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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS APPEAR BESIDE THEIR WORK

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KEN MITCHELL teaches English and creative writing at the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan. A feature screenplay of his, *Song of Wandering Riley*, is scheduled for summer production by the National Film Board of Canada.

The Great Electrical Revolution

KEN MITCHELL

I WAS ONLY A LITTLE GUY IN 1937, but I can still remember Grandad being out of work. Nobody had any money to pay him and as he said, there wasn't much future in brick-laying as a charity. So mostly he just sat around in his suite above the hardware store, listening to his radio. We *all* listened to it when there was nothing else to do, which was most of the time unless you happened to be going to school like me. Grandad stuck right there through it all — soap operas, weather reports and quiz shows — unless he got a bit of cash from somewhere. Then he and Uncle Fred would go downtown to the beer parlor at the King William Hotel.

Grandad and Grandma came from the old country long before I was born. When they arrived in Moose Jaw, all they had was three children: Uncle Fred, Aunt Thecla, and my Dad; a trunk full of working clothes; and a 26-pound post mall for putting up fences to keep "rogues" off Grandad's land. Rogues meant Indians, Orangemen, cattle rustlers and capitalists. All the way out on the train from Montreal, he glared out the Pullman window at the endless flat, saying to his family:

"I came out here for land, b'Christ, and none of 'em's goin' to sly it on me."

He had sworn to carve a mighty estate from the raw Saskatchewan Prairie, although he had never so much as picked up a garden hoe in his whole life before leaving Dublin.

So when he stepped off the train at the C.P.R. station in Moose Jaw, it looked like he was thinking of tearing it down and seeding

the site to oats. It was two o'clock in the morning, but he kept striding up and down the lobby of the station, dressed in his good wool suit with the vest, as cocky as a bantam rooster in a chicken run. My Dad and Uncle Fred and Aunt Thecla sat on the trunk, while Grandma nagged at him to go and find them a place to stay. (It was only later they realized he was afraid to step outside the station.) He finally quit strutting long enough to get a porter to carry their trunk to a hotel down the street.

The next morning they went to the government land office to secure their homestead. Then Grandad rented a democrat and took my Dad and Uncle Fred out to see the land they had come half-way around the world to find. Grandma and Aunt Thecla were told to stay in the hotel room and thank the Blessed Virgin for deliverance. They were still offering their prayers some three hours later, when Grandad burst into the room, his eyes wild and his face pale and quivering.

"Sweet Jesus Christ!" he shouted at them. "There's too much of it! There's just too damn much of it out there." He ran around the room several times in circles, knocking against the walls. "Miles and miles of nothing but miles and miles!" He collapsed onto one of the beds, and lay staring at the ceiling.

"It 'ud drive us all witless in a week," he moaned.

The two boys came in and told the story of the expedition. Grandad had started out fine, perhaps just a little nervous. But the further they went from the town, the more agitated and wild-eyed he got. Soon he stopped urging the horse along and asked it to stop. They were barely ten miles from town when they turned around and came back, with Uncle Fred driving. Grandad could only crouch on the floor of the democrat, trying to hide from the enormous sky, and whispering hoarsely at Fred to go faster. He'd come four thousand miles to the wide open spaces — only to discover he suffered from agoraphobia.

That was his last real excursion onto the open prairie. He gave up forever the idea of a farm of his own. (He did make one special trip to Mortlach in 1928 to fix Aunt Thecla's chimney, but that was a family favor. Even then Uncle Fred had to drive him in an enclosed Ford sedan in the middle of the night, with newspapers taped to the windows so he couldn't see out.) There was nothing left for him to do but take up his old trade of brick-laying in the town of Moose Jaw, where there were trees and tall buildings to protect him from the vastness. Maybe it was a fortunate turn of

fate; certainly he prospered from then until the Depression hit, about the time I was born.

Yet — Grandad always felt guilty about not settling on the land. Maybe it was his conscience that prompted him to send my Dad out to work for a cattle rancher in the hills, the day after he turned eighteen. Another point: he married Aunt Thecla off to a Lutheran wheat farmer at Mortlach who actually threshed about five hundred acres of wheat every fall. Uncle Fred was the eldest and closer to Grandad (he had worked with him as an apprentice brick-layer before they immigrated) so he stayed in town and lived in the suite above the hardware store.

I don't remember much about my father's cattle ranch, except whirls of dust and skinny animals dragging themselves from one side of the range to the other. Finally there were no more cattle, and no money to buy more, and nothing to feed them if we *did* buy them, except wild fox-tails and Russian Thistles. So we moved into Moose Jaw with Grandad and Grandma, and went on relief. It was better than the ranch where there was nothing to do but watch tumbleweeds roll through the yard. We would have had to travel into town every week to collect the salted fish and government pork, anyway. Grandad was very happy to have us, because when my Dad went down to the railway yard to get our ration, he collected Grandad's too. My Dad never complained about waiting in line for the handout, but Grandad would've starved to death first. "The God damned government drives us all to the edge," he would say. "Then they want us to queue up for the God damned swill they're poisoning us with."

That was when we spent so much time listening to Grandad's radio. It came in a monstrous slab of black walnut cabinet he had swindled, so he thought, from a second hand dealer on River Street. An incandescent green bulb glowed in the centre to show when the tubes were warming up. There was a row of knobs with elaborate-looking initials and a dial with the names of cities like Tokyo, Madrid, and Chicago. Try as we might on long winter evenings to tune the needle into those stations and hear a play in Japanese or Russian, all we ever got was CHMJ Moose Jaw, The Buckle of the Wheat Belt. Even so, I spent hours lying on the floor, tracing the floral patterns on the cloth-covered speaker while I listened to another world of mystery and fascination.

When the time came that Grandad could find no more bricks to lay, he set a kitchen chair in front of the radio and stayed there,

not moving except to go to the King William, where Uncle Fred now spent most of his time. My Dad had managed to get a job with the city, gravelling streets for fifty cents a day. But things grew worse. The Moose Jaw Light and Power Company came around one day in the fall of 1937 and cut off our electricity for non-payment. It was very hard on Grandad not to have his radio. Not only did he have nothing to do, but he had to spend all his time thinking about it. He stared out the parlor window, which looked over the alley running behind the hardware store. There was a grand view of the back of the Rainbow Laundry.

That was what he was doing the day of his discovery, just before Christmas. Uncle Fred and my Dad were arguing about who caused the Depression — R. B. Bennett or the C.P.R. Suddenly Grandad turned from the window. There was a new and strange look on his face.

"Where does that wire go?" he said.

"Wire?" said Uncle Fred, looking absent-mindedly around the room. He patted his pockets looking for a wire.

"What wire?" my Dad said.

Grandad nodded toward the window. "This wire running right past the window."

He pointed to a double strand of power line that ran from a pole in the back alley to the side of our building. It was a lead-in for the hardware store.

"Holy Moses Cousin Harry. Isn't that a sight now!" Grandad said, grinning like a crazy man.

"You're crazy," Uncle Fred told him. "You can't never get a tap off that line there. They'd find you out in nothing flat."

Grandma, who always heard everything that was said, called from the kitchen: "Father, don't you go and do some foolishness will have us all electrinated."

"By God," he muttered. He never paid any attention to a word she said. "Cut off *my* power, will they?"

That night, after they made me go to bed, I listened to him and Uncle Fred banging and scraping as they bored a hole through the parlor wall. My Dad wouldn't have anything to do with it and took my mother to the free movie at the co-op. He said Grandad was descending to the level of the Moose Jaw Light and Power Company.

Actually, Grandad knew quite a bit about electricity. He had known for a long time how to jump a wire from one side of the

meter around to the other, to cheat the power company. I had often watched him under the meter, stretched out from his tip-toes at the top of a broken step-ladder, yelling at Grandma to lift the God-damned Holy Candle a little higher so he could see what the Christ he was doing.

The next day, Grandad and Uncle Fred were acting like a couple of kids, snorting and giggling and jabbing each other in the ribs. They were waiting for the King William beer parlor to open so they could go down and tell their friends about Grandad's revenge on the power company. They spent the day like heroes down there, telling over and over how Grandad had spied the lead-in, and how they bored the hole in the wall, and how justice had finally descended on the capitalist leeches. The two of them showed up at home for supper, but as soon as they ate they headed back to the King William where everybody was buying them free beer.

Grandma didn't seem to think much of their efforts, although now that she had electricity again, she could spent the evenings doing her housework if she wanted to. The cord came through the hole in the wall, across the parlor to the hall and the kitchen. Along the way, other cords were attached which led to the two bedrooms. Grandma muttered when she had to sweep around the black tangle of wires and sockets. With six of us living in the tiny suite, somebody was forever tripping on one of the cords and knocking things over.

But we lived with all that because Grandad was happy again. We might *all* have lived happily if Grandad and Uncle Fred could have kept quiet about their revenge on the power company. One night about a week later we were in the parlor listening to Fibber McGee and Molly when somebody knocked at the door. It was Mrs. Pizak, who lived next door in a tiny room.

"Goot evening," she said, looking all around. "I see your power has turnt beck on."

"Ha," Grandad said. "We turned it on *for* 'em. Damned rogues."

"Come in and sit down and listen to the show with us," Grandma said. Mrs. Pizak kept looking at the black wires running back and forth across the parlor, and at Grandad's radio. You could tell she wasn't listening to the show.

"Dey shut off my power, too," she said. "I alvays like listen de Shut-In. Now my radio isn't vork."

"Hmmm," Grandad said, trying to hear Fibber and the Old-

Timer. Grandma and my Dad watched him, not listening to the radio any more either. Finally he couldn't stand it.

"All right, Fred," he said. "Go and get the brace and bit."

They bored a hole through one of the bedroom walls into Mrs. Pizak's cubicle. From then on, she was on Grandad's power grid, too. It didn't take long for everybody else in the block to find out about the free power, and they all wanted to hook up. There were two floors of suites above the hardware store, and soon the walls and ceiling of Grandad's suite were as full of holes as a colander, with wires running in all directions. For the price of a bottle of whiskey, people could run their lights twenty-four hours a day if they wanted. By Christmas Day, even those who *paid* their bills had given notice to the power company. It was a beautiful Christmas in a bad year — and Grandad and Uncle Fred liked to take a lot of credit for it. Nobody blamed them, either. There was a lot of celebration up and down the halls, where they always seemed to show up as guests of honor. There was a funny feeling running through the block, like being in a state of siege, or a revolution, with Uncle Fred and my Grandad leading it.

One late afternoon just before New Year's, I was lying on the floor of the front parlor, reading a second-hand Book of Knowledge I had got for Christmas. Grandma and my mother were knitting socks, and all three of us were listening vaguely to the Ted Mack Amateur Hour. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I thought I saw Grandad's radio move. I blinked and stared at it, but the big console just sat there talking about Geritol. I turned a page. Again, it seemed to move in a jerk. What was going on?

"Grandma," I said. "The radio —"

She looked up from her knitting, already not believing a word I might have to say. I gave it up, and glared spitefully at the offending machine. While I watched, it slid at least six inches across the parlor floor.

"Grandma!" I screamed. "The radio's moving! It was sitting there — and it moved over here. All by itself!"

She looked calmly at the radio, then the tangle of wires spread across the floor, and out the front parlor window.

"Larry-boy, you'd best run and fetch your grand-father. He's over at McBrides'. Number eight."

McBrides' suite was down the gloomy hall and across. I dashed down the corridor and pounded frantically at the door. Someone opened it the width of a crack.

"Is my Grandad in there?" I squeaked. Grandad stepped out into the hall with a glass in his hand, closing the door behind him.

"What is it, Larry?"

"Grandma says for you to come quick. The radio! There's something —"

"My radio!" Grandad was not a large man, but he had the energy of a buzz-saw. He started walking back up the hall, breaking into a trot, then a steady gallop, holding his glass of whiskey out in front at arm's length so it wouldn't spill. He burst through the door and screeched to a stop in front of the radio, which sat there, perfectly normal except that it stood maybe a foot to the left of the chair.

"By the Holy toe-nails of Moses — what is it?"

Grandma looked up ominously and jerked her chin toward the window. Her quiet firmness usually managed to calm him, but now, in two fantastic bounds, Grandad stood in front of the window, looking out.

"Larry," he said, glaring outside, "fetch your Uncle Fred." I tore off down the hall again to number eight and brought Uncle Fred back to the suite. The two women were still knitting on the other side of the room. Grandma was doing her stitches calmly enough, but my mother's needles clattered like telegraph keys, and she was throwing terrified glances around the room.

"Have a gawk at this, will you, Fred?"

Uncle Fred and I crowded around him to see out. There, on a pole only twenty feet from our parlor window, practically facing us eye-to-eye, was a lineman from the power company. He was replacing broken glass insulators; God knows why he was doing it in the dead of winter. Obviously, he hadn't noticed our home-made lead-in, or he would have been knocking at the door. We could only pray he wouldn't look at the wire too closely. Once, he lifted his eyes toward the lighted window where we all stood gaping out at him in the growing darkness. He grinned at us, and raised his hand in a salute. He must have thought we were admiring his work.

"Wave back!" Grandad ordered. The three of us waved frantically at the lineman, to make him think we appreciated his efforts, although Grandad was muttering some very ugly things about the man's ancestry.

Finally, to our relief, the lineman finished his work and got ready to come down the pole. He reached out his hand for support — and my heart stopped beating as his weight hung on the contra-

band wire. Behind me, I could hear the radio slide another foot across the parlor floor. The lineman stared at the wire he held. He tugged experimentally, his eyes following it up to the hole through our wall. He looked at Grandad and Uncle Fred and me standing there in the lit-up window, with our crazy horror-struck grins and our arms frozen above our heads in grotesque waves. Understanding seemed to spread slowly across his face.

He scrambled around to the opposite side of the pole and braced himself to give a mighty pull on our line. Simultaneously, Grandad leaped into action, grabbing the wire on our side of the wall. He wrapped it around his hands, and braced his feet against the baseboard. The lineman gave his first vicious yank, and it almost jerked Grandad smack against the wall. I remember thinking what a powerful man the linesman must be to do that to my Grandad.

"Fred, you feather-brained idiot!" he shouted. "Get over here and haul on this line before the black-hearted son of a bitch pulls me through the wall."

Uncle Fred ran to the wire just in time, as the man on the pole gave another, mightier heave. At the window, I could see the lineman stiffen with rage and determination. The slender wire sawed back and forth through the hole in the wall for at least ten minutes, first one side, and then the other, getting advantage. The curses on our side got very loud and bitter. I couldn't hear the lineman, of course, but I could see him — with his mouth twisted in an awful snarl, throwing absolutely terrible looks at me in the window, and heaving on the line. I know he wasn't praying to St. Jude.

Grandad's cursing would subside periodically when Grandma warned: "Now, now, father, not in front of the boy." Then she would go back to her knitting and pretend the whole thing wasn't happening, as Grandad's violent language would soar to a new high.

That lineman must have been in extra-good condition, because our side very quickly began to play out. Grandad screamed at Grandma and my mother, and even at me, to throw ourselves on the line and help. But the women refused to leave their knitting, and they wouldn't let me be corrupted. I couldn't leave my viewpoint at the window, anyway.

Grandad and Uncle Fred kept losing acreage. Gradually the huge radio had scraped all the way across the floor and stood at their backs, hampering their efforts.

"Larry!" Grandad shouted. "Is he weakenin' any?"

He wanted desperately for me to say yes, but it was useless. "It

doesn't look like it," I said. Grandad burst out in a froth of curses I'd never heard before. A fresh attack on the line pulled his knuckles to the wall and barked them badly. He looked tired and beaten. All the slack in the line was taken up and he was against the wall, his head twisted looking at me. A light flared up in his eyes.

"All right, Fred," he said. "If he wants the God-damned thing so bad — let him have it!" They both jumped back — and nothing happened.

I could see the lineman, completely unaware of his impending disaster, almost literally winding himself up for an all-out assault on our wire. I wanted out of human kindness to shout a warning at him. But it was too late. With an incredible backward lunge, he disappeared from sight behind the power pole.

A shattering explosion of wild noises blasted my senses, like a bomb had fallen in Grandad's suite. Every appliance and electric light that Grandma owned flew into the parlor, bounding off the walls and smashing against each other. A table lamp from the bedroom caromed off Uncle Fred's knee. The radio collided against the wall and was ripped off its wire by the impact. Sparking and flashing like lightning, all of Grandma's things hurled themselves against the parlor wall. They were stripped like chokecherries from an electric vine as it went zipping through the hole. A silence fell — like a breath of air to a drowning man. The late afternoon darkness settled through the room.

"Sweet Jesus Christ!" Grandad said. He had barely got it out, when there came a second uproar: a blood-curdling barrage of bangs and shouts, as our neighbors in the block saw all their lamps, radios, irons and toasters leap from their tables and collect in ruined piles of junk around the "free power" holes in their walls. Uncle Fred turned white as a sheet.

I looked out the window. The lineman sat on the ground at the foot of his pole, dazed. He looked up at me with one more hate-filled glare, then deliberately snipped our wire with a pair of cutters. He taped up the end and marched away into the night.

Grandad stood in the midst of the ruined parlor, trying in the darkness to examine his beloved radio for damage. Grandma sat in her rocking chair, knitting socks and refusing to acknowledge the disaster.

It was Grandad who finally spoke first. "They're lucky," he said. "It's just God-damned lucky for them they didn't scratch my radio."

PLATO'S CAVE-DWELLERS ARE RELEASED

GRAHAM PETRIE

So the guards let them out,
and they stumbled and staggered down to the stream,
hands groping in the air,

and waited till night. When the soft
reflection of the moon was bearable,
they opened their eyes.

They saw the cool water,
the quick movement of fishes in the damp weeds;
some swore they heard voices and singing.

They thought they were back in their cave
with the soft fall of shadows, muted whispers,
bare feet shuffling in the sand,

and lay down to sleep. But the guards
beat them with rifle-butts, swore at them,
told the bastards to look at the sun.

GRAHAM PETRIE's poems have been in *Prairie Schooner, Massachusets Review, Denver Quarterly* and other journals. His book on the films of François Truffaut will be published in London in 1970. He teaches English and Film at McMaster University.

Three Poems

Translated from the Japanese by Ronald Bayes and Nabuaki Sumomogi

POEM

MATSATO SHIMIZU

You!
You were restored
from dead memory
when the sun sank into your eyes
when the night began to expand
from the inside of your eyes.
Suddenly
all the lights of town died out,
all the windows of this town were broken.
Why?

Ah!
wreckage of glass, iron, concrete!
Angels of hell were there!
People walked the ruined town, the town itself
dripping a cool blood from its head
cut open by shards of glass.
And in the blood
a tiny,
red flower bloomed
just like a poppy.

People
kept walking with red flowers
on their heads.
And you?
Soon you will have to celebrate
your own funeral —
off by yourself;
And make a floral tribute with the flowers
from the head, and
place that tribute on your own grave.

(That day,
the very day
the red flowers were on the people's heads,
was the morning when
John Coltrane died.)

A BIBLE

GYOYU HASEBE

God came back
from a walk
to persecute me.

When I took my glasses off
God disappeared from my sight.
The Dangerous Fellow knew it quickly.

At the day's height
nobody could understand my words.
Nobody could see my smiling face.

That Guy created a human being
but it was not necessary that
I was also created.

So, He might teach and lead
but I don't think that
I was took care of by Him.

What an arrogant Cat!
What a Bossy Bastard!
He ordered and plundered my foods.

Like a flash
bird and animal escaped my approach.
It cost me.

He ordered my books taken away.
Somebody hooked my letters and pictures.
It's bad as blindness!

I want to see the people
whom God didn't create.
I want to see the persons
who threw off the glasses He forced on.

Whenever That One goes out for a walk
I go opposite, to the fields to search.
But like clockwork He always comes back
to persecute me.

THE TERMINAL

UNO TAKASHI

My watch has been ticking
the rusted time only.
But while it takes rest — laying down on the job,
rusted time runs away
inhumanly through the dry sunset.

One day
the passenger on the final bus
was the summer.

RONALD BAYES is presently writer-in-residence at St. Andrews College, North Carolina.

NABUAKI SUMOMOGI is a Nagoya businessman working in the import-export business.

GYOYU HASEBE is a Tokyo businessman.

MATSATO SHIMIZU is a journalist from Omiya-shi.

UNO TAKASHI is a writer living in Tokyo.

Four Poems by Lois Sadowski

ELEGY FOR A TEACHER

An arc of light
Leaping out of dark waters

Your wake
A silver chain
Of submergings
And surfacings

You are the lead-salmon
Springing toward other countries
Of snow palaces
And columbines

Where skeletons of fishes
Like ancient ivory artifacts
Comb river sands in articulate stillness

While fingerlings
Wriggle out
To loquacious oceans.

VISITATION

My veins are rivers.
Pieces of jagged rock
Roll down my blood,
Blistering soft tissues
With pebble-making friction.

I wait in a tomb
Of night-lights.
Neatly tagged and shelved
The other corpses sleep among the poppies.
When will they bring me poppies?

I have a bullfrog for a head
Booming at spaced intervals
Throughout the night.
I blink for something I can recognize.

The midnight moon
Is silk-screened on the curtains.
Floating out of reach
I want the moon.

The hands of the clock
Fly round the room.
Time is metallic on my tongue.

