PRISM *international*

Spring, 1969 $1.25

STAFF

EDITOR *Jacob Zilber*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS *Robert Harlow*
Prose

Douglas Bankson
Drama

J. Michael Yates
Poetry

ART EDITOR *Clive Cope*

PRINTED BY MORRISS PRINTING COMPANY LTD., VICTORIA, B.C.

PRISM *international* is a journal of contemporary writing, published three times a year by the University of British Columbia. Annual subscriptions are $3.50, single copies $1.25, obtainable by writing to PRISM, c/o Creative Writing, U.B.C., Vancouver 8, B.C.

MSS should be sent to the Editors at the same address and must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope and Canadian or unattached U.S. stamps, or commonwealth or international reply coupons.

PRISM *international*

VOLUME EIGHT NUMBER THREE

CONTENTS

FICTION

Boy & Girl	JOYCE CAROL OATES	4
The Net	MICHAEL BULLOCK	27
Introducing Charlie Leeds	CHARLIE LEEDS	36
The Extinction of "H"	GEORGE MCWHIRTER	83
Three Stories	JANIE KENNON	100

POETRY

The Hotel	FREDERICK CANDELARIA	18
Three Poems	WARREN CARRIER	20
Two Poems	STANLEY COOPERMAN	22
Two Poems	T. CARMI	24
Two Poems	GEORGE JONAS	30
Three Poems	JANIE KENNON	32
Two Poems	NANCY MCFARLAND	34
The Spilled Child	SUSAN MUSGRAVE	48
A Selection of Polish Poetry, introduced by	BOGDAN CZAYKOWSKI	50
On the Spirit of Law	CZESLAW MILOSZ	52
From *Mediterranean Verses*	ALEKSANDER WAT	54
Note on Andrzej Busza	MICHAEL BULLOCK	68
Two Poems	ANDRZEJ BUSZA	69
Good Good	MIRON BIALOSZEWSKI	71
Didactic Verse	BOGDAN CZAYKOWSKI	71
The Visit	JERZY HARASYMOWICZ	72
Two Poems	ADAM CZERNIAWSKI	74
Three Poems	JAN DAROWSKI	76

A Few Thoughts on the Polish Question	ZBIGNIEW HERBERT	79
Grief	ATTILA JOZSEF	81
Broken Time	RICHARD EMIL BRAUN	82
Charlie Mingus and the Grey Lady	PETER STEVENS	94
Mr. Morley's Pastorale	MYRON TURNER	96
Two Poems	PETER WEIBEL	98
Two Poems	JEAN CHATARD	110
Two Poems	NORMAN SIMMS	112
Two Poems	JOAN WHITE	114
Nature Study	HUGH MILLER	120
Books and Periodicals Received		123

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS APPEAR BESIDE THEIR WORK

The cover illustration is by JANIE KENNON, whose fiction and poetry also appear in this issue. See the note on page 100.

JOYCE CAROL OATES' fifth book, a novel entitled *Expensive People*, was published in 1968, and her first book of poetry, *False Confessions*, will be brought out this year by Louisiana University Press. She is in the English Department at the University of Windsor, Ontario.

Boy & Girl

JOYCE CAROL OATES

THE BOY WAS LOOSE AND GANGLING and looked about fifteen instead of eighteen; it was embarrassing that his father was so handsome. The girl was slight and had the frail powdery look of a moth, a colorless fluttering insect of some sort. It was embarrassing that her mother was so solid and horsey; in fact the girl, Doris, called her mother "the horse" behind her back with a kind of smirking, satisfied affection. The boy, Alexander Jr., spoke of his father as "my father" and to his father's face he said, "Father . . . "

They kept meeting all their lives, in and around Lakeshore Point. He went to a boys' school and she to a girls' school and their friends overlapped, though neither of them really had "friends"; they had new and old acquaintances. It was an achievement that they had both lived for so long in Lakeshore Point because it was a suburb people moved in and out of constantly; it was a surprise in April how all the signs went up before houses, "For Sale," in time for a quick deft selling in a day or two, a few weeks of arrangements, and the move to the next city and the next suburb as soon as school ended. So, in the midst of all this coming and going, the loading and unloading of great Allied Vans that proudly conquered the continent, sooner or later Doris and Alex would have fixed upon each other, at least for a while. As Doris grew older — she was now sixteen — it occurred to her that the atmosphere of a typical school dance was the atmosphere of life itself. Partners went out to dance, the music changed, partners came back, switched around, danced again, and the gymnasium would be filled beneath its fluttering strips of crepe paper with the shuffling of legs and feet and the

movements of arms: so many bodies. It was like this in Lakeshore Point itself, with strangers always moving in and strangers moving out.

They were different types: Doris was popular and had a nervous irritating laugh, the laugh of girls in crowds who are sure of being overheard. Alex was faintly stereotyped, liking chess and astronomy and complicated crossword puzzles his mother could not understand. Prepared for Harvard, he had been deeply wounded in his senior year at Lakepoint Boys' Academy when his application at Harvard had been rejected. He had the usual extraordinary grades and his hobbies — chess and astronomy and, at an advisor's suggestion, ice hockey — had seemed good enough. It was a mystery, his rejection. So he would be going to the University of Michigan in the fall and he walked about with his stoop more pronounced than usual, muttering in reply to greetings, casting away imagined slurs with a nervous wave of his hand. When the other boys bothered to think about him they thought he was rather queer. Everyone had an opinion of Doris Moss, even at distant high schools, but Alex wasn't up on any recent news; he and Doris had gone to the same orthodontist seevral years ago and he remembered her as a slight, shy child, perpetually twelve.

Alex had decided firmly to become a doctor and to go into medical research, and somehow his rejection from Harvard was not believable. He carried this rejection about with him everywhere, anxious to drag it out and admit it, humble, questioning, nervous in the hope that it had all been a mistake and he was accepted after all. He was the kind of boy adults believed they could talk to, until they talked to him. His parents' friends approached him with stiff helpful smiles.

He had decided to go into medical research because his father, a doctor, was in a kind of medical research himself. One evening when his parents were having a dinner party Alex had heard something that impressed him strangely and changed his life. He had come in from a movie — he always went alone — and used the downstairs guest bathroom, in the back of the house. There was something about this bathroom he liked. It was done in black and gold, with decanters of scented soap and lovely scented tissue and toilet paper, also gold, and small exquisite guest towels that were white linen with gold embroidering. On the dressing table was a delicate mirror, balanced for the fine-lashed eyes of his parents' lady guests; underfoot was a black, black rug. Alex liked to use this bathroom because he felt very special in it. He felt like one of his

parents' guests. Before parties he cautiously checked this bathroom, by himself, since the maid was always harassed and could not be trusted to see whether the soap was clean or not. The special soap in this bathroom was ball-shaped, gold and white, and it gave off a lovely sweet scent. But sometimes the soap balls grew dusty because they were never used.

This feeling for the bathroom was important because it might have had to do with Alex's decision. He was in there when he heard his father and another man come into the kitchen, and his father's grave words were somehow mixed in with the scent of the toilet paper and the soap. His father was saying, "It's a hell of a complex operation. You don't have a neat laboratory situation, of course. You must consider the environmental factors — the humidity, the wind, the area, the particle size, the amount of saturation, the method of ejaculation. You can imagine the variability there." The other man, unknown to Alex, said something about computers. "Yes, computers are certainly helpful," Alex's father said in his kind, serious voice, "but beyond a certain point only the existential fact is real. Nothing else is real. An event happens only once and that's the difficult thing about life — it isn't a laboratory experiment."

Alex was strangely agitated. He admired his father and feared him a little and it seemed that each of his father's words was valuable. His father worked for the government now on classified projects and it was sometimes necessary for him to be gone for weeks at a time. Perhaps these long trips or the isolation of the laboratory had made Alex's father rather remote about most things, as if holding them out at arm's length; so it was intimate, hearing his father talk like this. Above the clinking of ice cubes his father said, "The biological cloud agent is a totally new frontier. It's fascinating work. You have to think of it as disease control in reverse, breeding pathogenic organisms that we've usually thought of in rather negative terms. And then, apart from the physical reality, there is a totally unexplored area of psychological reaction — what the bonus effect in terms of enemy panic might be, we don't know. We have some ideas, that's all."

Alex remained in the bathroom after they left. He kept hearing his father talk about "reality." His father's other words rose and circled in Alex's brain, and he could not quite understand them, but again and again the word "reality" returned to him. What was real? What was real? "Beyond a certain point only the existential fact is real," his father had said solemnly, and Alex tried to under-

stand that concept. It was strange that he could be so quick at school and so slow, even dense, around the house. It was as if his father gave off a kind of glimmering cloud that fogged up Alex's glasses and also fogged up his brain.

Inspired, he wrote a theme for his English teacher, Mr. Godwin, called "Precisely What is Real?" Mr. Godwin was very pleased with it and read it to the class, embarrassing Alex immensely. Mr. Godwin, though not so tall and handsome as Alex's father, was a minor, substantial hero in Alex's life. He was a raspy, enthusiastic man with nicotine-stained fingers.

Though Doris was younger she was more experienced than Alex. For years she had been a child and she recalled those years with a kind of disbelief. Then, one summer, she had stayed with a girl friend at Cape Cod and met a boy who was supposed to be a television actor, or had hopes of being one. He told her about the television business and the people who ran it that you never saw and had no idea existed; they were the people who really counted, he said. He had a narrow, darkly handsome face and might have been fifteen or twenty-three. There was something indeterminate about him, as if he were waiting to be instructed about himself. "The people that run things are off to the side. Hidden. You don't see them, you stupid guys at home," he said with a sneer. When they were together on the beach it was like a television scene. He was always close to her, with the head-on, slightly myopic look of actors on television; he seemed also to be saying words he had used before. Doris had a fragile, freckled look and a rather thin body. He had forced her to take an icy cold shower with him on the first night they met, and since then her body felt faintly unreal, tingling and numb at the same time. Her body held this sensation for some time. She could not get over it, her mind wanted to break free but couldn't, her body retained this daze — it was nothing she could explain. She didn't talk about it. What she remembered about the boy was his face and body and hands and especially his words, which were strange. "On television there's all these people running around you never see, and cameras and stuff. You stupid bastards at home don't know anything. You don't know how things really are and even the people on television, that work for it, they don't know either. It's too big."

Though what he did to her was no different from what other boys were to do to her, when she returned to Lakeshore Point, she could not get over his words. There was something forlorn and angry in them, something violent. She kept hearing the violence in

them, replaying the words in her head, and her body had that vague, suspended feeling about it, numb and excited at the same time.

Doris' mother insisted upon a Saturday morning ritual of shopping. Doris shrank from anyone seeing her with her mother, and her small, closed, sleek face and her rather pigeon-toed, arrogant step quite clearly distinguished her from her mother. Her mother had a long, kindly face; it was unfortunate that her two front teeth were prominent. Doris' parents were both rather homely and sturdy; Doris was lithe and quite a surprise. While her mother chattered about nonsense in the stores Doris dreamt of what she would be doing that evening, on her date, and about whether she gave a damn if the boy called her again.

Alex's mother knew Doris' mother slightly. Both belonged to the Village Women's Club. Doris' mother had inherited quite a lot of money and seemed to apologize for it with her big, toothy, hesitant smile; Alex's mother, coming from a less wealthy background, was therefore sharper and knew whom to befriend and whom to slight; she always avoided Doris' mother. Sometimes she saw the mother and daughter out shopping on Saturday — the mother galloping enthusiastically along in short, squat, thick-heeled shoes, and the girl dressed like a little slut in a short skirt. At such times Alex's mother called out, "Why, hello, Edith!" and breezed on by.

Yes, she thought with an involuntary satisfaction, that girl what's-her-name did look like a slut.

She had her own problems with Alex. Though he was eighteen his skin was still awful; it was a pity, really to look at him. Every Saturday she packed him in the car and drove him all the way into the city — and she hated the city — to a really superb dermatologist who played squash with her husband at the Athletic Club and who administered to poor Alex X-ray treatments, dried ice treatments, a variety of pills and hormones, and numerous salves. Poor Alex had to wash his face with a white sponge and work the lather up and then rinse it away, using only lukewarm water. No hot water. Acne was caused by overexcitation of the oil glands, his mother had learned to her distaste, and so he must not make things worse. She thought the word *acne* was at least as ugly as the problem itself. It always startled her to see her own son — such a tall, gangling boy! — come out of the doctor's inner office and into the waiting room, with that apologetic stoop to his shoulders, that half-chagrined, half-challenging smirk, and that terrible bluish-violet acne all over his face — It fascinated her, in a way. It was lumpy and flaky at

once. Some pimples were very hard, like berries; others were ripe and soft and draining. Sometimes it was all she could do to keep her hands off his face but no, no, one never squeezes these problems away; nothing so violent. After a good lathering and a good tepid rinsing Alex applied a special ointment to his poor bumpy face, and it was also a shock to come upon him late in the evening — that tall thin boy in his pajamas looking for food downstairs, his face covered with a ghostly white film of medicine that flaked off as he walked.

Poor Alex.

In the spring of his senior year in high school something began to happen to him. He lost his appetite. He walked about mumbling to himself, arguing over something. His father was in Washington for most of April. His mother had a number of teas and luncheons; Alex felt vaguely protective, knowing that his mother dreaded to be alone and that loneliness was increased by this constant round of parties, and yet he was uneasy with such knowledge and did not know what to do with it. Should he have such an understanding of his own mother? Was it proper? Though he was forbidden by Dr. Lurch to eat chocolates he ate them secretly, like a twelve-year-old. When his father called, every evening at eight, he made sure he was not around though he would have liked nothing better than to talk to him. He felt dizzily as if he were becoming a child again. . . .

His mother began to plead with him. Wasn't he an intelligent boy, at the head of his class? Then what was wrong? Why was he so argumentative? Why did he so hate to change his clothes? His underwear? Ah, his mother pleaded with him! Alex knew that he was becoming strange but he did not understand it. He felt a peculiar resistance to taking showers or baths and he disliked brushing his teeth because . . . because in this way wasn't he stirring up germs . . . ? But he did not want to think about it.

"What will your father say about this?" his mother cried.

She was a pretty, dismayed woman. Every day she rose at seven-thirty and showered and put on excellent clothes, all the required paraphernalia of a woman, including high-heeled shoes; every day she went out at about noon or twelve-thirty, to have luncheon somewhere or to play bridge or to do something, Alex wasn't sure what, she was tremendously and wonderfully busy. On the other days her friends visited her and she served luncheon — chicken or shrimp or crab in some kind of cream dish, usually, with a delicate icy fruit dessert — and Alex loved the very odor of such days, the rich promise of his mother's happy life. He did not want to disturb her.

It would be a disgrace for any son to disturb so happy and busy a woman, and yet . . . he felt that there was indeed something wrong with him, some dissociation from his body, a fear and a distrust of his own skin.

For Mr. Godwin he wrote an unassigned essay called "The Limits of Reality." It was long, rambling, and feverish. He wrote it late at night and was quite proud of certain sentences: "The nature of disease may well be the ultimate reality, and the method of survival in adjustment. Isolation and adaptation. Living with disease. Nothing can be repeated. History comes and goes. There is nothing but the Existential Fact. My skin is a dense swarming sea of maggots invisible to the eye. . . . "

He handed that essay in with great excitement on a Friday morning, and that evening he went to a party against his wishes, at his mother's wishes. She was concerned about his "social life." It was a party for high school kids at the big Payne house and he was probably invited only because his mother played bridge with Mrs. Payne, no other reason. He spent most of his time eating, scooping up dip with his finger. He ate a lot of shrimp. In the recreation room — which was long, with a low, stucco ceiling and a great fireplace at one end, without a fire — couples were dancing in the darkness. Alex half-knew everyone there and disdained them. Betty Payne had been rude to him, which meant she had been forced to invite him. So he stayed by himself and his face was fixed with a knowing, philosophical smirk as he ate shrimp.

There was a commotion in the recreation room. One girl, dressed in white, stamped on the floor and threw herself about in what was either a new dance or a tantrum. She threshed her body, flung her arms around violently, let her long hair fly out about her face — from the way others were watching her, Alex decided it must be a tantrum. The girl had a thin, delicate body and her legs were quite thin; it was Doris Moss. She was associated with a crowd Alex had been aware of for years, without taking any real interest, having heard of their perpetual adventures and daring every Monday throughout high school. He had heard a number of things about them but did not exactly believe everything he heard. The girl Doris continued stamping the floor in her shiny white low-heeled shoes, exactly like a child, and a boy shouted something in her face.

She whirled around and stalked out of the room and came right to Alex. "Hi, Alex, how are you," she said in a taunting voice. "Let's go for a ride and get out of here. Do you have a car?"

"I walked over."

"I've got a car. Come on."

Her face was wet with perspiration and strands of hair stuck to it. A few kids were watching her but Alex ignored them. "Come on, come on," she said with a husky, flirtatious voice, tugging at Alex's hands. "Let's get out of this place before I suffocate."

He followed along with her, both surprised and pleased. She kept touching him with her small, darting, nervous hands and he wondered if perhaps a new self might rise out of him, a new Alex, popular and assured. But she said as they left the house, "Why don't you have a girl friend?" This hurt him a little and he did not reply. "Are you queer?" she said with a happy stamp of her foot. She leaned around and laughed up into his face. "There's my car. It's boxed in," she said, pulling at him. "No, don't look in that car, leave them alone! You really are queer, aren't you?"

They got into her car and she managed to get out by driving over the lawn. She had to back up and drive forward a few times, impatiently turning the wheel, and she finally managed to get out. Alex watched the doorway of the house for someone to appear and shout at them, but no one came.

"Why don't you have a car? Why don't you have a girl friend?"

"I don't know. Don't want them."

Her brisk brassy manner was good because it expected nothing of him. She talked so fast and so loudly that she hardly listened to him. "No, really, tell the truth for once," she said, poking him in the ribs, "is it some religious thing or something? The way you act?"

He had been drinking at the party but it had not released a freer, bolder Alex. Instead he felt hot and nervous. As Doris drove along the boulevard she kept laughing in a strange mocking way. "Alexander Jr.!" she said with a snicker. Then her mockery changed to a kind of fake sugary concern. "Your father's kind of cute though. I like your father. Why didn't your father come to this lousy party tonight?"

She drove carelessly and kept jabbing at him and teasing him, and Alex wondered if this was the usual way for girls to behave with boys; he didn't know if he liked it or resented it. "Tell me what you're doing these days," Doris commanded. "Are the braces off your teeth? What's wrong with your skin? Tell me about your father. Tell me something, say something," she laughed. She let her head fall back and her mouth opened blankly. On her delicate ears tiny earrings glinted; Alex liked them. He was glad he had found something about her to like.

"My boy friend pierced my ears for me. This was someone you don't know, some bastard. I don't go out with him anymore. First you get it clean and then you put a piece of cotton behind the ear, you know, to protect that — you know — that vein or artery or something that's there — but anyway it bled a lot — My mother gave me these earrings for Christmas."

"They're very nice."

She reached over and seized his hand. "Do you like me, do you think I'm beautiful? What are you thinking right now?"

"I have a sort of headache. . . . "

"I've got this crazy idea, it's a great idea, there's this little kid I'm going to take for a ride. Let's take him for a ride. On Sundays people drive up and down the lakeshore with kids, on rides, looking at the lake so let's go get him, all right?" There were flecks of saliva around her mouth. Alex, staring at her, felt his head begin to ache seriously and wondered how he would get out of this situation. She was driving fast and carelessly. She turned off onto a darker street and raced along it, not stopping at intersections, and after a while she braked the car to a fast stop before a ranch house. Alex sat in the car, bewildered, and she ran out.

A few minutes later she appeared at the door of the house, backing out, and then she turned and ran down the walk with something in her arms. It was a baby. "Look. This is my brother Dorsey's baby. Look at it. It's my nephew. What do you think, I'm an aunt. No, let me drive, I want to drive," she said rudely, though he had only slid over in order to look out at what she held. It was a baby, yes.

"What's that?"

"What's it look like?" she laughed. "I told the kid inside, she's in seventh grade at Cooley, I told her we'd be right back; we wanted to take the baby for a ride. It's sort of a nice baby. Here."

Alex did not want to hold the baby, thinking that he was not good enough for it, wouldn't know how to hold it, would frighten it. But she thrust it at him and started the car again.

