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Valparaiso University

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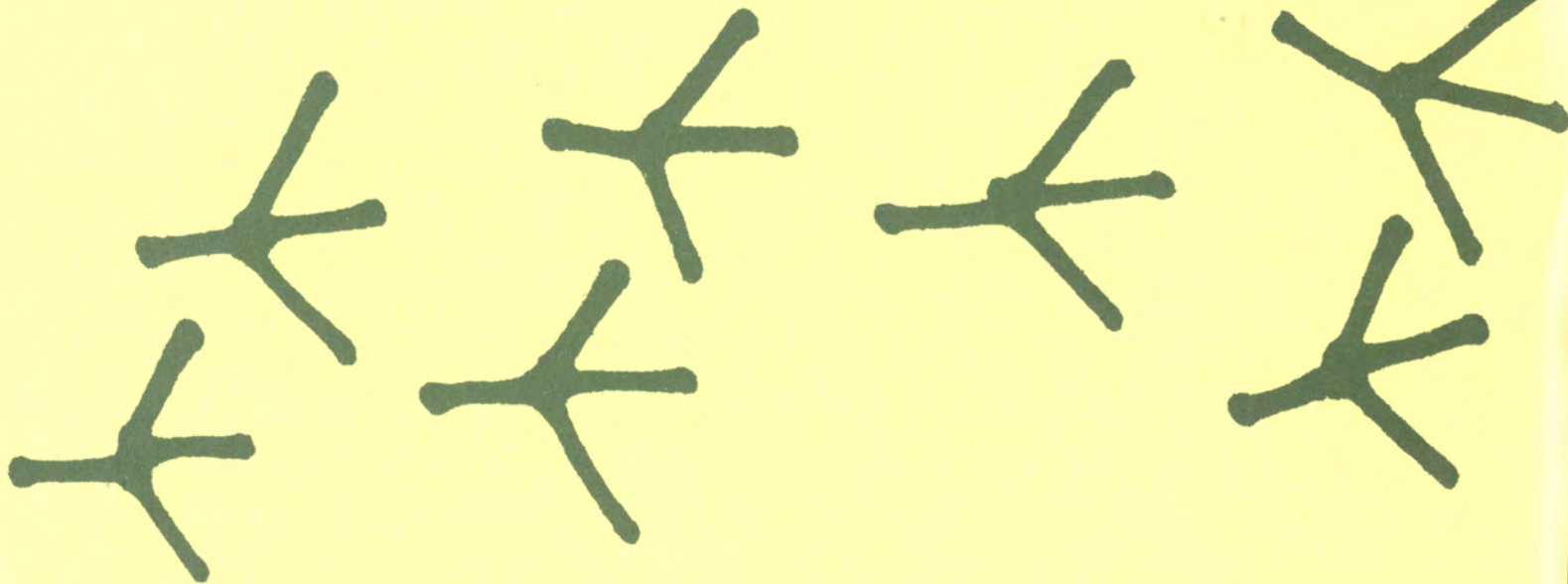
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The Lighter

from the students of
Valparaiso University
May 1970

friends & critics

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having grasped
the wriggling
snakes
of knowledge
he raises
his arms to the
sun,
the sinewy power
flows from snake to
arm and arm
to trunk,
he
lengthens and broadens
and roars smiling
his joyous
words,

katherine carino.

"What are you going to do with yourself this morning while Daddy's out fishing?", his mother asked the small boy as he wandered around the kitchen. "Can I fish off the dock by myself?" "Can you bait your own hook and—?" "—Sure I can," he said over his shoulder, already on his way out the door.

With the unwieldy length of the cane pole half-dragging behind him, he went down the walk to the lake. Kneeling on the wooden dock he dug in his dirt- and straw-filled tin can for a worm. He thought this one was wiggling with unaccustomed fierceness as he folded it over the hook, with lips pressed tight. A smear of blood and white viscous film clung to his fingers as he drew them away, and he reached over into the water to rinse his hand. Then he picked up the pole again, got to his feet, and swung the line out over the water. He lowered the hook until the bobber floated gently on the smooth water at the end of the dock, and he waited. Every stir of the red and white ball was judged with calculating eyes. Finally it trembled, moved a bit across the surface, then bobbed unmistakably. With a start he pulled the line straight, gave a little jerk, and his fish flapped through the surface. Its wide sun-barred sides gleamed shiny wet while it flung drops with a frantic tail. But it was firmly hooked. He reached out for the swaying line, lifting the huge pole and backing up simultaneously.

fishing

nancy freeland

Soon he held the line just above his wriggling catch. When he had reached a point as far away from the edge as he could get, he laid the fish on the rough planks with the pole beside it, and ran into the house. Bursting through the door he called for his mother. "Mommy, I caught one! Come take it off the hook for me!" His mother laughed. All right, I'm coming. Is it big enough to eat? Do you have something to put it in?" At his excited answers she took a pan from the cupboard and followed him through the door. He ran down the cement walk ahead of her, heedless of the uneven pavement. Suddenly he stumbled, and when his mother reached him he was hopping on one foot crying and clutching his raised knee. He pointed to his big toe, where blood welled around torn skin and a broken nail. "Sh-h-h, it's OK. I'll go down and get your fish off the hook, then we'll fix your toe. If you are going to tear around so on this cement, you ought to wear shoes, honey." After the first shock of his wound, he recovered rapidly. When his mother returned he had already hopped back to the house on his good leg, and the tears were replaced by a grimace. After the toe was cared for he hobbled out the door. "I'm going to take the next one off the hook myself," he said to her determinedly.

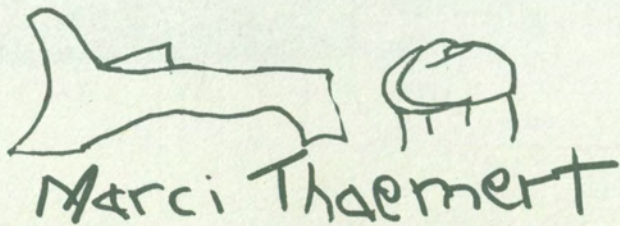
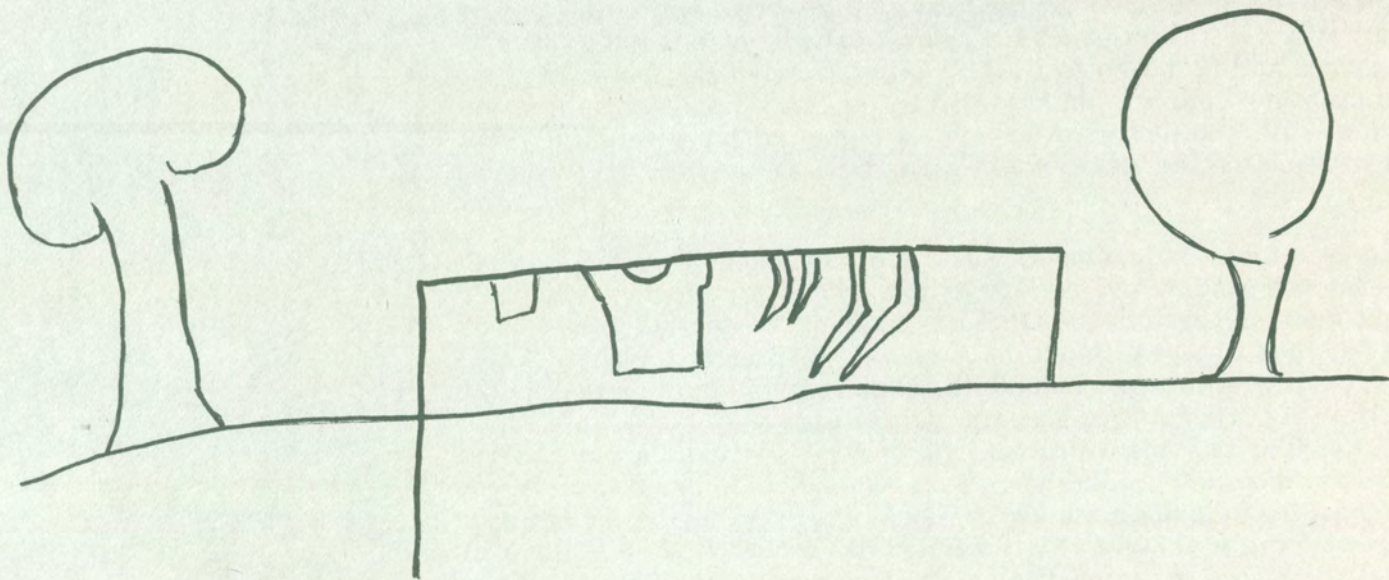
The morning was more than half gone and the sun had well warmed the gray planks of the dock when he saw the bobber sink again. He hauled this one in carefully until he held the flapping fish suspended right before him. Then he kneeled down by the pan and cautiously stretched his free hand toward the fish. His fingers could not quite meet around the slippery body. First they slid back over the smooth surface so that the fish popped free and