At last the sea-air freshens.
The billowing curtains are new sails
And through the window somewhere is the sea:

I had forgotten an ocean where
An oyster's irritant becomes a pearl.

SHE WEARS A HAIRBOW

She wears a hairbow
Bright as a butterfly
On the crest of her hair.

She blushes to say
He hasn't kissed her yet
And tried to hold her hand
But she refused.
She knew she ought.

Her legs are jump-rope legs
In bobby sox.
Her skirt a mass of flowers
Overlapping.

Her life has been
A teeter-totter,
And it is up and down
Four husbands later.

Between she always has a rest
Away from home
In white-walled peace,
Traveling to innocence again.

INCARNATION

A warthog face
Hung from bunched shoulders.

His dead-meat breath
Pushed through the link-fence
In short musky puffs.
Marble eyes
Slobbered for 10 p.m.,

When Mr. Ratzke would yawn:
"Well, better let Boy out."

Thick-nailed paws
Almost claws
Slapped the dead street.

Even the pale light of the moon
Angered that hot red throat.

Through panels of ecru lace
We watched his tail, sickle-taut,
As he stalked Sidney Street.

Lois Sadowski is a graduate student in English Literature at the University of Washington.

SHADOW

FRANK MILLER

It is a game we play;
them calling and calling,
and finally my putting down my pen
to step through the dim porch,
squinting into the sudden light,
but under the apple tree before I know it;
never looking up.

I stop by the trunk now.
On the lowest limb, just above my eyes,
the smallest pair of feet, with one
toe unable to stop wiggling.
But he is well hidden.

In the tree I hear giggling, too — a cough —
then the wind.
The oldest one is wisely silent
(He would be the highest),
while another clasps his mouth;
a dog barks somewhere,
and the fourth slips and grabs on . . .
(thinking surely he would fall)

Yet I do not look up.
What would happen if I ever did?
Quiet. It is a curious feeling.

Wind in the limbs and along the grass
where I look,
bringing in its own sweet smell.

Oh, yes, I think, if I were to lie down on my face
and close my eyes in this grass,
the tree limbs would be my thoughts:
leaves, verbs; apples, nouns,
and they would not move,
they would be very still and never change,
none of them.

But I cannot, nor do I look up now,
even as I turn, hearing one snicker hopefully
(a part of the game, too),
and walk away, out of the shadows of the apple tree
and in, through the dim porch, to my room,
to work again.

FRANK MILLER's poems have been accepted by the *New England Review* and *Cimarron*. He is now studying for his doctorate in English at the University of Oregon.

PASSAGE

H. MARSMAN

Translated from the Dutch by Hannah van der Kamp

Wounds feel out his passage
the plain is blind
and eyes burn deeper than the purpose

o, borders, horizons and fading

beyond this the world shall burn:
a flower askew in the flapping mouth of space

but when the shutters slid over his eye,
the world made a one-quarter turn.

H. MARSMAN, a Dutch Expressionist, died in 1940. He published eight books of poetry, three volumes of essays, two novels and two books of short stories.

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HARRY H. TAYLOR is preparing a collection of stories for publication. His "Tristan" appeared in our Summer '69 issue. He teaches English at Ball State University in Indiana.

IPHIGENEIA

HARRY H. TAYLOR

January 15

GENERAL TRYGANEUS has just been in on the same old errand. He wants to know what I am prepared to do about the windless weather which keeps us on the island while a mysterious sickness spreads through the camp. He asked me to see a good oracle. I have my doubts about an oracle's value. Everyone knows how they work. He will propose a riddle — the kind which either has no answer, or has many, depending upon the person who "solves" it, and in return I shall be charged some outrageous amount. However, I finally consented to go, probably to pacify the General more than anything else, and I shall make the trip tomorrow morning, before dawn.

January 16

The old quack sat in a sort of tent on a low hilltop — everything half-obscured with steadily rising vapours. He was wearing a soiled turban and many heavy, vulgar rings. General Tryganeus accompanied me, as I might have anticipated, and the oracle was waiting for us. The General nodded when the oracle spoke, as if in confirmation, and I caught him looking at me several times, as if he were anxious to see how I was taking it. I am sure that the old fox has been up there before, and that he *knew* what the oracle was going to tell me. We walked back to the camp in silence and parted in front of my tent without saying a word.

Great horror can never be precisely isolated from the queer, cumulous area of numbness which surrounds and supports it. It is true that I have been told I must sacrifice my daughter in order

to get the ships moving again, but I feel as if I am merely dealing with words, as if the oracle's words were any other words, and I can not really feel the reality which lies behind them — if any does . . .

In any case, I have often noticed that strong leadership, with its ostensibly clear, swift lines of action, has behind it a certain amount of compromise and muddle, and, with luck, with any luck at all, I may be able to handle the trouble here without having to send for my daughter.

February 2

The sickness, a mysterious silence, leaves gaps in the ranks here and there. The medics are puzzled. They are unable to explain it, and rather than have the whole camp alarmed, I have asked them not to discuss it in public. I need time to think . . .

I do not assume that I can outwit the gods, of course, but, on the other hand, I do not assume that I fully understand their design, either, and if I can not forsee design, then I can not very well be charged with going against it. Is my daughter *really* fated to die, a sacrifice, or am I merely fated to struggle with the problem, to wrestle with the squirming tentacles of choice? I struggle in dazed slow-motion, trying to get the coils away from my throat, my chest, my groin.

In the meantime, the games continue. The days stay cloudless, cold and clear. The sea quivers with light, and the nights are filled with hard, brilliant stars.

A prayer: Apollo? Well, are you still there? What are you thinking?

February 15

General Tryganeus says nothing, but he watches. He watches every move I make with the small, alert, blank eyes of a wolf, and although he does not interfere, I know what he wants. I know, for instance, that he has put his son, Syriscus, in charge of a ship that has been fitted out and is waiting at a moment's notice to bring my daughter back here. The old General, a veteran, a thirty-year man, is perfectly cracked on the subject of war. He can't understand why I hesitate over the sacrifice of one child, a girl at that. He believes that the games are merely degrading amusements, when the men could be killing and getting killed, and he stands down at the docks for hours at a time, saying nothing, looking out to sea as if he could smell Troy on the windless air.

Am I wrong to assume that Apollo would never stoop to work through a fool like Tryganeus?

March 1

I went back to the oracle to argue a little theology. "I have," I suggested, "an interesting paradox. Would you like to hear it?"

He shook his head. "Not particularly. You have merely come for a different diagnosis, and I can not give it to you. You ignore *all* the signs, and your behaviour bewilders Apollo himself. He is steadily growing more and more perplexed. He is angry, he is hurt."

"I'll tell you about the paradox anyway. I am beginning to believe that a man must defy the gods when he knows that his own position is more moral than theirs, but, on the other hand, the man is partly responsible for the gods' crimes when, in defiance of the gods, he allows the crimes to continue. Isn't this really a tragic choice? And at the heart of the tragic choice there lies the terrible paradox."

He shook his head again without looking at me. "I propose an interesting solution: a god can not commit a crime in the first place, which leaves *you alone* responsible for what is happening. This is no paradox."

"Why doesn't Apollo speak to me himself?"

"He is, every day," the old man said, and would not utter another word.

March 5

My wife and I aren't getting on very well these days, and since she hasn't even bothered to honor my request for a picture of the girl, she isn't very likely to release her to me, either — even if I command her to. Well, I can *send* the bloody boat, to keep the men happy for awhile, and when the empty craft returns, I do not see how they will be able to blame me. I shall look like a fool, of course, but I shall have tried . . .

March 8

The General has been in with the death figures for the past week, a frightening number. The victim now drops in his tracks. The boys perish while standing guard duty, squatting over dice, or horsing around in the showers. The General has openly talked about the "plague" in my presence, and while nobody has said anything to me, I know that he has talked about it around the

camp. I also know that everyone knows about the oracle. I can not leave the tent without sensing the soldiers' watchfulness, and when I am bent over maps, I can feel my orderly's eyes on my neck. I have become so short-tempered lately that I fly into a rage at the slightest offense, and since I can not trust myself to be just, I have given up inspecting the troops. I spend more and more time in my tent. I know that the soldiers are saying that the King is usually drunk. I am not, but I can not sleep on the usual amount of wine, and before I retire, I open a fresh bottle.

March 11

I finally called for Syriscus, made out the orders, and put him in charge of the boat. He took the orders, looked at me as if he were about to speak, but he suddenly turned and walked out of the tent. Syriscus is a bold, beautiful young officer who has been walking away with most of the prizes in the games lately, but, despite his heritage, he does not have his heart in the war. I know for a fact that he once called Helen a whore, and whenever he encounters me, I feel as if I am being patronized, in a quiet, well-bred way. He is both too bitter and too clever to be a first-class soldier, like his father, and while I can handle the father, I have to watch myself around this youth; *I* know Helen's a whore, but nobody, of course, can be perfect.

(But *poor* Syriscus! Klytaimestra will give him an earful before she sends him about his business, back to an empty boat. She will want to know if I really think she is fool enough to pack the child off to a camp filled with "sex-hungry soldiers." I can hear her now, saying "sex-hungry soldiers," spitting out the "s's" in the young man's face. She will enjoy being so explicit around such a beautiful youth. His looks will unleash her best venom and contempt.)

March 13

Everyone knows that the ship has embarked . . . The games have stopped; gambling has just about disappeared, and since the laundry tents are now used for laundry, the whores have gone back to town. The parade grounds have been swept; the camp is quiet; and everybody is obviously waiting. I can nose the waiting in the dry, cold air. I taste it in the meat, swallow it in the wine, and when I retire, when the massive army cumbersomely settles down for the night, I can hear the expectancy which rises with every prayer.

March 15

The men love me again, and while they can not look me in the eyes, they try to show their concern. The food has generally been improving. The cook fusses with my favourite dishes, and knowing my appetite for truffles, the mess boys are out right now gathering the best that they can find.

March 16

I have been working on a few lines . . . nothing at all pretentious, of course . . . but something, some fresh word of hope and encouragement to offer the men when the false ship returns without the sacrifice . . . I shall say, "This, too, shall pass . . ." I shall set the mood with a quiet religious ceremony, something in good taste, and when I have the men with me, I shall offer Apollo the camp's finest, biggest bull . . .

April 1

Rumors fly ahead of the ship. Syriscus has my daughter on board! She's coming! She's coming! What happened? What went wrong? What went wrong?

April 3

I still can't *know* that everything is certain. We haven't had decent sailing weather for months, and while the men say that Apollo has briefly offered a favoring wind, the wind may have died down out there, far from the island. Besides, even allowing for decent sailing weather, the captain will have to skirt enemy shipping, and while his course will be indirect and uncertain, he may lose his way, or be taken. Other craft have been taken, or turned back. Why not his?

April 15

While no one knows precisely where the ship is now, the rumors continue to fly through the air like arrows. Rumors do not have to obey the usual laws of time and space, and while I may not see the girl for months (if ever) the rumors have penetrated everywhere. The story goes that my wife is having an *affaire*; that she speedily handed the child over to the young officer to get her away from the palace. In this case (and assuming, of course, that the story has any truth to it at all), then Syriscus walked right into her net! What timing! I suppose I am supposed to find Ultimate Design here.

April 16

But *who* is the man? Rumors propose a dozen different possibilities, but I can not take any of them very seriously. Since no one has desired my wife for *at least* the last ten years, I can safely assume that the lover believes he is after the kingdom, and this being the case, he must be a foreigner. The natives know that the culture is so densely steeped in matriarchy that a young male is lucky if he is allowed to run for county clerk. The Bacchae dance in the hills; on clear nights you can hear their awful racket; and village mothers frighten their male children by telling them that the wild women are out looking for their testicles. I have tried to put laws through about this business, but with my wife running everything behind my back, I haven't been in the least successful. I have only been able to execute an obvious transvestite and a couple of toothless old crones.

April 17

She's here — within a few hours of the shore! The air is warm, perfumed, like summer. The breezes have conspired to make it a safe, uneventful trip, and she moves toward us through the fairest of signs. The sea is like a mildly ruffled lake; and here and there, among the temples in the mountains, small, very delicate wildflowers have suddenly appeared. The old General, that jackal, has picked a bunch to take down to the ship. He is like a young lover. He can hardly contain himself . . .

April 18

I have learned to anticipate the horrors of war. I am prepared for the rapine, the burning, the senseless slaughter; and behind every political speech I can hear the cries of the women, the children and the slaves as they crawl away from the flames. However, I have never been able to prepare myself for the absurdities which also lie in wait in every campaign.

At the last moment the fool ship had trouble docking. However, the general staff had already gone down to welcome it, and we could not very well turn back when we were in full sight of each other. We stood close together in our dress uniforms for an hour, wearing our official smiles of greeting, holding the pose as if arranged for a state portrait.

The General finally gave his wilted flowers to an orderly, but when the boy threw them away (as he believed he had been instructed to do), the General cuffed him on the back of the neck

when he thought no one was looking, still wearing his official smile. The sun was particularly strong, and, in heavy armor, a sentry passed out, falling over backwards into the water. We could see nothing but bubbles. I finally ordered someone in after the idiot.

I left an awkward, noisy creature at home, half boy, but this seventeen-year-old is a grave, beautiful young woman. I watched as Syriscus helped her to disembark, his hand in hers, and I realized that they had become lovers during that long, pleasant, boring trip. They had that vulnerable closeness, that touching dependence. Neither in his awkwardness seemed to know where to look, what to do with his common vulnerability, now that it was exposed — as if they had just wakened in each other's arms, and, while trying to confront the world, they were still curved inward toward some central source.

April 19

I dined with the child this evening. She is a bit too serious for her sex, or at least for my taste, but her eyes are so clear, her skin so fresh, that when she is thinking, the gravity is like a warm glow, a faint flush. She assumes that Helen was kidnapped, carried off against her will (*Helen*, of all people!), and when she asked if I thought her aunt was still alive and well, I said that we all hoped so; we certainly hoped so. (She seemed at the moment so earnest, so involved that, in another minute, I half-expected her to ask if there was anything *she* could do!) We talked about the past. She remembers that old swing in the side yard, when she was four, when we were all still living in the mountains together — in the days before my wife became absolutely impossible.

Her innocence has its precisely defined limits. She knows what's going on at the palace, all right, but she believes that I have brought her here to get her away from the unhealthy atmosphere, and while we did not discuss it, she imagines that I am going through great suffering over her mother's unfaithfulness. She handles me very gently, as if she were visiting an invalid. Her seriousness lingers in the air now, after she has gone, like a final, suspended musical note — pure and perfect.

April 20

The temples have a festive air; they seldom go unoccupied; the games, which have been resumed, have now become much more ceremonious; and each morning there are fresh flowers in the officers' mess. I can see that the unspeakable future is in the present

atmosphere, mirrored in a soldier's face when he is caught unaware, in the movement of a slave's arm when he pours the oil for the evening bath, and while everyone waits for me to set the day, that arm, holding the oil, seems suspended, always just above me.

April 21

The General is uncomfortable among the temple decorations and the priests' chatter, but he is willing to go through the forms and ceremonies because he assumes that, in the long run, the gods want what he wants. A battered old blood hound, he patiently sits on the temple steps day after day while his eyes ask the single question: Now? *Now* do we get on with it? He has become so preoccupied with his vigil that he has not even noticed what has been going on between his son and my daughter.

April 22

The death figures continue to mount. Two brothers died together today while patiently waiting their turn in the games. They dropped on the spot, and when the medics carried the warm bodies into the tent, the chests and shoulders were still glistening with the wrestlers' oil. These fair, lovely youths, sixteen-year-old twins, everybody's favorites, were the last of a minor royal line, good country people. I knew the father just slightly. What can I say? Where can I turn? Where can I look?

April 23

On first glance, I am tempted to tell myself that the lovers, the General's son and my daughter, are so appealing, so vulnerable, because they have been caught up in such vast, impersonal manipulations, whether Apollo's design or men's; but I have to remember that *they would not have met in the first place*, without the manipulations, or without what the oracle calls the Family Crime, the curse on the house . . .

I have never really bought that story about the dish of human flesh, anyway, because, while my father *was* hot-tempered and imaginative, he was more given to threats than to action. However, if the oracle is correct in assuming that a curse is on the house (a huge, sprawling, vociferous clan which gets together only for weddings and funerals, and then half of it is generally not speaking to the other half), the family would be unconscious pawns in a series of unfolding crimes which slowly reveal themselves like those oriental paper bits which flower when dropped into water . . .

Nonsense. I *won't* buy it. How can the horror which my relatives commit commit me? If I am responsible for a dark, original crime, then I am a slave, hardly human, and while I will grant that the gods can be impossible, they are Greeks, after all, and they would not play such a Joke on another Greek.

I tried to talk to Syriscus, but I couldn't. I do not know how to put this without seeming to be indelicate, but let me try: It has become increasingly obvious that the youth is amusing himself with an heroic role which doesn't by blood, belong to him. He has become increasingly self-conscious about his isolation and suffering, in a perfectly acceptable, mannish way, so far, but he is nonetheless not without a sense of drama, and he wants the stage to himself. He believes that he was born for this moment — the stage cleared, the universe tense with expectancy, the stars themselves watchful. Everyone else — the army, his father, I, his King — play parts in a vast, sometimes vaguely distracting chorus. In any case, he has fallen in love with the suffering entailed in the possibilities of choice (shall he be a soldier or shall he save the girl?), and, inflamed with his pain, he has grown a little less than human because he has let the issues themselves become a little less than real.

April 24

I understand — from the usual rumors — that Aigisthos is my wife's lover. Well, if he believes that story about the banquet of human flesh, and therefore assumes that he must play his part in the family curse by sleeping with Klytaimestra, he may have chosen to do what he believes he has been preordained to do. Poor Aigisthos! There must be pleasanter ways of obeying necessity!

Klytaimestra and Helen. The war we go to is a reflection of the wars we have left behind; the past waits for us, around the next bend, in the future. We make our choices one-by-one until, at the end of the chain, we suddenly realize that we have run out of freedom.

The lovers spend their afternoons and evenings at the officers' club. They avoided public places at first, but on this island there is practically nothing to do after you have visited the woods and seen the temples, none of them particularly impressive. The couple have a new innocence; sex alone can approximate that freshness, and while they rub each other down with sun lotion, locked alone within their angle of illumination, they are unaware of the children who run squealing along the edges of the swimming pool; the

mothers who call back and forth to one another in the haze . . . *Everyone* knows except the old General, that tiger, and at first everyone was charmed. Oh yes, charmed, amused, touched, so *very* touched. What a *lovely* couple. And *such* a shame! But their patience is now wearing thin. The girl was snubbed by one of the officers' wives in the club bar last night, and when Syriscus took her home, he was so furious he could hardly speak . . . He finally told her everything, but he found out she already *knew*. He doesn't know how long she has known, but she *knows*. She went to bed immediately, but she is bearing up well. She came in to breakfast this morning, ate normally, and then, as if nothing were different, nothing were wrong, left the table to keep an appointment with the hair-dresser. Syriscus looked white and shaken. I tried to talk to him, but he looked at me as if he did not know me, and turned and walked out.

April 27

We burned the twins. I've had the funeral on my mind for some time, as a matter of fact, and I was expecting trouble. I sent my daughter into the hills, in hiding, and I doubled my own guard, men whom I can trust, whatever happens. The mood was ugly from the beginning. There was an unexpectedly large crowd around the pyre; men came in so close that the front row was in danger from the flames, and the M.P.'s had to drive them back. The men pushed forward, threatening the police, shouting obscenities. However, the atmosphere was stagey, self-conscious, rehearsed, like bad theatre. The General was standing apart, surrounded by *his* guards, his favorite officers. He was calmly watching, wearing his smile, his eyes expressionless. I moved among the men, determined to be seen, trying to stare down the ring-leaders, reminding them that I was their King. When I stepped into a group, asking for trouble, the faces were soon docile, the eyes looked away, and I knew that I could handle the situation.

Then it happened. The boys (*both* of them) had a lover. Someone thrust him forward toward the pyre. He was one of those hard, fatty, middle-aged captains who have worked themselves up from the ranks, and because they are not aristocrats, they have allowed themselves to go to seed in peculiar ways. He came grieving and howling, covered with small self-inflicted wounds, his face smeared with ash, his clothes torn. "Iphigeneia!" he screamed, like a

woman, his hands raised in supplication. "We want Iphigeneia! Give us this girl! We want Iphigeneia!"

He was evidently not part of the script, because the men looked embarrassed, and when I ordered his arrest, they fell back, putting as much distance between themselves and him as they could, as if in fear of contamination.

I saw Syriscus for the first time. He reached the clearing ahead of the arresting M.P., drove his spear into the officer's side, and, mounting a platform, addressed the men over the body. He cried out against Helen and against the war. "Get out of here as best you can!" he screamed. "Go back to your homes. Go back to your wives, your children, your vineyards, where you belong! You have no business here! What makes you think you have business here?"

For a moment, I could not react at all. Then I was finally shocked and stunned. I could hear ringing in my ears — the same ringing which must have been going on in the mad man's brain. I was as ashamed as I would have been if he had been my own son; I felt such pity for the General that I could not raise my eyes to look at him. *How* could *such* a *good* mind crumble so easily? I was at first at a loss to understand, and then I knew that Eros was behind it, of course. Eros had finally fully possessed him. I have had him imprisoned — put away before the madness can spread and do others further harm.

