovers'll be just as cold.

Steve Benson





Puddles of Misconception

Puddles of misconception
obstruct those searching
for four-leaf clovers
in fields of unkempt growth.

A wildflower peeks through
tangled briars, but remains
unacknowledged, since those
looking fear being scarred.

Cancerous weeds hide
even sunflowers trying
to peer above the confusion.

Beauty is smothered before it is
born, and no one cares.

Linda Smith



Glory in the Flower

Willie Shaw

He had arrived before dusk, just as the sun had burned its image on the cresting waves. He was a member of a high school choir which had escaped to the beach for a retreat, a reward for their year's activities.

When the other members had raced in frantic to their rooms, he had come out onto the porch. The girls had giggled loudly, pretended embarrassment, and hurried out. The boys had stolen off to taste their first beer and to watch the night people pace the sidewalks, but he was lost to his thoughts or to the spirit which nature yields from the sea.

As he sat in one of the old white rockers with his feet up against the railing, his eyes stared absently into the dark. He threw back his head and exhaled the grey smoke from the cigarette held tightly between his fingers. His golden hair which hung from his high forehead was tossed by a chilled wind which crept across the porch. His taut, smooth face was revealed as he drew heavily upon the smoke. He moved to brush away some ashes from his cutoff jeans, pulled at his loose shirt tail, and went back to his thoughts.

The air hissed from the compressor over the door as a young girl came from the lobby out onto the porch. She walked straight to the porch's edge and searched deep into the darkness. She brought her arms together and folded them close to her body. The wind tugged at the loose ends of her tied back hair; deep ebony hair which reflected the glare of the naked light bulb above her. Her blouse tail fluttered below her navy sweater. Her legs were smooth, and the tailored shorts hid little of their beauty.

She casually turned and spotted the boy. After a few minutes of hesitation she walked slowly over and sat in a rocker beside him.

An old lady and an old man in quilted jackets and fishing caps walked up the steps. They chatted idly as they continued into the hotel. For the first time the boy looked at the girl. He looked directly into her eyes, then dug desperately for the crumpled pack of cigarettes.

"Has everybody gone out?" she asked looking up the beach where colored lights glared into the darkness.

"Yea, I think so. I been here since we signed in." He stared on into the dark for a glimpse of the roaring surf. "Nice place . . . with meals and all."

There was silence between them, but the palms rustled their dry leaves, and distant auto sounds floated around.

"Been for a walk yet?" She lowered her head and played nervously at the loose ends of the blouse.

"Not yet. I thought I'd wait on you. Wanna walk a ways up the beach?" He lighted another smoke and turned, facing the girl. Her face was beautifully featured. Tears caused her eyes to sparkle.

"If you'd like?"

He took her hand. They walked down the steps and moved onto the white sand. They hesitated, decided on a direction, and wandered off into the dark of the moonless night, lifting their feet intently from the sand as they pulled forward.

"Well Chris, have you been sitting here all evening? Why Wanda and Betty Gale and Sue and I and some others walked into town and tried our luck at bingo." It was the choir leader, Mrs. Attria. A pleasant, over-weight lady who wore an obnoxious straw hat and print dress. "We didn't win a thing, but . . ."

"But remember those footlong hot dogs, and that man not understanding us not having any beer." Wanda broke into shrill laughter, and the girls, joined by Mrs. Attria, gave way to the gait of the memories.

"No, Mrs. Attria. I went for a walk up the beach." Chris answered absently as he flung a cigarette butt onto the sand.

"When everyone gets in," Mrs. Attria gazed at her watch, "which is only ten more minutes, we'll sing some, then everyone off to bed." She was beside herself with joy.

Slowly the choir amassed on the porch. Straying in by twos and threes and fours, they appeared. Some of the boys were red faced, glassy eyed and laughing loudly. The girls were swirling around swopping secrets of their adventures.

"Twenty six, twenty seven, twenty . . . where is Linda?" Mrs. Attria asked looking around. Chris' head jerked toward the director.