his wet hand closed on itself. At the next grab he let go with a jerk and an exclamation as the stiff fins stuck his palm. Finally he held it as firmly as he could manage and he began to struggle with the embedded hook. His face screwed up as the barb tore the thin stiff tissue. But it finally came free and he thrust the fish into the pan with relief. He glanced out toward the other fishermen visible on the lake before he dug for another worm to rebait his hook.

His father returned just after they had finished lunch. The boy saw him from the kitchen window and raced down to the dock. Proudly he announced, "I caught four sunfish from the dock this morning." "You did? Well I think between the two of us we should have enough for supper tonight." "Can I go out in the boat with you sometime? I can do everything for myself, all the time." "How about tomorrow? Can you get up early with me?" "Sure I can, and we'll catch twice as many fish as you got today!" Excited, the boy stepped backward to get out of his father's way as he unloaded the small boat. He was not watching his footing on the narrow dock, and suddenly he backed over the edge, falling quickly and without a cry, too startled to react. But his father's arm shot out immediately. The smooth curve of the top of the boy's head was just bobbing at the center of the rings of disturbed water when his hand reached in to seize the boy's shirt and haul him dripping to the dock. He was laughing and shaking his head at the same time. The boy only began to sputter as a delayed reaction, finally realizing what had happened. His father loomed large above him, his hand still grasping tightly the boy's shoulder. Suddenly he ducked and wriggled free, splattering water about him from flying limbs.



Joan Lundgren



chanson experience

in Just -
fall when the world is crud-
luscious the little
mathprofessor

Postulates big and wee

and sammyandpammy come
running from drinking and
premaritalsex and it's
fall

when the world is puddle-muckerfull

the queer
old professors hack grades
far and wee
and bettyandisbel come angry

from arguing God and existence and

it's

fall

and

the

whole godamn

world sinks

into ob-

liv

ion. . r. w. roschke

Princess Priceless

On How Princess Priceless Came to Valparaiso University and Tried to Fight for Purity

Dedicated to k. r.

Once when the university was young,
Once when the university was pure,
There abounded much purity, chastity, decency, and
all sorts
of intramural sports.

And there were parameters that, like the women, were never violated.
And tone knew character and the Student Handbook was conceived.
And all loved the Student Handbook for it was good.
Sons and daughters and sons of Valpo begat
and were begotten— but not on campus.

All this virtue and truth was guarded by God through his servants the Yoohoos.
These Yoohoos were a race of friendly creatures who were called yoohoos for the
peculiar sound they made to attract another Yoohoo's attention.





And the administrators loved the Yoohoos dearly for

They made birthday cakes
and gave money.

They planted green shrubbery
and gave money.

They bought furniture for dorms
and gave money.

Years slipped slowly by and everyone was oh so happy.

Until, one black day, an evil crept nigh unto the precious parameters.

And the evil slithered under the parameters.

And into this paradise of purity came the Hussies.

The Hussies smoked.

The Hussies drank.

The Hussies played Scrabble for money.

The Hussies were deceptively charming and lured students away from their volleyball games and administrators away from their subcommittees. No one was left untouched by the Hussies except—

The Yoohoos.

The Yoohoos knew the Hussies were evil.

And this was because the Chief Yoohoo had received a note from God in her Worship Supplement





at the 10:30 service and she was warned of the Hussies who were brazen.
But no one believed the note was authentic for it was hastily scribbled on the back of a reading development flyer.
When it appeared that all was lost, the subbest of the sub committees in heaven sent a recommendation to God for immediate miraculous intervention.
And God gave the matter all His due Deliberation and said, "Why not!"

And it came to pass, when Richard Nixon was President of the United States, the Vice President of Student Affairs had a miserable headache.
And he went forth to the University Medical Center to be healed.
And the kindly doctor told him to go wash in the baptismal font.
And the Vice President of Student Affairs did, but to no avail.
Ao again he harkened to the University Medical Center and the kindly doctor told him to drink orange juice and say the Lord's Prayer with the doors closed but not locked.
And the Vice President of Student Affairs did, but to no avail.
Again, the woeful administrator went to see the kindly doctor.
And the kindly doctor was puzzled and wanted to look more closely at the source of the hideous headache. So he took a hammer and piously pounded the head of the administrator.
And lo, the skull was opened and from the dark abyss sprang
PRINCESS PRICELESS





wearing a chic ensemble of brown and gold swaddling clothes from the Coronet Shop.
And on the third day, she reached puberty and enrolled in the university.
One day, while in the union eating a fisher-of-men sandwich complete with french fries
for the student-on-the-go, she was espied by the Student Senate President.
Somehow he could tell from the purple haze that surrounded her being, that she was
different from the other union rats.
He sashayed over to her table and asked her to be on the Residence Review Board and
fight for truth and purity.
And, verily, that was right up her alley.
Glowing, she assented.

It was not long before the goodness of Princess Priceless was put to a test.
The Floozies, a leftist militant movement within the Hussies, had proposed to the
Review Board, a piece of licentious legislation.
The Floozies were asking for intervisitation between and among the various sexes in the
sanctuary of their dorm rooms, in which the most outstanding feature is the bed.
Princess Priceless went forth to the meeting to dauntless defend
the tone and character of the university
the purity of womanhood
the sanctity of motherhood
the ninety-five theses of Martin Luther





and other various and sundry good causes of the Missouri Synod.

But she was despised by all. Both the students and the administrators were possessed by the evil spirits of the Floozies. And the Yoohoos couldn't make the meeting because they were making birthday cakes.

But Princess Priceless stood firm.

Gentle of voice,
pure of heart,
graceful of movement,
simple of mind—

she fought furiously unto fatigue the perverse proposal.

But all sneered at Princess Priceless.

All guffawed at Princess Priceless.

And the administrators pre-eminently pranced about the room
churlishly chanting their rheumatismic rhyme.

UP WITH SEDITION
PERDITION
PERMISSION
DOWN WITH TRADITION
TUITION
SUBMISSION

And the Princess was much disturbed.

And she lifted her eyes to the acoustical ceiling and uttered one last prayer:





To whom it may concern last seen in the general vicinity of heaven, we need a referee for this game. Thy rational discourse come. Thy rational will be done through all the proper channels, of course. Give us this day our daily parameters. And preserve us our chastity as we preserve those who chastise against us. And lead us not into self-regulation. But deliver us from contemplation. For thin is the system saved by power for the order, forever (barring the onslaught of the Aquarian Age) and ever. Amen.

And suddenly the frolicking voices died in the presence of so pure a heart. And they were greatly moved. Ashamed of their evil ways, the administrators turned the Floozies from the room.

Tearfully, the Vice President of Student Affairs turned to the Princess and whispered tremulously, "Don't worry my child, we will stop this raucous resolution once and for all. I know just the committee to send it to for further consideration."

Princess Priceless smiled and then faded into purple haze.
Her work was over and purity was saved.