April 28

General Tryganeus came in to see me this evening. He stood just inside the tent, leaning on his spear. "Have you been out today?" he asked. "Do you know what's happening? Have you tested the mood in the air?"

I nodded. Syriscus' madness has already spread. The men have been talking all day among themselves, huddled together in groups like women. Every boy in the camp has his story. Half of the camp has decided that it has slept with Helen at one time or another and that it is only fair to let the Trojans have their turn. I can not stop this anarchy unless I can get them to war.

"We need wind," he said, reading my mind, "wind, wind, wind for the sails."

I got up. "All right," I said, "all right."

His face twitched, twice, like a horse's behind, but he said nothing more.

May 1

O! IPHIGENEIA! IPHIGENEIA! IPHIGENEIA! IPHIGENEIA! O!

September 10

When will the heat break? The city wall, seen from this distance, rises like a single sheet of metallic flame. The men's spears, helmets and shields are broken into a thousand points of glinting light, and we fight blindly, dazed, without direction or method. When the sun finally drops, the air has a stale breath. The men groan and roll around without sleeping, fighting the sand flies.

I dreamed the other night that I was still wrestling with the possibilities of choice. I was visiting the oracle again, but as he turned the cards up, one-by-one, I saw that they were blank on both sides, like mirrors which reflect nothing. Then I realized that I was dreaming; that Iphigeneia was already dead. I could not ward off the next, unexpected blow: a curious seizure of peace.

I have observed before that great horror can never be precisely isolated from the queer, cumulous area of numbness which surrounds and supports it. Whenever I attempt to consider the unalloyed catastrophe without flinching, without lies or without cheating, I can not muster the agony which would be exactly equivalent to the catastrophe. When I think "pain," I merely descend as if hypnotized into this area of numbness which appears to possess a dense substance of its own. The horror lives down there, protected like a curious growth in a chemical solution.

People, races, nations, exist this way. Because everything, of course, depends upon how one chooses to look at things. The men have been worried about blood guilt, and I have noticed that they are already working on a beautiful story: the body on the altar was not corporeal; a god, possibly Apollo, removed the living girl at the last moment, and left, in her place, an airy shape. Centuries from now this version will turn up in someone's library — a pale shadow of this time, this violent age.

In any case, I would like to think that I can keep the truth preserved, in an unalloyed condition, away from the public eye, but I have noticed that she has been turning up in the General's speeches on inspirational occasions, and if she sits in the middle of his syntax on a white horse, the nation will be fortunate if she does not soon become another excuse for further blood-letting. I feel so helpless. What can I say? What can I do? *Somebody* should not have committed that first crime . . .

SPRING OFFENSIVE

GEORGE DREW

This pleasant interlude
of springlike weather
charges in
between the flanks
of winter:

two panting dogs,
deluded by the sun,
are copulating
on the lawn before
a sunshocked

troop of students who
are empathizing perfectly.
Breaking apart,
the dogs pursue each
other across

the conflict-beaten turf
and then return again
and struggle
to an indecisive draw;
the students,

losing interest in the
stalemate, soon move
on toward
hotter confrontations of
their own.

GEORGE DREW has had poems in several U.S. journals. He lives in Highland Falls, New York.

Seven Poems by Hans Jean Arp

Translated by Joachim Neugroschel from the French and German

AND POUNDS AND POUNDS AND POUNDS

and pounds again and yet again
and on and on
and once twice thrice until a thousand
and starts all over again
and pounds the big multiplication table and the little multiplication table
and pounds and pounds and pounds
page 222 page 223 page 224 and so on until page 299
skips page 300 and continues on page 301 until page 400
and pounds this once ahead and twice backwards and thrice upwards and four times downward
and pounds the twelve months
and the four seasons
and the seven days of the week
and the seven notes of the scale
and the six feet of the iambics
and the even house-numbers
and pounds
and pounds everything together
and it works out
out to one

THE WATER REMAINS EMPTY

is this this world
is that the hereafter

whatever is here takes fright when it wants to sit down
whatever is in the hereafter piles up to the great edge of the
soul that is feathered on both sides

is this this world
is that the hereafter

the front goes out through the front
the back goes out through the back
and the middle remains standing
but before the middle introduces itself
the water empties
and the bottle fills up
the hand shuts its trap
for whatever is spoken turns into blood and uses the familiar form
the arch-thighs hang out of the shirts
and touch the armies
the hair of the fruitful years stands on end
but the water remains empty

IT WILL TURN INTO A HEAD

the sphinxes carefully stick their noses out of the bark
for mister thread is bringing the rope
and mister rope is bringing the thread
to tie up the bag filled with obelisk butterflies

the bones in the stones grow faster and faster
in the foundation the kisses are festering
the sky revolves like an umbrella in the wind
the vases sigh like diamonds

if you sew a cackling bouquet on this happy holiday
it will turn into a head
that instantly looks at itself in a mirror
and asks itself: is that me or isn't that me

the gloves ask themselves the very same things
when their comfortable tongues recite the following litany
go up and push down
go down and push up
go forward and push back
go back and push forward
go right and push left
go left and push right

that's why it would be best to take down the mast-hats
the inner neckties
and the celibacy eggs from the thousandth floors
and to put them back on the table of creation
to ask the laurel-covered little quarter-hours to sit down on
    their ephemeral chairs
to arrange the ephemeral chairs and the table of creation rigorously
    in the shape of an interim pretzel
and then to discharge oneself of one's shoes as quickly as possible
and to leave the rest to the final eel attached to the gratis
    rural policeman

CLUCK CLUCK CLUCK

they walk a square
a circle
a point
and turn on the point
punctually halfway around
and halfway around again
they don't want to rest
on the ironing-board
on the twelfth tray
they shorten the short
they elongate the long
they thin down the thin
and fatten the fat
they wall up clouds alive
they unroll bales of water
and sweep them
they peck the blue shingles from the lines
and cackle cluck cluck cluck
so that they may feel very wavy
and so that it may speak for no reason
under the under
tick tock tick tock
like us clocks

FIRE-I

lion of night ey ply
reply ive by ply
unbranch sigh pi sigh ply
fire-i fire-i
i
lie
for wry thy sigh pi-wry
tiu tiu in arch
ide thy pi-wry
lion ingale re mi
sigh illicide lyrie
in-ike isis sigh ply
thy sigh is wry enchant
inarch reply the night
tiu tiu eh glu
supu tiu glu
glu supu
tulu

BEFORE THE CHAMBER

before the chamber the spinners of lions
drive out spiders and princes
marvelous ones of salt and flowers
the spiders drive out the princes
the princes glide the lions driven through the flowers
the spiders drive out the spinners
the lions are marvelous
the spiders are of salt
the princes are flowers

SPLOTCHES IN SPACE

(a cycle)

1

Age lives from hair to hair
across the orphaned air
It lives like an egg
hatching a fruit
on a tightrope between two wings

the air has the age of the wings
the fruits give birth to wings
the leaves of the wings bleed
on the hems of the air

2

death's-heads
glowing like suns
go thirsting towards the source of space
scorned by the stingy drakes
the craving babies
and the et ceteras
numbered and signed by the authors

3

the walls are of human flesh
the mushrooms have voices of thunder
and brandish heavy rapiers
against ancestral mice
with elephant-teeth

4

porcelain udders swing
on golden trapezes
among necktie branches
while stars jargon
and fly from fruit to fruit

5

siamese columns weep
knitwear tears
because they drop down at every midnight
from their bone saucers
like dots dropping from i's

6

a landscape in a snorting coach-and-four pauses
before a paraffin canape;
star-gloves knead
the anthropomorphous void

7

flower-syllables cover
bouquets of fronds
bobbin-lace tents are bobbing
in cotillions corantos galliards
with piggy-banks full of wasps

8

the end of the air
and the end of the world
are as round as balloons
but while the end of the world
remains on its folding chair
the end of the air jumps
from a tournament tree
into an empty cage
that flits through the air

9

the diamond-peel tempers morals
the merry-making draws out
sometimes even beyond death
and even beyond the railing
in worn-out space

10

the gluttonous clouds drive
their trunks and their tails
into the fragrant wounds;
flowers with honey-wigs
stroll about on the chatterbox-water

11

the mouths of the light yawn
and reveal a vacuum;
the blood-engine
breathes happiness on the snouts
and endlessly repeats
the aunts and angles
the uncles and ants

12

is it really a blue coffin
and not a saliva-covered hermitage;
if this apparition were ground up
would gleaming needles finally
tumble into the putrid light

13

beaks peck out the eyes of the light
of frisky cheeks;
tete a tete toe to toe
feet roll before their own feet
tatooed teats of teutoburg
shout the beaks with a teatonic fury

14

the snouts are filled with lily eggs
the plaster muscles carry
biped umbrellas
the flowers sweep the milk
with their visible voices
the stalks bend out of space

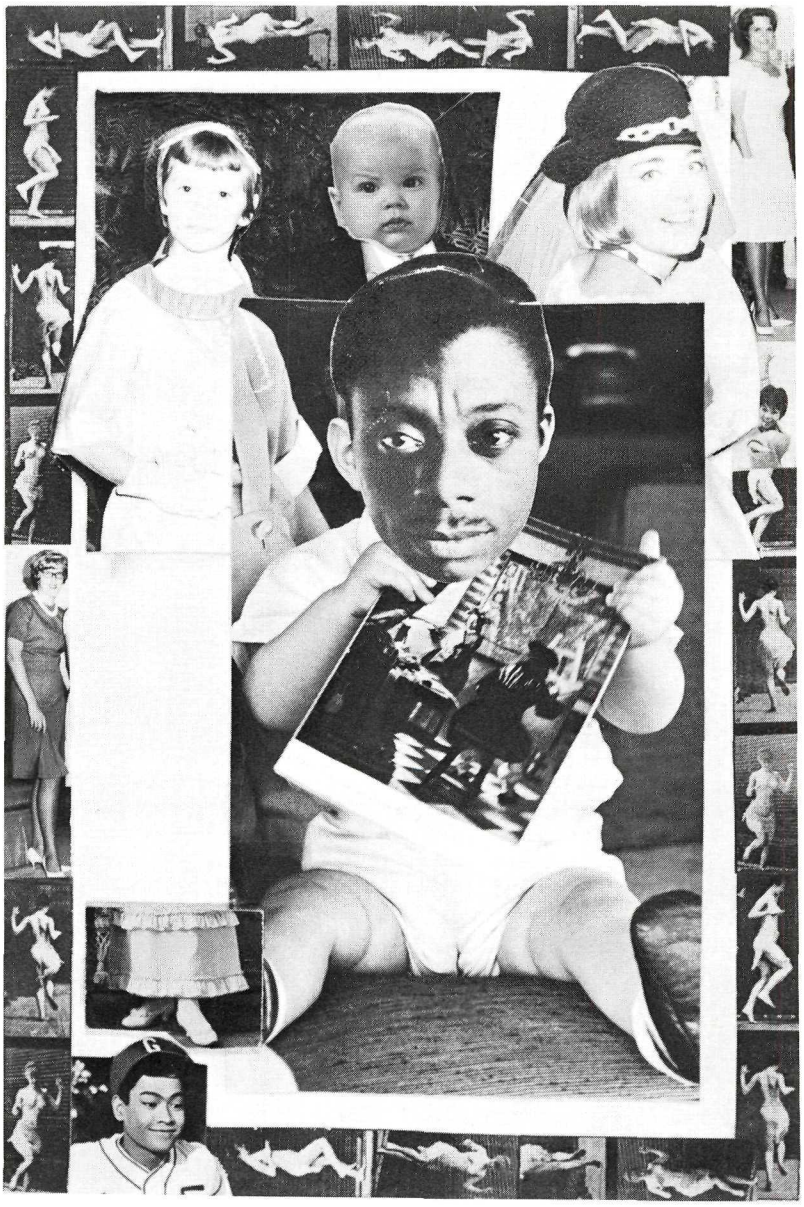
15

sit down on my toe
little white and naked sky
remain a lack-luster costume
remain white and naked
let former realities
mend the water
depilate the souls
fling the last word
beyond the last heart
remain white and naked
let the haloes purr
and filter their thoughts
let the roses stroll about
on the skin of a dwarf
let the four-voiced members
wave feathers of flesh
remain white and naked

16

the clouds undress
on chubby tables
the straw shirt embraces
the paradoxical sponge
beware of the machinery of faces

ARP's complete French poems are being translated into English by Joachim Neugroschel for Robert Motherwell's series *Documents of 20th Century Art* at The Viking Press, New York. Mr. Neugroschel is also preparing American editions of Georg Trakl, Miodrag Pavlovich, and Richard Huelsenbeck.



This photo montage is by LENNIE KESL whose work has appeared in *Prism international* before and who has exhibited his drawings and art work in many United States galleries. He is presently teaching at the University of Florida.

MAIDEN VOYAGE

MICHAEL FOLEY

Out in the crowd
Her bright coat bobs
Like a lifejacket.
An inflated smile
Secures her buoyancy.
Confidence throws up
A superstructure of talk.

Impressive and careless
She's as unsinkable
As the Titanic.

MICHAEL FOLEY was a guest editor of *The Honest Ulsterman* and has published in various magazines in Ireland. He lives in Belfast.

TOUCHING

SHARON LEE BROWN

roof in my mouth
and roof overhead
lying full down
and air alone
resting acrobat on me. .
I hear the little snakes
with the flickering
tongue of the snake
in the sky beside me.
I first sit
cooling my arms
and passing them
around the mountain,
two different roads
over the flickering
cold snakes
shooting up
like ice floe
off the flower pots
and patio bricks —
tips that blunt
in the air —
little pink lipsticks

clean as whistles —
everything ticks
like clocks
where the snake
faces come together
colored black and green.
I lift my neck —
I fasten a flower back
and swallow a cactus
with its heart
opening —
the tree together
in its leaves
knows how it feels:
innocence unlost
is touching:
like an old horse,
a drunkard's thoughts,
or the little boat
of a name in the wind. .

SHARON LEE BROWN teaches English at Scripps College, Claremont, and is putting together a first book of poems, *Retreats.*

Loy Otis Banks has had stories in many journals, including *Edge, Fiddlehead, Perspective* and *Four Quarters.* He teaches short story writing at Colorado State University and has been an advisor to *Colorado State Review.*

THE CLUSTER

LOY OTIS BANKS

As a member of the court of inquiry, I was troubled for some time by the suicide note, that two-line prescript which showed up in the deceased's coat pocket:

> That nature which condemns its origin
> Cannot be bordered certain in itself

Censure, apology, advocacy? What was it the expression of? Four months ago, even two weeks past, I could not have said. But I know now. Or rather I think I do. One can never be certain what in all ways is being said in a quotation which serves as a closing testament for one decided upon self-extermination.

In my official duty I need not have exerted myself in exploring the mystery of Charley Lamb's motive, although a little something of that came out at the inquest. But privately I had set myself to answer still another question: was that twenty-syllable prescriptum intended to define the unique, or to encompass the universal? Lured by curiosity, by morbid expectations, I went about investigating the method. And the madness.

Charley Lamb, a student, hanged himself in his own apartment on the night of his twenty-first birthday. That is the matter-of-fact delineation. Perhaps one thinks immediately of a type, the disoriented and neurasthenic youth who utilizes his own death to punish his enemies with guilt. A very primitive motive, this one. The classic one. And, among the young, probably the one most often acted upon.

It was not this way with Charley Lamb. He was no type, and it is by no means certain that he suffered neurasthenia. But a kind of

madness? Yes, there was a variant of madness in the way he thought and acted.

There was a madness, it would seem, in the guise which he assumed in death. Let me explain. When the police entered Charley's apartment, they found him fitted out in the clothes of a men's-store dummy, his face heavily tinted and shaded to resemble that figure. Their first thought was that they had been played upon again.

As pawn and lure, provocateur and ploy, Charley the Dummy had companioned the liveliest of drinking competitions; he had been discovered in bed with coeds, naked in lighted downtown windows, and squatting purposefully on the front lawn of the chancellor's estate. That was the authentic and irrepressible Charley of the men's store, subject to short leaves of absence and official returns.

The police were loosening the knot at Charley's throat when they discovered the play was death. This was not the authentic Charley, but the Charley of the flesh.

The deceased Charley Lamb had spent the first night of death in his own apartment and in the company of fellow students, invited to celebrate the arrival of his majority year. He was there, almost hanging over them, but they took him for his counterpart, the authentic one.

For me it was Charley's linking of the simple and the profound that confused the issue for perhaps a pardonable time: the trifling guise of the dummy set against the marquee-like preponderance of the damning twenty syllables. In my mind's sight that is how I see Charley even now, rope-suspended and arcing almost imperceptibly, facing in one minute his own yard-high syllables that seemed to gazette the backdrop wall of his death chamber, and in another minute fronting around to the noisy human spectacle of his grief.

Imagine a scene on the night of Charley Lamb's death. A cluster of students enters his apartment. They are at a high intellectual pitch, *fortissimo*, and have decided to accept Charley's invitation only because they have been routed from another quarter. But they will not be separated. It is solidarity, the group reality, which gives their lives point.

As they enter the death chamber, one of them (expressing all of them) says, "There's old Charley." Nothing more. They grant his relevance. None doubts his authenticity, or doubts far enough to

give him a trial slap or twist. He hangs there, and they go about decanting his liquors. They drink heartily and are refreshed.

So much are they refreshed and heartened by Charley's liquors that they begin to talk of death. Death is their great enemy and their constant subject. You see, they are committed to exorcise this influent taint. To them death is their one remaining link with the past, and they have denied all others, home, childhood, parents, faiths, loyalties, timepast itself.

True, it is a difficult position they are in, and they are not alone. But they will extricate themselves from this last insufferable bond, and in the already-charted way. They will disavow death, withdraw their recognition, and out of that withdrawal complete a creed. That creed, denial, is their passion, the orgy of their minds.

Yes, in the sanctuary which is the place of Charley's final commitment, they talk contemptuously about death as they might about an aboriginal faith. In the asthenia of their minds they must first abstract death, impersonalize it, identify and extend it as a theory only. Only then can they exterminate it.

From time to time Charley arcs around to them, bearing an awful message in his sightless eyes, but their minds' eyes are closed to his: his that acknowledge the alliant reality; that, motionless, reassert the link, of life with death. But will the knowledge which his lifeless body bears prevail against their mindful innocence? Perhaps his last thought, now hours past, is to wonder if he has made his intention plain. Or perhaps with thanksgiving he reflects upon how he, himself so recently indentured to their creed, has won discharge.

It is true that their major preoccupation is vanquishing death through the agency of their minds, but the mind in time exhausts its present resources. And so as the night wears thin, as refreshment flattens, they retire from their ritual subject, death, and regroup for departure.

At this point one of them who is more demonstrative than the others goes up to Charley and, taking him by the waist, sends him into a tight spin. All watch with faces drained of passion. To them the gesture is as superfluous as a backward look at the empty glasses. They see and do not see the revolving beacon that is his face, the Harlequinesque movement of his body like that of a floundering top.

Without knowing it, the one has set into motion a force which in reality all of them are not yet prepared to resist. The hook by

which Charley is suspended routs and gives way and he plunges to the floor at their feet.

So much for the students now.

I admit to help in the matter of identifying the tragic lines, in their partial presentation not the most transparent of citations. They are from *King Lear*, and it is Albany who speaks them to Goneril, his wife, who plots her father's death, poisons her sister, and afterward takes her own life. It is in the addition that Albany's prophesy is transported into a more certain light:

> She that herself will sliver and disbranch
> From her material sap, perforce must wither
> And come to deadly use.

Four of Charley's cluster who came before the court of inquiry were asked to interpret the two-line prescriptum. None could identify it or through it attribute a motive for the suicide. I was not content to let the matter rest there, however. I went on with a reading of the three-line particularization, and afterward related the actions of Goneril and Edmund to the multiple tragedy.

At some point of the inquiry, perhaps at this moment of reading, I clearly became Charley's advocate, and that is why I have written this syllabus of a strange and prophetic suicide.

At this point, too, looking at the four for signs of recognition, I became convinced that Charley, without intending to do so, was speaking sanity to a world going mad. No, I don't think Charley had consciously sought an audience outside his own cluster, but I decided that he had earned one, and I determined that he should have it.

Could Charley's cluster have looked forward to next-morning classes instead of to another three days of spring vacation, one might suppose they would have worked off their fear and rage in a congenial climate. The classroom is an impregnable sanctuary for aberration. If it does not in fact fan aberration, it at least provides a sure supply of fuel. There the indwellers, both master and apprentice, agree to hear all premises, all suppositions. And the one most adept in speculation is often the one most generously rewarded. So it is, and so it promises for the future.

With life it is different. Exigencies apply and are honored. Hypothesis and theory wait.

Imagine, then, the prospect immediately before Charley's cluster as they leave the suicide's apartment. They have one another, and

that is a substitute classroom, but life is invasive, encroaching. There will be a confrontation with the police, because death has been resurrected by one of their own. Their frustration and fury mount, but their sanctuary is closed to their needs.

They will open it, and upon it vent their wrath of denial.