"But maybe we shouldn't — "

"Oh, shut up," she said. The baby began to whimper and Doris snapped on the radio. "This is a lousy car. This isn't my car. This is Fred's car, Fred Smith, do you know him? Of course you don't."

"Fred Smith?"

"You don't know him and you don't know anybody. Can't you stop that baby crying? What kind of a father are you?"

Alex rocked the baby experimentally and it did stop. He felt a

kind of numbness move over him, as if he were indeed a father, and the frantic perspiring Doris who sat beside him were his wife, a mother. He stared down at the baby in awe. "Fred's this guy I have kind of a thing with, he's real wild. He's real strange, he's from Olcott. He doesn't hang around with any bunch. This is Fred's car that he lent me for tonight, I was at his place and drove it over, my mother thought I was at Toni Sargant's. There's a slumber party there tonight. She thinks I'm going there but I'm not."

"Where are you going, then?" Alex asked suspiciously.

He held the baby as if in accusation of her, rocking it gently. The girl cast a sideways glance at him. He could not figure out her wild chatter, and then he remembered suddenly talk at school about certain kids who took pills; Doris had been mentioned. He saw at once that of course she was high. She had a strange waxen look beneath the perspiration, a dummy's look. Seen in ordinary light she would have been a girl of about sixteen with a slightly snubbed nose; in the changing, disruptive lights from the drive-in restaurants and gas stations they were passing she looked as if her skin had been painfully tightened around the blunt hollows and ridges of her face. "We'd better go back," Alex said.

"This Fred is awfully strange. He lives by himself," Doris went on. A car approaching them flicked its lights and finally blew its horn to urge her back onto her own side of the street. "I said I'd be back around twelve but I got hung up with someone, that Tommy, but he made me mad . . . and Fred will get mad, but, but I don't know if I'll go back to his place. . . . I don't know. I should get his car back or he'll be mad. I took a bus over to his place but that was during the day . . . but if I go back he'll make me stay . . . he's sort of strange. . . . He's twenty-four."

"Doris, we'd better go back. Let's take the baby back."

He felt a little sick. Doris had driven out quite far and was in a dark, dingy suburb now, rushing along the main street. "I want to get to the country," she said angrily. "I'm so sick of all this I could puke. We've got a cottage up north we could go to, nobody'd know. My brother Dorsey, he's a goddam show-off, he's really my stepbrother and he's an awful lot older than I am. I don't remember him, really. That might not have been his house. I think it was. I told the babysitter my sister-in-law wanted the baby and she believed me, and I'm pretty sure it's the right baby, my nephew. His name should be *Walter*. . . . Isn't that a stupid name for a baby?" she said angrily.

The baby began to cry again as if startled by her remark. Alex stared helplessly down at it and felt, once again, a magical sensation of being its father: the two of them besieged by the cruel, crazy words of its mother. He wondered suddenly if there might not be some danger of their infecting the baby. His hands were very large, holding it; his skin looked dangerous and flaky in the mottled light.

"I know what, let's play a trick on Dorsey. Let's fix him," Doris whispered.

"What?"

"Let's kill it."

"What?"

"The baby here," Doris said. "Isn't that a wild idea? Huh? What do you think?"

She stopped the car. She leaned over to Alex and stared down at the baby's face; Alex leaned away from her. "We could let it drop out of the car by accident. We could say it got out by itself. Some other car would hit it, not us. We could watch. . . . We could stuff that blanket in its mouth, what do you think, isn't that wild? What do you think?"

Alex's head was pounding violently. "You're crazy," he said.

Doris laughed and laughed at him. Oh, he was absurdly intelligent; he'd never get over it any more than he'd get over his acne. Doris lay back against the seat laughing until she began to sob angrily. Alex stared at her. "You want me to drive back?" he said cautiously.

"Stupid bastard like you don't know how to drive," she muttered.

She said nothing more. Her stare was fixed upon something before her, on the dashboard, maybe. Or on nothing. Her mouth opened upon rapid, jagged gasps. Once in a while she giggled convulsively and Alex waited, frightened, but she did not speak. He said shyly, "I'll drive back," and Doris made no resistance when he squeezed over her and got behind the wheel.

He drove back to the Payne's house and parked in the circle driveway and walked home by himself, terribly frightened. His fear was a kind of intoxication and he could not think straight. Later he was to hear that the police had been called, that the baby did belong to Doris' brother, and that Doris was found unconscious in the car; the baby was crying on the seat beside her.

And who was to know that Alex had been involved?

He told no one about it, no one. His father returned from Washington and had a talk with him. He was a serious, handsome, busy man and it was a serious matter that he take time to talk so length-

ily with Alex. He talked about being normal. "Do you think it's normal," he said, "to horde your dirty clothes? Not to change your socks, to wear them in bed?"

"I'm not bothering anybody," Alex muttered.

"Your mother says this is getting worse. It's getting worse. And what about this essay you wrote?"

Mr. Godwin had called Alex's father about the essay. It was no surprise; Alex should have known better than to write such a thing. *What is reality? Reality is germs and microbes and infectious scum. . . .*

As he listened to his father read these strange, angry words he was torn between a knowledge of their insanity and a hope, a terrible hope, that his father would glance up at him with respect. But his father held the paper at some distance, reading, his mouth working the peculiar words as if they themselves were infectious. Finally he said, "Do you think this is the work of a *normal mind*?"

Alex broke down at that point. He confessed to his father about the terrible odor of his skin, the infection of his skin, the sensation of crawling and gnawing and fluttering. . . . Oh, it was terrible, it was terrible and his voice rose to hysteria; he began to claw himself. "It's all over me, I tried to keep it secret but it got worse. I don't want it to fly off or anything . . . the X-ray treatments help, it isn't on my face . . . it needs to be burned off, not stirred up, that's the danger if I fool around, I don't want it to get stirred up and go off on other people. . . . "

"What's wrong with you? What are you talking about?" his father demanded. His father showed no fear but was calm and logical and Alex tried to imitate him, though his skin became cancerous with germs as he spoke; so active, so restless! His very skin crept upon his bones and his scalp moved of its own accord. "I think it could be treated but I don't want to miss school," he said sorrowfully. "I know something's wrong with me, I know it isn't normal and I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please don't tell Mother or she'll worry about it. . . . "

So he was taken by his father to Dr. Mate, a friend of his father's from Harvard Medical School. Dr. Mate was a psychiatrist whose practice consisted entirely of disturbed adolescent boys. Alex's problem was judged not a serious one because it did not threaten violence, and it was not even an uncommon one: a neurosis induced by Oedipal aggression further stimulated by a sense of inferiority and frustration. He clawed at himself, in the opinion of Dr. Mate, because he could not claw at his father. Yet still his "problem" did

not go away. After many sessions with this doctor, who reminded Alex of his own father, Alex was made to understand that it was his mind that was sick and not his skin. They arranged for him to spend some time in a hospital called Oakridge Manor, about twenty miles from home, and he was cautioned not to tell his secret to the other patients that his skin was infected and seething with germs. Oakridge Manor cost sixty dollars a day but was worth it, everyone said. After a while Alex's father transferred him to another private hospital, Foxridge Manor. He was allowed to come home on weekends. He liked these visits home but he was unable to relax; he carried himself about cautiously and stiffly through the familiar rooms, his own former room, the lovely guest bathroom downstairs, and when he spoke it was in a cautious, stiff voice. His mother talked to him about the way the living room was going to look when it was painted and the drapes changed.

"But why are you sitting like that? You can let your arms rest on the table, please, Alex, don't sit there like that — you know you're perfectly all right, please," his mother said.

"Yes, I know. That's right," Alex said.

"Then why are you sitting like that? You look so strange."

"I'm sorry. I know there's nothing wrong with me."

She rushed on to talk about the painters' union and the terrible fight a friend of hers had had with a painter. First he had painted her friend's dining room walls white, and then he had leaned on them apparently with his dirty hands — and so the walls were blotched and smudged — and what did he think? What did Alex think happened next?

Alex said vaguely, "Out at the hospital the other day there was a girl I thought I knew. She was sitting in the reading room. She was leafing through magazines very fast. There were little scabs on her fingers, it looked like, as if she bit her fingernails, but . . . but maybe there weren't scabs, I didn't get that close. . . . I thought it might be Doris Moss."

"Was it?"

"I don't know."

His mother said slowly, avoiding his eyes, "Well, it was awfully sad about Doris. Of course I don't know anything about it. But some boy beat her up. Some man. He beat her up very badly a few weeks ago in some awful place downtown. It was such a shock."

"Then what happened?"

"To her, you mean? I don't know." She was staring at Alex with her blank, flattened-out look, a pretty, dismayed mother who had

seen too much and thought about too much, who had been destined for a life of luncheons and dinners and the fulfillment of a good marriage and the enjoyment of a successful son . . . and instead this had happened. She stared at him.

"She didn't die or anything?" Alex said.

"I don't think so, no, she didn't die. I don't know what happened to her," his mother said. The telephone began ringing in the next room. "That's the contractor with the estimate," she said, apologetically and with a rush of mild enthusiasm; after a decent moment she rose and went to answer it and Alex heard her in the next room talking about the living room walls. They were to be painted either white or oyster. That was the conclusion of their talk about Doris Moss and the subject never came up again.

THE HOTEL

FREDERICK CANDELARIA

is complete:
crystal doors shimmer,
admitting everyone,
and rooms are ready —
always reserved.
The clerk hands out keys
and declares
no luggage necessary —
all is provided.
The omniscient bellhop
opens your designated door
and disappears with his tip.

All suites connect.
In one bedroom
seven blacks appear
naked but for straps —
and you strip.
In another
there are no windows,
only mirrors everywhere,
a blonde shimmering on the bed,
and you hold the whip.
Some rooms have glass roofs
and you know there are stars still
but the showers are dry
and hiss only in whispers.

Your flat has plastic walls
and everyone watches you always.
This floor is perfumed
by beautiful people
screwing beautifully
while the closets fill with hate,
reeking but offending no one
accustomed to conditioned air.

The clock has no hands:
it is always checkout time
before you can leave —
too late —
charged for the extra day
you never had.
Though the phone wouldn't ring,
nor the toilet flush,
and room service never answered,
and the elevators stuck
while the staircase was locked,
and fire escapes were never built —
yet the bill is correct.
But you can't pay it.
Discreetly the house detective
grips your elbow and leads you
down the dark corridor
you never explored.

FREDERICK CANDELARIA, editor of *West Coast Review* and Associate Professor of English at Simon Fraser University, has published in *Prism international* and many other journals. He is the author of a poetry volume, *Dimensions*, and of three critical texts.

Three Poems by Warren Carrier

AUTUMN SONG

My mouth full of leaves,
I kick the weather open like a plum.
Ripe rain jets against the clay.
Wherever I bum in New Jersey
my nerves get pinched by pretty girls.
The first snow corners space in Glasgow,
Montana. An abandoned ballerina
whirls with mortal ease those final larches.
I smile, a maniac among somber pines.
My pulse hitch-hikes to Yucatan.
Goodbye, you sons of bitches!

EVERYTHING IS FLOATING AWAY

Spirit drifts over the hill, over my house.
Brown grass and leaves smolder a sullen gully
where quail scurry, stalked by enormous trucks.
Transplanted maples flame in demented wind.
The movement overhead! Stars fly always
outward from that great explosion. Children
yell: Who is that man in the white mustache?
Our smiles float away. A white wind spins
on the mountain. Everything goes, like quail, rising.

LADY WAITING

His bear tracks mark your skin deep as six
when father shook the world with shouts that banked
like snow. The house blew down in whiskey storms.

You married young to carry time as a child.
A violent man could cure you with his touch.
Just say it's beautiful and lick your dreams.

Once upon a fall outdated birds
sang upon a wire above your house.
At dusk they flew to Arkansas. Love
in Honolulu means hello, goodbye.

You sway with roots in the air like a banyan tree.
Let cameras click you hanging from a hook
or stretched abed in Nome with salted skin
waiting for his paws or shouts of snow.

WARREN CARRIER is a widely-published poet and translator, and Chairman of the Department of English at the University of Montana. His volume of poems, *Toward Montebello*, appeared in 1966.

Two Poems by Stanley Cooperman

MUSACK FOR A CAMPUS KITCHEN

"That a man's reach should
exceed"
                what?
a throat maybe,
or the skewer we push
into our neighbor's
gums:
        anything
that says HERE
I am, me . . . like a billboard
of skin, Virtue
made into lamp-shades.

Strategy
            of course
is helpful: and the right
enemies
to squeeze
between the chipped eyelid
of a whisper, until
History
lays golden eggs
in our pockets, and we
hatch them
into shapes of love:

a sparrow
stuffed
with the sauce
of a Yorkshire pudding.

VENUS DESCENDING

Full of rushing weeds, a poison
no longer pure, but filled
with river-incense, the shape
of concrete shadows, their form
hammered into dark smell,
oranges
grown rotten with expected winter:
this is how we come upon each other,
always in surprise, the secret
wiping of our shoes,
the inhalation
over puddles spilled from our flesh.

It's impossible to breathe
with dreams covering our faces,
every lover a surgical sponge,
names
that fill the empty holes of our cheeks
with lamentations: like an old woman
with dung on her face, praising
the father of pomegranates
and wild goats,
twigs burning in winter fire,
while the stump of her life turns
black, eaten by indifferent animals
among the stones of her city.

STANLEY COOPERMAN has published in *Prism international* and many more. His second volume of poems, *The Owl Behind the Door*, was brought out in 1968 by McClelland & Stewart. He is in the Department of English at Simon Fraser University.

Two Poems by T. Carmi

Translated from the Hebrew by Anne Atik

FOUR AIR LETTERS

I

I've burned your letter.

It's autumn now.
The tatters of the bark are hanging
from the eucalyptus trunk
like clothes gone out of fashion.
I heaped its leaves, they burned
and turned to ashes.
Then I took off my shoes, sat
seven days, seven nights
waiting for the tiny phoenix
to rustle its wings.

Oh, I'll brood on these ashes
until my soul takes flight.

II

Turn of a shoulder, glimpse of a nape
eye like a grape.
They've suddenly all conspired
to beguile my eyes.
I go on piecing you together
like a puzzle.
I go on computing you
and the end of days.

And soon you shall be my holding,
wholly, redeemed.

III

Now the clocks begin to move.
Your time is borne away on the waves
in dolphin-leaps.
Mine drags along on heavy earth.

What happens to the sundials at night?
What happens to the hour-glass
and to angels' wings in water?

But when you'll answer
I'll tell you how much sand and how many stars
and what the time.

IV

I'm sending you many words today
equipped with light and air
oxygen and emergency masks.

But the way is very long
and who knows if they'll hold out.

When they reach you, my love,
they may be in need of respiration
mouth-to-mouth.

DREAM

Last night I dreamt my son did not return.

He came to me and said:
When I was small and when you were
you didn't want to tell me
the story of Isaac
to frighten me with knife fire and ram.

But now you've heard her voice.
Softly, not commanding
(her hand is full of voices
and she spoke to your forehead and eyes:)
is that it?
and you rushed right off to the cache
drew the knife fire and ram
and in a flash
your son, your only one.

Last night I dreamt my son did not return.
I expected him back from school
and he was slow in coming.
Then, when I told her
she put her hand over me
and I saw all the voices he had seen.

T. CARMI has published many books of poetry in Hebrew; St. Martin's Press, New York, brought out his *Selected Poems* in English translations in 1963. He lives in Jerusalem.

ANNE ATIK's poems and translations have appeared in *New World Writing*, *Poetry London-New York* and *African Heritage*, an anthology of French-speaking African poets. She lives in Paris.

MICHAEL BULLOCK's stories, poems and translations have appeared in *Prism international* and scores of other journals. He is also the author of several poetry volumes and many books of translation, and the editor of *Expression* (England). At present he is on the staff of the Creative Writing Department at the University of British Columbia.

THE NET

MICHAEL BULLOCK

I WAS WALKING along the cliff-top at the time with a frail wind whispering in my ear and gently shaking the gorse bushes. The sea was climbing up the face of the cliff, bringing its fish with it, when a great net descended from above, capturing all of us — wind, sea, fishes, gorse bushes and myself — and transporting us to a nearby hilltop.

Here my *femme fatale* was waiting, dressed all in black with a red flower at her breast. Drawing a knife, she cut the meshes of the net and released us all from our imprisonment. The wind shook itself like a dog and wandered about in search of a lamp-post; the gorse at once took root again, looking as settled as though it had never moved; the sea went scampering off down the hillside, carrying its fish in its hands; I lost sight of it behind a clump of trees, but a loud splash suggested that it had returned into the sea.

I myself gazed at my *femme fatale* and thanked her for releasing me from my imprisonment. "My dear," she said, "it was I who cast the net." "Why?" I asked her. "In order to have you at the top of the hill." "And what about the wind, the gorse, the fish, the sea?" "All caught up by chance," she told me.

* * *

I heard a nearby chestnut tree laugh cynically and, buckling my belt, I stepped across and cut a number of symbolic figures in its bark, dimly aware that by so doing I was shortening my life by several years.

After dusting dry leaves and twigs from her clothes, my *femme fatale* took the knife from my hand, cut off my left ear and nailed it to the tree trunk with a pointed stick. "There," she said kindly, "that won't bother you any more."

I thanked her for her kindness and bade her goodbye. On my way down the hill I stopped to apologize to the gorse for any inconvenience it might have suffered on my account. "Oh," it replied, "that doesn't matter. One place is as good as another. Besides, the wind up here is a better colour."

Much relieved to hear this, I continued on my way.

My attention was inescapably drawn to a row of stones running down the hillside by the path. I caught a particularly large one as it passed and was much surprised to observe that both surfaces (it was more or less flat) were covered with runes. Since these were unintelligible to me — although I recognized some of the symbols as having an obscene significance — I put it down on the ground again and it immediately ran off to join its companions.

Looking back up the hill I saw my *femme fatale* hanging upside down from a branch of the chestnut tree, her short black skirt round her waist. A few seconds later she flew off, batlike, and vanished round the other side of the hill.

* * *

I reached the foot of the hill, continued on towards the cliff, found a path and scrambled down to the beach.

After strolling along the beach for a hundred yards or so I came upon a group of seaweed-covered rocks, evidently submerged at high tide. In a pool among the rocks I found a large crab, looking suspiciously like the stone I had picked up and studied on my way down the hill and bearing the same runic symbols on its back.

I lay down on my face and peered into its eyes. It gazed back at me with a look of such ineffable sadness that I shuddered. As I did so a seagull dropped from the sky and fell to its death on the rock at my side. The sadness in the eyes of the crab grew even more piercingly intense and I had the greatest difficulty in refraining from weeping.

The blood of the dead seagull trickled slowly down the rock and into the pool, where the crab waited with open jaws to receive it. As the seagull's blood entered the crab's mouth and passed down its throat into its stomach, the crab grew larger, changed colour and shape and finally turned into a huge seabird — an albatross, I be-

lieve — rose up out of the water, took wing and flew away; but not without first giving me a look of such savage and vengeful triumph that my hair stood on end and I trembled with fear. Such sadness, then such hate — why? I wondered. I felt the creature's malevolence still hanging over me like an invisible pall.

I asked myself how I could escape from this aura of doom, but no possible means presented itself to my clouded mind. I therefore made my way up the cliff again towards the spot at which I had been standing when the wind first whispered in my ear, fully expecting that when I reached it the net would fall again.

Two Poems by George Jonas

ON A MARGINAL AFFAIR

She looked as though she had a secret
When we first met but she had none.
She lived in a flat on Cottingham Street,
My eyes were soft, her mouth was firm.

Later we drove in an open car
Around the country and we made
Love in the lake and I seem to recall
Drinking a bottle of champagne in her bed.

She looked as though she had no secret
After a year but she did have one.
It turned out to be the standard secret.
My eyes were cold, her mouth was drawn.

Now we haven't spoken for quite a while
My eyes are vague, her mouth seems lazy
We nod when we meet in the street, we smile
And we still share the same cleaning lady.

FOUR STANZAS ON SALVATION

If God is dead perhaps we'll all go to heaven.
Michael the queer, Iris the scrotum-stroker
Will mix with older angels in the wide
Windless expanse of paradise.