Marsha Siik

Janis Schedler





BARNES — ashenfaced, elegant, austere, normal, faultlessly attired in a black tuxedo and white ruffled shirt, an air of some authority, about fifty and meticulous.

BUTLER — ashenfaced, formal, faultlessly attired in morning coat with tails, an air of servitude, about thirty-five.

CLOWN — wears a mask with a large red-lipped toothy smile, false gaiety, vindictive, wears a black clown suit with white ruffles on the cuffs, collar, cap, etc.

FAT LADY — cheerful, slightly puffy face, sweet, girlish matronly voice, many gestures, wears a little girl's party dress and a little girl's ringlets, about forty with pink cheeks.

OLIVER — appears to be meek, wears a blue suit, white shirt, maroon tie, appears to be about sixty.

Set

White lighting. There is an arrangement of high white walls backstage. Perhaps they are light creme colored with Grecian scrollwork on the upper fifth of the walls. Two single doors are spaced apart on the right side of the arrangement. The floor is of dark polished wood, perhaps rosewood. Along the back wall are three elegant, richly ornamented coffins and a small pyramid with "Coke" signs on all four sides. All of these pieces are on rolling platforms three to four feet high.

Ascertainment
|
Steve Suppan



Lights on. At center stage Barnes sits in a great black, high-backed chair sideways to the audience. In front of him are a black table with two wineglasses on it and a black wicker chair. Butler is in the midst of pouring a second glass of wine when there is a knock at one of the doors.

BARNES: Attend to the door, Butler.

BUTLER: Yes, sir goes to the door and opens it. Sir, May I have your invitation please? Clown steps in past Butler.

CLOWN: Oh, of course pulls a baby rattle out of his large pocket and gives it to Butler, then looks generally around . . . hhm. . . To himself. . . very good. Isn't the dress rather somber? No one told me it was a black tie affair. I wish I'd get the messages straight. I'd have sworn it was a masquerade ball. Barnes walking towards the table. Barnes, isn't this a costume ball?

BARNES: Do I know you?

CLOWN: Don't play games with me, Barnes. Answer my question.

BARNES: I beg your pardon sir?

CLOWN: You know me Barnes. You've seen my face in all the ads. I am the funny man. Our firm puts out the ads. You balance the books so we can put out more ads. I am the funny man Kneels in Al Jolson style. Butler stands at Barne's side.

BARNES: I am truly sorry sir, but I don't know you. Perhaps you would care for a glass of wine. Butler finishes

pouring the second glass of wine. It would settle your nerves and offer us opportunity to discuss the reasons for your mistaking my identity. They sip the wine. The clown sits down. Now, you were saying?

CLOWN: Your name is Barnes. We work for the firm. We are in a partnership with Oliver.

BARNES: You know Oliver?

CLOWN: You've heard of Oliver?

BARNES: My dear sir, this is Oliver's funeral. We are in the anteroom of the funeral parlor.

CLOWN: I. . . I can't believe it. . . pause of recomposure. What sort of man was Oliver? Now fidgetting in chair.

BARNES: He was perhaps sixty. He favored blue suits, white shirts and maroon ties. Constantly he favored them. He was rather meek. Occasionally he smiled, rather wryly.

CLOWN: Naturally, we are a producer of smiles, the largest producer in the world. . . But you say Oliver is dead!

BARNES: At any rate, he was about to be buried when I last noticed. He should die today. I mean the arrangements have been made; organist, plot, preacher, press, mourners, morticians fidgetting slightly, chauffers, caterers; they've all been bought. The books would be horribly messed if he didn't die. To say nothing of the memorial teacups we donated in his honor to the college of his choice now standing up, cringing at the prospect of Oliver's living. They'd all have to be restamped.

CLOWN: Ha. . . you are in a fright. Tell me if I can persuade Oliver not to die and agree to balance the books, would you recognize me?

BARNES: Well, there are certain channels. A certain protocol should be followed.

CLOWN: Damn, can't we bely formality on this occasion? After all, our firm does make smiles. I am the smile maker.

BARNES: That remains to be ascertained.

CLOWN: Well, if we are to indulge in formalities, let us by all means have a trial. You shall be the judge. I shall be the prosecution. A trial will ascertain something.

BARNES: And why can't I be the prosecution? I have already the grace, the elegance, and the pointedly calculated mind.

CLOWN: Because, my dear Barnes, I have the face, the deliverance, and the style for the execution, that is the prosecution of due process.

BARNES: Yes, you do have the smile. . . Then I shall be the defense!

CLOWN: No, think a minute Barnes. The defense is a peon animal. He has a dearth of grandeur; your austerity, your royal majesty. You can only be. . .

BARNES: . . . the judge of course!. . . but whom shall we select for the defense? He should be a member of the firm.

CLOWN: Who is the peon? Who is meeker and more mild-mannered than Clark Kent?

BARNES: Why, Oliver of course! Butler, you shall be bailiff. *pauses, slightly puzzled* . . . Clown, you shall be recognized by me, provided you persuade Oliver to live and balance the books. But how shall I profit from this charade?

CLOWN: It will be a "divertissement" until Oliver dies. . . And now, on with the show!



All three form a file and they walk to the closet door; Butler first, Clown second, and Barnes at the rear. Butler opens the closet door and they relay one black wicker chair, fire brigade style. Then Barnes and the Clown take the great chair and place it behind the table, while Butler places the Clown's chair in front of the table. Both wicker chairs are nearly sideways to the audience with a slight diagonal slant facing the audience. Then all form another brigade and walk with majesty to the closet door. Butler opens the closet door and pulls out a huge golden ceremonial mace with a large red-lipped smile on the hammering end. The mace rests on a large black pillow. The brigade passes the pillow and mace to Barnes. The procession files around the table once, and the Clown places the mace on the table. Then Barnes places the pillow on the

great chair for added pomp and heighth. The three form the same brigade as before. They walk formally to the closet. Butler pulls out a black judges gown and hands it to the Clown. The Clown bows and presents the gown to Barnes.

CLOWN: I hereby invest you with the stature and the right.

BUTLER: The stature and the right, so be it.

Butler and the Clown walk to the rear of the chamber and pull a coffin apiece to the front of the stage. The coffins are placed on the flanks of the wicker chairs, thus completing the semi-circle facing the audience. In the meantime, Barnes has put on his gown, sat down in the great chair and sipped a little wine. His task completed, Butler stands at Barne's side, facing the audi-

ence. The Clown, his task completed, stands next to his chair, side ways to the audience. Barnes rises.

BUTLER: Will all please rise. . . *waits.* . . We have been gathered here merely to make certain somehow that this Clown can be recognized. The Honorable Judge Barnes presiding. There shall be order in the court.

All seat themselves, the butler in the wicker chair opposite the Clown.

BARNES: Here! Here! Now we shall get on with it. *He flips a coin but does not look at it.* Prosecutor, your opening remarks.

CLOWN: *Stands up and walks about, lawyer style, as he remarks and question.* My objective in this trial is not merely to achieve recognition but to prove that water is thicker than blood. . . Yes, I mean to prove that on the evening of December the eighth, you Barnes, and you Oliver, destroyed the smile machine and in so doing killed the Fat Lady.

BARNES: Oh. . . help. . . I've lost my reserve. . . Yet the show must go on. For it is written, or at any rate is spoken.

OLIVER: *Opens coffin lid, sits up and laughs.* Order in the court! *laughs.*

BARNES: Here! Here!

Oliver laughs, lays back down and closes the coffin lid.

CLOWN: Now if this trial is to go lickety-split, we should drop a bomb. *Gesturing like a ring master.* For my first witness, the Fat Lady! Bring in the Reincarnation Machine. *Butler walks to the rear of the chamber and rolls the Reincarnation Machine to the side of the Clown's chair.*

The Reincarnation Machine is the pyramid with the "Coke" signs on four sides.

CLOWN: Plug in the Reincarnation Machine. *The Butler cannot do so.* . . . And now!, I present to you the Fat Lady.

Coffin lid pops open. The Fat Lady sits up.