Picture them now inside a building on the campus. Which one? What one building is most provocative of their distrust, most vulnerable to their destructive rage? The library? Yes, they are already inside, having forced entrance through a window, and can be seen moving wraithlike among the book shelves. They work efficiently in teams of two, one holding the book, the other ripping out pages. But not all the pages. Thrift is the watchword, and mutilation, not total dismemberment, is their goal. A chapter or less will accomplish their end. And the ripped out pages are carefully stacked, the foreshortened books meticulously replaced in their original berths. At an appointed hour before dawn, one of their cluster will go out to the superannuated hearse which waits in a parking lot, drive it up to the window, and systematic loading of the neatly-stacked pages will begin.

From moment to moment a little light from a lamp post outside reveals a fugitive face with clenched jaws, temple swollen-veined, torturing eyes fixed with rabid concentration upon a victim being processed for mutilation.

Assume accomplishment of their goal at a safe hour before light. They are now cruising triumphantly along a country road. Only one of them is motionless, speechless, and unclothed. He sits, assisted, on the seat next to the driver. In a short time they come to a bridge. There they stop, then drive the hearse in among the protective trees.

In a moment the rear doors of the hearse swing open, and Charley's heritors swarm out. They are tired but steadfast. The conquest has been made, it is securely behind them, but there is still the rite of obliteration, the formality of fire. Like experienced movers, determined and patient, they unload the cargo and scatter it in a tight circle under the bridge.

Not until the last page has been cleared from the hearse do they lift the naked and speechless one from the front seat and carry him to the circle. Now he is stretched out ceremoniously inside the double circle, and they wait for the match and the flame. In ritual time the matches flare from around the circle, the offending pages

take flame, and at the center the authentic Charley blazes and becomes extinct.

The engine of the hearse starts and quickens and the last ash stirrer quits his post. Fagged but fulfilled, like incontinent young lovers, they mount the hearse for the return trip.

Charley's heritors have had their way and for the moment they are satisfied, but this retaliation against circumstance, like the record of defiance that lies in their past, only victimizes them. They are now another important step away from freedom, another step advanced to manipulation by circumstance. Had they suffered rather than countered the death of Charley, they would have represented themselves in that one circumstance inviolable, and thereby advanced toward circumstantial immunity.

Tomorrow Charley's heritors will have to counter another circumstance antithetical to their creed. Tomorrow and every tomorrow after. A weary prospect? Yes, and it is in that very matter of prospect that they are damaged. The prospect of the past, which offers that exclusive advantage of example, they are closing off. Perhaps that is another way of saying that for them each day is a further disbranchment from their material sap. That is the way of madness.

And what can be made of the fact of flame? — the incineration of the men's-store dummy, the authentic Charley. Do they perhaps see in that death an expiatory cancellation of the unacknowledged one? Counteraction. Neutralization.

Do I seem to be saying that Charley's heritors talked themselves into a lie? — that Charley had really never hanged himself. Yes, I think that is the purpose which the blaze served. It established authenticity. Identity. A kind of death, yes, symbolic, but only by their own agency. Such is the drift of the asthenic mind.

Charley Lamb *is* dead. Charley the apocalypt. And what of the future of that cluster which he dared to instruct through his own death? There is little cause for optimism there. But the issue of Charley's title and the claim which I have made for it do not lie with them. They did not attend Charley's last rites, and they can hardly be expected to read this syllabus of his death. It is not for them. It is for you.

DARK AT THE CLOSING

EUGENE McNAMARA

Like a traveler sailing the Archipelago who sees the luminous mists lift toward evening, and little by little makes out the shore, I begin now to discern the profile of my own death. — THE EMPEROR HADRIAN

Portents:

a dead crow on the wet porch steps —

a dead starling by the curb's edge
day by day growing flatter, drier,
more an abstract of a bird's shape —

a dead squirrel in the bushes
one eye socket already filled
with ants, blind, impervious
now and beyond reach —

a dead young rabbit caught
in the mower's fury —

I study the pulse in my wrist
read the obituaries and
subtract my age from theirs.

My talk is all of rare disease
and sudden death:
His age? I ask. *Only forty?*
Only sixty? Twenty? Only —

I subtract my father's age
at death from mine
and wonder:

I am as cold as early morning feet
on bare linoleum.

The Situations:

A man falls asleep while his children watch television.
The voices, speaking of super heroes, evil princesses
and the planet Thoth, enter his dreams.

The rain-scattered birds
return to the tree.

The things I gave:
A word. A touch.
What were they?
They break in your hands.
Let them free.

Others raise their faces to
the sky as bells peal and
silver jets pierce the tall sky.

The faces are filled with
intent joy or wonder or
fear of what the bells or
the planes outward bound
mean, what they say,
what is to come.

The faces lift the sky.

I begin now to taste
my own death.

("We can't return.
We can only look behind
from where we came — ")

all that summer it rained
I thought I'd lost you.
Been trying to reach you.
You couldn't hear.
I was shouting down
a dry well.

Bubbles rise in the blood
fine as silk urged along
the corridors under the skin
pulsed through the body's
labyrinth towards the heart
unwinding dreaming threads
of unloosening, falling
away, apart, coming towards
the end of themselves and
of my time.

My thoughts hesitate at this:

The dark mystery of a train shed
where steam idly boils across
grease-wet concrete.
The dark cars are silent
and unmoving.

full circle? the blood
does not answer but sullen
pulses on in its own dark
bemused in its own journey
through me towards silence
in my heart.

the cars in the train shed!
they too are portents!
they are mysterious and unmoving!

At the Closing:

a few measures:

a father carries his sleeping son
out of the car after a long trip
home. the child awakens for a
moment, is confused by starlight
and turns deeper into sleep.

a child traces a word in a book
ball: does he think of roundness?
of the shape of his hand curved to
hold? of the earth?
of the earth unheld by any hand
but let drop spinning alone?

time enough for that later.
for now it is enough
that he trace the word
that his lips celebrate the thing
that he turn from the word
that he go running into
the world and time.

EUGENE MCNAMARA teaches English at the University of Windsor, is Editor of the *University of Windsor Review*, one of the editors of *Mainline*, has had poems and short stories in *Quarry, West Coast Review, Queens Quarterly, Intercourse* and so on. A collection of his poems is scheduled for October with Delta/Canada.

Three Poems by Glenn Wesley Beaudry

BLACKNESS IS WHERE NO THINGS ARE

Somewhere between this thing here
and that thing there we are:
light seems not to shine, cannot appear.
Shadow is on the land, lesions on the star.
We feel for our wound at the place where
it is not as if we could discover
ourselves at the point of least resistance where power
is not, feeling certainly as if it were.

The moon is scarred at this eclipsing hour.
The earth has crossed before it like a dark lover
crossing dumb distances, his mission unsure,
his direction only directions of thin air
as it oddly diffuses through now this, now that strange detour.
White destinations are lost among dark depots drained of color.

A PROVINCE, A PURPLE SANCTUARY

It is not certain. And assuming only grass
would best put it all at green ease,
is a fancy subjunctive. How workaday it goes

in colloquial syrups of vaccined days,
more mystifying than martyrs on a cross
injecting lilacs with lozenged eyes,

with eyes burning like corners of burning brass.
Much wonderment about immunities, about disease,
while around the stillness one only improbably never knows.
So much for acumen, the needling disquisition about ways
as bronze nodules pass beaming on the boss:
the flesh behind has its desperate way, then dies.

Nor was it ever more certain that, in the tongue that says,
that it is, the Life living with the self and the self's red malaise.

THAT SOME PICTURES FORM

Some such definition's possible, perhaps,
the blue recedes back into blueness;
absinthe dries as anger in the paint.
The Painter drops his brush and naps.

The edges are perfectly correct:
volumes blur backward: the hallucinating saint
seems to topple forward from the canvas
upon the fuseled reverie.

The color's conversion is direct,
not ample, but laconic as the faintly faded chair
fading into ether oils, into the swayed tree,
bare branches sticking uneasily on unshaped air.

Perhaps the Painter, daubing on his dreams,
defines it crossly: the rubbed grey rims of two cups
grudging on the potion's wheel like stained glass
connecting a past imperfect

with some perfectable Unknown.
But the lines mostly, isolations by blank junctures,
or in the rounding draught, merging shapes like flesh and spleen
dozed together in one vinous mass.

GLENN BEAUDRY is chairman of the creative writing program at the University of Alaska.

GEORG BRITTING, who died in 1964, is among the most important German writers of the twentieth century. PETER PAUL FERSCH translated four of his stories for previous issues of *Prism international*, and is now at work on a book to be called *Georg Britting: Selected Short Stories*. "Carnival in Flanders" is from Britting's *Gesammtausgabe*, Band I, Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1958. We are indebted to the publishers for permission to print this translation.

Carnival in Flanders

GEORG BRITTING

Translated from the German by Peter Paul Fersch.

THE WIND BLOWS ACROSS Flanders always; at least during the war it was like this; I never experienced it otherwise. And many roads criss-cross Flanders, and tall trees line both sides of these roads, poplars naturally, and the wind bends the poplars so that they lean forward, like beggars, beneath the cloud-covered sky. And once I saw four men on one of these roads carrying a stretcher in the wind — but I shouldn't mention this here, for this is not a proper beginning for my story, because I want to tell it in the end. Let's forget about roads and poplars and start with a different scene.

With every firm step clouds of musty dust whirled up, and because we weren't used to stepping softly — our nailed boots weren't fitted for this purpose — the dust hung in the air like smoke. Pretty-boy Reismüller was a gutsy and fidgety little doll with white face. Excited as always, he screamed: "Why don't you guys finally get some sleep!" His thin, commandeering voice, of which he, the former student at N.C.O. school, was so very proud, crackled through the hall like a whip-lash. Naturally, to no avail, for no one obeyed him; besides, here and now he had no business giving orders.

Two smoking oil lamps dangled from the ceiling and gave off just enough light so that no one stepped in anyone's face. From the gallery that curved around the hall, about half way up the wall, came a long drawn out rumbling thunder: a mountain of chairs piled high had begun to slide and collapsed.

Some of the men were already stretched out on the barren floor, field-pack or knapsack for a pillow, and tried to sleep. But they couldn't fall asleep. Not because the floor and the field-packs were too hard for them — tired men find every bed soft — but because everyone still carried in his heart and eyes the images of the past few days, and this is what kept their sleepy eyelids from closing.

And once more Reismüller's voice trumpeted forth from the stage: "Quiet! Quiet! Go to sleep!" He had arranged for himself a place to sleep on a half-rolled-up screen with a green meadow painted on it. He squatted in the grass among the flowers, his back leaning against the wind-machine, and his obstinate and boyish face showed an angry scowl. I sat in the prompter's box, even if it was a little crowded down in there, it was warm and I was alone in my little house, and that was worth something. Heinrich, the tall one, carrying a burning candle and shielding it with his hand from the draft, walked sniffing and scenting between the dusty pieces of movable scenery. I placed my hands in front of me like two open pages and pretended to read in the book, pretended to be the prompter, and when he passed by me, his head bowed to the floor as if looking for something, I whispered to him in a hissing tone of voice: "Heinrich, you terrify me!"

But this Heinrich must have been in league with the devil, like the Heinrich Faust in the play, for he had suddenly vanished as if by magic. I was curious and climbed out of the box, found the door at the back of the stage, stepped through it, and saw him swinging a pike. Scattered all over the place were tin mugs, silvery crowns, swords, and visors. On rusty nails hung hair pieces, dishevelled, dusty, gray, black and blonde, and false beards, matted, and in the flickering candle light it looked like the inside of a cannibal's hut in the South Sea, or a head hunter's, where the severed skulls of enemies dangled from leather strings. A spider had spun a web between a long, pointed, pitch-dark beard and the light-colored wig of a girl with long pigtails. The web swayed in the draft of air, and Heinrich said, "That beast!" and held the candle under the motionless spider, who developed many legs under the burst of flame, wriggled, stopped wriggling, turned into a lump, melted with the net, and died glowing and stinking. "I am going to sleep here," said Heinrich, leaning on his pike. Well, he could do as he pleased, why not here? "Be careful with the light," I said, knocked over a helmet with my foot so that it rolled shrieking and

wobbling for some distance, and went out, leaving the man in the company of pigtails and beards.

It was cold in the hall, and I was also hungry, but had nothing to eat, no sleep, so I stumbled toward the exit. It was two o'clock in the night, pitch-dark outside, it rained, and the wind howled. A man on horseback, the collar of his overcoat turned up, clattered through the streets. He rose black in front of me, indefinite, horse and rider flowing together, and when lightning broke from under the horse's hoof, a spark struck out of wet stone, how comforting it looked, this warm, little, yellowish-red, dry, and living creature! I wanted to converse with the rider, he compelled me to tell him something, anything. I, the black silhouette, standing in the doorway, shielded from the rain, wanted to tell him something: him, the black silhouette, riding through the streets of night, between the houses, under an invisible sky, in a wet overcoat and on a wet horse. Maybe if another spark had sprung from under the hoof, a dry and red one, I would have done it, but the cobblestones gave no fiery answer, only echoes, diminishing echoes, and I went back into the hall.

The guard on duty, legs stretched out, sprawled in a wicker chair, and he had a hard time keeping his eyes open. The exhalation of the many wet uniforms smelled repugnant. The many sleeping men stretched out dead made a gruesome picture. Many had their mouths half-open and sounded their death-rattle in a dream. Most of them had their knees pulled up, hands buried in their pockets, and were hunched up like dogs. On one side of the hall the rifles were piled together. In the corner slept the commanding officer, Ketteler, on a few canvasses, using an overcoat for cover. He was the only one with officer's rank that had not yet been wounded, and he was in charge of the company.

All day we had been fighting the English. Those devils were unbelievably tough. They wore small, flat, bowl-like iron hats and were long-legged, we noticed, all of them long-legged. The thin calves of their long legs were wrapped in yellow bandages, and on the outside of their smooth-fitting uniform coats they had breast pockets sewn. They excited us, these breast pockets, which on our side could only be seen on the coats of generals. And these long-legged, yellow generals — we had not seen a single fat one — it seemed to us, were all brave. And so we had spent the day facing each other in the mud, shooting and hitting them, and they hit us, and when evening came — and that much we had already noticed,

after each one, after each single day came evening — well, when evening came our replacements arrived, and now we were on alert station in this small village in Flanders, but any second it could start up again.

I said "Good night" to the guard on duty and carefully moved in the direction of the stage. Somebody screamed in his sleep and thrashed with his arms. I plumped down into the black yawning hole of the box, pulled the warm, woollen cap over my nose, and went to sleep.

The spider was again in the cannibal's hut, weaving between two skulls, not a spider web, but a thick, gray, loathsome rope, and the rope started to swing, to swing back and forth, and all of a sudden it coiled around my neck. I wriggled with many limbs like the spider under the flame-throwing candle in the storage room. I hung as if from a gallows, and the dead masks grinned fiendishly, and the chieftain's head started to speak, the dead, severed head, but naturally I didn't understand a thing. It babbled something in negro slang, and the noose around my neck kept tightening, and the chieftain's skull screamed louder and louder. What did this guy, this grinning South Sea Islander, want with me? Because I still didn't understand him, he got mad and said angrily tocktocktock to me, and now I understood and the clear, crackling sound of English rifle fire awakened me. I dove out of my box, stumbling from dream into reality. Little Reismüller shot past me, already in full battle dress, the helmet on his head, chin-strap in place, pack on his back, as if he had slept in full dress. The lamps on the ceiling glowed dimly in the vapour. Ketteler, the commanding officer, stood white-faced in the middle of the tumult and screamed with cracked voice: "Get your rifles and outside!"

Shouting, dust, excitement. Pale eyes in a freckled face, rifle strapped across his shoulder, someone remained undecided and stroked the wall with his left hand, tenderly, as if taking leave. Magic had happened to him. This we all had to guard against in difficult hours. And that he had become its victim, one could see in his helpless and frightened face. For him the dusty, barren, uncomfortable hall had turned into a warm, glowing, rosy cave, and the hard floorboards, on which he had just slept, beckoned him like soft, billowing cushions. To lie down and stay there until Judgement Day: how nice that would be! Yes, to stand here and stroke the wall: What luck! He sighed, then he looked up, and saw a few belated men rush to the door. Busy enough with themselves, they

took no notice of him, and he looked into their sad, disavowing faces and followed them.

The long-legged ones, with flat iron-bowls on their heads and thin lips in clean-shaven faces, must have broken through and must have entered the village already. Bullets whistled through the air, sounding hollow, like scratching paper with a needle. There already had been hand-to-hand combat, and this had broken and splintered the force of their thrust. The English were slowly but surely being pushed back. Only to the outskirts of the village clung a small troupe and barricaded the road with obstacles consisting of cabinets, tables, mattresses and all sorts of household furniture, and in spite of the fact that we came at them with hand grenades, they held out.

At dawn we saw a figure racing up the road behind us, and the pounding of his boots made the cobblestones clatter wildly. "A jumping-jack," someone yelled. As if he had just left a masquerade ball, the fellow came dressed in a white-and-red checkered clown's suit, only the pointed dunce's cap was missing, and the jester climbed onto the shaky barricade. "Hei! Hoi!" he howled, the madman, and tossed the grenades that we handed him, and wriggled and tossed and howled at the English. Really, that's how it was, and that's exactly how it happened, that's what a masked fellow did at the earliest break of dawn, a white-and-red speckled fellow, and the English that were there, if one of them is still alive, and that is quite possible, they would remember it as we remember it still. The masked fellow sang something with resounding voice, as if it were a great pleasure to him, and it was far from being pleasurable, but he sang, no one knows why he sang on this cold morning in February of the year nineteen-hundred-and-seventeen. Then there was silence. For a short time, about fifteen or twenty seconds, and that is a long time, there was no shooting, neither on our side, nor on the other, everyone was probably unfastening some more grenades. The red-and-white fellow was no longer singing, stood on top the cabinet, I stood below. In front of my nose there danced the red-and-white squares of the clown's pants. The white ones were grey, but much lighter than the greyish morning, and the red ones were blood-red, red as blood, I couldn't think of any other comparison in this moment of total silence. And now this clown crouched, and I felt that he was preparing to jump, and his leg moved away from under my nose, the barricade was empty, and he, this fellow, was over and down there among the generals with their fashionable jackets and fancy breast pockets. Wild shooting

started on all sides, day-break grew lighter, howling and laughing we followed the checkered figure over, and then the outskirts of the village were in our hands again.

Yes, this was Heinrich, the tall one, who had put on the clown's suit in the junk room of the theater to keep warm, and probably also for a joke, and had not been able to take it off quickly enough. So he had joined in the fighting masqueraded, and now he was with us in the shallow trench we were digging out quickly, without being bothered much.

We didn't want him to take the clown's garb off again. Someone had discovered that today was Shrove Tuesday. We had completely forgotten about it, what did we know of the calendar? But it was really Shrove Tuesday. We had checked it and it was true. In the afternoon the field-kitchen brought some food, some hodgepodge, liquor, plenty of liquor, a horrible, biting, brown booze that we gulped down greedily.

And later on I saw a huge spider at the edge of the trench, huge and grey, like an English helmet-bowl. I wanted to kill it, but when I struck, my fist didn't land on a soft, twitching, blood-splattering body, as I had expected. It bounced onto something hard; it made a hollow sound. Naturally, it was only such a helmet-bowl, and the head with the clean-shaven face was not inside it. It was a harmless helmet, and the one who had lost it had to go to the quarter-master (who must have cussed up a storm!) and requisition another.

Yes, we had a good time in our trench, in our shallow, newly-dug trench, and it didn't rain, and that was a blessing we knew how to appreciate. Only once, in the afternoon, a shower of white hail-like snow fell out of a brownish cloud and swept over our heads, while, at the same time, the sun glowed pale. The pointed crystals crackled like sand, and the wind stirred them into small funnels of sand, lifted them into the air, and drove them away from us so that no wet traces remained behind.

The long-legged generals stopped shooting at us, so we stopped shooting at them, we were just as gallant as they, even though we didn't wear generals' jackets. Fearless Heinrich, the red-and-white flecked one, had received the largest ration of booze. He seemed to be drunk and yelled continuously: "Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday!"

The little doll, Reismüller, the N.C.O., who of late and to his pride had been allowed to lead our company temporarily, looked askance and cross at Heinrich's clown suit. He had always been of

the opinion that, as far as things go, we were probably pretty fair combat soldiers, but that we displayed little sensitivity to certain matter-of-fact regulations regarding military discipline. "But tomorrow you will take off that outfit," he said to Heinrich, "no German soldier should run around like that!"

"Yes, yes, o.k., just don't get excited, corporal!" said Heinrich without looking up at him. Little Reismüller winced when he heard the word *corporal* which was now in common use for N.C.O.'s. He hated it, for it seemed to him a violation of regulations and suggested unwarranted familiarity. But he didn't dare protest, for everyone would have laughed at him. In the trench, Heinrich, flat on his stomach, was digging a little hole with his fingers. "This is good earth," he said, "she gets a lot to drink from us, a lot of stuff, some of our blood, even some of our poverty, obediently she swallows everything." He dug deeper and, creating a little cone-shaped funnel, he smoothed its walls with the tips of his fingers. Then he carefully poured from his canteen a little liquor into the funnel, and it foamed and bubbled as in a glass of champagne. "She also should have some of this," he said, again filling up the funnel with earth, pressing and smoothing it over, so that no one could tell the spot. "Because today is Shrove Tuesday," he said, "and tomorrow is Ash Wednesday!"