It will be nice to bask in static bliss
After the twisting pleasures of our lives.
Having flown rockets over sleeping towns
We have more need of Eden than the saints.

Children we burnt will wait for us with flowers
And look politely at the crystal foam
Around our mouths, and lead us by the hand
To see the spot where God's throne used to stand.

We will forgive ourselves for we are good.
If this is heaven, we'll make the best of it.
There must be music of a kind, there must be sex,
And refreshments will be served at ten to six.

GEORGE JONAS has published a book of poetry (*The Absolute Smile*, House of Anansi, 1967) and poems in several anthologies and many journals. He produces radio and television shows for CBC in Toronto.

Three Poems by Janie Kennon

THERE IS A CRACK

There is a crack
between the awareness of the knife
and the sleep he couldn't sleep
by reading what he couldn't dream.
A ditch becomes his medium.
It goes under the surgeons,
across the parking lot,
over the low lands
where the last of the field mice
  have been harvested.
The air is warm with sleep;
  the sun shines on the metal stubble.
When a man was arrested
crawling down the middle of a street,
he said, "I am going to a funeral
or a birth. I don't know which."
They gave him life, in a narrow cell,
while sleep turns to morning fog,
and the patient died.

1/3 BECOMING 2/3

Utrillo knows the daylight
shades of grey,
but did he ever sleep?
Come down
into the night;
imagine the dark
in the dark
and only then
are you dreaming.

And when you come in the daylight
to the places you have been,
remember the order.
The sequence must not follow
or you will awaken to a dream
and be held there without sleep.
As prophet
destroy the order
by moving where you didn't
go before.
But you must move
and not, instead,
speak,
for, as in dreams,
you are mute.

THE CAT IN THE WINDOW

He owns
a very wise cat that hears nothing approach
and opens one eye.
It has stolen the poses of peace
with a slow yawn.
He watches it;
how it stretches in the sun's heat,
being aware of no sun,
or watches the street through its reflection;
its minutes are neither long nor short.

The cat dances well with a broken spine;
although it speaks in bloody syllables,
he carries it under his coat
and will not let it die.

JANIE KENNON: See note on page 100.

Two Poems by Nancy McFarland

FISHING GROUNDS

I ran for the sea
in a sixteen-foot skiff
and, half-grown with large dreams,
made my way with the men
who fought giant nature.
We searched down fish,
and tossed out our gear,
we captured fish, cleaned fish,
sold fish, got rich on them;
in the winter we talked fish;
I grew weary of fish
and fishermen —
their horizons so broad,
their vision so limited.
Till, grown, with tough questions,
I tied up my boat,
my new forty-footer,
traded gear for a briefcase
at a giant university.

I tossed out my questions,
dissected the books,
slumped at desks like a bivalve,
let all truths run through me;
and pursued with the best
the slipperiest prey.
I met two keen searchers, who,
when they knew me,
confided their envy,
their longing desire
to make their life on the sea
as fishermen.

OFF COURSE

The porpoise are plaguing me again
those blue bastards
when I'm nasty
come loping bellyrolling at my bow
spout their mockery
whistle — Cool it Cap!
  learn to live
  it's so green
  so great
  below
They know everything the porpoise
and their bubbles break my path
a streak of giggles somersaulting
to my plod
they tease me — Dive
  join up
  Darwin missed us we sing too high
I couldn't hear it
    but I felt it
felt the derision in that tail slap
pulled in my eyes
God has fins
I believe it

NANCY MCFARLAND is a graduate student in English at Western Washington State College in Bellingham. She has had poems in the college journal, *Jeopardy*.

Introducing Charlie Leeds

James R. Christy sent us a covering letter when he submitted a selection of prose pieces by his friend, Charlie Leeds. We reprint the letter here with his permission.

Charlie Leeds is 47 years old, a sometimes jazz bassist, various back-up jobs with the likes of Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, Bud Shank, Steve Allen, Tony Fruscella (not as a union back-up musician, either!) — and compulsive writer. He is unable to send these things himself because at present he is in a state prison in New Jersey. (He has been in numerous prisons and jails, also Lexington, Synanon, DayTop and various state hospitals.) He is what is termed by our society a "dope addict."

His writings, of which I am in possession, run to about 300 pages. Even if Charlie was not incarcerated, he could not send his stuff off because he can never *finish* anything. He is constantly re-writing, cutting, incorporating. He has finally just laid it all on me in hopes that I can get it placed.

The importance of the work, I feel, is that as the confessions of a man who has undergone such experiences, they nevertheless maintain an honesty, *purity*, humor and naiveté that are astonishing. During his life, which has taken him all over the world, he has seen and been a part of the "lowest" and "basest" activities of man. Through it all he has been dealt the worst of hands. Through it all, however, he has maintained his spiritual (if I may use the word) virginity. He is, in fact, a purist. He could gather all his work together and call it "My Book of Sorrows"; instead, typical of the man, he titles it "Tillie's Punctured Romance."

What this last prison sentence —consecutive 3-5 terms, no parole — may do, I don't know. I really don't know whether he will make it. When you're inside you have to have something to look forward to on the outside. He doesn't. I hope that at least I can get some of his things published.

Rose O'Christ

LIFE HAS ITS OWN inscrutable way of deciding where some of its most dramatic and significant scenes are played, and here on one of the very first days of January 1954 sat Judy and I in Horn & Hardart's Cafeteria, sharing a table with, and surrounded by, Mr. and Mrs. U.S.A. who were taking what seemed like more than a passing interest in our conversation. Probably because I was crying like a goddam fool.

There have been many times when I *felt* like crying in Horn & Hardart's, for one reason or another; but because of the social stigma and all, I had never given way to the impulse. Besides, I don't cry very much anymore — no more than I absolutely have to, and certainly no more than the next guy, but today was an exception. Today Judy had told me she wasn't going to make it with me any longer. She had said — Charlie, and I said what, and she said — I can't make it with you any more and I *flipped*. Really. I died right there. I felt like I would never get up off that lousy chair again and I began crying right in my baked beans, in front of all the Smiths and Joneses and Browns. I kept saying Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, and How can you do *that*? But all she said was — Charlie, eat your beans.

I said: *Fuck* these beans. I'll give them to the gentleman from Indiana — and I slid them across the table toward some fat man when this other guy in a blue suit who certainly looked like he had enough of what it takes to get along asked us to please leave or he would call the police. He didn't have to tell *us* twice.

Somehow, after that, we were in St. Patrick's Cathedral. Probably because we were beat for somewhere to go; I can't think of any other reason for being there. Because when it came down, as it always did, to making a choice between dope and God, it was always dope. Because money was very hard to get — but God was impossible; so somehow we always managed to get some money — somewhere; by committing some sort of flagrant deviation from everything good and decent.

I don't remember what we did, or just how much of a reprieve we were granted from reality, but it wasn't long before she was walking me to the bus station. We came down that nightmare of a Broadway and it was wet gray and dirty; five o'clock and *cold*. All goddam people and Hector's Cafeteria's Hotel Astors and Drug Stores — with no drugs for the likes of *us*, Judy said and she laughed. And when we got down to the Paramount Theatre she felt sick so

we stopped in front of the building. Look Baby, I said, do you see this place? Well, back in '37 some skinny kid from Chicago, with a borrowed tux and a heart as big as all New York, stood up on the stage, pointed his clarinet toward heaven and blew the top right off the joint. And suddenly a miracle was born — and they called it Swing — she started to cry and I looked down at her beautiful white face that was always as pale as death, and her insane black hair and her lips that had split when she had come up from Miami and had somehow never healed and I walked away from her.

After all those years.

Sailboat in the Moonlight

For Toni Levexier

I USED TO COME IN HERE THEN, once in awhile. That was a long time ago, though — right after the Great War. I still hadn't fully realized that there was no reason to go in anywhere. But I was beginning to suspect it.

Look — there was a record that was popular then — it was knocking everybody out, you remember it. I'm sure — about the mission bells ringing and she gives you the very same razz-ma-tazz: Nancy, with the (I can't repeat it).

Well, it was right in here (we're in the Club Harlem), & it was on the juke-box, just one of *many*, actually, since 1946 — but for some reason I remember that one in particular. It and Carmen MacRae, who was playing piano (in F) and singing all by herself in the front bar, (God*damn*, *why* do I make so many typing errors. I'll tell you what I think it is. I think it's that so-and-so Doctor that I go to. These lousy capsules that he gives me make me, I don't know — goofy, or something. One of these days I'm going to just stop taking everything — pills, oxygen, water, food — everything. That's the *only* way to get really straightened out, I'm convinced of it.)

Anyway, I was sitting here, by myself, more-or-less, in this empty winter-time Joint, listening to her and hearing that record and just speculating, in general . . . weighing the possibility of Jesus coming back, etc., and wishing awfully much that *I* could play something but I couldn't (yet).

I suppose, in my childish mind, I figured that if I could just play

music like Lester Young, and have somebody beautiful to do awful things to all the time, and *then* if I went to Heaven when I died — everything would be alright.

But, for some reason, *none* of that was happening. And like I say, I was getting a little worried that it would maybe *not* happen. So — that's all — that was me in '46, that was it, in front of "10,000 violins playing: . . . well, she gives you that very same thrill."

I used to think, There's got to be *some*thing, besides *this*. I used to actually pray, sometimes — "please God — make there be something."

But, as you probably suspected, I didn't really ever find anything. Even though I did get so I could play. And I did get to do some awful things to some pretty beautiful women. But (except for you-know-who, who was *awfully* beautiful and who I did some *awful* things to and paid, consequently an *awfully* heavy fine for) I never could go for very much of the rest of it.

So — that's how dope-fiends are born. That's *the* reason. It's as simple as setting your bed on fire or burning a hole in your pants. I know, I'm sick, Dodger Fan-Civic Leader-P.T.A. vote-casting Bastard. . . . (Oh, I forgot . . . Jesus did come back one night. He came into the 500 Club when I was playing there, but I didn't get a chance to talk to him. He went straight to the back with Skinny and Jack Lescoulie. No, I don't really know what they do back there . . . play cards I guess.) No, I never did hear mission bells ringing — are there any OTHER questions?

Kansas City Syndrome

I DON'T LOOK "right" now. My face is thin and drawn and my eyes have that strange look. I hold my head funny — down somehow, and over to one side. I don't know what it is that I do exactly but people always ask: What's the matter with your neck, Charlie? One time a couple of years ago Bernie The Singing Newsboy picked me up at North Carolina and Pacific Avenues and said to me:

"What the hell is the matter with your neck . . . is it *busted* or something?"

"Who the fuck knows," I told him.

And who the fuck does.

I've been walking a lot and the other night I stole a book. People are looking at me strangely again. Shop-keepers get uneasy when I

come into their stores and they follow me around. Pretty soon the dogs will be barking at me again and the neighborhood kids will throw stones and bits of rubble.

Sometimes I see a friend but I have nothing to say to anyone now. Lou Powell said: "Oh, I saw *Rose* last night, and do you know (Jesus *CHRIST!*) I never recognized her with her hair cut short like that, she looks . . . " (I kept saying mother-fucker, mother-*fucker*, *Motherfucker*, over and over again. I started to cry in back of my dark glasses. I went into the bathroom so nobody would see me and I didn't really want to come out again — ever. (But I did, of course.)

Of course. Of course you did, Raskolnikov. You can't stay in the bathroom forever, you found that out years ago.

"Just what exactly *is* the matter with you, Raskolnikov, or Charlie, it's Charlie, right?"

"Ask the Goddamn question."

"Just exactly what *is wrong* with you Charlie? Is it your mind or your body? Isn't there *any*thing that will help? What do you *want*? There must be *something* that you want."

I didn't say anything for a few moments, I just stood there with my back to all of them, facing the fire. And finally I picked up one of my boots and threw it to Walter, like I used to do when we were kids, and I said:

"Yes . . . I want to kiss Rose Tracy's ass. For nine hours."

"That's *all* you want?" everyone's eyes turned towards me.

"Is that *all*?" (somebody giggled in the second row).

"*THAT IS ALL*," I told them, I threw my other boot and all my clothes into the fireplace and then I fainted.

* * *

Little Jay still comes to see me. There's no getting away from Little Jay I guess, ever. He is beautiful and we will always love each other I suppose but he is a real pain-in-the-ass along with it. He tells me about his girl friend and how he balls her but he never tells me why and I never bother to ask him anymore. I mean, what the hell do I care about the obligations of Stardom and how much of a drag it is to have to be nice to all of the people all of the time.

"It's not worth it," he says. "What shall I do?"

Go Fuck yourself, little Jay.

He doesn't know either. None of them do. They don't know how you look with nothing on and how you taste and why I feel the way

I do. They don't understand *any*thing I ever say really, and I don't understand them either. I don't even know what *any* of that is all about — none of it. The other night I told him when we were going uptown:

"The fucking dues are too *high*, Jay. . . . They're charging me sixty million dollars a second and they never even tell me where they hold the meetings. I don't even know the name of the club. Do *you* know, Jay?"

He laughed, "Pay the rent," he said.

"I *can't* pay the rent," I told him, "I *can't*." And I really can't Rosie. I don't know what to *do . . . look at me*, Baby.

I'm in Love with the Girl on the 3c Stamp *or* It's Her Irish Ass I'm After

For George S.

ONCE UPON A TIME, while the dew was still on the raindrops, I got hung-up in Pleasantville. Do you know where that is . . . Pleasantville? Well, you don't *have* to know or to have been there, because it's exactly like every small town everywhere. And its Main Street on this particular Bright & Shining, Apple Pie, Shave & a Haircut, Hi There Neighbor!, morning was just like Fayetteville, North Carolina's and North Platte, Nebraska's . . . and if you don't like it — get arrested & see — *no* — over *there*, Stranger — that's Main Street Waking Up! She's shaking out her skirts, rubbing sleep from her eyes, and lazily watching the Hungry Browns let down their awning, while big, lovable, friendly, O'Grady — the Cop on The Beat — helps some tyke across her, grasping a small grimy paw in his big, lovable, friendly Irish mitt — and Jesus *Christ* (*Where are You?*) & there was *I*, on one of Her corners, slightly out of context and *more* than slightly uncomfortable, being fresh from Limehouse and rather unpressed in my 500 Club Tuxedo denying *every*thing thrice before the cock crew. It was Good-time Charlie with his Rotten Past working hard to fuck-up The Future. The Mysterious Charlie Leeds, with his Negative Attack and Positive Retreat . . . Big Chief Rain-in-the-Hat standing on the corner munching on a

bag of 1000 - 3 grain Tuinals and watching Life get set for another Top O' the Morning to Ye' day.

"Somebody should have put that bitch on a 3 cent stamp and *mailed* her somewhere . . . " I muttered.

"What? What was that you said?" queried O'Grady as he went by with another grimy tyke. He called me a faggot.

"Save your nuts, you might marry a squirrel," I spat back at him, as I reached in my bag for another Missouri Avenue Turn-Around.

He swung at me with the tyke and missed (of course).

"What's your fuckin' name and address?" he demanded . . . "and what are ye' *doing* here? Exposing yourself, I dare say!"

I told him I had to meet with a cat named Christ and that it didn't look as if he were going to show . . . but that was all a lie. Actually I don't know *what* I was doing there . . . Because that was somebody *else's* tyke, not mine and besides, I felt like I was going to cry. And I couldn't seem to get out. The busses would come and go and somehow I would miss them all. After awhile I gave it all up and just sat there.

TWO EXCERPTS from *To Hell With THIS Cock-Eyed World*

The Man Who Loved Everything

THIS WHOLE CITY was owned by one man. A King he was. A self-made King it's true, but a king never-the-less: John the Worst of The House of Calabrese.

In the beginning it had been just Rotten John Calabrese, a man-with-a-dream. A dream that could only happen here. A dream to be king. And he rose, with the help of no man, from utility baby in a whorehouse, to Demi-God, in the short space of twenty-two years. And, in a land that had never before (or since) known a king, this was no small feat. How this came about is a mystery up to this very day. According to John himself when asked about it years later: "I just said — I'm King." And — he was. Just before his death in fact, he was about to accept full Deification Rites when he would have been crowned: "His Holiness John The Down, Son of God and One True Messiah of South Jersey and All the World."

John was a product of the town and the time and to understand

one it's necessary to understand the other. He was an *extreme* example, however. There has never, before or since, been another like him. *Any*where. I don't *care* where.

King John was a man who lived solely for the gratification of his senses. And he was first in a field that includes every man who stands and walks erect — from the goddamed Java Man, on down. He was a rapscallion who made the Marquis de Sade and King Farouk look like Tennessee Ernie Ford and Ozzie Nelson, respectively.

Quatro-sexual as a child (men, women, other children and animals), in later years, he became quinto- and then sexto-sexual. After that, why Jesus Christ! Almost *nothing* was exempt from his lickerish eye. Nothing that swam beneath the seas, clung to rocks, flew through the air, or crawled upon the land. He even became, in his own words: a matter-fucker, a lover of things inanimate.

A veritable slave to that cruel, unrelenting, and capricious mistress: carbon monoxide (CO_2), "... he would break away at any time from his lords & ladies and dash madly down the street to the nearest car, stop it, crawl underneath with hose in hand, and shout to the driver: 'I command you! start your engine but don't go *nowheres* or by my beard I'll have your head!'[1] And he would, too. Make no mistake about that. Either that or you'd make National Beast Week, and be cast live in the ever popular Elephant Wars or in the show-stopping Brown Dog Fights. In any event, you were in a *world* of trouble if the King ever jumped under *your* car."

It got so that nobody would even drive within fifty miles of the Palace, and John would have to travel to New York or Philadelphia seven or eight times a day just to get fixed.[2]

W. C. Fields, a good friend and authority on John, tells of the King's insane passion for one of those green, wooden benches that line the Boardwalk. He fell "ass over tin-cups" in love with that "idiot bench," Bill wrote to me. "The Son-of-a-bitch actually married it. Can you imagine that? Making a bench a queen? God-*damn!* I'm not surprised he had eyes for it, naturally. Or even his

[1] "Greats Now Gone" Goldberg.

[2] It was, you see, necessary that the vehicle belong to a stranger or else there would have been no problem. But, as Stan Levey said: "It's got to be some cat you don't know otherwise you don't get off. Don't ask me *why,* Jack! How the hell do I know why. That's just the way it is, that's all." Stanley, the Prime Minister and Heir Apparent, it must be admitted, was as strung out as the King himself, with a CO_2 and hydro-cyanide Jones as long as the Boardwalk. In fact anyone who indulged in this degenerate practice was known as a "Stanley Steamer." (Dog-Mifflin Pub. Inc., all rights reserved.)

sleeping with it. Not after the affaire de Lighthouse and the way he carried on with those *trolley tracks right out in the middle of the street.

"Well, after him and the Bench broke up the King went to the races to forget, as it were. It was the Kentucky Ave. Derby, I think. I should *know* actually because I was with Stanley and him. Anyway, he fell completely out over the kid that won — and the horse, too, naturally. So — afterwards he summons them to the Royal box and says: "I dig you and your horse the most and I want to marry your asses: Your ass and the horse's ass." Well you know, the jockey *flips* because he don't know this cat and he wheels the horse around and tries to make it but he never does of course and the first thing he knows they're both in the Bridal Pit. I felt sorry for them too because I know that bastard Calabrese and I knew they was in for something. And sure enough all that night we would hear screams and loud neighs and galloping hoofbeats and often repeated *Hey Rubes* emanating from the palace grounds. He was misfortune's Jockey that night I tell you!

"He ate the horse, we found out later, but I didn't *want* to know what he did to the rider. Probably got him in the Whistle room or on the Diving Board, or worse, though that's hard to conceive. The next morning though, ca-*rash*, over the goddamn wall they came — both of 'em — and down the 'Walk at full gallop, with John and the whole entourage right behind them — that little son-of-a-bitch 'n dwarf, that crazy soothsayer, and even *Stanley*, for Christ's sake! Can you *imagine* that cat? I asked him about it later and he said, 'Well you know Baby, I had to make it because I was with The Man when the shit went down, and you know I got to make it *look* good anyway!'

"Oh, the horse and the kid jumped off the end of the Goddamn Iron Pier. Without even batting an eye. That's how all that Diving Horse shit got started too you know. As if things weren't bad enough!"