FAT LADY: I walk, I talk, I'm full of chalk. I am the Fat Lady. How rotund are you?

CLOWN: Please, only the facts. This is a court of law. *He sits down.*

Butler walks to the table, takes the mace and walks to the side of the Fat Lady's coffin. She giggles.

BUTLER: Place your hand on the Golden Mace. *She does so.* Now, do you swear?

FAT LADY: Deary landsakes, no! Why Uncle Ralphy Jackal would take to bad ways, and Dear Edger Elephant would bump into coffee tables, bless his large blind eyes.

BUTLER: Thank-you. *Returns to table and sits down.*

BARNES: Counselor, you may question the witness.

CLOWN: *Again into the lawyer, ring-master gestures.* Now,

Fat Lady, it is known that you are a good mother, but did you not, on the evening of November the thirty-first, seduce Oliver in a loving attempt to acquire the plates that produced the world's smiles?

FAT LADY: Mi spickery! Mi spickery! Seduce Jolly Ollie for possession of the smile plates? Why never on earth. We did it in the Reincarnation Machine. Ollie wouldn't counterfeit smiles. He just wanted to make more of them. Me too. . . . The plates are counterfeit. The smile machine does not exist. Ollie makes smiles by himself.

BARNES: This is a pickle. No smile machine. Then all the money I've spent for oil is gone for naught. My poor books . . . but onward Clown.

CLOWN: Now that we've established your moral worth, I will ask you. . .

OLIVER: *Coffin lid pops open and Oliver sits up, then very pompously.* . . . I object! The honorable counselor did not state her moral worth.

BARNES: Objection sustained. Prosecutor, you will state the Fat Lady's moral worth.

Oliver chuckles.

CLOWN: She's worth as much as you'll pay her.

FAT LADY: Scribbly-wibbly. I object. Look here, you may be angered that there's no smile machine, but that's no excuse to be jealous of me. I'm better paid than you are

because I'm a cog in the production. You're just a facade, you scrud, you P.R. man!

CLOWN: All right, Fatty, If I'm scrud, then what is Barnes and what is Oliver and what is Butler?

FAT LADY: I walk, I talk, I'm full of chalk. I am the Fat Lady. How rotund are you?

CLOWN: I am finished. *Sits down.*

Oliver smiles wryly and a bit painfully.

BARNES: Shall we ever get back to the things which must be ascertained? Oliver, would you care to cross-examine the Fat Lady?

OLIVER: Yes, I would, your honor. . . Fatty?

FAT LADY: Yes, Ollie?

OLIVER: Now I want you to be nice. We must ascertain certain things *he giggles*. . . Now will you tell me why I make smiles or why we need smiles? Is there any need for smiles? *perhaps melodramatically*

FAT LADY: Ollie, don't be self-pitying. Tiddly-widdly yes, there must always be smiles. . . Ooh! Fly away Edgar! Oh, where's your sense of radar you crazy elephant. *She waves her arms and squirms as much as a person sitting in a coffin can. After a few moments she stops as the errant Edgar regains his sense of radar.* . . Ollie if you merge with canned laughter, I'll never speak to you again!

CLOWN: stands up Oh, fie upon evil. Fain swoon me away from dire love's sake.

FAT LADY: Look here Clown, you can intimidate poor Ollie with your vicious barbs, but nobody satirizes the Fat Lady. Sic 'em Uncle Ralphy.

The apparently invisible Uncle Ralphy attacks the Clown's leg. Clown hops around, one legged, in a mad frenzy as Uncle Ralphy chews his leg.

CLOWN: Agh! Agh! Achtelebein! Love your hateful enemies! Be kind to blind flying elephants! A jackal a day keeps the doctor away - ay-ay! Agh! Agh!

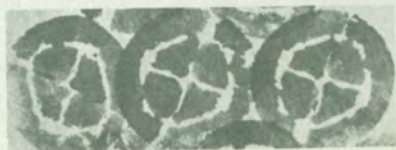
FAT LADY: Off him Uncle Ralphy.

CLOWN: Agh! Agh! . . . Oh! . . . ah! . . . oh! . . . sits in chair nursing wounds

BARNES: Order in the court here! Order in the court! Certain things must be ascertained! Get that crazy elephant out of here! Clear the court!

The Fat Lady and Oliver lay down in their coffins and close the lids.

The light falls from white to a hazy greyish blue and then back to white at the front of the stage.



A Mime in Three Movements

First Movement

Barnes and Butler walk in front of the coffins and sit down cross-legged, sideways to the audience. They are expectant, rubbing hands and leaning forward. The Clown's walks out to face them. He is also sideways to the audience. The Clown reaches into his pockets and pulls out two oranges which he begins to juggle. He bobbles the oranges and they fall, rolling to Barnes and Butler. They wave their arms and hold their noses in booing him. Both pick up an orange apiece and throw it at the Clown. The Clown is hit, but bows into a wooden somersault. Butler and Barnes thumb their noses at him. The Clown arises and majestically produces from his pocket a cardboard model of an atom bomb! On the model is painted a large red-lipped smile. The Clown flourishes the model to the audience and then to Butler and Barnes, who initially scramble away from him. But after some moments awe gathers in them and they stand to applaud the Clown. The Clown puts the bomb back in his pockets, bows to the audience, Barnes and Butler, and then cartwheels to a cross-legged sitting position.

Second Movement

Butler stands up without the use of his hands. He then walks on an unseen tightrope to an unseen platform. He picks up a platter of unseen glasses and walks the tightrope, doing pirouettes and kicks. Twice he stops to serve imaginary drinks with politesse. During the last stop he crashes to the floor in macabre disarray. Butler gets up slowly and makes a very low bow. Barnes scuttles behind Butler on his fours. Then the Clown pushes Butler over Barnes' back. Barnes and the Clown roll in laughter. Barnes rolls back to his previous seat, as Butler crawls to his previous position. All compose themselves.

Third Movement

Barnes arises with dignity. He walks to the left side wall and using his finger writes columns of figures on the wall. He is pleased with himself. Barnes does a swanlike movement of grace and balance. The Clown scoots to the table, takes the mace and shoves it on Barnes' extended fingertips. Barnes collapses unceremoniously. He remounts his composure quickly. Taking the mace and holding it diagonally across his chest, Barnes stands up.

The Clown, who was in fits of laughter, and Butler, who looked on silently, line up behind Barnes; first the Clown and then the Butler. They stride formally back to their pre-mime positions in the midst of the greyish-blue light haze.



The white lighting reappears

Barnes rises and Butler stands up and walks to the side of the table, facing the audience.

BUTLER: All will please rise. *The Fat Lady and Oliver pop open their coffins and sit up.* We are gathered here to ascertain certain things. The Honorable Judge Barnes presiding. There shall be order in the court.

BARNES: Yes, I want order here. Defense, your opening remarks.

OLIVER: *Appearing much consternated. Oliver stands up in the coffin.*

Fie, upon your face
Of green cheese
Melted in the pocket
Of the moon,
The odor is unreasonable.

Oliver leaps from his coffin to the floor. As he speaks, he points an accusing finger at Butler, Barnes, and the Clown, respectively.

Where walks the magic penguin,
Who balances
The glasses of formal servitude and informal fear,
On the tip
Of his nose.

OLIVER: Hey! Ho!
Has the ink
Frozen in your file cabinet

of two non-existent things, the smile machine and a dead Fat Lady.

BARNES: But the Reincarnation Machine?

OLIVER: A mere non-functional toy, a technological myth. . . I played along with your game, though I'm not sure why. . . If you weren't so twisted. . . How could you bury me before my death and refuse the Spirit of the Crazy Elephant the shelter of life?

A pause. Oliver peers at Butler.

Butler fidgets and then bows. Oliver turns to Barnes.

The center of your heart?

Well, funny man,
You've painted on your concrete smile.
Is it fixed as readily
As your heart of stone?

Yodel-ah-he-who
Can echo their imagination
From a mouth that can neither
Open or shut?

BARNES: What are you talking about, Counselor?