The morning after was to live up to its murky reputation, but today we didn't know it, today, today we drank liquor, giving the good earth of Flanders her share, and were in good spirits, for today was carnival-in-the-trenches.

And if I had the gift of clairvoyance, but I don't, I could have told you something now that was going to happen a day later, which I saw with my own two eyes a day later, but today, on Shrove Tuesday, I couldn't see.

Well, there is a road in Flanders, and one side of the street is paved with round cobble stones, the other side is unpaved, and both sides are glistening wet. Tall trees, poplars naturally, are planted along the country roads in Flanders, and naturally the wind blows in Flanders and bends the poplars, so that they bow humbly, all of them bowing in the same direction, assuming an attitude of prayer. Why are they praying to the gray, cloud-covered sky, for they could only be sending their entreaties there, where else? The road is long, probably endless, and leads through flat terrain that looks like a sea, a sea of land, and here and there a farmhouse drifts aimlessly like a ship. And now four men come

walking down the road with a stretcher, and on the stretcher they carry something that is hidden, something that is hidden under a brown cover, something that is long and hidden under an old brown trench cover. The men are walking down-wind, and the wind makes them bow, like the poplars, and the longish thing on the stretcher doesn't move. It's something dead, something irrevocably dead, that much is certain from the brown trench cover, from the wrinkles: someone who has an eye for it could easily see that under these wrinkles only something dead could be hidden. A gust of wind, a very strong one, comes racing down the road. The poplars shake and bend, groaning, and the men bend forward, and the brazen fingers of the wind lift the corner of the brown cover, and one can see something red, something checkered red which is covered up again. Everyone would have thought that what they saw was blood, because these days many stretchers were being carried through Flanders.

But it wasn't blood. The deadly bullet stuck in his heart caused no blood to flow, not even a little blood, only dry death. It was only one of the red checkered squares on Heinrich's clown suit that the wind had uncovered this afternoon on Ash Wednesday in the year nineteen-hundred-and-seventeen.

Two Poems by Bill Howell

GREY WOMAN

Tight, time is up lips
on that grey woman with half a beard,
the one with Mrs. in front of her.
Can't imagine who'd marry or name a woman
like that, or how, now a widow woman
with no smiles. We clash, alone together,
each meeting a parting, wide
and wild eyeing each other to see
who tells the first lie.
She clips and slices words at me
like unsafe razors to be returned
dulled or sharpened by my will.

Words to others flow from her
like seconds from electric clocks
about my flaws. She hates me
because I'm rash enough to write, breaking out
enough to be right. I tell myself
an old woman is never someone
to get along not getting along with, still
I wonder why I don't ever smile
back at her when she doesn't. I hate her,
try to write her out of me
words choked in endless draftings,
suddenly many times her same age,
practicing my rightness.

I study the fading grey, the vital question
she asks with her eyes without her mouth
knowing or caring to ask it, study without
knowing what a real student is,
and break it down . . .

Smiles are always young,
hold tears like cups until someone
turns then upside
down over impossible lifetimes.

Once she was young, she says:
soon I'll be old, I'm told.
And if no matron is a mother,
then no poet is a son.

EIGHT STANZAS CONCERNING THE GREAT "WHO ARE YOU?" AND "NAME THE LITTLE ANIMALS" CONSPIRACY

Ask, "Who are you?"
at any toddling toddler.
And if you bring it up right,
the kid'll grin at you.
But he won't know, either.

Nobody else asked me. I was different.
'Cause there were two of us.
Brother Bob and me.
My twin. We grinned, too.
And asked each other.

It's like that, being a twin.
You sort of know.
And when you can talk,
you each introduce each other
to whoever you meet.

I'm Bob's brother
and he's mine, except
being a twin, it's like
growing up with your best friend
sleeping in the bunk above you.

And you're never ever afraid
of the dark, and the two
of you can beat up
any kid on the block,
but you never ever need to.

And you have twice
as many friends
as most folks, and folks
get sick of you twice
as fast. But you never ever do.

And right from the start
you stand apart together
on a pair of separate leashes,
or lie in a double pram,
kicking each other with answers.

So even now
he's married and gone,
I still answer to both names,
and say I'm housebroken,
and still sort of know.

BILL HOWELL had several poems broadcast in 1969 on the C.B.C. *Anthology* program. These are his first in print. A native of Nova Scotia, he now lives in Toronto.

Two Poems by Harold Enrico

GRIZZLY

The webbed toes of waterbirds padding
estuary mud kept me awake for hours last night,
although wild geese, lost in fog,
lifted me almost to the edge of dream:
unclouded larches, pure Canadian fords,
peaks that contrived to blend their colors
with the tatters of a dying sun.

Meanwhile, my heart-beat timed me
back to a sleepless earth,
but toward morning I climbed a high moraine
against a wind from the North
and slid down into a Yukon of faultless woods
where I hunted the Grizzly in a foot of snow
and tracked him down into a bog.
Waist-deep in water, I flailed my arms.
A flock of widgeons whistled over my head.
The sweet smell of the beast hung in my hair
and penetrated my skin through my dripping clothes.

Furred, my hands stretched their claws
and scratched at the early stars.
I felt a blizzard blowing under my hide.
Sleepily, I dragged myself to a pile of roots.

In a nest of leaves
I slept that winter out.

HAROLD ENRICO's poems and translations have appeared frequently in *Prism international* and many other journals. He lives in Cosmopolis, Washington.

FROM THE TOP OF QUARTZ MOUNTAIN ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF KANDINSKY'S DEATH

From the top of Quartz Mountain:
deer, trees, the shapes of stones
— hexagonal crystal, blemished agate —
the great perfection or an imperfect emblem
from the deepest heart,
the tips of the elk's great antlers brushing the aspen leaves.

The light blows strong,
remembering to sing:
thalassa! thalassa!
over the black wave,
through the forked branch of the pine.

(At Neuilly, Kandinsky,
precise as a chemist,
mixes his own colors,
pulls up the shade at one o'clock sharp,
letting in the light.
Between the necropolis and the Champs Elysées
the rainbow arches over the iron gate.
In the center of each painting,
zero is absolute at the bone.)

On the top of Quartz Mountain
the sun shifts from spruce to pine,
and the late afternoon shadows
dapple the deer at the edge of the scree,
the golden plover in the grass by the western hemlocks —

when suddenly the sun explodes,
black begetting black at the edge of red.

Yama, how your blackness shines,
a black bird in a nest of stars!

THE DEATH OF ANIMALS

IGOR WEBB

Not a bit serious — a balloon
or something light as that,
but somehow bundled into fur
and as innocently pregnant
as Don Juan's teenage lovers . . .

Now she bleeds.
The expected life
escapes in a sliver
of blood, collects
in fat red drops
like rain on a window —

We look on
as at the rain —
the red drops fall —
already, as she bends
and with her rough
pink tongue
cleanses her pain,
she is an animal;
and we are afraid too.

Do as we know —
a cardboard box
padded with a linty
black towel —
the keys, the car

but undistinguished
in her cries among traffic
the first drops between
green light and red —
skinned like a rabbit,
its perfect nails,
and a rag of afterbirth.

In the vet's palm
these few warm
ounces lie weightless.
The frail cord dangles
between his thumb
and forefinger.
All the while
a big red dog
huffs through the silence
of the waiting room

and of these spare bones and flesh
that held such brief and sightless
life, and show no cause of death
but death, and are dropped
forever in a jar.

IGOR WEBB has had poems in *Cambridge Review*, *New Measure*, *Expression* and others. He lives in Montreal.

Five Poems by Margaret Atwood

RETURN TRIPS, WEST

I

We follow the cement paths
conscientious with flower borders;
you name the buildings, one after another.

The smooth walls turn towards me
smooth, uninformative;

for you they are bunched with menace,
their bricks ripple and bulge.

In front of you everywhere goes another man,
scowling at you from doorways,

ignoring you in the cafeteria
with its wooden plaques and antlers,

as we cross the bridge glancing
with scorn back over his shoulder,
his eyes phosphorescent.

II

This is a place I can't enter
and neither can you, finally.

What you thought
you would find here has

vanished, as if
the moment you left, the town
heaved like a wave,

the houses tip on their
foundations, the roofs are collapsing, the
wires thrash,

in the wash of new neon
light, the shadowy faces
including your own, float
silently, go under

III

Later as you sleep
in the car, I watch your face
alter, I know

you have gone back to the town / the only
way you can ever get there;

you run over the bridge, you begin
to climb the mountain, you reach
the rocks, the forgotten absence, the

desolation. I am not with you, I will
never be with you; even

in daytime I can
only ask questions
which define my failure.

What can be shared?

A MORNING

Because we couldn't sleep we went on
though at first I could see little;

behind us the sun rose
white and cold; the early
wind came out of the sun.

In front of us the low hills, yellow-
grey grass dunes, and then
the mountains: hard, furrowed
with erosion, cloudless, old, new,
abrupt in the first light.

With shrunken fingers
we ate our oranges and bread,
shivering in the parked car;

though we knew we had never
been there before,
we knew we had been there before.

A SOUL, GEOLOGICALLY

The longer we stay here the harder
it is for me to see you.

Your outline, skin
that marks you off
melts in this light

and from behind your face
the unknown areas appear:

hills yellow-pelted, dried earth
bubbles, or thrust up
steeply as knees

the sky a flat blue desert,

these spaces you fill
with their own emptiness.

Your shape wavers, glares
like heat above the road,

then you merge and extend:
you have gone,
in front of me there is a stone ridge.

Which of these forms
have you taken:

hill, tree clawed
to the rock, fallen rocks worn
and rounded by the wind

You are the wind,
you contain me

I walk in the white silences
of your mind, remembering

the way it is millions of years before
on the wide floor of the sea

while my eyes lift like continents
to the sun and erode slowly.

HIGHEST ALTITUDE

Here, our possessions are cut
to what we carry: plates,

blanket, our maps, basket with food,
last thought: lake where we waded
in the green glacial water.

The view to the side, below,
would be, as they say, breath-

taking; if we dared to look.
We don't dare. The curved

ledge is crumbling, the melting snow
is undermining the road,

in fear everything
lives, impermanence
makes the edges of things burn

brighter. The rocks are purple, heart-
red. We hold our eyes tight
to the line; the reference point

not the mountains but the moving
car, and each other.

HABITATION

Marriage is not
a house or even a tent

it is before that, and colder:

the edge of the forest, the edge
of the desert
the unpainted stairs
at the back where we squat
outside, eating popcorn

the edge of the receding glacier

where painfully and with wonder
at having survived even
this far

we are learning to make fire

MARGARET ATWOOD won the Governor-General's Award for poetry in 1966 with *The Circle Game*, and is the author of *The Edible Woman*, a novel (McClelland & Stewart, 1969). Oxford University Press will publish her *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, poems, in 1970.

POWER FAILURE

THOMAS REITER

This lightning and a mood in the candle's
Drippage building its blunt ruins, your hands
In choreless lull
Absorbing the table's porcelain chill.

In this failure of systems observe
The serrated edge of the knife
Flicker its score of grins, the aluminum
Ladle brim with a darkness,
Shadows debate your clock.

Believe this strangeness concerns you.
Believe also your garden argues
Its designs, for posed upon
Thorns you have trellised,

The rain blooms with lightning.

THOMAS REITER's poetry has been in various journals in the United States; he is now conducting creative writing workshops in poetry at Monmouth College, West Long Branch, New Jersey.

WALTER BENESCH has had prose and poetry in *Prism international, Trace, Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale* and others. He is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Alaska.

A Man for One Season

WALTER BENESCH

HE WAS MOWING THE LAWN with one of those old-fashioned lawn mowers one has to push. The Smiths'. The Smiths were on vacation and he had agreed to look after things.

The mower was sharp. Smith took excellent care of his tools. Even with a wife and six kids he still had time to keep everything sharp and working . . .

Something caught in the blades. The sharpest mower will pick up a stick.

Just as he thought he had the twig the handle slipped from his grasp. The blades swung free a quarter turn. The next blade stuck on the same little sliver. It also caught the cap of his index finger and the fingernail. He swore under his breath at the Smiths. Out loud at the mower. Then stuck his finger into his mouth to stop the bleeding. Sometime as a child he had heard that licking a cut like dogs do stops the bleeding and disinfects.

The cut wasn't bad. The blade had taken the top layer of skin and broken the under layer. It bled slightly. The nail was broken. Hurt like hell. In a minute or two he wrapped his handkerchief around the finger and finished off the lawn.

In the evening before his own TV with a warmed-over hamburger, soggy french fries, the finger started to hurt again. He looked at the flesh-tinted band aid for several minutes before he decided to risk the unpleasantness of tearing it away.

He was angry. Times like this he needed a wife and kids like Smith had to yell at. He laughed. Before they called it off he had yelled at Delores. But she had always yelled back. Louder. And

they were underway again . . . poor old immature Delores. Completely empty upstairs, away upstairs that is. Just upstairs she was really stacked . . . but it hadn't been enough . . .

The finger started to throb.

His mind flashed for a moment back to the twig again. A knotty little pine branch with two scraggly needles on it that came off in his hand when he tried to dislodge them. That's why he'd stuck his finger in so far. He remembered the things he said about Smith under his breath. Out loud about the mower. The finger in his mouth and the taste of the warm blood . . . there hadn't been a great deal, more a scratch than a cut really . . . it was warm and . . . how could he put it . . . ?

"Good God!" . . . what was he doing sitting here in his living room with a sore finger trying to remember exactly how his blood had tasted? Must be a sign of accumulating years. 45 it was now. At 45 one's head softens slightly.

He turned the TV off.

Maybe it was infected. The finger had hardly had time to show signs. On the other hand blood poison works very fast. He certainly ought to be able to tell something by looking at the wound? If nothing else he might be able to think of some cure against the pain. Aspirin only upset his stomach.

"Ouch!" There.

The cut did seem a little blue. Or was that dried blood? It started to bleed again. Stronger than in the afternoon. Maybe he had damaged it. He placed the finger into his mouth. There it was, the slightly warm, indescribable taste. He savoured it on the tip of his tongue. Rolled the flavor around the end of his finger before he swallowed it . . .

"I'm a vampire," he laughed to himself. Under the laugh there was no denying the taste was . . . well, he could never remember it tasting like this before. He had cut himself innumerable times and licked innumberable cuts . . . This time, no mistaking it, he noticed the taste of the wound. And the hurt started to subside. "That's why dogs lick cuts . . ."

He went to bed early. Placed another band aid over the scratch. It had stopped leaking but might start in the night and soil the sheets.

He slept on Delores' side of the bed. Really it was his side more than hers. It turned out that each one could sleep only when occupying the same geographic point between the sheets. They had

argued a lot over that one. She was remarried. Apparently the sucker this time could sleep any place because it had lasted ten years already.

It was some time during the second year they realized they had to occupy the exact same spot. Where had he slept before that? He couldn't remember ever having slept any place else in the bed in any other position, knees curled up to his abdomen — he was getting heavier and the old knees didn't curl quite so easily now.

No, he had always slept this way. It was Delores who . . . oh, what the hell, he could go on and on. It wasn't just the bed. There were lots of things, most of them petty. Add them all up . . . ?

Maybe that was what she had done. She wanted out. He could have outlasted her . . . maybe she intentionally added little annoyances to her fits and tantrums. Bit by bit in hopes he'd give in. He had finally. But only because she begged him to and he felt sorry for her . . .

What the hell, why keep thinking about it!?

The next morning the plaster was off. He couldn't recall removing it, nor did it seem possible it might have worked loose. There were spots on the sheets. The cut was still wide open. Wider than yesterday. It really hurt now.

He sucked the blood out of the open scratch and went into the bathroom. Accidentally rubbed soap into it. That smarted! When he put the finger into his mouth to ease the stinging it tasted like soap and he spat angrily into the wash basin.

He rinsed the soapy spittle down the drain and washed the bowl good with cleanser. Rinsed it. He was right-handed and had to use his left because of the cut. Damned awkward . . .

Another bandage on the finger.

"Sonofabitch . . . !" the long kitchen knife he was using on the grapefruit slipped. This time it was the middle finger. Deeper too! He just wasn't left-handed. He held the finger in his mouth while he wiped off the drain board and the knife.

There it was again. The same warm . . . sweet . . . yes, it was distinctly sweet. Not strong, but noticeable . . . that was the taste he was trying to identify last night.

The finger wouldn't stop bleeding. He didn't want to bandage it till the last minute when he left for work. Breakfast he alternated between toast and the finger.

By the time he arrived at the office both plasters were damp. Embarrassed by the awkward condition of his hands, he stayed in

his office all day going over accounts. Thumbing the pages with his left hand.

Miss Jenkins came in to take dictation. He kept his hands under his desk. Around ten o'clock he asked her to bring him the first aid kit — "a slight headache. I want to see if there's anything besides aspirin in there . . ." She assured him there wasn't.

Her impudence irritated him. He told her curtly to bring it anyway. He would look for himself. She was getting very possessive. He must make it clear to her that being his secretary did not mean she owned either him or the Company. Her talents lay in shorthand and typing. She wasn't supposed to run the office.

When she returned he sent her out and removed the entire adhesive plaster box. Three times during the day he replaced the band aids. "I'm a bleeder," he thought half-seriously.

He unwrapped the fingers and examined them carefully for infection. Then licked the blood off. There was a washroom down the hall. But he might well find someone in it . . . there would be the absurd questions and unnecessary expressions of sympathy.

The fingers weren't actually bleeding. The redness was gone. A clearish pink fluid was soaking the wrappings. This was apparently the source of the sweet taste for it seemed stronger now than even this morning with the fresh cut.

Perhaps he should have stitches? The cuts weren't that deep. There was no sign of infection. Yet . . . there must be something wrong with his system that the flesh refused to close . . . and the sweetness? He had never noticed that before . . .

The fingers hurt. The only time the stinging let up was when he was licking or sucking the cuts preparatory to putting on a new plaster.

Around midnight he awoke suddenly out of a bad dream. Miss Jenkins was suffering from a ruptured appendix. He was the surgeon. Needed to cut a small door into her chest immediately beneath the left shrivelled breast to climb down to her appendix and pull it loose. When he made the initial incision with his pocket knife the blood spurted everywhere with such force it blinded him. As he awakened he found both fingers in his mouth. The band aids gone. He was sucking on them like a small child pulling at its thumb. His mouth was full of a cottony sweetness.

He replaced the bandages and went back to bed.

In the morning the plasters were still in place. Quite dry. The cuts were healing and had ceased to run.

The Smiths came back at the end of the month. Smith received four weeks every year. But his salary wasn't as good. He would kid Smith. Ask him for workmen's compensation because he'd lost half an arm in that antique lawn mower of his.

Smith was as scrawny as a sparrow. His wife, Betty, big and bulgy and fertile. They would probably have six more kids if Smith held up . . .

Dinner was over. Thank God. Six monsters. Every one of them talking and yelling at once. Grabbing things off one another's plates, out of each other's mouths. The little girl, Gertrude, or whatever her name was, had even started on him before Smith yelled at her. She'd managed to splash gravy all over his sport coat. It wasn't one of his good ones. He was too wise to wear anything good to Smith's for dinner. The child should be taught some manners!

He told Smith about the lawn mower. Smith thought it was funny. It wasn't. He wanted to say so. Betty at least took it more seriously. Too seriously. She didn't know when to leave well enough alone. Wanted to see the finger. Fussed around like she would over one of the kids. He thought for a while she was going to try to put a band aid over the healed scar and kiss it "to make it well."

He left early. Promised himself that he would begin disentangling himself altogether from the ridiculous Smiths. Someone ought to band aid Betty's mouth shut . . .

The next morning for breakfast he sliced the same finger with the same knife into the same scar. The knife was quite sharp and moved so smoothly through the grapefruit and his finger that he didn't notice it until he saw the red on the blade.

He had cut deep into the flesh of the second joint. The finger was bleeding profusely. He placed the cut against the lips to catch the blood. As the warm liquid came in contact with his tongue he was so startled that he let the knife fall to the floor.

A pungent, heavy sweetness filled his mouth and swept up through his nose. It was as if he had inhaled the essence from some exotic, candied citrus fruit. He couldn't place the taste beyond its sweetness. The heavy fragrance was unfamiliar. But it was his blood. No doubt about that.

The cut was bleeding badly. He had to keep swallowing to accommodate the liquid. The swallowing carried the fragrance to his stomach from whence like alcohol it rose almost immediately to his brain. A slight faintness tugged at his consciousness. Was it

because of the loss of blood or was it the intoxication of the taste?

How could his own blood intoxicate him? What was he doing here sucking in encouragement at a bleeding cut!? He must be losing his mind! He quickly placed his finger in the sink and let the cold water run over it. The flavor lingered in his mouth. From the sink he could detect the same powerful and heady essence. He moved his head closer. There was no mistaking it. The bowl was full of the heavy, sweet scent.

He turned the water off and wrapped a clean handkerchief around the finger. It might have to be stitched. The cloth was soon damp. A red stain and the strange fragrance worked their way out. Wrapping several more handkerchiefs about the finger, he shaved and dressed as best he could. He didn't get blood on his shirt, but it was difficult to button the front with his left hand.