John had been born here, in his own words: "... in back of the service bar in the 500 Club. And the whole time the goddamn Shriners kept riding all round on those fuckin' motorcycles throw-

* The poem "My Tracks" (... my tracks, my tracks, who laid you on the goddamn cold-ass ground where Massa sleepts, etc.") along with his other poems of unrequited love were published and read extensively and were at one time required reading in public schools throughout the land. Who doesn't remember, for instance, "O' strong, staid, up-right joint...", his ode to his Lighthouse, and "That Bastard Lighthouse hates my guts."

ing cherry-bombs and paperbags full of water. I *hate* a goddamn Shriner ever since. And a Moose too, as far as that goes.

"I grew up right in the club, getting by on what I could swing with from the free-lunch counter, sleeping wherever I could find a spot; sometimes in the ladies' room, sometimes in the men's. Sometimes I even had to sleep out back with the goddamn horses and the sheep and all. I swear to Christ I didn't know *what* the hell I was until about fifteen. That's no kidding. Still don't, sometimes.

"I used to sweep the chimleys in the daytime and at night I turned tricks like everybody else. Man, listen — we *turned* some tricks in those days. *Every*one did, bartenders, musicians, waiters, old men and women, even the dogs and cats. Why . . . Why when they hollered *'Trick'*, you *turned* it, Baby, with what*ever* was out in the alley — Animal, Vegetable or Mineral!"

Hello Sucker

And celebrities? You could see them all —right here, three-deep at the bar. This was Texas Guinan's place then and *any* night of the week you could see John Barrymore, Frances Farmer, Count Basie, John Wilkes Booth, William Tecumsah Sherman, Lila Leeds, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, and, oh God — *any*body who meant *any*thing.

But it was Fatty's age and Fatty's time, he was king and he *knew* it and the crowd loved him for it. Why — why when he walked into the joint *every*thing would stop. You couldn't hear a sound. And then the band would strike up with *his* song: "O' Fatty, Dirty Fatty, the Nastiest Man In Town!" (With my flies wide open I'm dreaming) copyright Smith, Kline & French, all rights reserved.

Why one night — and I'll never forget it — I saw Fatty drink blood out of Abraham Lincoln's shoe *then* sit down and eat up thirteen Cherokee Indian girls, three Puerto Rican bus-boys and one bond slave and holler for *more*! and the whole time old Texas stood on top of the piano and hollered — Hello *Sucker!* at the top of her lungs!

That was her thing you know, yelling that. She'd been doing it ever since anybody could remember. Ever since she was a little girl. But lately — the last few years — that's *all* she did. Honest to God! From morning to night. You could walk past there *any*time and

you could hear her — even in the winter when it was boarded up and all. And she always had to climb up on something high before she started — like the piano or a balcony. And more than once I've seen her swing from the goddamn chandelier for hours — steady hollerin' Hello Sucker — Hello Sucker, Jesus *Christ*!

I used to try and figure out why she did it — hollered that, I mean. It used to bother me a lot, too. I was always trying to find somebody who knew her when she was a kid, you know, before she started it. But I never could. And then I got bugged worse than ever, and do you know why? Well, it was because nobody else gave one good whats-its-name whether she did or didn't yell that or anything else. Like I asked Wally Reed, who had been hanging in there for years — I said Wally, do you have *any* idea why Texas keeps yelling Hello Sucker over and over? He said, and dig this, "What does she yell? Hello who?" I couldn't believe that. And he wasn't the only one. Half of those people in there didn't even know she was doing it. And it was *loud* — I mean she didn't just raise her voice, she *screamed* it. Really.

Why do you know that one Sunday — Palm Sunday, or Easter, I can't remember which, just before church when everybody was going in — and you know *every* goddamn body used to go to church on those two days — she was up in the goddamn *steeple* screaming that thing. And *nobody* except me and George Raft even looked up! Now do you believe that?

I'm telling you, I was upset over this. I really was. I mean if George hadn't of looked up I don't know *what* I would have done. I grabbed him after the service though, and I said, "George, for Christ's sake man, make sense! Why didn't anybody but you and me look up when Texas started yelling *Hello Sucker* from the church steeple this morning?" He said — "Kid, these chumps around here aren't aware of *any*thing unless they can spend it, eat it, or lay it. So don't worry about it. It ain't you, it's them." He said it didn't particularly bother him though — about as much as a barking dog.

The only cat I ever found that felt the same as I did about her was Stanley Ketchel, the prize fighter. And he felt maybe even worse. The first time he ever came in he looked up at the chandelier and said — "What the hell is *that*? He said, "Why in the name of God does she holler *that*? I mean if it was — how you going to keep them down on the farm, or feather your nest or who's sorry now — or *any*thing but Hello Sucker! She's putting me on, that's what she's doing!" And he was all ready to kick her ass but I finally

convinced him that she always did it. But then he thought *I* was putting him on because that sounded pretty far out too.

Years later he told me that it was indigenous to this town. "That maybe, don't make sense to you, Charlie, and it wouldn't to me either I guess if I came from here, but I really believe that. This is a *very* weird place, you know." "I know," I told him. "No, you don't, that's what I mean. You *think* you know but you don't actually see *how* weird. I've been around a little — and I'll tell you this, any other place in the world — *any* place, and I don't care whether it's New Guinea or Greenland or Siam or where, if that old bitch did that she'd get a reaction — of *some* kind. I'm not saying they would all put her down or have her committed or even care what she was saying — In some places they might even worship her — but they just wouldn't *ignore* her.

"George just about told the story, you know. And don't even *think* about asking me why this is so — here, more than anyplace else, but it is, and so much for that." And he ran off down the boardwalk and I never saw him again.

THE SPILLED CHILD

SUSAN MUSGRAVE

Now, too,
you are wanting
the spilled child out of me,
the last part
unbroken down
— the abandoned bird
wingless and screaming
in a corner —

Now you too.
Down among the many dawns
bleached in iron rivers
whoring on chains
of muddy fish —
you too
in the blackness that bites off
all the white flowers,
the darkness that meets you
everywhere
with sad news from home —
you too
want the spilled child
to die in secret
or not at all,
to sew her body
to the ground with worms

or preen all the birds' songs
of waiting
— the birds that drag the night
like a black sheet
in their beaks —

while our hearts and kidneys
crash like cymbals
— some of them were
torn into pieces
because of their refusal to sing —

So I will go
and in the black spring
I will pick dead flowers.
At night
I will overturn stones.
Curious and broken
the spilled child
will burn
reluctantly and for a long time.

SUSAN MUSGRAVE, who was born in 1951 in Santa Cruz, is now attending the Institute of Adult Studies, Victoria, B.C. She has published in *Malahat*, *Best of Poetry*, *Poetry*, *Poetry Review*, *West Coast Review* and more. The poem here was broadcast recently on CBC's *Anthology* programme.

A SELECTION OF POLISH POETRY

A Note on Seven Polish Poets

BOGDAN CZAYKOWSKI

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to introduce seven poets on a page of print. They belong to different generations, they matured in different parts of the world, their *one* common feature is that they write in Polish. Of the seven, only one confines himself to poetry alone; others are critics, essayists, playwrights, short-story writers and translators; Czeslaw Milosz has written three novels.

Aleksander Wat came from a Jewish family and from a generation that could choose between a number of "isms". He was a "surrealist" in 1919, editor of a left-wing periodical ten years later, and a deportee in the Soviet Union during the war; his poetry was frowned upon in Stalinist Poland. In 1957 he was awarded a literary prize not by the State, but by the readers of a revisionist literary weekly; however, soon afterwards he decided to leave Poland. He died in France in 1967. It is perhaps not surprising that his poetry should possess the uncanny quality of having been written by someone who could have conversed with the prophets, who had seen through Hegelian dialectics, had been sharply reminded of having fed on turtles in Alma-Ata by a learned turtle at Oxford, and who is equally at ease in discursive and in surrealist idiom.

Czeslaw Milosz grew up in the early 1930's in the Polish-Lithuanian city of Wilno. His poems express, in a variety of forms, a deeply personal relationship to the world that could perhaps be described as a non-ascetic, expansive mysticism, unreconciled to transcience and the separation of the self from the world's body. History has accentuated the sharpness of these existential dilemmas. Perhaps his most self-revealing poem is "Bobo's Metamorphosis," where he says (of another poet):

I liked him as he did not look for an ideal object.
When he heard: "only the object which does not exist
Is perfect and pure", he blushed and turned away...

Year after year he circled a thick tree
Shading his eyes with his hand and muttering admiringly.

How much he envied those who draw a tree with a line!
But metaphor seemed to him something indecent.

He would leave symbols to the proud, busy with their causes.
By looking he wanted to draw the name from the very thing.

. . . . . .

And still there stood the tree unattainable.
O veritable, o true to the very core. It was.

Both Milosz and Wat are major poets; both have managed to be profoundly relevant to their time, without becoming its captives.

The most untypical of the other five poets, all of whom were born between 1922 and 1934, is Jerzy Harasymowicz, least intellectual, most ready to follow where surrealist fancy will lead him. All five, although three of them matured in Poland, and the other two in England, share certain stylistic features, and are fond of the grotesque mode. But each one has his own unmistakable individuality. Zbigniew Herbert is perhaps the best known and most highly regarded in the West; his balanced poetry translates very well. Miron Bialoszewski's most original contribution to postwar Polish poetry has been his preoccupation with objects, which he treats as presences deserving rapturous celebration. This stance is, of course, consistently, ironic but it allows him to write with impunity poems of joy and songs of discovery. His more recent poetry is unfortunately almost untranslatable, owing to his experimentation with language. Jan Darowski, too, experiments with language, but he is more discursive and conceptual, and less idiosyncratic. Adam Czerniawski pursues poetry by invading prose. He is interested in the essential poetic statement, but he often is, and likes to be, elusive.

All seven are fine poets, which is the least one can say in so many words.

Bogdan Czaykowski, b. 1932, is a poet, critic, author of several volumes of poetry and numerous articles, and member of the *Kontynenty* group of poets. He has lived in Vancouver since 1962 and is Associate Professor in the Slavonic Department at the University of British Columbia. At present he is on a leave of absence in Europe, writing a book on modern Polish poetry.

ON THE SPIRIT OF LAW

CZESLAW MILOSZ

Translated from the Polish by Z. Folejewski

From the crying of children on the floors of timeless
railroad stations,
From the sadness of the driver of prison trains,
From the red stigma of two wars on my forehead,
I woke up under the bronze of winged statues,
Under the griffins of a masonic temple
With the ashes of the cigar dying off.

It was the summer of plane trees, avian pearls poured from
early dawn,
Summer of coupled hands, blackness, violet,
Summer of blue bees, whistles, flames,
Tiny propellers of humming birds.

With my only anchor of pine on the sandy plain
With the silenced memory of my dead friends,
With the silenced memory of cities and rivers
I would readily rip the heart of earth with a knife,
And put there the glowing diamond of screams and laments,
I would smear the bottom of the roots with my blood,
So that names appear on the leaves
I would cover the malachite of monuments with the skin of night.
And etch with phosphor mene tekel fares
Glowing with a streak of burned out eyelids.

I could go to the shore where lovers
Watch what is left of their games floating to the sea
Among parked cars — a rainbow of soap bubbles
I could walk and listen how they labour
The eternal mass of dampened tones
of men's eager, nimble muscles
Over the hot butterfly of carmine.

Orchards jumping downward, to the bottom of ravines
National dances of silver-grey squirrels
White laboratories of bewinged babies
Always growing in a new epoch
Light, juice, glow of days
All this
Seemed to me the beginning of the sun of flaxen plains,
Where at the railroad stations at wobbly tables
Over an empty glass, with their face in the hands
Sit sad drivers of prison trains.

CZESLAW MILOSZ, b. 1911, is one of the most distinguished of Poland's living poets. Novelist, essayist, author of *The Captive Mind* (1953), editor of *Postwar Polish Poetry* (New York, 1965), he has lived in the West since 1951, and is Professor of Polish Literature at Berkeley, California.

ZBIGNIEW FOLEJEWSKI, b. 1910, is a critic, scholar, and author of many books and articles in the field of Slavonic and Comparative Literature and Linguistics, and editor of several learned journals. He is now Professor of Slavonic and Comparative Literature at the University of British Columbia.

From MEDITERRANEAN VERSES

ALEKSANDER WAT

Translated from the Polish by Czeslaw Milosz jointly with his students David Brodsky and Stephen Brod

I. Songs of a wanderer

"Ich stech das Licht. Ich stech das Licht
Ich stech das Herz das ich liebe."
Schönwerth, *Aus der Oberplatz: Sitten and Sagen.*

I

For whom is the garden fated?
Who is happy there?
Whose eyes will be my haven?
Someone steals toward me.
What falls in the abyss?
A scream resounds.
A hand gropes upward.
Give me your hand, my son.
Wife, look into my eyes.

II

Disgusted by everything alive I withdrew into the stone world: here
I thought, liberated, I would observe from above, but without pride, those things entangled
in chaos. With the eyes of a stone, myself a stone among stones, and like them sensitive,
pulsating to the turning of the sun. Retreating into the depth of myself-stone,
motionless, silent; freezing up; present through a waning of presence — in the cold
attractions of the moon. Like sand diminishing in an hour-glass, evenly,
ceaselessly, uniformly, grain by grain. Thus I shall be submitted

only to the rhythms of day and night. But —
no dance in them, no whirling, no frenzy: only monastic rule,
and silence.
They do not become, they are. Nothing else. Nothing else, I
thought, loathing
all which becomes.
I, a stone among stones. O, never had I thought
of stone in the words of death. I had always felt in it a heart,
a pulsation
of its life, and not just in its internal structures which amaze
onlookers, photographers, mineralogists . . . Simply: the heart of
a stone. Simply:
the dreams of a stone. To be at the heart of a stone — how much
I desired this!
At the heart of a stone, without a flaw which through our
flawed veins
slushes deep into our hearts and grows, making them totally
putrid matter,
subjectd to all decay.
The dreams of a stone! how I wanted to see
the dreams
of a stone, through its own stony eyes! Perhaps a human child,
an infant,
when it is no longer a palpitating sponge of flesh, but not yet —
a man,
perhaps, in his eye, he retains a dream of a stone, not even a
dream —
a reflection, an echo of a dream, distant and fading away. O,
how I wanted to be in the thought of a stone, to be what its
thought thinks. Or —
cursed in the beginning, exiled from stone, how I wanted to touch
the thought of a stone, just as I touch rose petals, careful not
to let it feel
my coarse, bulbous fingers, the fingers of a usurper:
it might die of disgust.
The thought of a stone, the thought of
a rose, what if they were akin?
In its very short season, when the rose is still folded-up wisdom,
and yet open to love; Eros, agapè — as I call this in the obscure
speech
of men, in speech without eyes, no — with eyes repeatedly
gouged out;

in snail words sent in whispers toward our cannibal lips
by our brain, which is nourished with blood, subjected to rottenness,
decay, putridity,
contaminating everything in its grasp with putridity, decay.
What's erosion,
I thought,
to a stone? What's the crumbling of its inner structures? The
heart of a stone
is not in structures, in time-space relations; it is generous,
rebuilding structures, while time, impotent, disintegrates them. The
heart of a stone
does not submit to annihilation, the death of everything which
becomes. Armored,
it is a sovereign monad.
I didn't envy the stone the riches of its
inner world.
I did not look for a shell to hide in, to gorge my mollusk senses on
the rich food of colors.
What are riches to the stone? Yes, in riches we surpassed
stones during our million-years' existence on earth. But what are
riches to them?
In their inner world nothing but poverty — as we call it, using the
gouged-out eyes
of our poor speech. But everything there is meaningful and pure,
every thing there is everything.
Only there. If God exists, he is there. At the heart of stones. Also in
their dreams.
Even the tree, the most perfect creation
of the demiurge.
just before he fell asleep, when he was dozing on the edge above
which
nods the head of a schoolboy, tired from poring over a book on
the table,
on that edge from which something irresistibly pulls us down, into
the dark, down and into the dark
from where we rose and rise obstinately — even the tree, I repeat,
when, like a strong man, it wedges into the stone and splits it apart
with its savage, dirt-covered, worm-coated root; when it pulls out
of mother earth
and without shame brings to light its magic dreams: leaves, birds,
grains,

even the tree, always prepared for flight, vibration, frenzy — even
the tree —
I repeat, the most beautiful creation of the demiurge while on the
edge of sleep —
what can it do to the stone?
Perhaps, in the instant of his vertigo,
the wildest creature, in whom was set the terrifying spark of genius,
so desiring to die out! so unhappy is it in that dwelling-place —
perhaps man in vertigo
has a flash of intuition, when he approaches stones with pain, yet
without noise, without pride?
a sculptor whose chisel, already lifted, is held back by the voice
of a stone:
stop, here is your threshold, one scratch more and you will be
rejected inexorably,
without return.
So I thought about stone. And since I loved
everything,
that is not even the negation of stone — but worse: otherness, all,
that is subjected to flaws, transcience, death and — worse:
resurrection
from death; and since I was sensuous to the marrow of my marrow,
since I loved my senses, my skin, all my skin, every skin even unto
fiery hatred — the heart of a stone was closed to me,
sealed fast.
But now is the time of old age. *Aetas serenitatis*. Thus,
disgusted
with the world of the living, its beauty turned toward death,
decaying, rising
from the dead as vermin, as acrid weeds, as manure used by
peasant hands, thus
I fled into the stone world, in order — a stone among stones, done
with pride,
although from above — to slowly close my eyes, not yet stony but
no longer human,
to your sufferings, to your tenderness, to your labors and those
agonies
of yours, to all that is subjected to incessant putrefaction,
that is our torture, our shame, our shameful pity,
our beauty like radiant eyes in the face of a hydrocephalic
hunchback.

III

So now, having fled into the stone world, I was slowly falling
asleep, a stone under
my head, feeling how the warmth of its heart penetrates my head,
and makes it similar, its twin; when on the edge of sleep, from
where,
heavy with the darkness we lean into greater darkness — now,
when I dreamt there: I, too,
am a stone among stones, and, like them, I am exalted yet without
pride, inert
and yet tense with strength, in a tense fullness which hangs in the
clenched stone fist
of the moon over a sterile landscape —
— I was awakened by the din of those
whom I survived.
Remember! Remember!
Not in a double row did they surround me; not
in the carriage
of a survivor must I pass them; no holiday dresses do they wear;
no wreaths on their heads. Naked, though tightly swathed
in the lava
of clay. Like that one in Pompeii, who just managed to lower
his brow
lifted in amazement and to fix his tired death-stare on the earth
which betrayed him.
Remember! remember! — they shout: and
they want to be forgotten.
Remember! — they shout: and they want eternal oblivion.
Our hell —
is in the memory of those who will survive us.
Driven out by the din
and the sham
of those whom I survived, I walked down through rubble. And
having lost
everything I knew in that difficult descent, I am again that
which I had been.

IV

It is not erosion which crumbles stone here.
But the jaws of an old
woman,
whom I pass on the road. A patient old woman, her eyes as if
in cinders
under a dark-brown straw hat — what can atrophied jaws
crumble? Blind, this I see, but with her gnarled hand and her
olive walking stick
she gropes for her son's return from work. All in expectation.
So dwarfed
you would swear: she comes from a workshop of olivewood holy
figures. And time
tarnished her with its patina. She stands thus, on the domestic
threshold, bent
in two. The cold Mother Earth.
It is not erosion which crumbles
stone here. For the rot
is in its nature. To rot, to scale off, to disintegrate: this is posited
in the law
of minerals. In the law of mollusks. In the law of man. Obstinate
olive trees
dug into the earth walls of these cliffs; and deep below —
a vast trough.
It keeps still at bay upsurged waves of mountains, once aroused
against it
by a Vengeful Hand, when they were liquid, fiery, crested. And thus
they petrified, barely humped, all in the same
crouch: henchmen waiting for the Master's sign.
The Vengeful Hand set them here as an eternal threat
above the mole and the bush, above the fretful ant, above the
young human
species, which secretes the glue of labor . . .
True, no man in sight:
yet,
smoke from the farms. Yet, hamlets. Yet, highways, roads, paths,
in an incomprehensible
tangle. And — farther on — streams snake, coil in silver, and far,
far away
the navigable sea, and from under its shiny skin, in this hour of
luminescence

the skeletons of sunken ships project their afterglow. O yes,
water, also water, even water, so immaculate — is contaminated,
condemned;
for myriads of ages plasma crawls out of its floods, in a relentless
flow,
plasma a billion times mutilated. Trampled down. Smashed.
Desecrated.
So it is not erosion. Not erosion.
The old woman on the domestic threshold,
bent in two, all in expectation, of her son's return from work (he
has a job in Grasse,
at Graset's perfume factory).