OLIVER: You know damned well what I'm talking about, Barnes! This trial is a farce designed to prove the existence

BARNES: Well. . . well, books must be balanced. . . for investigators. Records must be made. . . for posterity. . . Certain things must be ascertained.

FAT LADY: Edgar, flex your ears.

Oliver gives a nonverbal signal to Butler. Butler walks to the rear of the chamber and rolls the third coffin to the center of the semi-circle. While this happens, Oliver stares at the Clown.

CLOWN: Now, Fat Lady, don't sic your uncle on me. . . This smile, it's so hard to pull up and down. . . If you fix it in one spot, it's so much easier. There's no pain.

OLIVER: And for that comfort you would give away any joy that you have? . . . Edgar, take me on a long journey, perhaps to the North Pole. I'm sorry Fatty, I need a rest. . . They are so flaccid, so sad. There is nothing to resist. Smiles must have walls to push against, even if they are unfriendly walls.

Butler opens the coffin, loaded with delicacies and drinks.

BUTLER: Dinner is served.

Oliver takes out a candy cane, sniffs it delicately, and then lights and smokes it as if it were a fine cigar. He does all of this with a warm sophistication and grand reverence.

OLIVER: Come Edgar, let us partake before we depart.

Oliver puffs a smoke ring which he catches on the end of his candy cane.

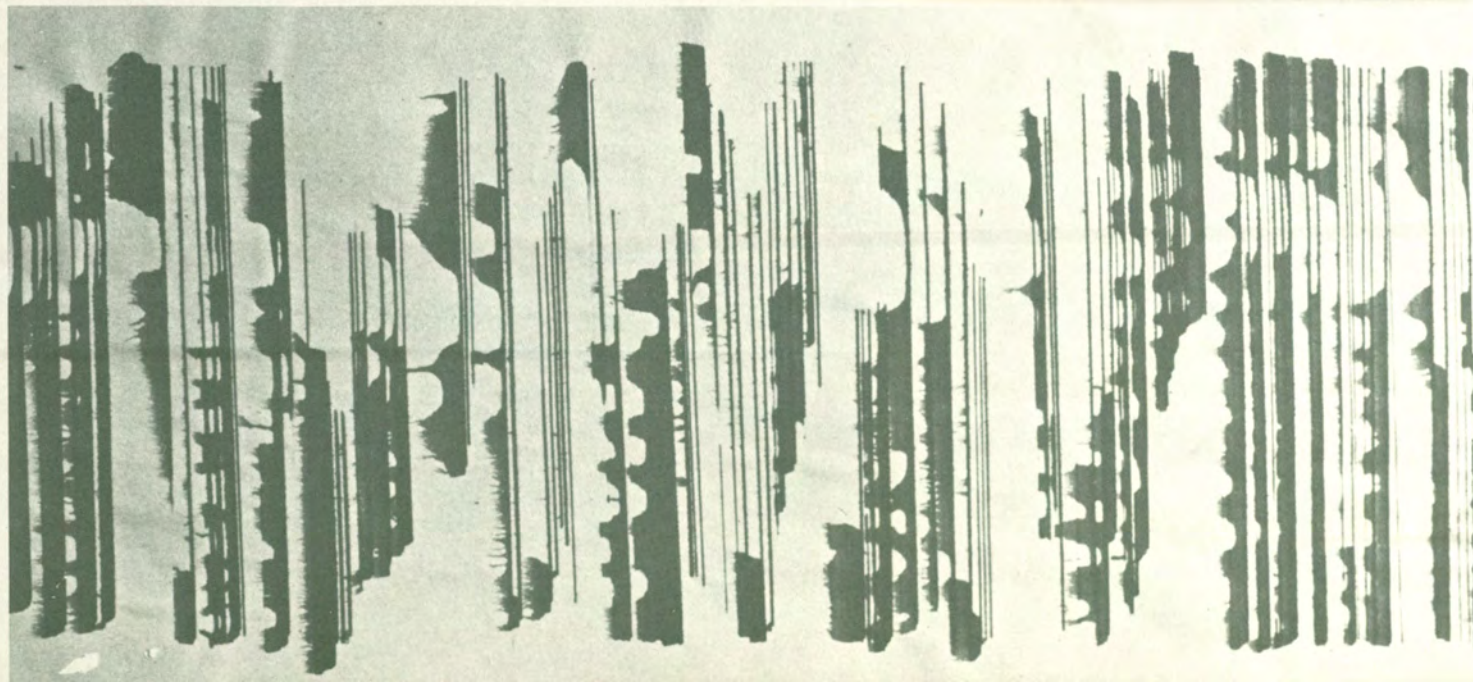


Blackout



Marsha Siik

Jeane Christianer



Polar Visitations/ Bill Karasch

From the North, from the polar country

Came the whirlwinds

Bearing the snow and the ice

And I bowed down and wept:

My weeping turned cold

No sun in the polar country

Only snow,

And ice

And whirlwinds.

And I bowed down and wept

And the whirlwinds kissed me

I shivered at the touch of their lips

And fell dead.

My eyes leaped out of my face
All blue and cracked of ice
And warred with the whirlwinds
My eyes warred
And my lips trembled
As I lay dead.

The snow was my blanket
To warm my dead body
My hands broke the blanket
Flew up and snatched the whirlwinds
They moaned in the grasp of my fingers
My nails gripped the whirlwinds
Tearing their skin
Blood flowed from their wounds

And covered my hair

As I lay dead.

I had conquered the whirlwinds
The cold, gaudy whirlwinds
Who slew me dead
I had vanquished them
They abdicated their ether-throne
And sank, bloodless
Into the old snow.

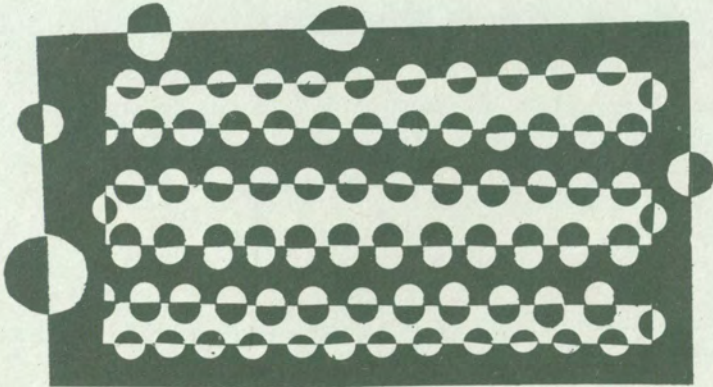
Which vanished, which disappeared.
(Not melted)
And I together with it.
We were no more
We were extinct

In other words,
We were no more.

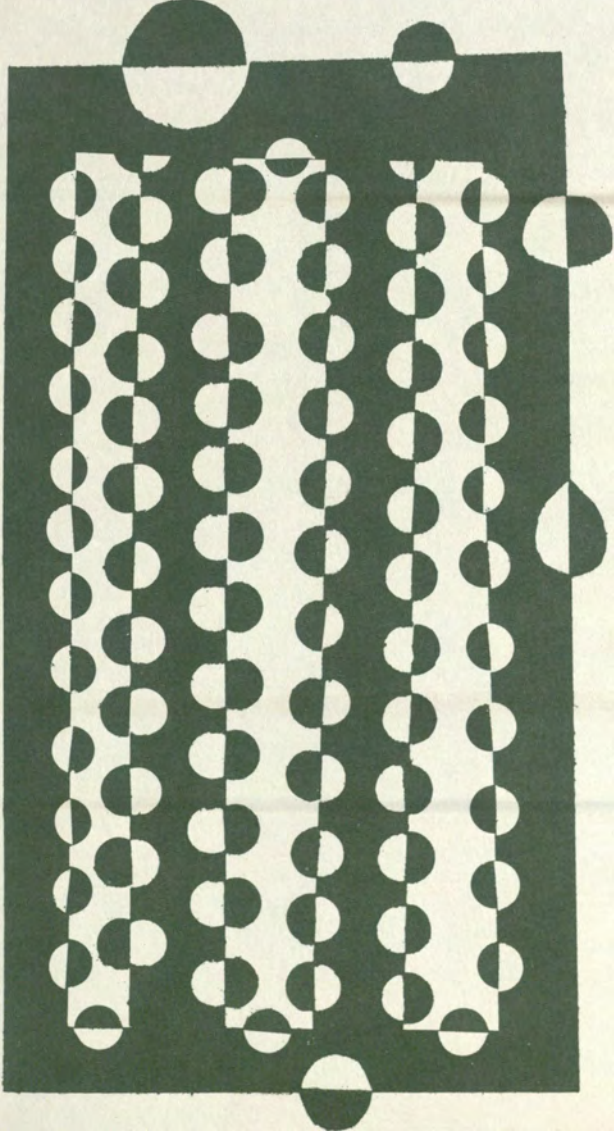
My lover's gone to fondle summer.