The house was full of the fragrance. Wherever he went it followed him. So thick that inhaling it was enough to blur his thoughts. Or was he weak from loss of blood . . . ?

Driving to the office the blood worked its way through the last handkerchief and left smears on the steering wheel. The odor was so strong he opened the window on the driver's side to keep his head clear enough to guide the car. He turned home again and called in that he was ill. To make no appointments.

The wound stopped bleeding. Only a moist fragrant water wet the skin where the flesh was scratched with a short, dark line.

As he rinsed the handkerchief the scent rose from the warm water and filled the laundry room. No, he had never anywhere smelled anything so sweet and inebriating.

The finger healed. For several days he could detect the faint fragrance about the cut. He didn't know whether anyone else noticed it or not. He avoided any close contact with other people until he was sure the wound was closed.

He turned down a dinner invitation at the Smiths' — along with an opportunity to see the slides taken on their vacation.

It was not a hallucination! His electric razor shorted out and he had to shave with a safety razor. Unused to it, he nicked his neck and face. There was the fragrance again. He rubbed one of the red patches with his forefinger and held it to his nose. He licked the finger. As soon as the drop touched his tongue the sweet taste filled his mouth. He wet his finger and one by one blotted the scratches. First lifting the stains to his nose and then licking them away.

After the electric razor came back repaired, he continued to use the safety razor. Told himself he had forgotten how close and clean it shaved compared with the inefficient electric. The electric was a lazy man's way of shaving. Of course the safety did scratch. But the better shave was worth it. Besides, "what's a little blood?"

. . . then the nosebleeds began. The first one about 2 a.m.

He was walking through an unbelievably peaceful dream. An orchard where strange, large red citrus fruits hung on dark bushy evergreens. One didn't need to eat the fruit, just looking at it was enough. Its fragrance and flavor overwhelmed from the looking by itself. Somewhere in the distance of the dream a waterfall or river was rushing. Apart from the water noises the orchard was absolutely still.

At first the noise of the waters was pleasant. Gradually it increased and threatened to deafen him and engulf the garden. The trees started throbbing. The fruit fell to the ground where it instantly dissolved. It was the increasing roar of the stream that finally awakened him.

The blood was running down the back of his throat in great clots. His throat was raw. The room, his head, his stomach full of raw sweetness. He was frightened for the first time of his blood. Perhaps he might bleed to death?

When cold compresses didn't help, he sat up and pinched his nose quite tightly with thumb and forefinger. For half an hour he sat that way. When he released it, it had stopped bleeding. The fragrance returned with such force he almost fell from his chair. He moved cautiously back to the bed and lay with his head propped high.

The nose bleeds came about every fourth or fifth night. Each time the same dream. The same throbbing awakening. He must be losing a lot of blood? Perhaps see a doctor? But suppose he were cured? What then? That would mean an end to the dream and to the fragrance. Did he really want to destroy the most beautiful thing he had ever experienced?!

He decided that if he could just keep his nose under control so he didn't lose too much blood, he could continue with things as they were.

He was physically a bit weaker. Miss Jenkins said once he was pale.

Perhaps rest? He took his two weeks. Go where? Better stay home. Pulled the shades and lounged between the house and the

fenced backyard. Fortunately he had long since broken with the Smiths. They wouldn't disturb him.

The nose bleeds came with ever greater frequency. Not so strong as initially. Rather an endless fine trickle of blood down the back of his throat. The house and garden were transformed from its fragrance. He was certain he recognized the garden of his dream. Here it was behind his own house!

No matter where he went. Or where he sat in this closed system he was in paradise with the wonderful scent about him.

But where were the fruits he had seen? So sweet smelling and full of flavor that looking at them had exhilarated . . . after all he had never actually tasted their substance. Only inhaled their fragrances, drunk it as it were . . .

By degrees it became clear that if the fragrance was that of his own blood and came whenever he managed to smell or taste it, then the great red citrus fruits from which this scent emanated must be himself . . . as soon as the thought occurred to him in its final form he intuitively recognized its truth.

Then where were they? Those wonderful fruits whose scent now surrounded him? He found them only in his dreams!

The two weeks were up. He called Miss Jenkins and said he was convalescing. Would probably use the two weeks sick leave he had coming. She should make arrangements. She was efficient. He was glad for that.

On the way to the patio from the phone he tripped over the rug at the door and fell to the hard brick. Of late he seemed weaker. He hadn't weighed himself and couldn't say whether he had lost weight. He was more prone to slips and falls. He wore shorts to permit more sun to get at his body. The sun's warmth was a part of the fragrant garden.

The patio brick skinned his knee badly. Leaving a red scar and a long piece of rubbed skin hanging from the knee cap.

His nose had not discharged since last evening. The fragrance was fading. As the liquid found its way over the tear in his knee, the air again was strong and thick with its flavor.

Without hesitation he cleaned his knee with his finger and placed it to his lips. He went into the bathroom for a razor blade to remove the hanging patch. Even before he found the pack and unwrapped a fresh blade he began to consider the possibility . . .

"Why not?" Here, if he understood the dream correctly was the

fruit, at least its skin. But even the skin should give him some idea . . .

Instantly he realized he could not have anticipated the taste! The scent was odorless in comparison with the texture and taste of the rind in his mouth. He could not control himself. Floated in the air. Not asleep. He was really in the garden. The house was gone. He wandered through the trees with those great aromatic clusters of fruit.

One that he passed had a cracked skin and a small piece had been peeled off by a bird or a squirrel. All the rest were complete and full. Oh God, if just a piece of rind could transform him, what must the flesh of this fruit of paradise be like!?

The back yard replaced the garden late in the afternoon. His knee was sore and swollen. It hurt. What was the pain in comparison with that other?!

He now discovered something else. Since he had tasted those fruits, the mere scent had lost its power. True, when he tried the discharge around the wound it was as sweet as ever, but it seemed plain in comparison with that other . . .

By morning the knee was blue and painful. He should do something about it. While he had been in the garden he had felt no pain. Apparently its nature was twofold. It enchanted the taste. But it also enchanted the body and the mind, moving them literally out of the painful, ridiculous "Here" to that unimaginable "There." And if a piece of rind might do it, what about the meat of those fruits? Couldn't they perhaps transfer him forever?

In the night he dreamed he was in the garden again. The dream was as it always was except this time he knew it to be a dream. And how wan the dream compared to the real thing. There was the current throbbing . . . that meant soon he would wake up. He recognized even this ordinary fact, so impoverished was his dream.

However, as the waters closed in upon the garden and he prepared to leave for waking, he noticed that he was standing almost in the leaves of one of the trees. Within reach, if he were fast, of one of the fruits. He acted quickly before the waters had time or a chance to interrupt him. He sank his teeth into the fragrant meat.

In an instant the dream garden was gone. He was in the real garden. And the more he savoured the delicate flesh of those strange citrons of paradise, the more he forgot the dream and "Then."

At once it was clear. As long as he ate of the fruit he would never have to leave. And he saw that there was no way of measur-

ing the garden or counting the infinite groves and thickets. All loaded with the same divine burdens.

The police surmised from the blood stains on the sheets and in the bed room that some sort of violent struggle had taken place, but could give no further information on his disappearance.

The Smiths hired a boy from across town to water the carnation beds and mow the lawn that summer. . . .

RENAISSANCE

JOHN E. MATTHIAS

The knocked-up look is back!
(old accurate Van Eyck):
the turned-up pointed shoes,
the twin-peaked cap.
Gentlemen, there's no one
here but Gentlemen.

And Ladies.

And the court.

Virgins of St. Denis
bare their privies for
the prince. And I am priest
and altar, consecrated host.
Bread and whisky on
my loins, a wooden
phallus, nails:
I stiffen and endure.

Empty out the coffins, then.

Disinter the bones.

JOHN MATTHIAS teaches English at Notre Dame. "Renaissance" is part of a sequence called *Bucyrus*, due out from Swallow Press this year. Other work of his is in *Experiments in Prose* and *New Poetry Anthology II*, also from Swallow Press.

HE HAS SERIOUSLY

WILLIAM A. SIEMANN

I

the mirth of an adventurer, the neat arrangement
of his scarce baggage, the pen markings
on his notebook, the need of his eyes for sleep

his laugh, his relaxed gestures

wits certainty of destination devotion to
project persistent questioning after information concerning this locale and future locales

simple dependence upon others to assist his need

II

elementary school in purgatory —

alone for days in an isolated area with the lesson
that people cared for and caring are all there is to a life

penniless in a foreign city and hungry the lesson
that neither wild beasts nor wealth can frighten an imagination

knows dust
sunrise
evidence
of love's presence in a family the scarcity
tactics
by which men subvert their manhood the variety
the luck
required to find a woman who differs from other women

III

beliefs philosophies opinions
and grey clouds in a wind
only what happens interests him —
on a journey and near no shelter either
it rains or it does not rain

time passes and the terrain
passes each place presents some
opportunity each increment of time he sees his own
death as the opportunity to finally garden

IV

(he has taken the phrase
'possibilities of life'
seriously)

V

The juggling for power on the
Red Sea between European and
Eastern Sudanese rulers reached
a stage which made traffic in
firearms with King Menelec of Shoa
a profitable enterprise and Rim-
baud decided to make his fortune in gun running to the interior.

Lemuel Gulliver: "There I studied Physic for two years and seven
months,
knowing it would be useful on long
voyages."

Charles Lindberg
Charles Lindberg
Charles Lindberg

VI

always

Tucumcari, New Mexico
six hundred miles yet to LA

the turquoise and dream-warm Gulf off Yucatan

Tierra del Fuego

the thought of Africa (the thought of the moon)

WILLIAM SIEMANN is a senior at the University of Notre Dame where he has been working in John Matthias' writing workshop.

UNIVERSAL SALLY

JOHN MARTIN

Sally's sort of inbetween
The devil and the deep blue sea
Or is it her husband and me?

One minute she says her marriage
Carries
Her aspirations
But then, she sees me
From time to time,
For coffee or beer
And sometimes
Just for talking.

Of course, her neurosis
Is her business
And not mine.

My concern
Is to learn
Something about the way she feels
So I compare her looks
With a summer's day.

Quite prettily,
Her long legs stride
Athletically.

Her turning head,
Calisthenically trained
To sketch a line across her mouth
That's soft on warmth
And hard on purpose
And even that is quietly sapping.

But will I get
Just what I want
From Sally
Even though
We don't know
What it is?

"He gives me perfect satisfaction"
She'll explain, about her husband
Stroking my brow.
"I don't need distraction
At least not now"
And yet it's all too plain
At least to me
Sally's sort of inbetween
Dying and living
When death of one
Is breath of another.

So which ever way she turns,
Searching for identity,
She's hedging bets
With men like me,
Perplexed on the outside
And him,
Duplexed on the other.

JOHN MARTIN has been a free-lance journalist, broadcaster and lecturer. He now lives in Prince George, B.C.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

Translated from the Greek by M. Byron Raizis.

GEORGE SEFERIS

1

The greatest sun on one side
and the new moon on the other
distant in memory like those breasts.
Between them the chasm of the starry night
deluge of life.

The horses on the threshing-floors
gallop and sweat
upon scattered bodies.
All are going there
and that woman whom
you saw beautiful, in a moment
is bending, can endure no longer, has knelt.
The millstones are grinding them all
and all become stars.

Eve of the longest day.

2

All have visions
yet no one will admit it;
They go thinking they're alone.
The large rose
had always been there

by your side deeply in sleep
yours and unknown.
But only now that your lips've touched it
on the outermost leaves
have you felt the dancer's dense weight
falling into the river of time —
the dreadful splash.

Don't waste the breath this respite
has granted you.

3

But in this sleep
a dream so easily degenerates
into a nightmare.
Like the fish that glittered under the wave
and plunged into the slimpy depth
or a chameleon when he changes color.
In the city that's become a brothel
panders and whores
peddle decayed delights;
the wave-borne girl
wears a cow's hide
for the bullock to mount her;
the poet
hoodlums throw filth at him
as he looks at the statues dripping blood.
You must get out of this sleep;
this flogged hide.

GEORGE SEFERIS is the Greek author who received the 1963 Nobel Prize for Literature. Translated here are three sections from "Summer Solstice," one of the three sequences in *Three Secret Rooms*, his most recent volume. M. BYRON RAIZIS, who is in the Department of English at Southern Illinois University, translated five more sections for the Spring 1969 issue of *The Southern Review*.

GWENDOLYN MACEWEN's prose and poetry have been in many journals including *Prism international*. *Julian the Magician*, a novel, was published in 1963 by Macmillan of Canada and Corinth Books, New York. She lives in Toronto.

The Second Coming of Julian the Magician

GWENDOLYN MACEWEN

PART ONE: The New Testament

The son of God is dead, which is worthy of belief because it is absurd. And when buried he rose again which is certain because it is impossible TERTULLIAN.

AFTER MY FATAL FLIRTATION with the Nazarene worker of wonders, I was crucified by a bunch of drunkards and peasants in a small village in Europe. Was such a death, I ask myself now, either necessary or advisable? — (I recall they used leather strips instead of nails) — and was there not something slightly schizoid in those tendencies which drove me to equate myself with the Nazarene mountebank? I did not, in any case, arise on the third day, but somewhat later.

I, Julian the magician, returned to earth on the birthdate of Mithras, the 25th of December in the year 1960. I materialized at noon, in fact, on a ferris wheel in a second-rate carnival which was frozen up for the winter, with three white balloons in my left hand and an inverted crucifix stuck to the middle of my forehead which was made out of red and green tinsel paper.

I allowed myself a moment or two to get my bearings.

That I was no longer in Europe was obvious; I smelled no bread baking in ovens, I heard no carts jogging down the road. That I was no longer in the 19th Century was also obvious, for there was a wheezing and a clattering and a grinding all around me from a myriad machines. A car pulled into the parking lot which served

as the carnival's winter home; the driver stepped out, wished me a Merry Christmas and invited me to a shot of whiskey from a flask in his glove compartment.

The balloons and the tinsel paper floated away from my hands and forehead; the wheel of the ferris turned a half turn and neatly deposited me at the bottom. I got off, shook the snow from my cloak, stamped my boots together once or twice for my feet were frozen, spoke, and found my words inscribed with white steam on air.

'Thank you, and a Merry Mithrasmas to you," I said.

The whiskey warmed my blood, my boots, my velvet cloak. I knew I had arrived.

I spent the first little while making up for lost time; I read about Kellar and Thurston, about Crowley and Blackstone and Houdini. I found myself irresistably drawn with sympathy to the latter, who had to maintain over and over that his powers were *not* supernatural — (an expert asking him, 'Can you prove it?'). Nevertheless there had not been another Julian during the century of my Sleep, of that I was sure. Someone wrote a book describing the events of my last life. Ah, but the swiftest movement of my left hand as it drops the ball or coin into the *servante* is more evocative than ten pages of prose! And who can tell the world more than I have told in the golden pages of my silence? How pathetic are those who try to record the unrecordable!

I learned very quickly that as long as I lived in North America, I had a choice between performing in carnivals or cheap burlesque-halls, neither of which appealed to me very strongly. My audiences were invariably composed of Philistines; my talents, ignored. But soon I realized that to be lost behind rows of strippers, sword-swallowers, dwarves, was almost a compliment to me . . . and am I not secretly acknowledged in a hundred more subtle ways? Am I not sleeping deep in America's psyche beneath layers of comic books and dreams? I am that which you most abhor, Philistines, and that which at the same moment you secretly, perversely desire. I am that part of you which vows to control the thousand machines of your destiny, which turns the dials and flicks the switches of your desires. I am the wand which works miracles, which ejaculates a silken sea of scarves representing every level of the spectrum, I am the chaotic, primitive machinery which grinds beneath the gears and cogs of your world. My name is the same from eternity, O

Philistines, to eternity . . . And even now when your dark streets and your gray winters overtake me I remind myself that I am the freest of men, for I shape the cosmos according to my pleasure, for I have learned never again to beg the godhead and its sweet cross. I will *perform* — for you, ladies and gentlemen, I will create for you a world of illusions, but it's up to you to come to terms with it. No more will I allow the succubus of my power to climb the ladder of my spine and suck out my brain; no more will my beautiful skull ressemble a piece of old cheese bored with the hundred holes of the desperate fiend of my own imaginings. The scarred flesh of my stigmata has regrown, I of all men no longer need the bloody signatures of sacrifice on my body. I race towards another, better death . . . Philistines, your foreheads bear the marks of Julian's heels!

I worked in three different burlesque houses during the first year. The theatre managers all gave me exactly seven minutes of performing time in between seventy minute marathons of strippers and exotic dancers. During my acts no one swooned, no one approached me afterwards with nervous diseases which I was to cure. I did, at least, possess myself, almost as well as the nearly naked dancers whose very flesh was their own inpenetrable armour against the world. (I often wondered why men came here for the cosmic thrills of coloured lights playing upon flailing meat; it was anything but sex). And my magic served only, at best, to wither even further the already limp organs of their want. (Why is the hunger *itself* so lean? What if I produced for them great pink elephants, cloudy mammals of their memory, gold and green edens, marvellous rain-slick jungles, brown limbs throbbing in a sea of moss?)

To recur here, among these concrete cities seems almost like an unholy joke I play upon myself. Your machines have emulated my magic, your sciences have inherited my soul, your streets slice up my spirit into long feeble strips. Satellites are new stars (but have I not orbitted the earth in the steel bubble of my consciousness?); spacemen are paraded through the ticker-tape jungles of New York, (does not a master astronaut fly his silks in the girlie-houses of America?); computers analyze the spectra of stars, (But in my heart the data of a thousand worlds . . .)

I look for myself in comic books; there I exist for you, my meaning the same, only my forms having changed. My cloak is red, green or yellow; there are little wings on my boots, little wings on my head, lightning bolts in my hands, sacred hammers in my fists.

Your children worship me now as once you did. Atman, his identity hidden only by a 'B' at the beginning of his name proclaims, 'You can't destroy my laboratory Doctor Zero because it's only a *dup*licate laboratory, whereas my real laboratory is in capsule state under my right thumbnail! And you, not possessing the handy Laboratory Diminishing Fluid, have failed to capsulize *yours* in time!'

And Doctor Zero, his identity hidden only by the strange nebulous question mark which hovers at all times in front of his face, answers, 'But what I possess in super-essence state under my *left* thumbnail, Atman, can, when released, destroy the *world*!' The fiendish laughter fades to silence, and my green eyes send your children to sleep, my winged boots fly through their dreams. I, the maker of illusions, have no more illusions left in myself; reality is for him who can make and break his dream, who can cause the sun to rise and set at his command, knowing his command is but a gesture or a noise . . .

(Yet still I want to tie together the polarities of sense, to bend the magnets of the world till positive and negative meet, till the world-egg cracks and truth oozes out, gold and liquid as the sun. You will not love me too much and kill me in any of the Golgothas of the world; you will keep me framed in the cartoons that lurk in America's psyche.)

How I long to take the city, juggle the bones of the city, shuffle its streets like a deck of dirty cards! How I long to *be*. But then, if I were once again myself, all the objects would take on an independent existence; my silks and glasses and dies would circle around me almost independent of my will, and I would be trapped in a vortex of my own art, my fingers having infused life into the objects I handled so long and so dearly.

Recently I dreamed I walked through the guts of a trautonium which was transforming the sound of bells into an electronic symphony. Bells were all around me, blips and blurps of static, the whirring of the machine's secret cells. I walked through it like Theseus through the labyrinth and I brought out my scarves and ropes and dies and rabbits. I prepared my apparatus on a small metallic disc which served as a table. I began to work. Suddenly all my apparatus became the component of sound; my silks became the crashing major and minor chords of a wild symphony; my dies sat one upon the other like tangible octaves; my ropes became eccentric winding scales; my rabbits became blips of static which

punctuated the composition. My silks arranged themselves into a flawless spectrum of sound and colour; I began to command my apparatus thus: 'Red Silk C Major, you will now pass slowly through yellow silk A Minor, leaving the knots securely tied — and you, C Major, will then return to your place in the colour-sound-spectrum. Purple die with the small hole in your side, you will now proceed to be flanked by two scales, ropes X and Z which, when tied together, will produce tiny mauve silk D Minor. Silk spectrum, you will line up and rest in a rainbow arc over my head until I think up another symphony . . .

Finally I gathered up my tired apparatus and found my way out of the labyrinth. I awoke to a Saturday morning screaming with traffic and the cries of children off school. A note beneath my door told me I was evicted for failing to pay my rent. I packed up all my belongings into one suitcase, put on my beloved cloak, my boots, and walked out into the street. It was spring.

I heard it, I heard a low fiendish laughter coming from somewhere in the audience as I shuffled the cards and let them fall gently, gently like rain down my sleeve. That sound, a dark chuckle, a groan, a curse. I looked out beyond the stage into the sea of bored faces below the footlights. Who laughed? Who had dared to laugh?

'There is one among you,' I said loudly as the cards collected themselves into my left palm, 'Who disbelieves me.'

Again the laughter.

So I let go.

The Jack and Ace of Spades issued from my right ear, the Queen and King of Hearts lept from my left, the proleteriat of the deck squeezed themselves out of my tieclip, the Joker slid out of my ribs like a subway transfer, the Jack of Clubs got combed out of my hair, I casually allowed three pingpong balls to roll out of my pant cuffs, I produced a rabbit from my left shoe, converted it into the Jack of Hearts and swallowed it, I flung the entire deck into the audience where it became a flock of screaming gulls, and then I walked off stage without a word.