Smoke dear to one's nostrils
sun-drenched window panes
and you, my dear road — the vehicle
for a return home.
In lieblicher Bläue
die Fenster wie die Thore
der Schönheit . . . Dichterisch
wohnet der Mensch auf dieser

Erde . . . Cold Mother Earth. She waits
for her son's return. Who
waits for me? . . . No people
except her are in sight.

— Salut à vous! — she calls loudly
and confidently. In this excellent
echo chamber of the air.

Not erosion. Not hamlets, farms, fire trails, interlacing roads. But —
eczema. But — eczema of the earth, mycosis of the earth.
Decrepitude of the earth. Processes of the earth's
disintegration. Black blight on a stone carcass. The scaling and
psoriasis
of her child. Also water, even water — certainly — most of all!
The digit
on a banknote delights the naive eye. But the experienced one sees
the water mark: the mark
of eczema, the mark of decrepit nature, alive and not alive.
The old woman in a dark hat
stands on the threshold bent in two
and in a pleasant voice sings:

And I bore you, son, for eternal dying
And I raised you, son, for painful rest.

And with her olive stick weaves a concise design in the air.

A stray sheep, staring at me: my worthy sheep, you will rot.
Manure, mycosis, rot, the agony of things living and not living.

V

"Off with his head."
The queen from *Alice in Wonderland*

A pretty innkeeper of La Chèvre d'Or
sits on the porch, her fingers interlaced.
Both of us with a glass of light
wine.
This trapezoidal
square. And a sycamore
in a casement. A fountain circa 1900,
ascending roads, descending roads
crisscrossed.
Along one soldiers descend
along another soldiers ascend.
60 km., 20 kg. load,
Jean, Pierre, Jacques — and again
Pierre, Jean, Jacques. They march in single-file,
one after another. Where are they being herded?
A rosy inn, yellow tables, sapphire pasture
and blue above our heads. A whiskered old lady
in a gray hat, her head — a toy block set right
on her belly (check to see what Roman artists called this
in the age of decline). She crossed obliquely and vanished. Next
a cat, young, fat.
Off with her head — shouts the queen.
The poor soldiers droop under their gear,
wipe off sweat, chance upon the fountain circa 1900,
move out in single file, one of them stumbled,
sighed, farted, fell, his buddies' roar
a bellowing dissonance in a serene concert
of pastoral silence. Off with their heads,
shouts the innkeeper. You are pretty, innkeeper of Cabris,
when you play with your pretty dog Diana,
when you plunge your narrow fingers into her raggy hair,

when you tickle her under her floppy ear,
when your gaze drifts to the pasture
from where dignified, colorful village magi
descended three weeks ago on Epiphany.

Now from there a hunter without a leg —
he lost it in the war — a local Don Juan, is coming
for his daily pastis. In a smooth Aronde
Mister Fevrard drives up with his Parisian girlfriend.
A setter runs across the square in a chic trot. It scared away
a permanent resident, the cat. The owner of the gift shop
returns from her siesta, an ingratiating smile on her flat face.
A stout ninety-year-old villager dozes over a liter of red wine.
He breaks wind, the simple soul. Mister Fevrard moves ten yards
farther on.
And all this in the sun, *un après-midi d'hiver.*
38° C. In February, unthinkable
in my country! Where people are born, love, die
in ferocious February. February, wear thick boots and be wary.
My country
is a peasant country. In this peasant country
the beautiful innkeeper, a pearl in her ear,
reads Agatha Christie in the doorway. Bored by Diane,
by Agatha, too. In a red Peugeot
a laborer drives up with his heavy-boned family. And again
soldiers pass, one after another, then in pairs,
then in a crowd. How they reek. Of the long road,
and of health. How they will stink
in sickness, in agony. Diane
ran after the last one. Off,
off with his head, shouts the queen Diana Hecate
Luna. In the paled firmament. A shepherd
with his sheep passes by. A cat — a brooding philosopher —
approaches, also the village drunkard, Monsieur Maxime,
a gentle drunkard, kind to people, eager for odd jobs,
slovenly, high-school graduate, in an embroidered skull-cap —
(what fate brought it here from the valleys of Fergana?
where in the whiteness of snows are violet-colored mountains and
the violet
of peaches by the violet of rocks, and violet tenderly washed in
the greens
of a stream, while a rider-philosopher,

a knight in tatters, girt with the scarlet
of Kashmir, passes by in a wild gallop, la ilah ill Allah, passes us
bent down to the dust under dun-colored bags from a labor camp)
    . . . And again,
God, those annoying soldiers.
                They see the green,
                I see snows.
                They — in the young sun,
                I — in a ferocious winter.
                A hunter, a laborer, a bird, a village
    orchestra, it returns —
a moustached head, he flails the pavement with a scissor-kick.
    Mister Fevrard
gets into the car with his Parisian girlfriend. Off with his head,
shouts the innkeeper.
                Whose head? I look around.
Mister Fevrard drove off with his Parisian girlfriend.
Nobody. Alone on the square. With you. Only with you. Always
    with you.
Off! — no! No, it happened differently.

VI

"Ah! Seigneur! Donnez moi la force
    et le courage
De contempler mon coeur et mon
    corps sans dégoût."
    Baudelaire, *Un Voyage à Cythère*

It happened quite differently.
As it does among people. Warmly. Gemütlich. In this way:
Three good buddies, around a samovar with vodka and cucumbers.
Two in suspenders; one in socks, another in slippers,
and the third as if dressed for a ball: a tie, cheap pin-striped
trousers, a frock coat of heavy fabric, lacquered shoes (memo:
buy some sneakers)
                Let the majordomo rage,
                the lackey's looking grim:
                we've got you locked up in our cage,
                we'll tear you limb from limb
— they sing in chorus, the first even has a quite nice tenor.

They drink, belch, look through
dossier after dossier, piles of dossiers.
"Whore and bandit," scribbles the one in gray socks;
"Off with his head," adds another;
"and brand him a brigand," the one in the tie writes
in a fine hand, like a worthy lawyer.
"A machine of hell?! A masterpiece of Satan?!" — let
the morons unravel it. And we here in a warm stench,
yawning, scratching ourselves, over cucumbers and a samovar —
three buddies. Off — — —
Off! — a voice in the air cries
without lips. — "Whose?" — "A head!"
It is no more. Cut off. Let's go back.
The wind from the sea
gathers us up. And wisps of smoke are
    fragrant. In the air
pure as a tear. How far one can see!
    How
tender are the little lights of men,
amen.

The green hunter
with a vigilant barrel
with a dog-mute,
at his post.
Don't ask him, I've known
for a long time.

VII

Satan — and not the Evil one. The Evil one is a devil,
behemoth, Azazel. No crony to Satan,
not at all, neither kith nor kin.
The other rebelled, yes, but he was rebelling
out of concern for man. Man, it has a proud ring to it,
that's why we rot in this hole, just our tough luck.
As to the devil, he runs errands for God, see
the book of Job, I, 12. From which you should not conclude
God is Evil. On the contrary — Infinitely, Incomprehensibly Good,
    as
it was justly written by Saint Dionysius,
the one who had his head cut off.
So don't ask: *unde malum?* Evil is a cognized Good. Perhaps
the reverse. Anyhow, Evil at a lower, so to speak,
stage of Development. Why is Satan identified with the devil? —
how should I know? A riddle, at least, at our stage of people in
    the clink. That's

why we are locked up. Our tough luck. Besides, ask Schaff. From
the divine
point of view we must be locked up as the spawn of Satan. From
the human,
as children of the devil. Confused, as usual, like philosophers.
But anyhow —
in the clink.

VIII

I play la pétanque.* I swear obscenely.
Dominoes with my cronies, backgammon.
I prattle. Grow muddy with drinks. Covered
with sweat, yes, sweat, eczema, mycosis.
My clothes are filthy. No fragrant oils
from Grasse will help; not all the scents of Araby can clean them.
Nor
will the breath of my little sister mimosa under the window
undo anything. The sun
looses a parasite in my hair. In its pincers
the tightly caught bone creaks like an old piece of furniture.
It is a high note. It tears heaven apart
from the West to the East. In vain. Nothing
will reach out of there. The Hand is no more. A stone which
does not fall. Hurry up, you gypsy soul. The night is near.
Centauresses
defending the Throne, as I wrote at the age of twenty. Centauresses
are no more.
Soon, the screech of an owl. The Hunter is already
at his post,
in a little hat, cockeyed as himself,
with a dog-mute. The urgent sun fire
calls me from the windows of La Messuguière tower.
Once more turn toward Cabris:
an acropolis in the gold of tiles.
Because the sun bids us farewell in gold
before it departs. Then
in chalky violet
before the night extinguishes it.

*"jeu de boules," bowling.

Before the night extinguishes us,
little fires of human bustle will flare up below.
How good it is to be at home, at last, facing silence.
Purify yourself with censers of sulphur, wool, fire,
fir twigs, in sacral silks
meditate by a candle, with Seneca. *Aetas*
Serenitatis; beyond the pass of old age
there is peace. Words, words. Seneca fell from your hand long ago.
You dream, old fogy, you daydream, daydrumdream . . .

IX

"It is the nature of the highest objective
art to be clean. The Muses are maidens."
— A. Lang, *Homer and Anthropology.*

So beautiful the lungs
are breathless. The hand remembers:
I was a wing.
Blue. The peaks in ruddy
gold. Women of that land —
small olives. On a spacious saucer
wisps of smoke, houses, pastures, roads,
interlacing of roads, o holy diligence
of man. How hot it is! The miracle
of shade returns. A shepherd, sheep, a dog, a ram
all in gilded bells. Olive trees
in twisted goodness. A cypress — their lone shepherd. A village
on the Cabris cliff, castellated
by its tiles. And a church, its cypress and shepherd.
Youth of the day, youth of the times, youth of the world.
Birds listen, intently silent. Only a cock crowing
from below in the hamlet of Spéracèdes. How
hot it is. To die on foreign soil is bitter.
It's sweet to live in France.

X

For whom is the garden planted?
Who is happy there?
No eyes to be my haven.

No food for dying.
Something creeps behind me.
Fear falls away.
What fell in the abyss?
Let the scream resound.
A hand looms above.
A smile hangs suspended.
Don't look at me, my wife.
Son, let go my hand.

XI

To my wife
on our 35th wedding anniversary.

Enmeshed in the frenzies of praying mantis':
Of nature's creations, what is more sublime
than a family? Wife, husband, child —
a golden division of the species, the lesser becomes the greater,
and so the tribe renews itself in the festoons of time.

O, Mountain stream
Basalt beneath
Bedrock of flight
Pendulum home
Vise of the heart
Lily of the soul
Contralto of quiet
and faithful shroud.
Violet — sorrow,
In winter flakes.
O' you warm earth
of peaks and valleys!
In sickness and in health
Siamese sister
My Bride.

La Messuguière, January - April, 1962.

ALEKSANDER WAT (1900-1967) was the foremost Polish Futurist poet after World War I and editor of a leftist periodical in the early thirties. He spent the years 1939-1946 as a deportee in the Soviet Union and lived abroad from 1959 (France, California).

ANDRZEJ BUSZA

ANDRZEJ BUSZA — whose poems have just begun to appear in English-language periodicals — is a poet writing in a tradition which, if it is not specifically Polish, is at least strongly European. His poems are full of an intense emotion held in check and subordinated to the demands of form and structure. They are characterized by lucid and vivid imagery formulated with great enocomy of language. A rich content is compressed and crystallized into short verses that have the concentrated glow of stained glass windows.

Unconcerned with the transient phenomena of contemporary existence, Busza's themes are the eternal vicissitudes of the human condition and man's place in the fundamentally unchanging natural world. His iconography is archetypal, drawn from the deepest realms of the spirit, the source of myth and legend. They move the reader with an immediacy denied to more cerebral or discursive writing.

MICHAEL BULLOCK

Two Poems by Andrzej Busza

Translated from the Polish by Lillian J. Nemetz

ATOLL

terrible is daybreak
on the black bough of the sea
the moon rages
like a gong
struck by lightning

thunderbolt after thunderbolt
rolls
along the corrugated
tide
and night is sinking
into cliffs of foam

we reach the port
the bay in silent mourning
welcomes us
with the claws of volcanic rocks

a small rusty steamer
sways
in the island's single eye
like as splinter
upon the dark glazed surface of a well

the pilot
on the bridge
surrounded by a flock
of glassy-eyed sheep
takes a briar pipe
not a flute
from his lips

saying
anchors are useless here
the sea is bottomless

THE STONE

I am talking about a stone
not just any stone
but this stone

the path is strewn with many stones
but this stone
is not like other stones

it has a broken back
and a net of blue veins
in its stony heart

it is unique and irreplaceable
like the evening
when the sea froze into marble

when I speak of that evening
I want to put this stone
in my mouth

so that the words
become harder than stone

I am talking about a stone
not just any stone
but this stone

ANDRZEJ BUSZA, b. 1938, is a poet, author of a monograph on Conrad, and a member of the *Kontynenty* group of poets. He lives in Vancouver and teaches in the English Department at the University of British Columbia.

LILLIAN NEMETZ is a student in the Slavonic Department at the University of British Columbia. She has had her own poems and translations of Andrzej Busza in *Expression*.

GOOD GOOD

MIRON BIALOSZEWSKI

Translated from the Polish by Bogdan Czaykowski

It's good when it's not too good
even quite good
                when it's not too clever
not-getting-better will not harm
if only one can endure
in one's own stupid way

MIRON BIALOSZEWSKI, b. 1922, is the author of four volumes of poetry. Since 1955 he has been running his own little theatre in Warsaw, for which he writes plays.

DIDACTIC VERSE

BOGDAN CZAYKOWSKI

Translated from the Polish by Adam Czerniawski

When the benefit of fire is at an end
And when the curse of incineration begins —
Do not forget the glow in the sky is a rainbow
Momentarily consumed by one colour:
Red.

When life ends like smoke from a chimney.
When no one counts deaths because the number
Exceeds imagination —
Do not forget that only momentarily
Is blood swallowed in consuming
White.

THE VISIT

JERZY HARASYMOWICZ

Translated from the Polish by Adam Czerniawski

Uncle & auntie came
spread their bottoms on chairs
might have been at the pictures

This will be it
they will have a session
watching the artist

But as far as I am concerned it is just one of those days
in the depths of the week
the pen
speeds by candlelight

But no sensations
no pianola
with a human voice

Uncle's disappointed
auntie's disappointed

Milk and bread on the table
might be the early Christians
no drinks seduce
my fuzzy nut

The inkpot really contains
ink
there really is paper
on the table

I don't walk on my hands
there are neither dwarfs
nor a bearded woman

You know what
says uncle
I think we'd better be going

JERZY HARASYMOWICZ, b. 1933, is a poet and forester by profession. He lives in Cracow, Poland.

Two Poems by Adam Czerniawski

FISH

he fashioned a poem like a fish
the fish is a symbol of saints
the fish lives in the depths of secretive seas
it withstands powerful atmospheric pressures
its presence heralds mysteries
it fell into the nets of humankind
it lies cold on a moist slab
each of its verses has immaculate rhythm
the scales of its metaphors glisten in the sun
the eye covered in film lives in imagination
and when only the skeleton remains
a white negative of symmetrical pine
words will survive illegibly for ever

Translated from the Polish by the author

POETRY

He who knows nothing
says poetry is like a Muse
(like the body he lusts for)
like a wingèd Foal
(a sure winner)
It is rather
an undiagnosed flaw of the nervous system
a rash of morbid ambition

The magician shall burn in the fire of change
the pre-tempered poem will crack
It is Man turned inwards in dreams
in dialogue with Man fully awake

Translated by Jan Darowski

ADAM CZERNIAWSKI, b. 1934, is a poet, critic, short-story writer, and editor of *Ryby na piasku* (London, 1965), an anthology of the London-based *Kontynenty* group of Polish poets (1955-1962). He lives in Oxford.

Three Poems by Jan Darowski

Translated from the Polish by Adam Czerniawski

THE WAY

When man loses himself
he begins to search for a roundabout way to the Indies
or the moon
or socialism
cuts down trees, heads, pours concrete everywhere
lays paving stones, erects street lights and signs

But Holy Jerusalem, the city of the Covenant,
has vanished beyond the forests,
they have drained away the rainbow
when they drained the swamps

Animals fear us,
neither flowers nor God
now wish to speak to us —
when we open our mouths
we spew stones
what is man to make of them ?
He builds a house
a tower of babble, a prison, a tombstone —
kneeling in a field, his back to the sun
wiping cold sweat from his brow
he constructs
his highway from nowhere to nowhere

LIFE

They — enchanted
he — disenchanted

Together they played under the table
learnt to walk
time ran they ran carefree like kids
for them the cuckoo was the clock,
the tin weathercock in charge of winds
the highest church dignitary

The same sun rose for them each morning
through the pear-tree in rays of poetry
the same heart set beyond the forest
eyes beyond mists, hands in mother's hair,
they would return from mountain excursions
unearthily withdrawn
carrying the july night on their backs like enormous wings
in the same wintry moon they dipped their pens
to describe death

And here life divided them

they still see
a birch skeleton on a hill with a red apple
in cool veils of mist,
he sees a glowing plain
on which his trembling hand plants a row of crosses —
like an illiterate
signing a document he does not understand

POST MORTEM

With the star of David they vanished beneath our earth,
they poisoned the air with dioxide of deadly psalms —
we too must suffocate, we, the murder's witnesses,
and with the torturer hand in hand march bowed through history.

Alcohol will not help. Our oily purple
hypocrisy floats to the surface.
Monuments are no use, no use saying we were like them
defenceless. Not everyone regretted
the sword cutting our Gordian knot,
cutting the nation's twin life.
Alcohol's no use — Lethe of cowards and fools.

The killer may offer his white-gloved
hand to those that survived,
may say — look, my right hand
is clean and unaware
of what the other hand did.
While a pensive righteous Christian
dropping cigar ash into the Atlantic
may say — true, the inscription was there
and so was my hand
but I left my glasses behind.

In this conspiracy we were the oldest,
not bound by silence even,
we ate common bread, drank
from self-same rock, their hands touched us,
the blood-drained hands of biblical tailors —

Those same hands are wind against the pane
shake the wreath's red shame
shake the memory.

JAN DAROWSKI, b. 1926, is a poet, printer, and member of the *Kontynenty* group of poets. He and Czerniawski are among the best translators of contemporary Polish poetry into English. He lives in London.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

ZBIGNIEW HERBERT

Translated from the Polish by Bogdan Czaykowski

The use of the same swear-words
and of similar terms of endearment
is no ground for drawing radical conclusions

Likewise reading the same school classics
is not sufficient cause
for murder

Nor is it different with the land
(willows, dusty roads, wheatlands, the sky and of course clouds
of feather)

I would finally want to know
where self-deception ends
and the real bond begins

Whether as a result of historical experience
we have not become spiritually deformed
reacting to events with the regularity of confirmed hysterics

And if we are still a tribe of barbarians
living amidst artificial lakes and electric forests

To speak the truth I do not know
I am merely
confirming the bond
it reveals itself in pallor
in the sudden reddening
in howling and raising of hands
and I know that it can lead
to a hastily dug hole

So then finally as the last word
that it may remain on record
yes, I did rebel
but I think that this bloodied knot
should be the last one
which the self-liberating man
will cut

ZBIGNIEW HERBERT, b. 1924, is a poet, playwright and essayist. His *Selected Poems* were published by Penguin Books in 1968. He has travelled a great deal, but lives in Poland.

GRIEF

ATTILA JOZSEF

Translated from the Hungarian by Erik Andrejis

Like a deer I darted,
Grief gentle in my eyes.
Wolves with sharp fangs started
Within my heart their cries.

My antlers, long since short,
In branches hung, bereaved.
Though as a deer I'm born,
I'll be a wolf, I grieved.