"She's coming down the beach. She'll be here in a minute." Marcia went back to her excited conversation.

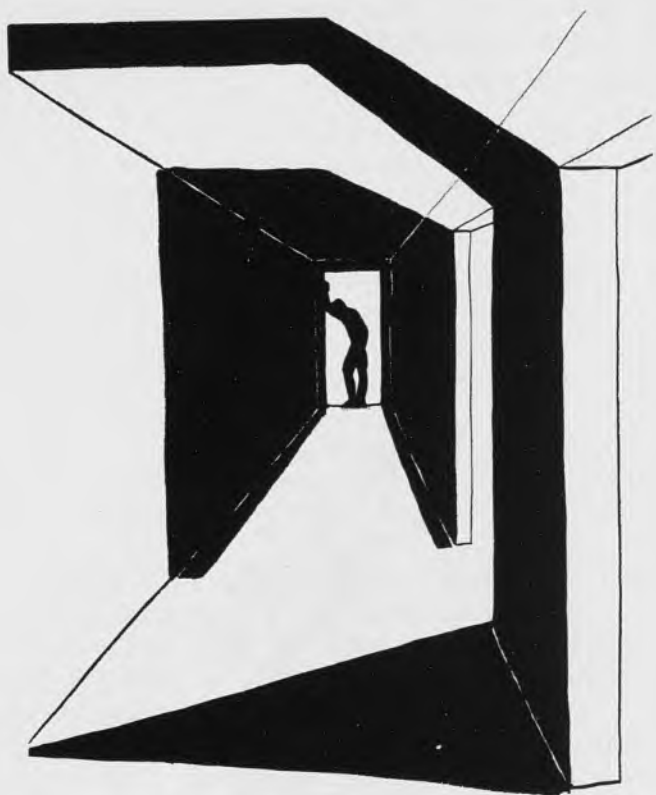
"Now. What shall we sing?" Mrs. Attria was seated and ready to see her accomplishment. "How about the 'Impossible Dream.'"

The voices hummed, coughed, then began. The shrill laughter and piercing screams now formed a soft chorus. Chris sat with his feet against the railing, singing absently. He watched the figure of Linda

come from the darkness and begin to mount the steps. Mrs. Attria smiled at Linda's appearance and continued to direct from her chair.

Linda listened, then joined in on the verse. She carried in her hand her scarf and a bent, bruised daisy which had several petals missing. She raised the flower to her nose and softly wiped away a tear. She felt a hand tug at her loose hand. She looked down at Chris and smiled. He took her hand in his and smiled back. And they all sang to a dream, an impossible dream.





Death

Silence mutters words of disbelief—
Intense, penetrating eyes search
for a sun-lit window with bright,
dancing curtains looking out on
green hills—

There is a latched door instead.
Imaginations beat to no avail at
the door, and then chase still
hearts not shredded by grief.
Pitied souls find a crack and
sliver through, smiling. Loving
hearts, too big for the crack,
condemn God.

Linda Smith

And Find In You These

As we have not been lovers
And yet as I have known the beauty
 of velvet darkness
The softness of flesh, the warmth of a laugh,
 the joy of youth.
Yes, I am aware,
And find in you these
As you move in your world
And I in mine.
But I could love you more
And find in love no regret
And no sadness in the sweet
 fragrance of your hair.
Yet, as we both know,
There is sadness in love
And love in sadness.

Dave Gilbert



From Satan With Love

by **Bill Hatchl**

Hell, 1970

Gabriel,

I doubt that I could succeed without your ironic encouragement. The more depressed you pious fools are, the more jubilant I am! Give up, I tell you! It's almost over. My next plot will make the Sin Games look like the circus that it is. You doubted that the drugs, long hair, and propaganda would help to emasculate men, but they fell for it. Ha! Ha! Their smiles reek with honey, do they not? Just as their youth were deceived by the pseudo-intellectuals that I maneuvered into their Learning Houses, so will the elders swallow the **modern** theories on religion. When their very essence collapses, mass insanity will soon prevail.