The manager raised my salary. I promptly quit. I spent the next lean week browsing in the Theosophical Library where a shrunken, white-haired witch of 70 tried to interest me in Blavatsky. She told me I had the eyes of a seeker of Wisdom and that I should give myself over to meditation on the Infinite. I informed her that I

was the Infinite. She invited me to attend her lectures on Neo-Mesmerism. I declined. She said my face revealed that I was a man destined to bring havoc to the world. I said I was a passive man.

Last week I made one final stand in a burlesque theatre; it was my swan-song, or perhaps I should say my sparrow-song, for I repeated an old trick that the Nazarene had known and which I had done countless times in Europe. From a bucket of wet clay, a multitude of sparrows . . . the theatre echoed with the sound of their wings; I let them fly from my hands like wishes, like wild gifts. I felt the blood dancing once again in my veins, I felt my clay-wet hands shape the cosmos; my laughter, pure and clear, rang through the hall, and the birds kept issuing from my fingertips. From the people in the hall there was no sound, no sound at all. The scarlet curtain fell like a great eyelid, weary after too much sight. It was some days before the birds, one by one, disappeared from the theatre and re-alit on the myriad telephone poles of the city.

Now that it's summer, I've entered the carnival, a Babel of broken tongues, a palace of vertigo; I give the people what they want — the vulgar, crimson and yellow magics, the hilarious striped and polka-dotted magics, the gay and swift and frenzied magics children and fools delight in. I must compete with freaks whose distorted bodies capture the attention of the crowds faster than my sleight-of-hand. The barkers, the psychotic ferris-wheels, the tinsel music distract my audiences in a hundred different ways. They eat hamburgers, and candy, and sugar floss while I perform. Yesterday Sleeda the Snake-Woman sat down beside me, one of her pets draped around her neck like a stole. 'You're so mysterious, you never say anything,' she said. 'Neither do you,' I answered. 'My snakes are my speech,' she said, 'You speak with your hands.'

'What do you believe, Medusa?' I asked her. 'What is the meaning of the carnival?'

She threw back her head and laughed with such a rough gaiety that her pet slipped down from one shoulder. '*Meaning*!' she cried, 'What's that?'

'That's what you get thrown up against every minute of every day,' I answered.

'What do you mean, what do you mean?'

'Why use the word, Medusa, if you don't know what it means?'

'Well what do you mean, what do you *mean*?' she cried.

Presently Sleeda gathered up her snake and went away, a giant Eve with beasts, the chapter Genesis in the bible of the carnival.

I try to understand the carnival. It's the sur-reality of the city, it's the dream-chaos where one can go mad for hours without anyone questioning his sanity, where each freak and each performer is a kind of mirror no one has to acknowledge out loud. And at the end of the day the people wander into the actual House of Mirrors and watch their bodies take on the crazy contours of freaks. For a moment, laughing at themselves in the glass, they are at one with the meaning of the carnival. Sometimes I watch them posing in front of the big mirror outside the Mirror House. Some do not smile; these I watch more closely. Last week I went in myself, but all the mirrors threw back accurate images of me, undistorted, pale. I am already the distorter, I am already the mirror.

Last night I dreamed the carnival was empty and it was once again winter; I walked through deep blue snow and there was a faint ringing all around me as the carnival wheels and the carnival machinery contracted in the cold. The blue snow got into my boots, and I whispered, 'I want to re-create all of this,' and I stared at the naked ferris and the naked canvas. My knees shivered and more blue snow got into my boots. Behold, I was cold and excellent in the naked carnival. I passed my hand over the great wheel frozen in its own vertigo, I passed my hand once, twice, and slowly the machinery groaned and scraped, the metal protested and sang out, the wheel began to turn. Blue snow clung to its spokes and blue snowflakes fell from them like confetti. The wheel turned and its turn was re-turn, it spun backwards through time to a thousand summers. 'I can bring it all back,' I whispered, and the blue snow began to melt inside my boots. I wore dark blue and silver, I wore white miraculous gloves . . . my frozen breath took form and a hundred white figures emerged from it to populate the carnival. Once I breathed particularly deeply and a gigantic figure materialized before me. Behold, I had created the Fat Woman. 'Who are you?' I asked, taken aback. 'Reality,' she said, 'But you can call me Reali for short.' She hung around me and refused to move. She examined my clothes, my wand, my blue and silver cloak, amused. She had every possible variety of body odour known to man. Eventually she waddled away, chuckling to herself, her flesh rippling like the surface of a sea.

Now it was midsummer and the blue snow melted away into the sawdust. I wandered into the midway which was midway reality

and dream. Suddenly the sky darkened as though an eclipse were taking place; the ferris wheel ground to a halt. All my people disappeared; there was only me and the darkness and the tin music. I began to run; I realized that I had dropped my wand. I turned, and there was Reali, laughing, and waving it in her hand.

'Give it *back*!' I screamed, but she only waved it faster, and then, like an elephant, charged towards me. She pursued me through the midway, jiggling and laughing and shouting all kinds of obscenities, and the blackness bore down like death.

I awoke this morning bathed in sweat. The first thing I did was look for my wand, and found it safely packed in my case as always. I was so distressed from the dream that I bungled an elementary French Drop in my performance this morning. No one noticed. If only I could dispose of such dreams as easily as I slip coins into my *servante* . . . but I cannot. Now as I write the little trailer in the carnival grounds that serves as my home seems smaller than a cupboard. If I don't go out I'll go quite mad.

Tony is bright, cynical, energetic . . . an excellent trilogy. He was working as a clean-up boy in the carnival until I hired him to be my assistant. Now he's bound he's going to be a magician. I admire his audacity. 'I want to learn *everything*,' he told me the other day. 'You can't,' I answered, 'Even I don't know everything.' 'It's only time,' he argued, 'You're young, why can't I learn everything you know?' I laughed at that. 'First of all, you'd be shocked to know my age and I won't tell it. Second of all, you can't learn one iota of what I know. Third of all, the thing to know first of all is that you can know nothing. Learn that and we may get somewhere.'

'Come on, I've only got about ten years to catch up with you!' he cried.

'You've got ten eternities to catch up with me.'

'I want to be a magician, I want to have power over *them*!'

'Them,' I echoed.

'Them,' he repeated.

'You want to lock people up in your movements, you want to map the dark side of the moon, you want to thrust yourself into the burning bush and burn your hands . . .'

He didn't understand, so I put him to work on some elementary knots. After a half hour he was furious. 'How long do I have to practise *this*?' he cried.

'Only about a year,' I answered. 'After that I'll show you the French Drop.'

'What the Hell's the French *Drop*?'

'It's the technique of getting something out of one hand while you misdirect attention to the other.'

'Sounds like the name of a dirty book,' he mumbled. Then in a more serious mood he returned to the knots.

Now he sorts, cleans, and repairs my apparatus every day. Last week I put him to work building a new set of props — a wooden wall braced with slanted beams at the back. I planned to use it only once. When the day arrived for my new performance the air was dark, indicating a summer storm. A crowd gathered around the wall, waiting. I appeared, removed my shoes to show that they were not magnetized, and began to climb the wall. Horizontally. I stopped in the middle, my face turned to heaven, and watched the storm-clouds gather. I was very comfortable; my blood sought a new level. People began to whisper. They waited for me to do something. Actually I was so comfortable I became slightly soporific. I put my hands in my pockets.

'He's putting his hands in his pockets,' someone said.

I brought my hands out of my pockets.

'He's bringing them out of his pockets . . .'

I almost fell asleep, it was like lying on my back in bed.

Suddenly the storm broke.

'Hey, you can't stand sideways like that, no one can!' came an hysterical female voice.

It's all done with mirrors," said her escort.

I pulled a few rabbits out of my pockets.

'It's simple levitation,' someone said.

'It's not levitation because he's standing on his *feet sideways*!' cried the woman.

The rabbits scurried up and down the wall.

'The rabbits are doing it *too*!' shrieked the woman.

'It's all done with mirrors,' came a voice. 'Besides, the rabbits all got magnetic feet, anyone can tell . . .'

'What about *him*, *he* hasn't got magnetic feet!'

Lightning came. I turned my head sideways and gazed at them. They looked like they were lying on top of each other. God, they looked funny. I laughed some sideways laughter. The rain broke finally. Horizontal rain. I came down and all the people disappeared.

'How did you do it, how did you do it, how did you *do* it?' Tony pleaded.

'Mirrors,' I said. 'It's all done with mirrors.'

The manager told me that after my performance there was a record attendance in the Centrifugal Machine; everyone wanted to be revolved at top speed and glued to the bare walls like flies.

Now the summer is almost over. Tony and I pack up to return to the city. Vertically.

PART TWO: After-Pulse and Power-House

. . . should they, creatures of "sorcery" peering into the dim "electro-biological" future in search of a deus ex machina, *look up at us and declare that God is a physiologist . . .* W. GREY WALTER

TONY PRESSED ME FOR WEEKS afterward about the performance until I finally gave in and whispered in his ear, 'Akasa!'

'Akasa?'

'*Akasa*. The Hindu word for levitation. Akasa can be achieved by projecting a certain cerebral electricity which interrupts gravity. Negative electricity in fact.'

'O come on!' he cried.

I asked him if he had a better explanation. No, he hadn't. I told him I learned the trick in India a thousand years ago. Furious, he returned to his knots. 'If I could just read your mind—!' he complained.

'Read your own mind, Tony, then you will have read the world-mind. Then . . .'

'O *come on*!'

Work is scarce this season. I refused recently to join the International Brotherhood of Magicians because of its initials, which means I now have no bookings anywhere. I am scarcely able to record what I have in fact been doing these last weeks, but record it I must. I've been working nights as a guard in a Power House. From midnight to dawn in the humming guts of Machine, myself a huge beating heart in the Power House, my pulse beating with a different independent rhythm than the pulse of Machine. I wander through the throbbing maze of pipes and coils; I address myself

to the generator politely, yet firmly, to the effect that it must one day acknowledge *me*. It intrigues, enrages me. This morning before leaving I put a hunch to the test; I asked a workman for the time, casually picking up his wrist between my fingers to see for himself. I had suspected it, now I knew. His pulse was geared to Machine. 'My watch runs fast,' he said. 'Subtract a quarter of an hour and you've got the right time.' I subtracted a quarter of eternity.

Why, I ask, do I endure it? Because I am gorging myself; because I love and hate Machine. In magic I create worlds; my hands dance to their own rhythms; here in the Power House there is another rhythm, another pulse which dictates another kind of dance. I begin to understand the anatomy of my enemy; I study the telepathy of its wires, its serpentine transforming coils, I listen to its heart . . . I hear the occult murmurs of magnetic poles as they swing and circle around each other, arguing, agreeing like people with opposite tendencies who both hate and love, each borrowing energy from the other, each becoming the other's prime argument, prime need. I charge myself on it, though its pulse will never dictate mine, though its dance and my dance will never coincide.

Now I sleep and dream by day, and I dreamed I stood at an intersection in the city; six white roads led out from it like the legs of a great white spider. I looked around and wondered what name I should give the city, and finally I gave it the name of Julian. I whispered the name many times until the name re-created me and I began to grow up and out, larger and larger until my left foot covered the whole of the intersection. The buildings became children's blocks beneath me; the clouds were miraculous white silks; the Lilliputians in their little cars fell away below me; I roared down to them, but my voice was inarticulate thunder. Thousands of red and white and blue dots formed immediately; I realized they were umbrellas. Then I thought, since I could no more speak to the people, I would perform for them. I took three clouds and knotted them together, but before I could complete my trick the Lilliputians had disappeared; I had merely created rain.

I put out my hand and clouded the sun — but wait — did I want to become merely a huge hulk of a weather god? Frustrated, I leaned over and picked up one of the Lilliputians and let him run around my palms awhile; then I brought my eye down close to him to observe his activities. He had given up trying to escape and was now sitting in the long wadi of my life-line and scribbling

something on a piece of paper. He must have been a writer. He sharpened his pencil to a needle-point and poked it in my iris. I winced in pain. Then he began writing somewhere clear across my eyeball. I was going to go blind. I put him down again and blinked several times to get my sight back. I was intensely curious to read the Writing on the Eye, but there was no mirror big enough for me in my present size.

Now I was growing even larger; I stepped out into the suburbs and from there into open country. Here was the place to perform. I rolled up my two sleeves so that God could see I had nothing hidden in them. I ripped up a few hundred miles of railway track for a wand; I lifted layers of the multi-coloured country side for my silks; I peeled highways from the earth for my ropes. I tied a yellow cornfield onto a highway and swung them around; I tied two small roads together and fastened a brown wheatfield securely between them; I uprooted three water towers and flattened them into coins . . . but my performance was interrupted once again by the fact that my size continued to increase. My feet became conscious of the earth's curvature and I had trouble keeping my balance. Earth's atmosphere stopped at my waist; I slipped from the globe and stood in space; a few moments later the earth was the size of an orange, so I peeled it and heaved the peelings into infinity; I squeezed out the blue juice of its seas into my mouth, carefully spitting out mountain ranges, submerged continents, continental shelves, polar ice caps, and finally, the long metallic axis which I was delighted to see really did exist.

Nothing remained to do but juggle. So I juggled stars, in groups, in galaxies . . . I wondered if there was anyone around to watch my performance. Closeby me through a milkwhite haze I could see the head of a tiny horse; it was lost in a white sea of suns. I dipped my hand into the foam and picked it up and played with it awhile, but soon it too began to disappear until at last it was only a small grey puddle of quicksilver in my palm. It vanished into the pores of my skin.

Now there was darkness; there was no more magic; there were no more galaxies; there was a mighty nothing which filled me with terror. The last thing I remember is peering into the utter reaches of the universe and seeing a shimmering silver form at the end. At the moment when I realized it was *myself*, I awoke.

Last week I got into a conversation with one of the workmen.

I told him that every atom in his body was another universe. 'No kidding,' he said.

I tie and untie myself like Tony's sorry knots.

I cannot bear for the light to go out, ever. I remember seeing an eclipse as a child in my last life, and the memory of it has never left me, the Dragon biting off the edge of the sun, consuming it bit by bit, my own hair on fire with fear. . . . Perhaps it's because of that that I'm now trying to create a darkness which is not dark, *a black light* in fact, a death that glows. My fears are still as clean and primitive as the fears Adam had when he awoke to find himself alone in the awful garden of the world. I am one year on the black light; it is still not ready.

Today I showed Tony how to execute a French Drop. 'Look,' I said, 'you pass the hand over the egg, thus, and it appears to disappear, and you say to yourself, *the egg is neither here nor there nor anywhere in particular, but like everything else in the universe its existence depends on your seeing it, that alone, and its soul is the gift of your inner eye . . .*' But Tony interrupted me at that point crying, 'All's I want to know is how the Hell do I move my *hands*!' 'O that,' I said, and proceeded to show him.

'There is darkness and there is light,' I said, gazing into the eyes of my audience. I spun a cardboard sun before them, and emerging from its spin it was black as night. 'Now there are many kinds of eclipses,' I went on, '. . . Eclipses of the sun, eclipses of the moon, eclipses of the mind . . .'

The people shuffled their feet and coughed uncomfortably.

'And there are many kinds of light!' I said, and motioned for Tony to flick off all the electricity in the room. Then I lit a small torch and spoke through the flame. 'You will observe that the room is now dark and the match is lit. Now, observe . . .'

Tony switched the lights back on; I continued to hold the burning torch in my hand. 'The Lord's light is white,' I said, 'but the lamps of the Devil are black!'

The torch darkened, *but still burned*, darkened to gray, to charcoal, to black.

Black fire, *black light*. The flames danced like deep jet shadows. The room and the people in it became like a photograph in negative . . . dark faces and white albino hair.

'Turn out the lights!'

'Turn on the lights!' they cried.

I was intoxicated. Inverted fire, backwards Prometheus who stole the darkness from the gods.

I snuffed it out finally and the photograph became positive. There was a hesitant scattering of applause. No one congratulated me on my achievement; I got two clammy handshakes and another invitation to join the IBM. Then the eclipsed ones went home.

'Can *you* be eclipsed?' Tony asked me later.

'What do you mean?'

'Can *you* be tricked?'

'Never!' I laughed. 'You mean, could my magic boomerang back upon me? Never!'

I'm starting to feel like a battery, my pulse charged by the Power House. Daily I live and die. I turn in on myself like a great hook and fish myself from my sleep to go and guard the Machine.

A generator is what you put mechanical power into to make electrical power.

A motor is what you put electrical power into to make mechanical power.

A dynamo is a combination of the two. I am a dynamo, the Two-in-One, Divine Dualism, the Power and the House, the House and the Power, the Power and the Glory forever Amen. I drift through the pale labyrinthal streets; what an affront to me it is that the city exists in its own terms. Sometimes, sadly, I bend down and pull bright cadmium scarves from between the cracks in the pavement. I give them to the children I meet. Lo, I am the Piper . . .

Somehow I must relate to the city, let its chaos be my own. But no — I'm not going to be tricked into reality! I do a handstand and watch the people walking upside down, their heads dipping into the pale cobalt pool of the sky. A policeman tells me I am obstructing pedestrian traffic. I tell him it's my profession to obstruct pedestrian traffic. He is not amused.

The language of Machine. Rugged sensor and remote indicator signal butterfly valves. Cation resins and gasketless cup-orifice unions. Stokers and gut grates. Manifold valves and tilting discs. Toggle nozzles and flow nozzles. Finned heat transfer tubes. Spindle thrust. The shuttle activates hermetically sealed switch contacts. O thou flanged orifice!

I walk through the small streets, the secret parts in the city's anatomy. Dirty children perform strange rituals on the pavements

all around me. Jacks and marbles, hula hoops, skipping ropes. *Step on a crack and you'll break your mother's back!*

'Hey, it's the magician! Do a trick, mister, do a trick!' A boy tugs at my sleeve and I can't refuse. I tie a red handkerchief onto a white one; I toss them into the air; when I catch them they're striped like candy canes. In a moment they're real candy canes, and I break them into little pieces and pass the pieces around. All the dirty little faces smile. That is the pain of reality amid the marvellous.

I flourish my wand before them and a long stream of flourescent ribbons flies in the wind. Small fingers grasp the ends of the flowing colours. I do not see their ragged clothes; I do not see the thinness of their bodies, I do not see the awful brightness of their eyes, I do not see the dying dreams that hover about them like ghosts, I do not see how small they are beside the city. I hide my wand beneath my cloak and for a moment I imagine it is a knife I plan to plunge into my guts. They keep calling, calling for me to do another trick. Frightened, I throw my precious wand at their feet; they scream and jostle each other to reach it. Frightened, I turn and run down a lane, then stand panting against a wall. Look, I have ripped my sceptre clean out of my flesh, I have given them my magic sceptre loaded with a sea of silks. They will fight over it and eventually break it, they will not understand how to make it work. Ah, what does it matter? — it's only a lightweight pistol-shaped meter with revolving jaws; it's nothing but a catalytic fluid cracking unit or a digital scanner, or a mere superheat feedwater sump pump . . .

Ah, but they're breaking me in half down the lane!

Now I survey the city from my rooftop, and sometimes I let my hands dance over it as though I were conducting an eccentric symphony whose musicians are robots and whose instruments are a myriad machines. I am becoming strangely tired, but in my tiredness is nameless excitement, an impossible suspense. *Something is going to happen.* Tony still struggles with the French Drop, and I tell him the secret of all magic is not to let the right hand know what the left is doing (or vice-versa) . . . and the ultimate secret known only by a very few is that the brain must be ignorant of what both of them are doing. He protests. I ask him if he has ever once seen me watching my own hands when I am performing. No, he says, he hasn't. That is because my hands have their own brains,

I say, each of my fingertips possesses a brain . . . He still protests.

The Power House must go, *that*'s what's on my mind, that's what's giving me the creeping sensation that's been with me for days. I'm weak from my recent castration in the lane, but I have work to do. The Power House must go. I stumbled upon a children's science book recently and read that 'The human body is like a wonderful electrical generator which produces and transmits electricity, and the center of this wonderful generator is the brain!' I read on, horrified and fascinated, 'Think of it, millions of tiny tiny electrical cells all over your body, isn't it wonderful, isn't the human body an amazing mechanism?'

I throw up my hands in despair over the city and the insane symphony stops. I am reaching a kind of Apocalypse; I know now I am destined to end the world. I flex psychic and physical biceps for the task ahead. I am going to crash the pulse of the Power House; it will all be gone, destroyed, and I, Julian, will arise out of the electrical rubble unharmed and in fact renewed like the phoenix whose existence is a direct affront to time and death. *Whether I win or lose, I always win.* As though in answer to my thoughts, Tony switches off an electric light. I will go back on the roof for a while later in the night, and watch the skies for the coming of the Horsemen.