A sleek wolf now I roam,
Transformed by magic's guile;
The pack around me foam:
I do my best to smile.

I prick my ears — the doe!
Then close my eyes in sleep.
Dark mulberry leaves flow
To nestle at my feet.

ATTILA JÓZSEF, who died by his own hand in 1937, is regarded as the greatest Hungarian poet of his generation. ERIK ANDREJIS is an outstanding translator now living in Downsview, Ontario. Many of his translations have been brought out by Corvina Press in Budapest.

BROKEN TIME

RICHARD EMIL BRAUN

Trees were wounded once, and limbs lost.
Now slow, feminine folds partly
enclose the painted scars. At first

when I came, winter was raining on
harrowed fields. In fall the same fields,
a strong green, were twinkling with cotton.

Time had broken. You could feel this.
We could tell that something had seeped through
and that this thing had covered us.

RICHARD EMIL BRAUN's poems have been in *Prism international* and many other journals. He teaches classics at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

George McWhirter is a graduate student in the Creative Writing program at the University of British Columbia. Two of his poems were in *Prism international* 8:1. This is his first published story.

The Extinction of "H"

GEORGE McWHIRTER

It is the spring of whatever year you consider appropriate. H. Andronaegui drinks until he fills his stomach with rough cider. When his bladder approaches overflow, he unbuttons his fly and relieves himself on the floor. From the way he holds his hand out of sight and grimaces, it appears that he squeezes a sponge instead of directing the flow of urine into the grating under the table.

H., normally, has three bowel movements a day. Green vegetables, clover, nettles, occasional grasses compose his diet. His feces tend to be loose and circular rather than cylindrical. He is nicknamed *Silage*, *Green Acre*, *Fodder*, and his skin often emanates the bottle green hue of an uncooked lobster: at other times the shade of green is brighter, resembling a grasshopper (another nickname).

This morning Mrs. H. maliciously extended the comparison with a grasshopper. "The way your gadget rubs," she said, "it sparks no more fire than a grasshopper."

Now night crushes the final traces of clear light between the hills.

From morning onward H. watches the light: first, heavy with sediment, yellowing later, and now clear: the last juice pressed from an apple, the clear urine at the last of a drunken day. The idea is lucid — H. believes H. has the right to belief.

These Christians, whose faces are blotched and streaked like the marble table tops, drink wine and cider and believe that, like spring, they will return. But H. knows they pass, like the urine, through the runnels and into the earth outside. Their souls evaporate — steam off the top.

H. gets up. Eyes follow him. Jellyfish with little purple centres swim in the light.

Journeying home, on a swampy dip in the upper road, H. trips over a tuft of cat tails and his body slaps like a stick into a huge puddle. The puddle is broken by a series of humps on which cat tails grow. One hump jabs into his groin: the pain and revelation coincide. Spreadeagled, he grips a handful of the polished stalks which he tries to pull out, but fails.

He crawls to his feet and begins picking a bunch. As he breaks each stalk, pressing it against the inside of his index finger with his thumb, then pulling, he recites lines which are incomprehensible to him, but intoxicating.

Green, my worship:
Green, my tongue.
Flame crackle with sap.
Green branch
Instruct the wind,
Make a green sound.

Green, green,
Luminous green,
Brim in the complexion
Of trees before a storm.
Green, my love, green,
My omnivorous colour,
Graze on the earth
Like a green cow.

Once gathered, he bends the stalks into a thick tuft.

* * *

Mrs. H., at first, isn't aware of the draught which creeps across her belly because H. rips the nightshirt with great care. He squats over her, peering at the V as it inches toward her breasts, as if he expected something to bob in the wake of the white cloth, perhaps the way dolphins would bob in the wake of a ship. But nothing. Not a ripple of fat disturbs her body.

Concentration makes H. lean so far forward that he unbalances. He hits Mrs. H. in the stomach with his head.

"Christ, what is it?"

"It's me, H."

"What in the name of God are you doing, H.?"

"Ripping your nightshirt. I have the privilege since it's my nightshirt."

Mrs. H. doesn't overquestion him and leaves it at that. Since the wedding, marriage has lacked any anticipation whatever and she won't squander this. So she waits.

Plick, plick, plick. The buttons at the neck tear off, and she waits again.

An end to this rumination, she thinks, at last H. is ready to yield the milk. The impossible gender of her thought doesn't disturb her.

Then, something too large blocks her senses.

Mrs. H. hits H. with the cupped inside of her fist, and jumps out of bed.

"No cock! Grasshopper! Do your own work!"

She grabs her dayclothes, rushes downstairs and begins to throw her belongings into the breadbasket. Upstairs, she hears a noise like a pot of cabbage boiling on the hob, *chirrup-gargle, chirrup-gargle.* It is H. laughing.

Mrs. H. goes directly to the storeroom, and drags a sack across the kitchen to the door and unloads the contents: clover, nettles, cabbage, artichokes, the remainder of his winter store of greens.

Rain is falling. She can't tell if it is this or the nettles which sting her feet and legs.

"Vegetarian. Grasshopper. Pick that out of the mud!"

By now H. is downstairs, incensed. Pulling off his nightshirt, he wraps it round his fist like a boxing glove, draws it back . . .

"A man has a right to eat what he likes!"

He punches her in the back of her head.

"A man has a right to a belief!"

Bowed, then straightening back, she hooks her elbow into his throat, cutting short his manifesto.

* * *

H. lies under the marble table. An old man, he must be old because the urine is luke-warm, diddles in H.'s face. Moses, Ezekiel, St. X. Loyola extinguishing a heretic.

* * *

Now, he recognizes the rain on his hot face and her voice. She hangs over him, her face swinging up, down, back and forth, an angry lamp in the dark.

"Lie there. Drown!" The words hiss like rain on the burning wick of her tongue.

"H., I've finished with your mad antics. Work makes things grow, not eating, worshipping fungus. I watered and fed you to sweat and fertilize.

"What have I got? Not a child for my old age — a farm going to wreck and ruin!

"If you want green fingers, or green thumbs, or whatever you want, dig them into the earth and get them to work."

H. seems paralyzed by the gorgon, almost goitred swelling of her eyes. Without moving his head and working only his lips, he wheezes, "Gall stone! A wife should have faith in her husband.

"Why didn't you marry the Butcher, and let him load you to the ears with raw meat.

"You'll see. I'll grow grass so tall — the cows will need stilts — udders like tentacles to get milked. I'll grow broccoli like skunk pine. The lot of you will crawl like slugs!"

"H., you haven't strength or will enough to fertilize an onion with your dung.

"Grow string beans and hang yourself!"

She picks up the bread-basket, then wedges it against her side. Mrs. H. is forced to swivel her hip in order to walk properly. In the circumstances of her departure, it seems a deliberate provocation of H.

Revenge. Revenge. The sky hangs over him like a dark bladder.

"Bitch! A man is entitled to a belief!"

And the latter is entitled to a martyr.

* * *

After Mrs. H. leaves, H. lies, prostrate and naked, working his fingers the way a lobster on a fishmonger's slab works stiff claws. Nothing is broken.

But what is the next step now she is gone? How long will he be free, and what if she comes back?

H. sits up, drawing his legs to his chest. His thighs slip and jiggle against him like two worms that have just surfaced and want to wriggle free.

This is no way for him, H., to think. Is he the victim of this opportunity or the master?

Worm. He stands up, his body trembling with exposure.

Is the green spark, the green phosphor of his soul, extinguished in this rain water?

His toes curl in anger and mud squirts between them. The sudden disappearance of toes tips him forward and he slops onto his knees. How often has he imagined drowning himself, a pagan version of a pentecostalist, in a green element — partaking of a new baptism.

He will submerge himself in green grass, inhale with his body the certain death of his old self. There is a scythe in the barn and a growth of ripe grass in the near field. H. decides to crop this for his new marriage bed.

But before doing so, he rests a while, gathering strength. In the opaque mud before his eye, he sees that first marriage night. Mrs. H. taking the vegetable marrow he used to prop at the back of his neck, and throwing it out of the window. . . .

"H.," she announced, "I'll make you pillows. I know your funny ideas: they're fine in the field, but — pillows and sheets in bed."

And she mummified him with starch and linen.

Why did she marry him, or he — her? Perhaps because Mrs. H. admitted once that she loved green things, and H. made extravagant predictions about the transformation he would bring about on the farm: which she took as a promise of great works, but for him, it was an assertion of faith. A faith which might cause him to brood all day on the mystery of parsnip wine or cider.

Priests and laymen should never marry. Mrs. H. had no palate for parsnip wine; she wanted daily bread for daily labour.

The memory sinks into the swamp of his past: atop which, there is one bright, green moment. . . .

Prior to their marriage, there had been H.'s great success. He undertook an experiment: tied his trouser legs and filled them with a conglomerate of grass, hay and manure. H., half-midden, half-scarecrow, drooled and slobbered half a summer over a cabbage, slept with it even. The cabbage attained an extraordinary diameter — 8 feet. When he exhibited it in town, they told him it was flabby: the iron and goodness were dissipated by the leafage. One square meal per twenty square feet, they said . . .

H. jumps to his feet and raises his hands in the darkness, a frog leaping to escape from a jar. At such desperate moments, however, the amphibious spirit of man transcends the limits of his confinement.

H. has a plan, and it has germinated for years.

"A prophet has no honour. No honour!" he shouts. "I'll grow something that will swamp the world."

He makes straightway to the barn, collects the scythe and hurries to the near field. There he cuts a small stack of grass which he carries armful by armful back to the farmhouse and piles on the bed. He finishes the preparations in a downpour of sweat, and falls sudden as the first drop of rain.

* * *

Growing pains, fever, rheumatics, who can say what H. experiences on the bed during the night: the sun transformed into a red cabbage, spear grass blowing like fields of green flame, a sky in which each mote is a cluster of four smaller motes like translucent clover.

In the morning, whatever has transpired prompts him to rise early and set off for the city.

* * *

The city attracts fanatics of all persuasions, most can be heard no louder than insects chirruping in the shelter of doorways or the nearest edge of the gutter. This may, however, account for the attraction: the desire to be a voice lost in the metropolis: to be ignored by many busy townspeople isn't so cruel as to be ignored and scorned by a few idle countryfolk.

But H. doesn't say a word, or mutter even. He goes straight to a shipyard, to the end of the most distant slipway from where he sees the gantries rise above him and the city spread behind from the apex of the delta.

On first impression H. seems to pray to the sea and the slipway. Then he bows over like a pavement artist, and walks backwards, drawing a line with his finger. The slipway splits and grass, weeds, ferns, vegetables, sprout like a giant mane from the fissure.

After some practice H. manages to face front and lope along dragging his finger behind, in the manner of a grown man who pulls a small child's cart at the end of a short string.

An unaccountable playfulness takes possession of H. He no longer strives to make the growth of wilderness continuous. Now and again he leaves an oasis of concrete or asphalt as an exclamation.

However, it is more prudent to maintain a high degree of continuity because when H. finds himself confronted by a group of

men, he can quickly retreat into the undergrowth. The undergrowth frightens the shipyard workers and they avoid touching this monstrous green stuff.

Before long twin waves of green, which roll to opposite points of the compass, devastate the shipyard.

Where H. has drawn a circle or an arc, cross currents of green eventually meet and splash up, but unlike a wave of water, these plumes and crests of green remain suspended in the air.

Only the gantries, like huge mantises, stand aloft from it all.

The reason for H.'s choice of the shipyard will inevitably become the subject of an inquiry. Some will suggest that he wanted to be a sailor, failing this, he revenged himself on ships: others assert that he loved the earth and wanted to destroy all approach to the sea, and still others maintain that it was purely accidental.

H. advances into the city.

Colonel J. of the special forces is appointed head of the operation to capture him. Police have shown reluctance to enter the jungle when he escapes into it because they fear it is contaminated.

Col. J.'s plan is, 1: to pursue H. across the rooftops, and 2: Forge ahead of him, 3: Suspend a net across an entire street (the net will be weighted), 4: When he passes underneath, release the net.

The plan works.

The actual arrest takes place some time after they trap H., because once the net falls, H. begins filling it with jungle. Finding him in that green hemisphere is like finding the proverbial needle: with the advantage that H. is larger, but the disadvantage that H. doesn't glitter.

H. has wrought a miracle. H. is content. Under the layers of fanaticism, there is the age-old inertia of the farmer. H. does no more than enough. Or, considering that he set out to swamp the world, has his power dwindled until it produces only enough energy to keep a pilot light aflame in the main furnace.

H. offers no real resistance when they finally lay hands on him. In fact he restrains himself from any demonstration of power, content merely to decorate the dustier parts of the truck with a few fringes of grass. He doesn't seriously object when they strap him into a straitjacket.

H. keeps silent and perplexes the authorities, the country and the world.

Who? Why? What? they ask, hour after hour. Every so often a new interrogator puts his face to the slot that opens into the lead-

lined room, and asks, "Foreign Agent, Fanatic, Anarchist, Communist?" He recites the *isms* and the *ists*.

The "who" was answered the next day, when a message from the village came, saying that it was H.

Mrs. H. refused a summons to appear, or couldn't be contacted.

They call on a Father Herbert, a French priest, to act as confessor and inquisitor. Father Herbert's geniality and sympathetic nature are universally acclaimed, and he is endowed with some of the perspicacity and quick wit of Chesterton's famous cleric. Father Herbert's approach can be described as warm and familiar.

FATHER HERBERT: My dear H., I am Father Herbert. We have the same initial. Isn't that remarkable! I wonder if they considered that when they summoned me.

H.: (*No response*)

FATHER HERBERT: Do you feel that you have a desire to confess anything that is weighing on your mind. (*Cough*) What you have done is a great sin, but what you can do with your power may be a great blessing.

H.: (*No response*)

(*Pause*)

FATHER HERBERT: I can understand your love for green things. There is a beautiful poem by Garcia Lorca which goes,

> Green, green, I love you green,
> Green wind, green branches.

H.: (*No response*)

FATHER HERBERT: Beautiful. Green, a wonderful colour. I remember when I taught at an Irish Seminary, they had these wonderful golf-courses.

Now there is a beautiful thing you could do for the country, make that wonderful, tight, springy grass they use on golfing greens. I remember well how my feet used to sink into it.

Such a pity we could only trundle a ball across it. Much more appropriate somehow for a ceremony. Mass should be held on a golfing green. A perfect way to celebrate God's goodness. (*A commotion*) Remove your hands, Mr. H. I am a man of the cloth.

At this point, it is unclear what H.'s intentions are. Anyway Father Herbert is replaced by the severer Father Xvr.

The Government is undecided on how to react to the circumstances. They threaten execution, but at the same time, don't wish to lose a potential resource. A solution which will include both possibilities is arrived at.

H. will be taken to a desert region of the country and abandoned. From then on he will be scrutinized at a safe distance. The army will at all times be willing to negotiate.

They explain the situation carefully to H. But H. amuses himself sprouting grass out of his ears, asparagus out of his pockets, etc. (H. has so much accumulated dirt that this is possible. The officials haven't dared to give him water to wash; they gave him barely enough to drink because it was theorized that they might be able to dehydrate his faculties. Concerning his ablutions. Even if they supplied him with bathing-water, it is improbable that he would use it.

H.'s stools are collected regularly and analyzed. Generally, it is noted that they grow less circular and more cylindrical.)

When the terms for possible negotiations are explained, H. drops his trousers and a pamfrey peeps out between his buttocks.

They remove H. as planned and deposit him.

Through the lenses of telescopes and binoculars, the soldiers watch, expecting at any moment a green wave to rise and roll toward either horizon. But no. H. digs a shallow pit, crawls in and covers himself. Obviously, since there are few rocks in the area, he is taking shelter from the sun.

Immediately, the ferocious ants which inhabit that region plant their mandibles like live sparks in his flesh. In a day he dies, a stronger man might have lasted longer.

Often, a man's death expresses the meaning of his life. Though what H. expressed is obscure.

Now, they say that when his body was consumed by the ants, the ants distributed his power. Certainly, a few oases have developed in places. The entire desert region is comparatively greener, but not discernibly so. One or two bands of gypsies scattered about the area are already initiating a cult around H.'s name, but they idolize notoriety in any form.

A small but insistent body of opinion declares that H. was an ignorant man who had merely put a green finger to his nose in defiance of society, and the fatuous gesture sufficed. Also, that the aggravation of circumstances prompted his action. His anger, once exhausted, left him devoid of purpose. His subsequent refusal to cooperate demonstrates plain stubbornness and his inability to comprehend the Government's terms and the value of his power. His supposed suicide or immolation was accidental. He successfully buried his body, but left his head exposed. Within a short while he must have been delirious with sun-stroke.

The Government will hold an inquiry as their last official action regarding H. In the meantime they collect his bones and send them to Mrs. H. who returned to the farm sometime after her husband's departure.

When Mrs. H. receives them, she takes a heavy pestle and mortar (used for preparing spices) and goes into the yard. After breaking the bones into manageable pieces, she begins to grind them to powder. Tightening her grip and screwing with her wrist, Mrs. H. mutters as if she were pulverizing words at the same time.

"Miserable turd. Grasshopper. To think I came back here. No man will have me. Stupid, terrible jokes. *S-p-u-damy*, they say we committed!"

She almost cracks the earthenware shell.

"When the authorities wanted me, I was frightened. Then, I read — *Greenfingers. Man or Demigod?* I was getting my things back out of the breadbasket and somebody came here to tell me, you had dug a hole in the ground.

"*Man or demijohn of urine!*"

Mrs. H. spits into the mortar and a little puff of bone rises like smoke from a crater of a volcano.

"You could have bargained with the Government: sold yourself to the Minister of Agriculture: hired yourself to foreign countries, put yourself to good use."

She relaxes her grip on the pestle, then knocks it on the edge of the mortar to release a little of the powder that has coagulated around her spit.

"You might have done thoughtful, tender things. Made a blue sky of hydrangeas for me, or a yellow one. BUT, that wasn't your way. You'd dangle carrots outside the window, as if a woman were an ass to be coaxed with a vegetable."

She finishes grinding and pours the powder into a pouch. Finally, she takes the pouch and draws a leather thong through it. The thong is sufficiently long to fit round her waist, where she attaches it, underneath her skirt.

An original manner of commemorating a departed husband, much more sincere than a jar on a cold mantelpiece. But this isn't her intention. A saying the people have in that part of the country would better account for her action:

> Woman, if thou wouldst tame devils,
> Hold them first betwixt thy thighs.

The precaution makes her slightly apprehensive: an apprehensiveness mixed with titillation.

"There you are, H. . . . In case you should rise again," she remarks boldly. Mrs. H. wonders, perhaps, if she rubbed a few love drops . . . But the memory of H.'s previous assault dispels her humour. He might bulge and tear out her belly like a cactus. After all he died in that country. Better keep the devil in his place.

Mrs. H. rinses the residue of bone from the mortar and throws it into the yard. Scattered here and there, nettles and clover can still be seen, baked into the mud. Which isn't strange, because all these events took place within a very short space of time.

CHARLIE MINGUS AND THE GREY LADY

PETER STEVENS

. . . And we sat around
at the small party
listening
to the music
                Charlie Mingus
and the little grey lady
greasing us
with a wide smile
bird-bright says
it's all about (pause)
dropping the
            next word
d e l i b e r a t e l y
into the silence between tracks
        screwin
                (g
carefully dropped)
isn't it?
Somebody agreed it was
sorta sexy
but not really, grey lady,
whatever you may wish.
That's what Miles
(your familiarity
grey lady
            breeds
contempt)
            blows about as well.

Little grey lady,
what Mingus strokes
                plucks
                fondles
is just a bass
or at most the base
of his blackness

and Miles Davis thrusts
his horn into music
nothing else.
So, grey lady,
just listen;
go home to get screwed.

Sometimes a blues clearly sings:
some like to make love in the parlour
some like to make love down lover's lane
but I like to make love
inthewee h o u r s ofthe mornin
w h e n i t s
p o u r o u R o u R I N
RAIN
but, little grey lady,
with your white mind
daring us to contemplate
the big black niggers
flexing their muscles
in their music
to rape
(hopefully)
you
you perpetuate darkness —
just listen
to the music
and don't give me
all that jazz
about
screwing.