I won't tell you my next move, angelic friend. I'll surprise you. All of you! No, this time it's not the Village nor even Moscow, not directly that is. I have them everywhere as you well know, and they need only my word. Anathema! Anathema!

Lucifer

Lucifer,

My spirit is draining for mankind. If only man's vision could penetrate the fine threads of your tinted glass web, your elaborate conspiracy would shatter. It is so simple. I don't understand why they don't recognize that each of your follies is entwined in that pattern conceived by your warped perspective. I see that you're using those cliches again: Underprivileged, Disadvantaged, Culturally deprived, Academic Freedom, Police Brutality, and Peace! Since these oral daggers are successful, what will you employ next? More **peaceful** marches? Non-violent massacres? Progressive morality? Sensitivity Training? How long do you think that they can be fooled? Surely, you have learned something from their history, and surely they detect this repetition!

Ah, Lucifer! You are a mastermind of subterfuge. But in spite of your progress, the sane are not yet dead, and I'm positive that our mortal friends will recover from their educated hysteria.

Gabriel

"How could the government ever legalize narcotics, Dad?"

"This **government**, my son, did it by the same means that it abolished capital punishment and left us prisoners in our homes! We're now like caged animals and we're waiting for the final slaughter."

Gabriel,

How's He taking it? I'll bet He's ready to repudiate them now! Haven't I insured that they desert Him? This is Heaven in Hell! I swear by all Evil it is! In all my eons of experience, I never knew that mortals were such suckers. I'll admit that the "Peaceful Co-existence with the Reds" took time, and it strained my genius. But they grabbed that one with no significant resistance. My smears on their patriots are under control. I won't allow that loathsome minority to alter my plan of Moral Breakdown.

Your profound hope in man intrigues me, Gabriel. Granted, you and I stand in diverse quadrants, but even you can see that the humans have finally made the decisive choice. They allowed themselves to be blinded by my corruption until it was too late. They deserve no more! You know how my "goodwill" has enslaved man at various times over the centuries. I used the same strategy on Rome that I'm using now. Remember Rome? However, this is the first chance I've had to achieve my design on a universal scale. Then He'll know. He'll know that it was I, the eminent Devil, the Emperor of all fiery Hell, who robbed His precious man of immortality! I now hold his wretched soul in my palm! I hold it! I shall crush it with masked fingers that choke him with collectivism. I have one last brick to place in my wall of Theft.

Lucifer

"Extra! United States surrenders to Allied Communist Forces in Far East! War over after eleven years!

Lucifer,

To you, it appears that humanity is essentially dead. Yes, after the surrender, the world entered into a Second Dark Ages, and learning has now ceased. You again beguiled man into compromising with his integrity, abandoning truth, and sacrificing reason for artificial intellect. You and your disciples did this, partly with feigned causes disguised as Brotherhood, Peace, Equality, Liberation, Love, and Progress. As all the "New Eras" before them, the twentieth century races became pushovers for diabolical irony, But you forget that man eventually realizes his mistakes, and the now diminished Light will in time emerge again. Your failure, Lucifer, is forever trying to desecrate the Eternal Truth, but this is even demonly impossible! You can only camouflage it for short periods.

You asked me some time ago why I didn't "get on the winning side." There are, of course, no sides. There is only one Realm of which I am already a part. Time is leading toward something, Eternity, and your time, Lucifer, is rapidly fading.

Gabriel



Of Love and Autumn

Leaves die and fall
 ended, piled, turned
Never knowing why
 just falling, and dying.
Ill winds of autumn
 whisper death
As their icy breath
 ends summer.

God knows why leaves fall
 why green must turn to brown
Why one summer spells eternity
 why spring's child
Becomes autumn's child
 why summer's love
Turns fickle in the fall.

Time was when love
 was young
When spring promised
 fidelity
Time was when life
 was more
Than just growing old
 but autumn came.

Tim Webb