Today I began. I cut off the telephone and threw it in the middle of the floor; I tore light bulbs out of their sockets and it was like plucking out the eyes of a hundred Cyclopses; I severed wires with a meat-knife; I yanked the motor of the refrigerator out of its box and added it to the heap on the floor; I trailed yards and yards of electrical entrails around the room; I attacked the stove, ripping out the wire coils of its burners, and threw them onto the pile; I delicately removed the tubes of the radio as though performing an operation on adenoids; to the ever-growing junk heap I added a few small magnets, several batteries, an alarm clock, and Tony's wristwatch. Then I stomped on the pile and did a little jig until everything crunched together into one metallic mass. I stood back and studied the electrical rubble, pleased, relieved. But I was tense as well, for time was running short, and I could feel grains of thin sand sliding down the hourglass of my body.

I have less and less time. I must write quickly. Today I put on my garments of motion, my cloak and my boots, the cloak that

looks as though it is forever battling wind, the boots with wings at the heels only I can see. I went out and walked through the streets, black and silver. The heels of the boots clicked against the pavement. People were anxiously watching the skies for a thunderstorm, but I was the thunder, and I was the contour and colours of their need. City, O City, I murmured, O City whose psyche is a subway, whose forehead is a pavilion of asphalt and steel, I will conceal you in my sleeve, I will drop you into my *servante* . . .

There was thunder, the sky split, it was the first day of the world, the streets were slick and black. I stretched out my hands and began to repeat my own name softly, softly, *Julian, Julian,* as the rain fell softly down my arms, and the name became the answer to everything, the beginning and the end of me, genesis, apocalypse, life and death. *Julian, Julian, Julian,* and the name questioned and answered me, and it was every name that ever was and will be and it was the name of the thunder and it was the name of the city. The lightning was like a giant probing rod, an electrical wand; I wanted it, I was going to get it, somehow, I was going to grab it in my hand and fling it across the city. Days, memories flew like electrons in orbit around my skull; I was Mesmer and Galvani and Zeus, I was positive, I was negative, I was double-poled like the earth, I was wet with rain and yet I burned; had I died then you could have pulled my skeleton apart and found every bone a wand. I was Julian, I was man, I was all of you and none of you, I was in the beginning, I was dead and born, I was all and one . . .

I caught the lightning at last within my fist. I hurled it southeast, towards the Power House. A great conflagration lit up the sky, and fires of a hundred colours danced. Then it was all over; the fuses of the city sputtered and died, and all the lights went out forever.

There is no more time; I scribble this by candlelight and soon it will be dawn. I am inheriting myself minute by minute, I am moving into time which is not time, leaving behind me the broken machinery of the world, clocks, watches, artificial lights. I am possessing me, I am creating minutes and hours with the movements of an inner sun. The world-clock is broken and I own myself at last. All the molecules of the world are as a string of beads I toy with between my fingers. I will turn the last stars of morning into sequins and sew them onto my cloak. I am that I am and each new thing I see I bless with my own name.

What serpent flies through the air with an ant lying quietly between its teeth? What is the worst thing the Evil One can achieve? To make man forget he is the son of a king. I dream of a naked church, I dream of an altar stripped clean of offerings, I dream of a naked world.

If you find this diary, you, nameless (for I must leave it behind) — remember that the Master of Illusions does not make you believe what he wishes, but what you wish. Remember that all this was not my dream, but yours, that I speak from within you, and you hear. And if you are laughing I am also laughing, and if you are weeping I am also weeping, and where this journal is, I am there.

PART THREE: Exit, Laughing

All that is above is also below; know this and rejoice. HERMES TRISMEGESTUS: TABULA SMARAGDINA

IT SEEMS HE WALKED through many streets and knew many deaths until the dawn, and spoke to himself in circles and riddles. And when the light of morning came the children once again gathered around his heels singing and chanting and speaking in the ancient mysterious tongues only they remember.

'You're a tall man, you look like God,' one of them said.

'No God is taller than that,' said another.

And one boy grabbed his cloak to get him to do a trick, but Julian cried, 'Do not touch me, do not hurt me!'

'I don't know my way home,' one girl said.

'Neither do I know it," he answered. 'It's very far and very near.'

'I don't understand you,' said the girl.

'Yes you do, child,' he answered.

And the children followed Julian to the carnival grounds, playing and throwing rubber balls to each other. It was about 4 in the afternoon. 'Winter is coming; we leave the sun,' said Julian.

The carnival was closed; there were a few empty booths and the big old ferris wheel and nothing else. The group climbed over the fence and entered the naked grounds of the carnival.

'I'm going on the ferris wheel,' Julian said.

'You can't, there's no one to run it!' someone cried.

'Nevertheless, I'm going. Watch me if you like.'

And the children stood in awe at the bottom and watched Julian get on.

'He's just pretending,' someone said.

The Wheel was rusty; its mechanism was tightly locked.

Julian smiled faintly, the first smile in a long time.

'Look!' a child cried, 'The Wheel's going round and no one's turning it!'

The children watched in silence as the huge Wheel creaked and groaned in the empty carnival. It gained speed and became a circular blur.

And the laughter of Julian broke out from the Wheel, circular laughter. Once or twice the children could catch a fleeting glimpse of him with his head thrown back and his hands outstretched, controlling the motion of the Wheel. His cloak flew and his hair flew and he laughed and laughed.

The children waited in silence for a long time. Then slowly and painfully the Wheel ground to a halt and its machinery locked with a loud click.

They waited for the magician to come down. But the Wheel was empty and Julian was not upon it.

Three Poems by David Heaton

SUNDAY DINNERS

For Christ's sake, in all those years of hope
I never chewed him out, but I
wished I was a Mick once or twice
so I wouldn't've had to feel him
go to mush when his better half
chased him across my tacky tongue.
Then I learned to paste him on my roof
where he'd stay so damned dry my spit'd
make him hang there in shreds; but Christ
he was used to that, so they said.

When I'd get him back to my seat
I'd ask with my head bent down
if he could work the toughest trick —
to "make me pure in thought and deed."
Then, while I never meant to try,
like Lonigan I'd always spot
a nifty pair of nyloned calves,
which made me slip my tongue up top
to get him unglued real fast; and
when I couldn't root him right out
I had to reduce him slowly
a little at a time until
I'd tickled myself rubbing out
the remnant cross he'd left on me
from the way some godly baker
with a sanctified cookie press
had made and baked him for my sins.

Jesus, it was nice to down him
and know the holy show was done;
when I headed through those last doors
in new hope I was still wolfing
faithfully the body I'd consumed.

A NOTE CONCERNING EVERYTHING

"Pythagoras . . . discovered the importance of the abstract idea of periodicity." WHITEHEAD

Since
to be
is
periodicity
my Am
is
zero in any instant
all in the whole period
a discontinuous line
of zenith and nadir
seconds of space
cells of time
an apexed wave
in mountain shape
and cloud motion
risen crested diminished
in a chronology of dots
a matter of split electrons
no matter
a Seurat of days
coherent as a photograph.

( )

Some daily notion I could skip
this round of redundant days
is one more habitual reminder
of all the dying done
between our first and last habitations,
those two hollow parentheses
each to each so close they imitate
a faultless zero;
and where they do not close
the nada of their guts
spills into a blank sheet
which swallows hollows incessantly.

DAVID M. HEATON is on the Comparative Literature faculty at Ohio University. He helps to edit *Mundus Artium* and has just written a review of Alan Sillitoe's *Love in the Environs of Voronezh*. These are his first poems in print.

Two Poems by Hugh Miller

CONFESSIONS OF A MANIFEST CODER

In the bottoms of ships is such stuff
As logs, poles, and piling, untreated
(LGTRT); makes you want to cry. Think
Of bulldozer blades and clamshell buckets
(DOZBLD, CLSHBU), razor blades (RAZBLD),
Toilet preparations not otherwise specified
(TLTNOS) and other paraphernalia of
Prosperity: steel springs (STLSPR), iron
Sheet (IRNSHT), and sand bags (SANDBG):
A ship's manifest of wealth. Plies
The ocean blue with parachutes (PARACH),
Steel storage tanks and pontoons (STLTNK),
Jewelry (JWRY), toys (TOYS), a plunder,
An argosy of wet hides (HIDES),
Bags, sacks (BAGSAC), and cleaning rags
(RAGCLN). Just to see the cargo list,
Coded or not, causes excessive drooling
(EXSDRL) and itchy fingers (ITCFGR).
God prevent its sinking.

HUGH MILLER is a graduate student at the University of California, Davis. His work has been published in *Inscape* and will soon appear in *Alaska Review* and *Fireflower*.

WE QUIT THE HUMAN RACE

Dear Maximus Publius Fluvius, Proconsul, between
the Forum and the Baths is a vacant shack we'd
Like to use for a clubhouse. Maxie and Horace.

Flavius, please handle.
Marius, suggest you prepare reply stating
hell no politely.

53:59: your action.

53.5912: Let's write to the father somewhat
sternly taking to task for effrontery his boys
(1) writing direct to the Proconsul, (2) setting
up own nonofficial recreation thereby weakening
Youth Program.

Dear Ciceronis, it has come to the attention
of this office that (1) your boys wrote to the
Proconsul requesting use for a clubhouse of the
construction equipment shack located between
the Forum and the Baths in (2) violation of the
aims and principles, not to say public edicts,
of the Youth Program. It will be appreciated you will
appropriately admonish said youth and
encourage participation in the official
program. Laius Gaius, for the Proconsul.

Copy for file. Route via Procurator for followup.
Note: this guy needs watching. L. G.

KLUBHOUSE: NO ADMITTANCE (skull and crossbones)

Well, boys, the state says no soap to your clubhouse
so I guess you'll have to join at the gym. Lousy
luck, chaps, but you have to play ball with these nobs
if you want to get jobs.

We don't.

You'll have to.

Meeting adjourned forever.

Four Poems by Oliver Everette

BIBLICAL ILLUMINATION

Now that my grandchildren
have reached
the mystic number of seven
I go to the clinic
and the doctor tells me
that the tip
of my vital statistic
has always been defective.

So up on the table with me
and I'm given the works
with trimmings yet —
everything
except a yiddish blessing.

My staff of abraham
bobs and weaves
as the doctor begins sewing
and I think of how a grayling
takes the fly;
I know how the fish feels
and I thank God
that Doc doesn't yank the line
like I do.

And now as I hobble
spraddle-legged
I think of those A-Rabs
who gave a bokay of foreskins
for Dinah
whom Shechem had violated
and how a day later
the brothers of Dinah
gave them a wedding reception
that killed them.

Those pious sons of Jacob
knew what they were doing
with effects and causes
when they made
that bloody bridal treaty
with the sons of Hamor
and with the men of Shalem!

(Biblical reference is *Genesis* 34)

A SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON
(Pt. Barrow)

The large mangy gray-wolf
paces the length of his kennel
at the Arctic Wildlife Station.
His black bitch and pups
howl in the next compartment.

With a grim contempt
for the tourists' cameras
he pauses at the split barrel.
He lifts his leg, and urinates
into his own drinking water.

"Did you train him to do that?"
asks a curious tourist.
The wildlife doctor explains:
"There's a tip on the old problem
of needless water pollution."

WHY I WEAR A BERET

It's been long gone — nigh twenty years —
my new felt hat
which Roethke borrowed
when he broke out of the bug bin
and told his keepers he was going
on a short drive with his pastor
and I drove off alone
not knowing the cunning fib
nor that my hat and he and man's rib
were off the same instant
to a progress of pubs from Bothell to Renton.

The college deans looked at me sharply
for misleading the poor, sick poet.
"We thought you had more principle."
Stunned by the We Accuse
I thought of my hat having its toddies
while I continued my calls on the sick
and I became ill.

I never did learn where my hat caved in
and fell to be swept up
in an afterday's litter
though the borrower later confessed
meekly, "Sorry. I lost it."

Hats too have ghosts that come back
twenty years later. "Now you are famous.
Your hat made the rounds with
the Guggenheim fellow for twenty odd hours
In the progress of pubs
from Bothell toward Renton."

Damn it all, Ted. You should have stood up
and did (like you said)
and turned in my hat — my errant, sick hat
at a clinic for alcoholics!

ONE FOR THE MAN WITH THE RUBBERY DOUGHNUTS

that huge hunk of clay
threaded by bones, varicose horror,
that flat-headed man who loved
to creep among weeds, roots
and the compost of things;

and to frolick with minnows,
to creep with snails and small crabs
among the sea-urchins
over the slimy stones;

to be at one with salt spume flecks
and freshet foam kisses,
sea-swellings rolling
the pebbles of lost things.

Now turned back
into his vegetable beginnings
he lives
not in the measure of old wassails
but in small wet things.

Weeds, how I loved you!

OLIVER EVERETTE teaches at the University of Alaska. His book, *Green Peter*, has recently been published by the Senesene Press.

CARNIVAL

WILLIS BARNSTONE

Is there room
for a yellow poplar leaf
of joy?

Sunday shakes like a Berber anklet
crayoned blue
in sun.

In this trap
of family guilt and yelping laws,
where is Tibet?

To kill a dog
is not a good way to fill
the heart.

The macaroni burns
and yet we bounce on the deck
in a tulip sky.

Nobody home?
Yes! A voice says happy love. Where?
Trick of time.

Waiting is
that pot of fire in the veins. Black tedium
and white hour.

WILLIS BARNSTONE is in the Department of Spanish at the University of California, Riverside. He was recently awarded the Cecil Hemley Memorial Award by the Poetry Society of America. He is currently compiling an anthology of world poetry since 1945.

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS RECEIVED

BOOKS

MARGARET ATWOOD, *The Edible Woman*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Novel, 281 pps. $5.95.

JAMES BACQUE, *The Lonely Ones*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Novel, 189 pps. $6.95.

HORST BIENEK, *Poetry*, Unicorn Press, 1969, trans. by Ruth & Matthew Mead, 55 pps.

ROBERT BIGELOW, *The Dawn Warriors*, Little, Brown & Co. (Canada) Ltd. 1969. Novel, 277 pps. $8.50.

EARLE BIRNEY, *The Poems of Earle Birney*, New Canadian Library, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. $1.50, paperback.

ELISABETH BORCHERS, *Poetry*, Unicorn Press, 1969, translated by Ruth & Matthew Mead. 55 pps.

MICHAEL BULLOCK, *Sixteen Stories As They Happened*, Sono Nis Press, 1969. 116 pps. $5.95.

MICHAEL BULLOCK, *A Savage Darkness*, Sono Nis Press, 1969. 72 pps. $5.00.

J. CHESTER, *An Amerian Sequence*. Poetry.

JOHN ROBERT COLOMBO, *John Toronto, New Poems by Dr. Strachan*, Oberon Press, 1969, 94 pps. $3.75.

R. G. EVERSON, *The Dark is Not Enough*, Delta, Canada, 1969. Poetry with illustrations, 91 pps.

JOHN FOWLES, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Little, Brown & Co. (Canada) Ltd. Novel, 467 pps. $9.75.

PHYLLIS GOTLIEB, *Ordinary, Moving*, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1969. Poetry, 79 pps. $1.95 paperback, $4.00 hardbound.

ELIZABETH GOURLAY, *Motions, Dreams and Aberrations*, Morriss, 1969. Poetry, 68 pps. $3.25.

GUILLEVIC, *Poetry*, Unicorn Press, 1968, trans by Teo Savery. 55 pps.

RALPH GUSTAFSON, *Ixion's Wheel*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Poetry, 128 pps. $4.95.

DAVID HELWIG, *The Sign of the Gunman*, Oberon Press, 1969. Poetry, 151 pps. $4.00.

DAVID HELWIG, *The Streets of Summer*, Oberon Press, 1969. Stories, 184 pps. $4.95.

DAVID KNIGHT, *The Army Does Not Go Away*, Anansi, 1969. Poetry, 42 pps. $1.95.

RUSSELL MAROIS, *The Telephone Pole*, Anansi, Spiderline Edition, 1969. Novel, 143 pps. $1.95.

W. E. M. MITCHELL, *Health, Wealth and Happiness*, Morriss, 1969. Philosophy, 84 pps. $5.00.

FARLEY MOWAT, *The Boat Who Wouldn't Float*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Novel, 243 pps. $6.95.

MARSHALL MCLUHAN, *Counter-Blast*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969, 142 pps. $5.95.

JOYCE CAROL OATES, *Anonymous Sins & Other Poems*, Louisiana State University Press, 1969, $4.50.

REVERDY, *Poetry*, Unicorn Press, 1968, trans. by Anne Hyde Greet. 57 pps.

TADEUSZ ROSEWICZ, *Faces of Anxiety*, Swallow Press, Poetry Europe Series, 1969. Poetry, 63 pps. $4.95.

NORMAN H. RUSSELL JR., *At the Zoo*, JRD Publishing Company Inc., New York. Poetry, $3.50.

HAGIWARA SAKUTARO, *Faces at the Bottom of the World*, and other poems, trans. by Graeme Wilson, M. G. Hurtig Ltd. 81 pps. $4.95.

JOHN SANDMAN, *Eating Out*, Anansi, Spiderline Edition, 1969. Novel, 94 pps. $1.95.

ANDREAS SCHROEDER, *The Ozone Minotaur*, Sono Nis Press, 1969. Poetry, 58 pps. $5.00.

RAINER SCHULTE, *The Suicide at the Piano*, Sono Nis Press, 1969. Poetry, 53 pps. $5.00.

VICTOR SEGALEN, *Stelae*, Unicorn Press, translated by Nathaniel Tarn. Poetry, 95 pps.

RAYMOND SOUSTER, *So Far So Good*, 1969, $4.00.

PETER SUCH, *Fallout*, Anansi, Spiderline Edition, 1969. Novel, 143 pps. $1.95.

MIRIAM WADDINGTON, *Say Yes*, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1969, Poetry, 90 pps. $1.95.

PATRICK WATSON, *Conspirators in Silence*, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Novel, 119 pps. $5.95.

J. MICHAEL YATES, *Man in the Glass Octopus*, Sono Nis Press, 1968. Stories, 109 pps. $5.00.

New Canadian Writing, 1969, stories by John Metcalf, D. O. Spettigue, C. J. Neuman. A Clarke Irwin Canadian Paperback, 152 pps. $2.95.

Notes for a Native Land, ed. Andy Wainwright, Oberon Press. Poetry, Stories, Articles, 155 pps.

The Challenge of Confrontation, The Telegram's Canada 70 editorial team, McClelland & Stewart, 1969. Six titles: *The Struggle for Survival*; *The Threat of Separation*; *Canada 70: A Summary*; *The Linchpin*; *Alienation and Anger*; *The Great Divide*. $1.50 each, $7.95 the set.

PERIODICALS

Contemporary Literature in Translation, eds. J. Michael Yates and Andreas Schroeder, Creative Writing Department, University of British Columbia. Poetry and prose in translation. Three times a year. $1.50 per issue, $4.00 subscription.

Contemporary Alaskan Literature, ed. O. W. Frost, Alaska Methodist University Press, special edition of *Alaskan Review*.

Departure, The University of Vermont Literary Magazine. Poetry, Fiction, Photos.

Ellipse — Writers in Translation. eds. D. G. Jones, Joseph Bonefant, Richard Giguere, Sheila Fischman. University of Sherbrooke, Quebec. French and English poetry in translation.

Hanging Loose, eds. Ron Schreiber, Dick Lourie, Emmett Jarrett, Robert Hershon. Box 398, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003. Poetry, four times a year. 75¢ per copy, $2.50 subscription.

New American and Canadian Poetry, ed. John Gill, R.D. 3. Trumansberg, N.Y. 14886. Three times a year, 75¢ per copy, $2 subscription.

Yes, eds. Mike Gnarowski, Glen Siebrasse, 4286 Graham Drive, Pierrefonds. P.Q. Poetry, Prose, 3 issues $1.00.

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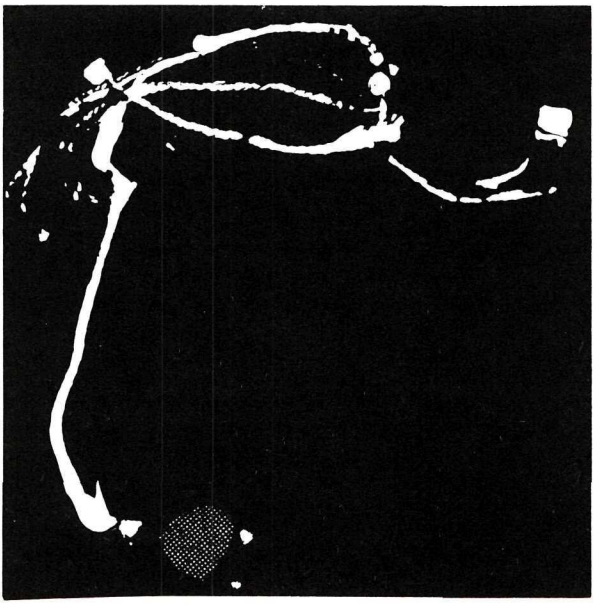

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REPRINTS OF PRISM INTERNATIONAL (Vols. 1-5) are available from the Kraus Reprint Corporation of New York.

THE GERMAN EMBASSY at Ottawa is using copies of *The Price of Morning: Selected Poems by Walter Bauer* (Prism international press, 1968) as awards to outstanding students of German.

WITH THE HELP OF a recent Canada Council grant, Bill T. O'Brien is in Mexico working on a new novel. His first novel, *Summer of the Black Sun*, was published in 1969 by *Prism international press* and *November House*.

TILLIE'S PUNCTURED ROMANCE, a collection of writings by Charlie Leeds, will be published this summer by *Prism international press* and *November House*.

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