—Sunccinctly missing

Becky Bonser
Age 12, 1964

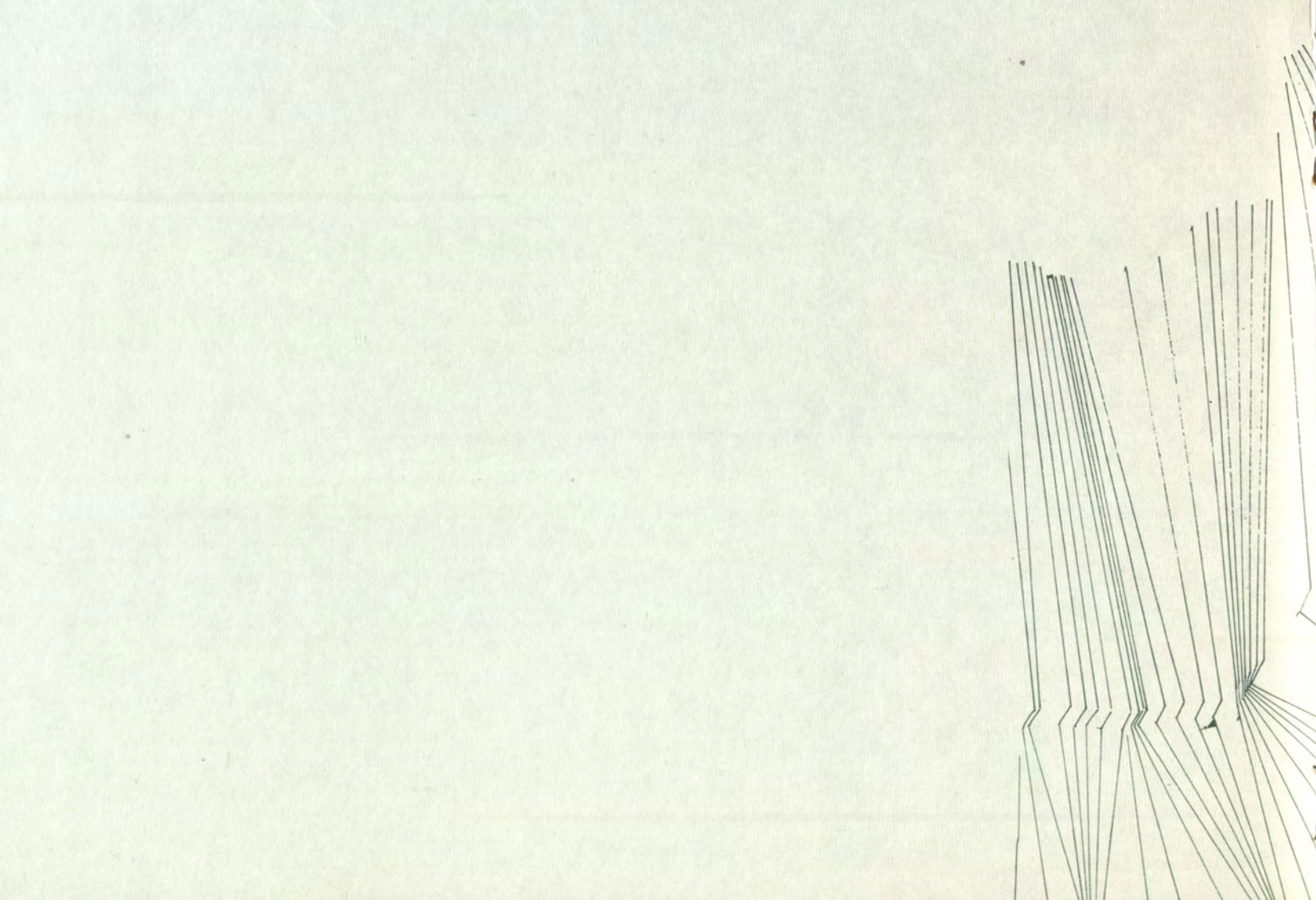


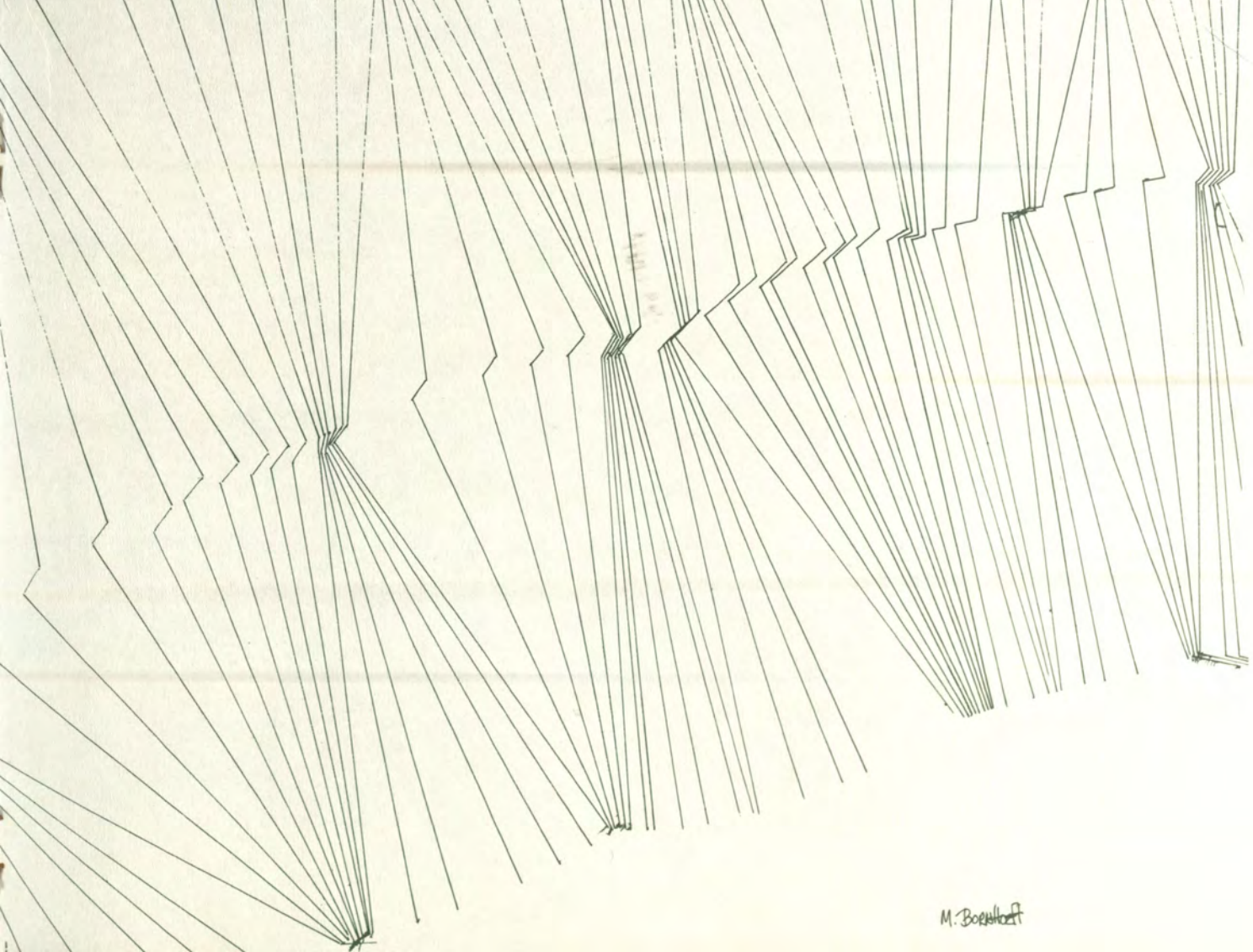
Time is
Abiding in endless seconds
And fleeting years
Upon this fearing earth,
Enjoying an endless existence
And secure in the peaceful knowledge of it,
Knowing dreadful secrets
And not daring to share them
With any mortal,
Participating in everything
And yet being distant
And cruelly plundering,
Robbing children of their play
And of their dreams.
He is finding amusement in
Those who are growing older
Without the realization
Of this
Fact.