PETER STEVENS' work has often been in *Prism international* and many others. He lives in Saskatoon.

MR. MORLEY'S PASTORALE

MYRON TURNER

He was nothing to outward show,
Dull glower, stale smirk —
Nothing but tweed trousers and tweed coat;
Striped tie, and sometimes spotted.
"I am nothing to outward show," he said.
This he knew;
And what he knew
Believed.

"Believing is what we are," said he.
"The trainman, a striped and puffy cap —
Believing what the child believes he is.
And I am what some child believes I am.
I am this image that he sees."

Still, there were nights in the middle of which he dreamed:
On a throne of silver, crowned with curls of hyacinth!
Pans and Satyrs jest, tumble, and pipe —
Wood nymphs, dancing on the marble —
Thighs curving into subtle flourishes of shadow!
O the white percussion of their breasts!
See on the princely wrist
Water nymphs dissolve to dew,

In ecstasies of rainbow
Wind themselves into love-knots,
Around his arm, and in his eye;
Or hover near the secrets of his heart,
Learning what he believed and what he knew.

And there were days, all unexpectedly,
In the middle of which he fell to the floor on his knees,
Like one who knelt (but violently) to pray:
And the pig-iron of his cast image then discandied,
Sugared in syrupy flames of his transfiguration;
And there were days when he lay on the floor all day
and cried — A prisoner of Abject Poetry —
O those lethargies of the commonplace,
The counter-point of gravy-stain and lace —
The tragic mask, a bored grimace.
So he had reason then, like one Prince of Melodrama,
To lie upon the floor and weep —
For the gods came down to perch upon his arms
And sing him into ecstasies —
And this so inwardly he knew,
So inwardly did not believe.

MYRON TURNER's poems have appeared in many North American journals. He teaches at the University of Manitoba, where he and George Amabile co-edit *The Far Point*.

Two Poems by Peter Weibel

proposition for a little talk

Translated from the German by Charles Lillard

i like christ
    for he was fond of children
i like america
    for it was nice to the hungarians
i like russia
    for they want only the best for the negroes
i like germans
    for they have blue eyes
i like jews
    for they were poor dogs

i like christ
    for he was a poor dog
i like germans
    for they are fond of children
i like russia
    for they were nice to the hungarians
i like america
    for they want only the best for the negroes
i like jews
    for they have blue eyes

i like christ
    for he was a poor negro
i like america
    for it is fond of christ
i like children
    for they have blue eyes
i like russia
    for they want only the best for the germans
i like negroes
    for they are nice to children

i like christ
for he was fond of the poor
i like germans
for they were nice to the jews
i like america
for it is a child
i like children
for they are fond of dogs
i like jews
for they wanted only the best for christ.

i like germans
for they are jews
i like america
for it is a negro
i like children
for they are poor dogs
i like russians
for they are america

e v e

(for waltraud lehner)

e v e
r e v e e v e r
d e v i l l i v e d
l i v e e v i l
e v e

PETER WEIBEL's "proposition for a little talk" has been translated for this issue by CHARLES LILLARD, who lives and writes in Vancouver. Member of the Austrian Filmmakers Co-operative and of the Institute for Directart, designer of love furniture, maker of object poems, paper poems, motion poems, Peter Weibel carries on his work in Vienna.

These stories are the first in print for JANIE KENNON, a creative writing student at the University of British Columbia. Her first poetry publications are also in this issue, for which she has done the cover drawing. The first two stories here were recently broadcast on the CBC network show, *Anthology*.

THREE STORIES

JANIE KENNON

Story of a Poor Man

MUMBY WAS A VERY POOR MAN. He worked as a scarecrow for many years because it was the only job he could find; his wages were small and he could not afford very much to eat. Before, he used to make a little more money by digging ditches in the clay soil across the countryside, so that the people who lived along the top of the hill would have something to jump over when they went fox-hunting on their fine thoroughbreds.

Of course there were no foxes in the country, nor had there ever been, and Mumby laid a scent for the dogs to follow with a drag. The hounds seemed to know there was no fox, though, because they would never bay, or even bark as they ran on in front of the horses. Mumby was fired because he stopped too often to rest and the hounds caught up with him. Then they would bark and snarl as they jumped at him and bit his arms and legs.

Mumby liked his job as a scarecrow. He would lean on poles, stretch out his feet and roll his head back to watch the clouds pass from east to west across the sky. With his head back like that, he couldn't see the field very well to scare away the birds, but the man who owned the land never came down from his house to see how the corn was doing.

One day, Mumby stood for too long, half asleep in the warm sun, and when he let go of the cross pieces that held him up, his legs were so unused to walking that he fell down on the ground and lay there, too weak to move. After a few hours a man in heavy armor came riding down the road on a small horse. There was a stag with a bloody face lying across the front of the saddle. The

dead animal had one foreleg pulled up under it, but the other three hooves dragged on the ground. Ah, here is some poor soul, said the knight, when he saw Mumby lying in the field. He got off his horse and picked the scarecrow up and gave him water, but Mumby was asleep from weariness and couldn't swallow. The knight put Mumby on the saddle, behind the stag, and climbed up again on his horse's back.

Mumby woke up as the knight was riding into a town, later in the afternoon. How fortunate, he thought, I am in the town and it has cost me nothing. But all the people, even the knight, spoke a language that Mumby did not understand; when he tried to ask the knight the name of the town, the man thought he was hungry, and set him down in front of a baker's shop, so the smell of the cooking would revive him, then he rode away with the stag that he had killed.

I'll gather my resources, thought Mumby as he sat on the ground. He put his hands in his pockets and from the right one he drew a ticking watch that only had one hand, on a blackened silver chain; from the left pocket he took a bird, a swallow with a piece of string around its neck. From his vest pockets he took a paper bag that held his money, with each piece wrapped in newspaper, a cap that he used to keep the sun off his head and some hair pulled from the mane of a circus lion. These things Mumby put on the ground in front of him and leaned back to determine their value. He could not know, as he had not been to the city for many years, that without enough money to buy boots or chain mail, as the knight had worn, he would be too light, he would float up off the ground. Without the weight of even these few objects, there was nothing to hold him down. With a little jerk he rose from the pavement in front of the baker's shop and floated up past the chimneys, into the clouds.

All night long he drifted up, and he was very cold. At morning, he could see far above him a huge bird with torn feathers hanging in the sky. He saw that he would soon come into the area of its cruel black stare and into the reach of its iron claws. But by now his coat was damp and heavy with the moisture in the clouds and he began to slowly descend to earth again.

Now I can be a scarecrow once more, he thought, but this was not to be. When he came through the clouds, he was shot down by some careless hunters, who, because of the early morning light, did not realize their mistake, until his broken body was brought back across the swamp by their silent hunting dog.

Don Quixote's Horse

THE BONES OF A HORSE were found in a rural district of Spain. It was thought they were the remains of Don Quixote's horse and the skeleton was wired together and put in a museum. It seems the lower half of the front leg was missing — the cannon bone, the pastern, the hoof bones. The others, the remaining front leg, the neck, the skull with the broken teeth, were in a heap in the museum; they had gotten up and wandered about the countryside looking for the missing front leg.

The cannon bone had been carved into a flute and the musician that had it lived in the city. One night as he walked home he saw the skeleton limping behind him. He paid no attention to it until it came up close behind him and took the instrument case in its teeth. The musician jerked the case away and ran home without looking back. Every night the skeleton waited in the rain outside the concert hall and followed him home and chewed on the door jamb with its long blackened teeth. He threw it some hay which it would not eat, and it followed him everywhere. The musician became thinner and tired of seeing the spectre every time he looked over his shoulder, but he would not give up the flute.

Finally he decided he must get away from the skeleton and one day in August he went to the country to see his sister, who lived in his mother's house. He took the bus from the city and got down and started to walk along a side road with pines in the ditch. (The bus pulled away and it was very quiet.) After a few minutes he heard stones being kicked in the road and turned and saw the skeleton. It limped up to him until its head was near his elbow and followed him. In twenty minutes he came to the house his sister lived in, a tall narrow white house on the road, with thistles growing at each side, a fence falling over, a cat sitting at the side of the road with a dead snake.

The musician went inside the house without knocking and called his sister's name. She stood above him on the steps. Her hair reached to the floor and brushed the stair as she came down. Her dress was old and black and long. The musician stared at her and sat in a chair in the corner and didn't speak. His sister laughed and talked for a long time and spoke to him softly but never called him by his name.

Later he took the flute from his suitcase and went outside and walked to the edge of a field beside a stream. The skeleton was still outside the house; it followed him and stood at the edge of the

stream and lowered its head until the teeth were just over the water, and stood without moving. The musician leaned on the fence railing and nodded his head sleepily. The cat curled up near his feet. Because the horse was grinding its teeth together, the stream and the man and the horse couldn't stop and become a picture. There was a voice from across the field; it was his sister, laughing and waving. The musician followed her, the cat followed her, the skeleton followed the musician, but they went inside and locked the door against the bones. The sister had tried to stroke the horse's nose, but each time the bones fell down to the ground until she went away.

And later the musician looked out the front door, then the back door; he couldn't see the skeleton and he came out of the house and walked across the fields, still carrying the flute. The skeleton limped around a corner of the house and followed him, grinding its teeth. Near a rock wall the musician stopped. The horse stopped. The musician turned around. "Why do you follow me?" he said. "Is it the flute you want? Why do you want your other leg? If you are dead you do not need to walk normally, you certainly do not need to gallop or buck." The horse lowered its head until it nearly touched the ground. "Of course if I give you the flute you will go away. And if perhaps I should give it to you, how am I to make any living. I will not starve but I am used to playing the flute." The horse didn't move. "And suppose I give you the flute? You will still have no ankle and no hoof." He stepped towards the horse, its head came up, it turned on its hindquarters and limped away. If the horse could speak (but it could not because its teeth were broken) it would say: I will be like every other horse, not particular, but every other that you pass on the road standing out across the grass, or by a fence waiting to be fed. In this way I become invisible. But the horse didn't speak. The musician stood and watched the horse for several minutes, and finally said, "I'll give you the flute if I can ride on your back." The horse did not move. The musician took the bridle from the barn behind his mother's house. It was for a harnessed horse, with blinkers to keep the animal from seeing what it was pulling, and long lines that reached back to the driver.

The horse stood still when he came up to it and put the bit between its broken teeth. The musician tied the flute to the horse's knee with a piece of wire, and put a sack over its ribs and climbed on its back. It stopped grinding its teeth and started to walk. It went so slowly the musician kicked at it but his legs hung down below its ribs and he only kicked at the air.

"Faster, faster," he said. It trotted down the field, climbed up over the rock wall and walked out through the bog. "Faster," said the musician, slapping it with the long reins. The horse walked slower, its legs sticking in the mud. When its front legs sank in to the knees, it did not try to get out. The musician beat at it with the reins, he could see the trees in the distance already standing still, the water across the bog had stopped rippling, nearby the reeds didn't move. Then the horse plunged up out of the mud and the reeds moved again in the wind. When it climbed up to higher ground, the skeleton collapsed. The bones fell all around, the musician was thrown off. "Get up, get up," he cried, gathering the bones in his arms. They were very heavy and all seemed to be the same. He found the cannon bone that was the flute but as soon as he put his hand on it the skeleton sprang up again into a horse and he couldn't pull it out from the leg. He took the reins and climbed on, and then he heard his sister laugh. The horse raised its head and looked across the bog. The sister stood by the house laughing and waving her arms, the trees blowing behind her. The horse didn't move, the musician forgot to move until it was too late, he couldn't turn his head.

When she stops laughing, he thought, and he was sure he could see the painter out of the corner of his eye, stopped by the road to paint the scene — the man across the bog on the horse, the girl in the black dress underneath the trees.

Museum officials know nothing of a skeleton or remains of Don Quixote's horse. There are musicians who play the flute living in Spain, but it is doubtful that any of them have a sister living in their mother's house in the country. There is no house near a bog, where the trees are blowing; and the horse? the bones? it seems they were a pencil drawing on the corner of the page.

The Apprentice

Imperceptible are the movements of His face, imperceptible.

— MICHAUX

DOWN INTO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, across the shelf, through the yellow green gloom as under a very near ceiling, through the sea weed forest with the mouths and deaths of strange fish skeletons,

down into the blackness of green, the weight of the ocean and the atmosphere and the planets press the water to such a tremendous silence that the blind fish and the blind stones are held motionless, until across the earth the moon rises, and the current changes and runs out across a reef, and the ocean at this great depth moves to the left three feet.

Quiet! He cried and stopped his ears. I can't stand this noise anymore. Someone was brought to him and sent up above with an apprentice. The instructions he received were explicit. The people, as they talked, were to be walled up in plaster cubicles. All that is inside a cubicle is air, and as sound vanishes in air, there would soon be silence. Then the man was to take all the gunpowder there was and pour it into the ocean. The earth was to remain, silent, because only there is there an ocean.

Where are we going? Teach me at least how to help you, boss, so you can go home early. I do not own a house. Boss, tell me where we're going. Why do we walk instead of riding a horse or a car? I'm hungry, but you've spoken to no one, and no one gives us any food. Be quiet now, fool. Among the things I do not own is a horse, a car. I never had a hat, although I got one for you before we left, a very old hat, painted by an Italian artist who was not buried but drowned, the hat must be returned, don't lose it. I never had any food, I never have spoken to anyone and I never will. When they ask me later if I have anything in my pockets, I'll say, no, as you can see, I have no coat. Now be quiet, we've got a long way to go.

In Walenstown, there was a fox hunt. Thirty riders went out one morning, a pack of hounds, the Master, the Whippers-in to chase the dogs. Several hours later, only one lathered blowing horse, still with the saddle and bridle on, came trotting back down the road. The others couldn't be found. The people said, such a thing couldn't happen twice, at least not in a row, and they organized another hunt. But nobody came back except one riderless horse. We were foolish to think it couldn't happen twice, the people reasoned, but now we have beaten the odds, and it can't happen again. But it did — one riderless horse came back from the next hunt.

The people were caught up with the idea of outlasting the strange phenomena. Hunt after hunt was organized, all disappeared, horses, riders, dogs, whips, and soon they had to wait for the riderless horse to come back afterwards, so they would have enough mounts to send out on the next hunt.

The boss and his apprentice were walking on a hill in the desert.

The boss walked slowly and picked his feet up carefully and didn't disturb the sand. The apprentice ran in circles around him, and the sand poured down the hill into his footprints and his shoes. Walk behind me, said the boss, but the apprentice wouldn't. He had seen a bottle in the sand ahead of them and ran and picked it up and brought it to his boss. Is there water here, boss, I'm thirsty, is there a letter inside from someone in the desert, a letter dropped by an Englishman as he rode with the Bedouin, who spoke no language, but rode horses with blood that was pure for three centuries? No, fool, it's empty, you see, empty of water and poison snakes or claws, empty of shoe laces and stolen playing cards, empty of steel chromium sculpture, empty of packages of cigarettes. There is no wine inside, or milk from a cow, water from a broken tap or a stream or a pipe. It's empty, empty, empty.

They wandered over the world, mixing plaster, in the countries of Bendar and Bakalan, the walled city of Alsabar, the leper colonies of Dashan and Ari. They would have stopped to rest sometimes, but they were always so far from anywhere when they decided to stop that they would have to get there first, then with the noise and the trouble of ordering a room and sufficient warm blankets (for the apprentice was always cold) they would forget that they had been so tired. The work, as they had been told, was simple. The boss would start to speak to someone and the apprentice stood nearby. As the person gave the boss his name, the apprentice plastered up one wall; his wife's habits and an anecdote, another side; his job and his feelings, the third wall; his beliefs and the things he supposed the boss to be feeling, the final wall; and the ceiling when he shouted, What are you doing to me?

In the distance, two tiny figures; at noon they are closer, by evening they are close enough so that in another day, they will be here.

Shut your eyes, fool, go to sleep. You do as I say because I was made as the master. All you can hope for is that I won't want to destroy you. I am capable of both the means and the desire — you, the means only. To be an apprentice is all you are, it is not a transition. I will not acknowledge you in any other relation. If you receive one answer only to each question, listen carefully, it will not be repeated. I am immune to exhaustion or thought, therefore there are no variations to this job, no other possibilities. You can learn nothing except the orders. The only proof that we have been anywhere is carried with the dirt underneath my fingernails. Didn't you see how many fish died after biting my hands? Now shut your eyes and you will go to sleep. There is a statue of the Horsemen of

the Apocalypse on a cliff overlooking the sea. I'll take you there someday, but now go to sleep. I don't want to go there, I'm too tired, boss. The beginning of the road is no use to us, nor the middle distance of the road. It's no matter that the Imperial road to Italy opens up just a few yards, just three strides up this hill. We're not going to go any further. I'm too tired, boss, I'm too tired.

"My name is Herr Bezard and I am the apostle of artificial flame. My children have gunpowder on their breath and burns on their lips and the insides of their mouths. Now that they are set free, the girls fly sea gulls on a piece of fine wire on a cloudless day, the young men swing from sky to sky on chains of my own manufacture. My favourite son, that is he — I plucked him out of the mountains and pulled him in through my window over a distance of a hundred miles — he will teach you to concentrate, if you come with us, to concentrate on one thing only, and to concentrate is the ability to be insane. My poor children. They live on scaffoldings inside the churches. Please do not mention water or the sea to them; they were left behind during the flood; they dream even now of water pulling at their ankles and feel their beds in the night sway and rock in all possible currents. Drowning is not an easy matter; one drowns so slowly — first the foot, the ankle, then the legs, and so on. Now they hang upside down from the scaffolding, like bats, so their heads will be the first to die, because a brain, you know, cannot feel any pain. Between their fingers, my friend, it is so dry, the dust of all the locks they broke in their hands, trying to get in from the rising water. So many hands were broken against the windows; so much broken glass.

"Why is it that I have only one eye? One is all that is necessary! It is the unit of measure for what we do here, it is as far as I can see. It is unfortunate that the manufacturing is so much smaller than the unit of measure and is never recorded. It is an easy thing to pass through my eye, and once there, no one is blind, no one can see. Here, darkness and light are locked facing each other; silence and noise, in quantities, balance, and revolving behind their backs is the sight of wind and the color of ice, there, all that is opposite nothing is nothing. My eye, my blue and crystal eye is the surface, but once below, the surface must disappear. It is not the space left when earth is locked on the left side of the morning. It is not without earth, for earth is not its opposite. We must disappear and must never have been if it is to happen, yet it exists simultaneously. My eye is full of children, or I would take you there with us; I can even guarantee that you will not dream.

"Quantities of gunpowder? That is possible," and he clapped his hands.

The conspiracy is disbanding; the members to organize again in some other generation. Unfortunately they left one member who did not go underground, who can't see himself alive again, in the future as a member of the cause. He is a threat to the conspiracy, but there is no one left to know that, and no one left to order his killing.

He decided instead to strike himself deaf. As he turned with his coat pulled over his shoulder, he asked the man standing at his left, Was there not someone sent up to take care of the matter? Have they not been called back? and the man behind his shoulder bowed and nodded, breaking his head on the stars.

The apprentice waited beside the gunpowder, beside three of the plaster cubicles. His trail should have been fresher the longer I followed it, but it wasn't, it was growing staler. If he has fooled me by walking backwards, at what point did his path cross through mine, at what distance am I now from him — I mean, how long have I been followed?

I suppose I am to do something with this powder. The other; I argued with him over the price, although I have more money than he wanted. He knows something he wouldn't tell me. It would now be impossible to find him, either to give the gunpowder to him, or to give him more money. I remember, I know that I have no memory; the only way to reach his is to trace his connections in the cities I was in, and I don't remember the names of the cities, other than all. If the boss is not here, I'll have to decide what it was he decided to have done. Gunpowder is for blowing things up. I'll dig some holes with the shovel and fill them with powder and set them off, until he comes.

I'm being watched; the plaster is too thin. When I said is the ratio five to one, he said nothing, when I asked, then is the ratio one to five, he shook his head, I'm sure, although I was standing a long way off. I've mixed it with too much water, it's falling away from their faces. They haven't said anything yet. I'll put some gunpowder in their eyes and mouths in case they do, but first I'll finish digging. Perhaps I'm only to dig one large pit, but how would I shape the stair?