release
Phyllis Root

the sun is slowly letting go the day
the crimson liberation of these hours
you watch, and I do too
because we cannot meet each others' eyes.
this letting go is hardest,
releasing days of bitterness
and fear
unwinding frenzied fingers
from our fragile pride
till all our pain has settled with the day,
so you will turn from twilight
and our eyes will meet once more.





M. Borchhoff

Joan Lundgren



I exhaled:

a perfect seeded sphere exploded
mushrooming particles descended
dandelion fallout

I blew it, God.

d. burgman

Galloping,

Today there is a great deal of sweating going on inside Leonard's green sweater. There it goes, up the steps, Leonard sweating on the inside, the cowboy sweating on the outside and galloping across the back on a woolen brown horse. The cowboy is yellow and his tatty speck of a red yarn mouth is supposed to be going: Yahoo!, but, in actuality, says:

what shall we do today, Leonard?

"Grunt," goes nasty Leonard, his usual discourteous way of responding to the cowboy, who, after all, is just some colored wool. It is Leonard's sweater and, though they share it, Leonard's sweat. The cowboy is silent; he screws up his face fibers (wrings out a bit of Leonard's sweat) and thinks, galloping there quite seriously with his hat waving in his yellow hand. His brown yarn Stetson, waving

courtesies, apologies—here we have a sad yellow cowboy galloping across (trying to escape from? No.) a green sweater on a fat back, sweating, apologizing for his existence with his hat. He says:

shall we watch the television?

Squinty eye Leonard considers; he reaches a decision and says, "Very well."

The cowboy is happy and, in a tinny voice, goes: Yahoo!

as he is supposed to, and the end-bits of his red yarn mouth curl up.

So into the house goes fat Leonard, preparing his mind to accept a children's television program about the bravest cowboy in the world, which might surprise some people if they knew how old Leonard is.

Galloping

The television goes click and says excitedly, “. . . And it won't cave in your face!! (Pause) Now, boys and girls, we return to Cowboy Leonard!”

A Yahoo from the cowboy, a grunt from Leonard leaning back in his chair, a Mphhghoo from the cowboy on the back of Leonard's sweater.

And now, on the television screen, we see the bravest cowboy in the world.

“I'm in a pretty tight spot,” begins Cowboy Leonard, “Alone, Lost in the desert. Night coming on. No food. No water. No weapons. Trapped here on this boulder (indicates boulder), surrounded by hundreds of evil, snorting pigs, the man-eating Javelina!”

(Indicates pigs, who squeal ferociously.)

“But,” continues Cowboy Leonard, “I won't give up hope. Oh, no! (He addresses pigs) You'll not get

me, you nasty little pigs! Cowboy Leonard has one or two tricks up his sleeve!” (Indicates sleeve. He looks as if he wants to pace about the boulder.)

In the chair, Leonard is thinking about things that have happened today. He meets his little brother coming home from school. They talk together across the long metal bridge above the railway, Leonard waddling, the cowboy galloping, his little brother skipping along noisily in proper little-brother-fashion.

“What's this word mean, Leonard?” His little brother points. “What's this written on the bridge?”

The cowboy looks worried, waves his hat.

“Words,” says Leonard, “just some words, written here and there.”

“Look at all of the words! What do they all mean, Leonard?”

"You'll find out by reading them when it's time for you to read. . ."

And the cowboy tries to warn Leonard, frowns his yellow forehead. But will Leonard listen?

"When it's time for you to read them," continues Leonard, "you must learn to ignore them completely. You mustn't read them at all."

At this, Leonard's little brother laughs and laughs and runs ahead to a big thick word. "But I can read them, Leonard, and I don't want to pretend that they aren't there. I want to know what they mean! Listen!"

He points and laughs, "Fook! Fook,fook,fook!" (pointing and pointing.)

Leonard begins to run his fastest waddle and waves fat arms.

"NO!"

The cowboy shuts his speck-of-wool eyes and turns a paler yellow.

But on and on goes Leonard's little brother, from word to word, like rocks in a stream, only mispronounced, shouting and laughing.

So Leonard screams, "Stop that! You don't know what they mean! You don't know!"

At the end of the bridge, the scream reaches Leonard's little brother, who turns and, laughing, sends one back. "Do you know? do **you**?"

And now he's melting-running and gone, except for some left-over laughing. Leonard is shuffling to get off the bridge; the cowboy slows to a trot, opens his eyes and asks:

did he get you, Leonard?

Leonard thinks. "No, he missed." says Leonard.

"The main thing to remember, boys and girls, is to be stalwart and unafraid," comments Cowboy Leonard, looking at the pigs. "To remain calm and in full possession of one's faculties. Stand straight and firm in the face of great peril! (He stands straight and firm) Throw back one's head and laugh, ha! ha!"

(the pigs squeal)

"Ho. Situation obviously calls for a cool head and a brave heart. (Indicates heart) Pigs there,

there, and there (pointing). Myself. . . here. Ah, well . . . things could be worse. . . For instance, I could be either there, there, there, or there (points) and the pigs could be up here. . . (Pause) I will assume that help is on the way. Yes, help will arrive in time.

(the pigs squeal)

“Help. Yes.”

In the chair, Leonard is thinking about things that have happened today. He visits the place where his father works. All fathers have places

where they work, thinks Leonard. It is a small white and metal room at the back of the Parlor and there is Leonard’s father, dressed in a long apron, muttering things to a client, who is lying on the table, resting. The cowboy yellows down several shades; he might be a bit of jaundiced white wool cowboy. He tries to warn Leonard, but will Leonard listen to pale yarns any more than bright ones? Leonard’s father doesn’t see Leonard standing there in the doorway. He smooths his apron, flicks off some

Gallop, ***Gallop***

bits of red, clasps the client firmly by his shoulders, shakes him vigorously. . . "UP!"

Nothing.

"Stand! MOVE! Wave! (indicating arms) Kick! Smile! Cry! WALK! Dance! (begins to lift client) Dance! (client off table) DANCE!!"

Leonard watches his father dance about the little room, dragging his heavy, unco-operative client after him. The eyes of the client are surprised dummy's eyes and Leonard's father is a dancing ventriloquist. "TALK!"

They dance a little clog step, then a drunken cakewalk; they bend and jerk stiffly, one heaving and sweating, the other merely looking surprised. And now they're leaning upon each other, Leonard's father sobbing great coughing sobs onto a cold shoulder offered by the client. Leonard is grasping the doorframe with both hands, the cowboy is desperately trying to gallop away with Leonard's green sweater. The client is staring at Leonard from behind Leonard's father and now seems completely astonished, as his jaw has dropped a bit.

Leonard's father coughs, "Nothing, again. . . nothing! Always nothing! I can only make then

look right. . . I can never. . ." He, sobbing in the middle of his turn, meets Leonard's eyes:

"LEONARD!"