Slowly, the earth fell apart, one half at night, one half at day. Pieces and molecules drifted off until there was no boundary where the world stopped and universe began, and the third place out from the sun was taken by empty, whirling space.

Boss, it's a long way to go — tell me another story. There was a hat, a wide-brimmed hat that had fallen in the sea. It floated away from the drowned head it had been on, and drifted in the warm Indian Ocean currents, past the mouths of many ports, unnoticed by the sailors on the merchantmen and tea schooners, until the water came over the brim and the hat turned sideways and sank into the ocean, where it floated down and rested lightly on the head of a wonderful fish. The fish smiled.

Two Poems by Jean Chatard

Translated from the French by Derk Wynand

NEW DAY

I announce feverish voyages that we will make
the loser can win what we will make
in the splendour of the new sun

I speak of your eyes my breaking shadow, I speak
of silex, of wounded jade
My kingdom totters with all this noise of embarkation,
with all these quais seated around our departures
Already you invite the grain of sand from the beach
obscure night and blue flying fish

We will take nothing you know it I count on it
The rain will dress us in cry and nuance
the sea will give us its earliest spray for
we will leave naked, our arms raised toward
the highest sail, our eyes filled
with volcanoes and lianes

The earth has its secrets the sea many more and we
know nothing but the weeping oats

I scratch open a sorrow in your cry of nail, I hoist
sunsets to discover the silk
of infinite ladders, I unbind the timid wave
I inhabit this new day, already puffing

LOVESICKNESS

Deaf voice your hair in the disabled morning
tender hand

I open the cage jointed at the point of impact
of your gestures I eat with dentures sick of your
blood its bestial desire for survival

The wrinkles of my life no longer need offences
the pomp of my life dies at the awakening
of heavy manchineels

We must dress up this sad bit of time
that we have to live, these rubble-mills that
turn us into lovers We must tear each reef
from the wave each lichen in its sleep

Say, you know the useful haunch the heavy blood
the strong breeze that bends us the muzzled sun
and all the demented gestures started again in
the splendour You know, you know it well, say
that my travels to foreign places are folly
You know, say that the islands no longer exist
My poor love My dear agony

We have loved each other in these riots of lianes
perhaps in Saint-Laurent, perhaps
in Georgetown, perhaps . . .

JEAN CHATARD lives in Paris where he edits the poetry journal *Le Puits de l'Ermite*. He is the author of three books of poems and has appeared in many French journals.

DERK WYNAND won the Brissenden Scholarship in 1968 as the most outstanding student writer at the University of British Columbia. His work has been in many magazines recently.

Two Poems by Norman Simms

A NEW FOOL, ABLE, REJECTED

Well, who is this hob-over-the wall, anyway,
to think she can dump her silly words right out,
like ladies throwing slop, and make me say:
Excuse me, ma'am; and be a gentleman?
If I go limping one foot in the gutter, doubt-
less I'm a pious man, but laugh? Why, then
you're just a foolish monkey — I'll never go
with you. And so she toddles off, "Adieu,"
I'd say, and good riddance, too. I know
a lady is not fooled by all this show,
and love (the real, unmoonlit kind) will fit
inside this rough-wool cowl. So let me laugh
and wiggle my ass's ears, like Moses' staff,
while Cain can say, Gawd, you're out of your wit!

CONFESSION:

To Master Geoffrey of Vinsauf

We do not think in dictionaries, move
Through fields of words with pruning hooks to link
One empty play of rhetoric, to prove
Its cold validity, to another; or think
In terms of books we gather from the past,
Complete with learnèd gloss, in which we find
Complex audacity that binds the last
Allusion to the first, as though the mind
Were a stone machine to weave of tapestry
Of iron threads, unwinding from strange spools
Of nameless authors ancient wisdom, free
From trammels of superstition, mystic rules
Of high technology and fact. We treat
Ourselves as though we had no garments, were made
To sit within the hollow kernel all afraid
And hear the pounding of the thrasher's feet.

NORMAN SIMMS is a Specialist in Middle English Literature at the University of Manitoba, where he is finishing a dissertation on the paratactical poetics of fourteenth-century alliterative poetry.

Two Poems by Joan White

I WAS A SECRET AGENT ONCE

among the young lords of Pasadena
and Calcutta, but who really knows
what anyone might be?
Restaurants air-cooled in summertime,
silverware and glassware, lacy chandeliers,
everywhere the same closed tones
of civilized barbarians: and all the while
I listened to discover who stood hidden
soft behind the arras, what Polonius
about to die could be prevented.
One can try.

And then outdoors I would uncover
accidents of love, the ragamuffins
in the fiery streets at midnight,
hair, flesh, spongy lungs, delicate eye's
jelly, living sans food, on danger.
Arrogantly still they pressed
each dawn as though to live
were necessary to their lives,
their causeless cause, as though
there were crusades I never heard of.

And in all the shops and streets I saw
men like participants of funerals
in which the only other things alive
were women who were dead:
dark suits and flowered gowns,
remote as in a play that does abscond
from us though it's our speech —
Hamlet the Dane not quite reviving us
with witty images.

I've poured myself a sleepy drink
and gone to sea, to sleep, to dream,
of a directionless wide swath
that I am cutting slowly
in a gentle few-treed vale.
Finally I come to meet a house
where my mother is among the rest,
all of them imprisoned with some guilt
I cannot learn. I ask, and weep
upon her neck; she will not say.
Her way is secret, terribly consoled;
tells me to go.

One has one's spy assignments
that don't work,
the ingenuity falls down, the faint
comes on even in a sleep,
and the interesting design
one wears — international attire,
the hooded gaze, the enigmatic back
of head, wind-ruffled hair —
these fade off farther than the play
one reads betweentimes,
and at last it seems
no airplanes fly, no boats will sail,
the legs stop running and all spies are dead,
a paradise of clowns who have
lived playing but can sit instead
serious, relaxed, their own
fingerprinters and not anyone's.

HOW TO SPEND A SUMMER DAY

1

Open up the window,
slide away the screen.
Flies roam in.

You are reminded of
a drift of passengers
from early worlds,
and their buzzing sounds
are ancient syllables
you cannot know.

2

A bird wings in: surprise
on both your parts,
embarrassment acute.
He will not listen to you
and his nervous flaps
can never teach him where
to go. Open all the windows,
open doors until
the house is more outside
than in. Encourage him
by talking quietly,
show him the patio in sun
all green and odorous
and full of bugs, throw crumbs,
advise him for his good:
"This way! Look here! Some food."

3

A stubborn bird, he must
fly through the rooms
perch on a lampshade
startle at each move
you make, your coaxing
only angers him, he treats
you like the tyrant of a jail
or doctor of a psychiatric ward,
staring with a cold
and jumpy eye.
Meantime the flies
wheel busily around
concerned with small hysterias
of touch and sight.

And now two wasps float in,
lyrically as on a beam
of musicked air, a blue
summer stream inside
the fuller sea, the atmosphere.

4

The sphere is here!
a spider's in the door
and now a cloud of gnats,
those tiny individuals
as dark as pepper in the milk.
A June bug zooms, stiff-winged,
a jeweled green, like metal turned
alive. You'll think you smell
an acid tone from him.

5

Suddenly, intoxication with
each other's wings:
they circle, spiral, tangent
off their course, they leave
no place to stand, and your
wide fannings like a king
of beast's, fracture the air,
made tidal waves of sway
and swell they madly swim.

They're all in flight, gone wild.
Adventure and imprisonment.
The spider knits to prey.

6

It is the jazz of insects
which the bird, most frightened,
listens to and fears
in a strange place. And you
next frightened must not leave
home for the free day
but entertain your guests
in summer amplitude.
By music. Just put on
some Lizst to complement
this high whine with the deep
piano, sound so brilliant, rich
and rippling that the rest is drowned.

7

Now you are crucified
by music and the shock
of smaller animals
getting their education in the swing
of those inhuman, superhuman
grand arpeggios, which are
sonorous like the bouncing fall
of marble stars.

JOAN WHITE's poems have been in many journals. She teaches literature and philosophy in a California junior college and plans to do graduate work at Claremont College.

NATURE STUDY

HUGH MILLER

For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move. — STEVENSON

The wood duck, seeing the tern, decided
Not to land on the lake: no natural enmity,
Merely a quirk. Similarly, for no reason, the mole
Did not appear that day, the day I went
To the woods. Why? I don't know; I don't
Yet know why I was there: perhaps to play
My inscrutable part. For no reason whatever,
I'm not going soon again. Don't get me wrong,
I don't love cities either; neither is superior,
Country or town, but travelling between them
Is the most senseless activity I know.

Stevenson walked with great pleasure, not
To get anywhere but just for the process; he knew
What he was about, Stevenson, observing things
In his way, like a garbage can collects. Yet
Knowledge is not process but facts; it matters
What's put in. They're not fun, facts; process is
Fun. Let's keep it straight: we learn nothing
By watching the wood duck, pleasure is never
Instructive. I don't know why. The tern
Suddenly arose with a rush of his wings (and
My arms too I remember attempted to fly)
But I knew then and know now
That only birds know how
To fly while I
Know nothing from watching.

HUGH MILLER is a graduate in English at the University of California in Davis. His poems have been in *Oneota Review* and *Poetry Northwest*.

BOOKS

for almost every taste
and purpose can be found,
easily, at

DUTHIE BOOKS

and PAPERBACK CELLAR

919 Robson	684-4496
670 Seymour	684-3627
4560 W. 10th Avenue	CA 4-7012
1032 W. Hastings	688-7434

University of British Columbia Bookstore

TEXTBOOKS
REFERENCE BOOKS
PAPERBACKS
STATIONERY

Hours: Weekdays 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A Special Giant Issue of **edge 9** *edited by Henry Beissel*

30 POETS: including Lloyd Abbey, Margaret Atwood, Jacques Brault, Fred Candelaria, Joy Kogawa, Gaston Miron, Peter Newlove, Joe Rosenblatt, Glen Siebrasse, Macrieff Williamson a.o.
and including poetry from French-Canada translated by F. R. Scott and F. Cogswell
from Japan translated by Graeme Wilson
from Egypt translated by Heinz Fischer
from Germany translated by Henry Beissel
from Vietnam translated by Crystal Erhart

PLUS
"Metal Flags & Cloth Medals" — an Arts Feature on Norman Yates

PLUS
Martin Heidegger: "The Call of the Fieldpath" (first English translation)

PLUS
The Dialectics of the Mind Revolution (W. R. Brewis)
Unilingualism & Cultural Schizophrenia (H. Wittmann)
The Art of Pornography (Silas N. Gooch)
Anti-intellectualism & the Non-Teaching Teaching Expert (Leef Stolee)

PLUS
Reviews of Cohn-Bendit's *Obsolete Communism*, Russell's *Autobiographies*, and of 15 books of poetry.

THIS IS THE FINAL EDITION OF EDGE ★ THE EARLY EDITIONS ARE ALREADY COLLECTORS' ITEMS ★ A LIMITED NUMBER OF COPIES ARE STILL AVAILABLE OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

No. 4 — Special articles on Education; a study of Alberta; poetry by T. Marshall, P. S. Barry, A. Grandbois, S. Mayne, P. O'Broin, a.o.
No. 5 — Articles on the Arctic and South Africa; play by W. O. Mitchell; poetry by R. Gustafson, G. Bowering, A. Nowlan, L. Kearns, a.o.
No. 6 — Articles on Quebec and India; short stories by J. Metcalf, W. C. Bondarenko, a.o.; poetry by P. Blackburn, S. Cooperman, I. Layton, J. Hulcoop, a.o.
No. 7 — Articles on China and Cuba; Special on French-Canadian poetry: P. Chamberland, R. Giguere, G. Godin, G. Miron, a.o.; poetry by H. Beissel, B. Lord, a.o.
No. 8 — Articles on Quebec, Class Struggle in North America, and Orwell's *1984*; special features on Czechoslovakia and the Art of Dennis Burton; poems by J. Brown, St. D. Garneau, D. Gutteridge, R. Kohler, E. A. Lacey, A. Purdy, a.o.

As a special farewell gesture we offer these past issues at $1 together with your copy of No. 9 at $1.50. Make sure you have the complete run of the most exciting cultural magazine yet to come out of Canada

THE BUSINESS MANAGER, BOX 4067, EDMONTON, ALTA., CANADA

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS RECEIVED

BOOKS

ERNEST BUCKLER, *Ox Bells and Fireflies*, McClelland and Stewart, 1968. Collection of short stories, 302 pp. $7.95.

PETER DE VRIES, *The Cat's Pajamas & Witch's Milk*, Little, Brown & Co. (Canada) Ltd., 1968. 2 novels, 303 pp. $7.25.

DOUG FETHERLING, *the united states of heaven/gwendolyn papers/that chain-letter hiway*, House of Anansi, 1968. Collection of poetry, 80 pp. Paperback $1.95, hardbound $5.00.

IRVING LAYTON, *Selected Poems*, McClelland and Stewart, 1969. $6.50.

MORDECAI RICHLER, *Hunting Tigers under Glass*, McClelland and Stewart, 1968. Essays and reports, 160 pp. $5.95.

ELI SIEGEL, *Hail, American Development*, 1968. Poetry. Clothbound $4.95, paperback $2.45.

THREE CUBAN POETS, *In the Turmoil of the People*, translated by Roger Prentice, 44 pp.

PERIODICALS

Chelsea, ed. Michael Benedikt, P.O. Box 242, Old Chelsea Station, New York, N.Y. 10011. Poetry, art notes, plays, film, autobiographies, fiction and criticism. Quarterly. $1.00 per copy, $3.50 sub.

Dialogue, published by the Students Representative Council, University of Cape Town Libraries. Discussion, articles and comments on various subjects.

Salt, ed. Robert Currie, 1119 - 13th Avenue N.W., Moose Jaw, Sask. Poetry, reviews, reports. 24 pp. Sub. $1.00 per year.

The Anthology, ed. Richard Krech and John Oliver Simon, Noh Directions Press, 2209 California Street, Berkeley, Calif. 94703. Poems read at COSMEP in Berkeley, 1968.

Trial 1968, eds. John Gillan, James MacSwain, Mount Allison University. Poetry, art.

Works, ed. John Hopper and Robert Brotherston, AMS Press, Inc., 56 East 13th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003. Poetry, fiction, drama, commentaries, reviews. Quarterly. $1.00 per copy, $3.50 sub.

west coast review

a tri-annual magazine of the arts

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY / BURNABY 2 / BRITISH COLUMBIA / CANADA

Forthcoming in Volume IV:

Poems by	Alex Comfort, Alain Horic, Henry Beissel, D. G. Jones, Robert Dana, Alvin Greenberg, Douglas Blazek, Greg Kuzma
Fiction by	Alden Nowlan, S. Najovits, K. Thompson, E. McNamara
Music by	Robert Moran, Robert Sheldon
A Filmography on	Donald Richie
Bibliographies on	Vernon Watkins, Dürrenmatt, Mishima, Günter Grass, Apollinaire
Reviews	debating *The New Romans* Beckett, Dudek, Snyder, Parra, Ross, Hesse, Neruda, Guillen, Canadian Literary History, *Beowulf*, Edmund Waller
Notes on New Books	Small Presses, M. Richler, Frank Lloyd Wright
Essays on	Computer Poetry and on The Current Literary Scene
Drama by	Theodore Kitaif

Drawings *Photographs* *Photo-Poems*

Subscriptions

Single copy	$ 1.50
One year	4.00
Two years	6.00
Donor (1 year)	10.00
Sponsor (2 years)	25.00
Patron (5 years)	100.00

Advertisements

Outside back cover	$100
Inside back cover	75
Full page	50
Half page	25

Address all correspondence to

Frederick Candelaria
Editor, *West Coast Review*
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby 2 (Vancouver), B.C.
Canada

4 poets. 2 novelists. 6 important books.

The Owl Behind the Door. Stanley Cooperman. New poetry that gets under the skin and moves from an Associate Professor of English at Simon Fraser.

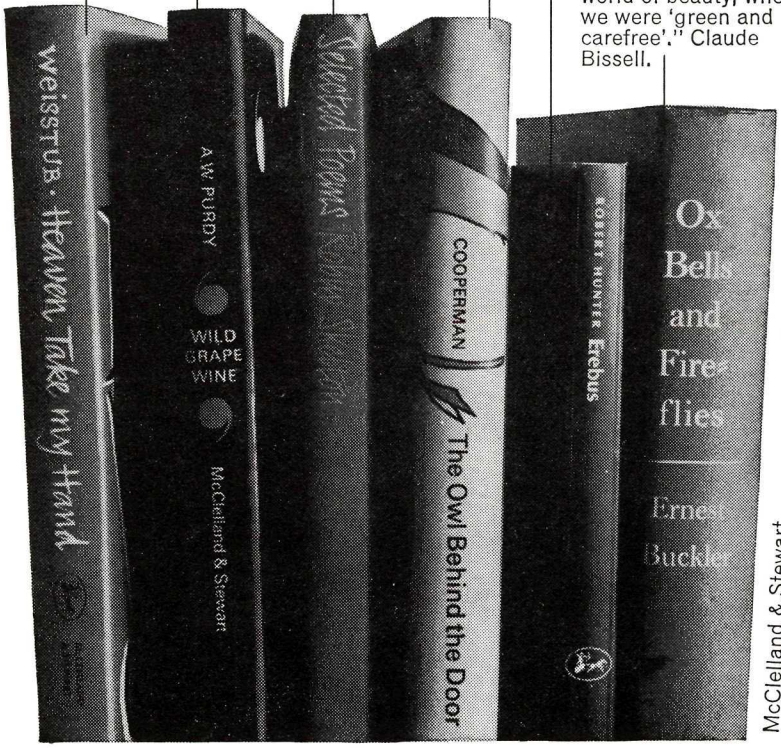
Wild Grape Wine. Al Purdy. From a Governor-General's Award winner and one of the most vital poets in the country, 68 new poems.

Erebus. Robert Hunter. "It's as formless—yet as disciplined—as most of Millers' work . . . a big, joyous, sad funny, hugely ambitious, marvellously successful book." Alexander Ross.

Heaven Take My Hand. David Weisstub. A young poet's involvement with the Jewish cultural myth. An evocative resolution of culture and now.

Selected Poems: 1947-1967. Robin Skelton. The best writing from the Editor of the Malahat Review from eight previous collections.

Ox Bells and Fireflies. Ernest Buckler. ". . . it reaches down to touch everybody's dream of a world of beauty, when we were 'green and carefree'." Claude Bissell.



McClelland & Stewart
The Canadian Publishers

The Price of Morning

Selected Poems by Walter Bauer

A bi-lingual edition, in German, with facing English translations
BY HENRY BEISSEL

"... Fine poems, finely translated ... vivid, often searing pictures of the human condition of our time." MICHAEL BULLOCK

"... His poems in the German language present a cosmopolitanism which balances our continentalism, and are an important focus for our literature. *The Price of Morning*, in the original German and in Henry Beissel's fluent English translations, is a wise book, too."
JOHN ROBERT COLOMBO

"... The appearance of *The Price of Morning*, selected poems by Walter Bauer, is an event of first importance.... Here is a poet who has paid the price of his morning, achieving poems that spring with compassion and anger straight out of life." RALPH GUSTAFSON

"... The book *The Price of Morning* is beautifully set out, and printed with amazing care. The translation by Henry Beissel is not only philologically exact, showing a genuine grasp of even the subtlest nuances of the use of the German language, but is also an achievement in its own right as language of poetic quality." HANS EGON HOLTHUSEN

"... In this newest book we find the expression of the purest essence of Walter Bauer's nature.... This translation will be of benefit to the whole of the English-speaking literary public of North America."
ERNST JOHANN

"Walter Bauer's poetry reflects a consciousness which feels deep concern for the desperate struggle of modern man, thrown into a world quite often beyond his control.... Henry Beissel succeeds in transposing Bauer's most personal poetic voice into beautiful English."
RAINER SCHULTE

"It is a remarkable translation of a rare and genuine libertarian poetry. ... I admire his achievement in its own right as a superb poetry of suffering and triumph, and I applaud *Prism*'s choice of *The Price of Morning* as the first of its publications." GEORGE WOODCOCK

For a copy of *The Price of Morning*, send $4.75 to

Prism international press,
Department of Creative Writing,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver 8, B.C., Canada.