The cowboy thinks he has assumed control of the sweater, after all, but it is Leonard inside, Leonard, pumping out a speedy waddle, running from his father's eyes.

And when it's safe to breathe, the cowboy asks: did he get you, Leonard?

Leonard thinks. "Just a flesh wound." says Leonard.

"I am safe! Yes, for the moment, I am safe!" says the world's bravest cowboy. "I. . . shall call upon my clever and resourceful nature to deliver me from this. . . predicament. . . I can stand. (he stands). . . I can contemplate (he does so). . . I have two. . . opposing. . . thumbs (they wiggle). . ."

(pigs squeal)

"which is more than you can say, pigs! Hundreds of you out there and not one. . . not **one** opposing thumb in the lot! . . the herd. . . (Pause) I am a human being! Yes! Decisive action will be taken against you, pigs!"

Galloping, Galloping

(the pigs squeal)

"You suppose that you, in your pigginess could ever hope. . ."

(the pigs squeal)

"Your miserable pig-like pigginess against my magnificent humanity?? HAH!"

(the pigs squeal)

"You. . . PIGS! You piggy little piggoty pig, pig, pig. . .!"

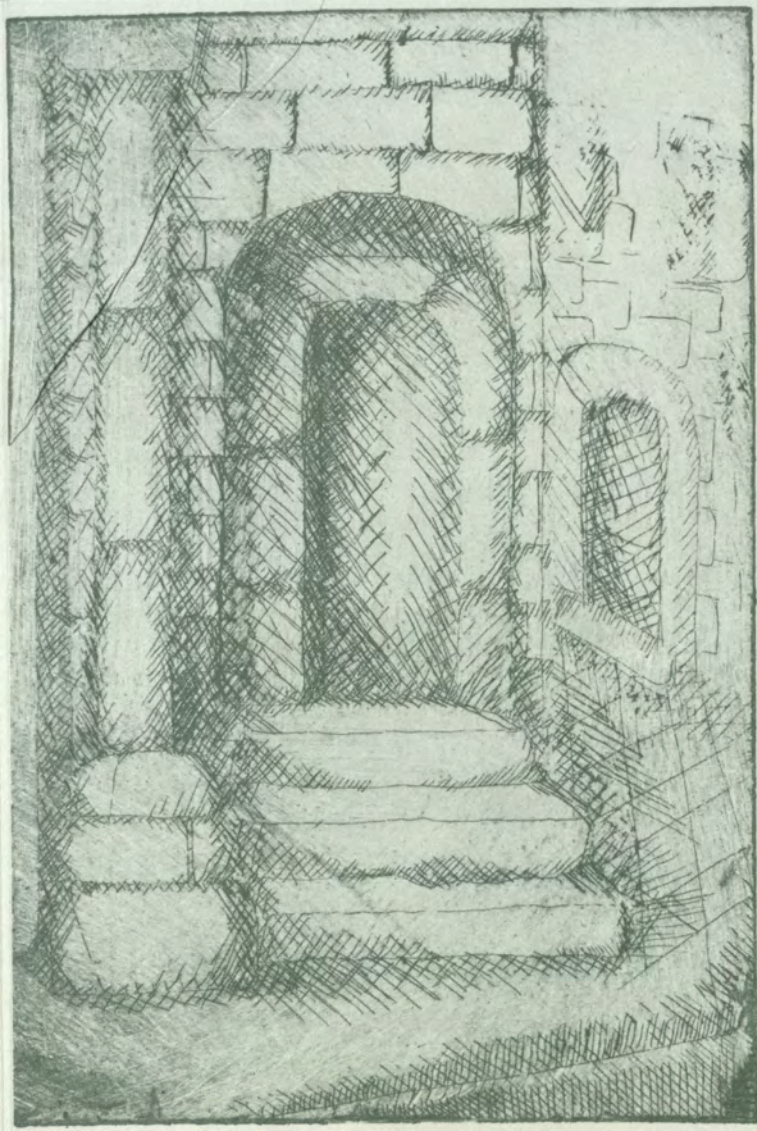
(the pigs squeal)

Leonard is thinking about things that have happened. He stands and stretches his heavy self. An anxious little voice:

what's the matter, Leonard?

Leonard thinks. "They got me, Cowboy." grunts Leonard, taking off his sweater.

Ken Raabe



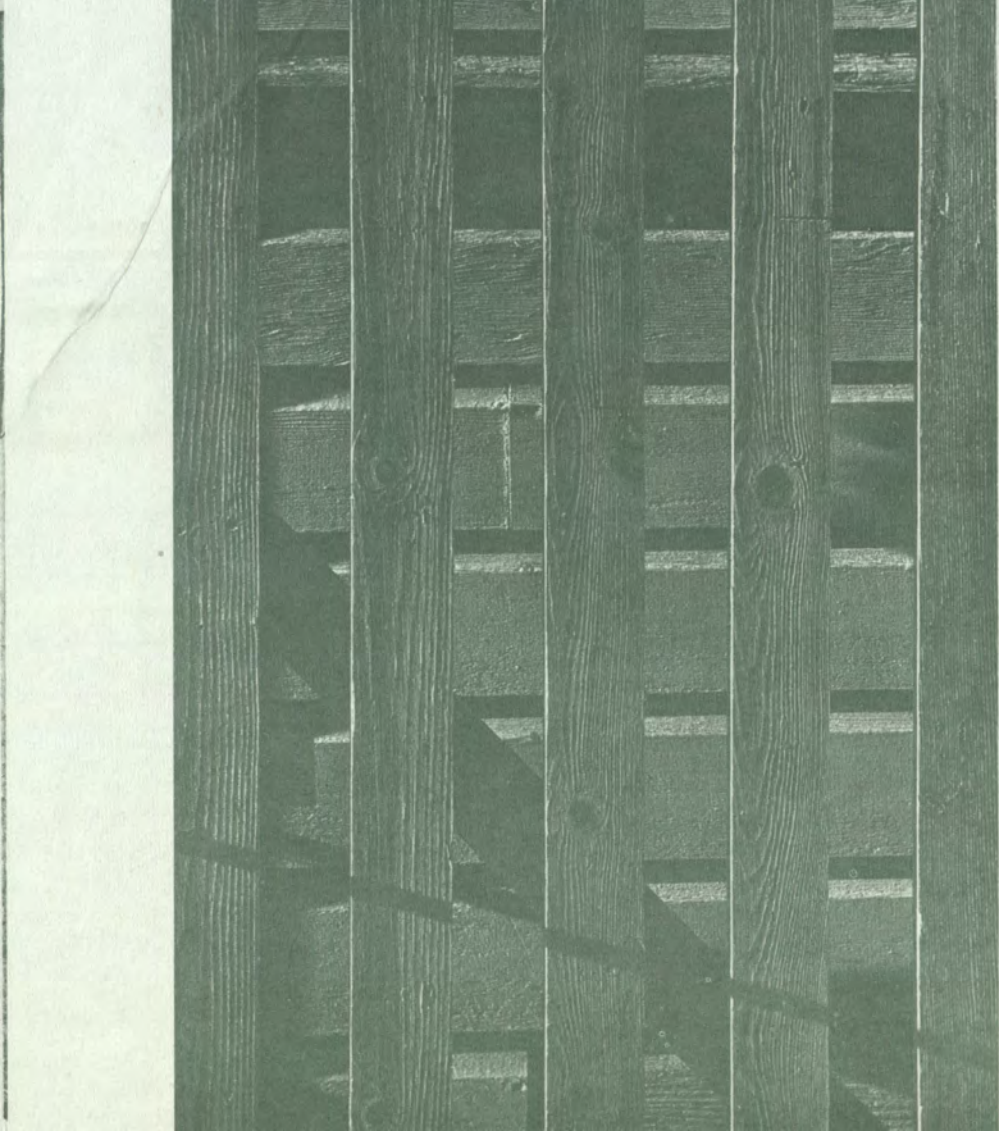
Marsha Siik

un día frío
sonrisa amarillo
¡brillante el sol!

Kathleen Kler

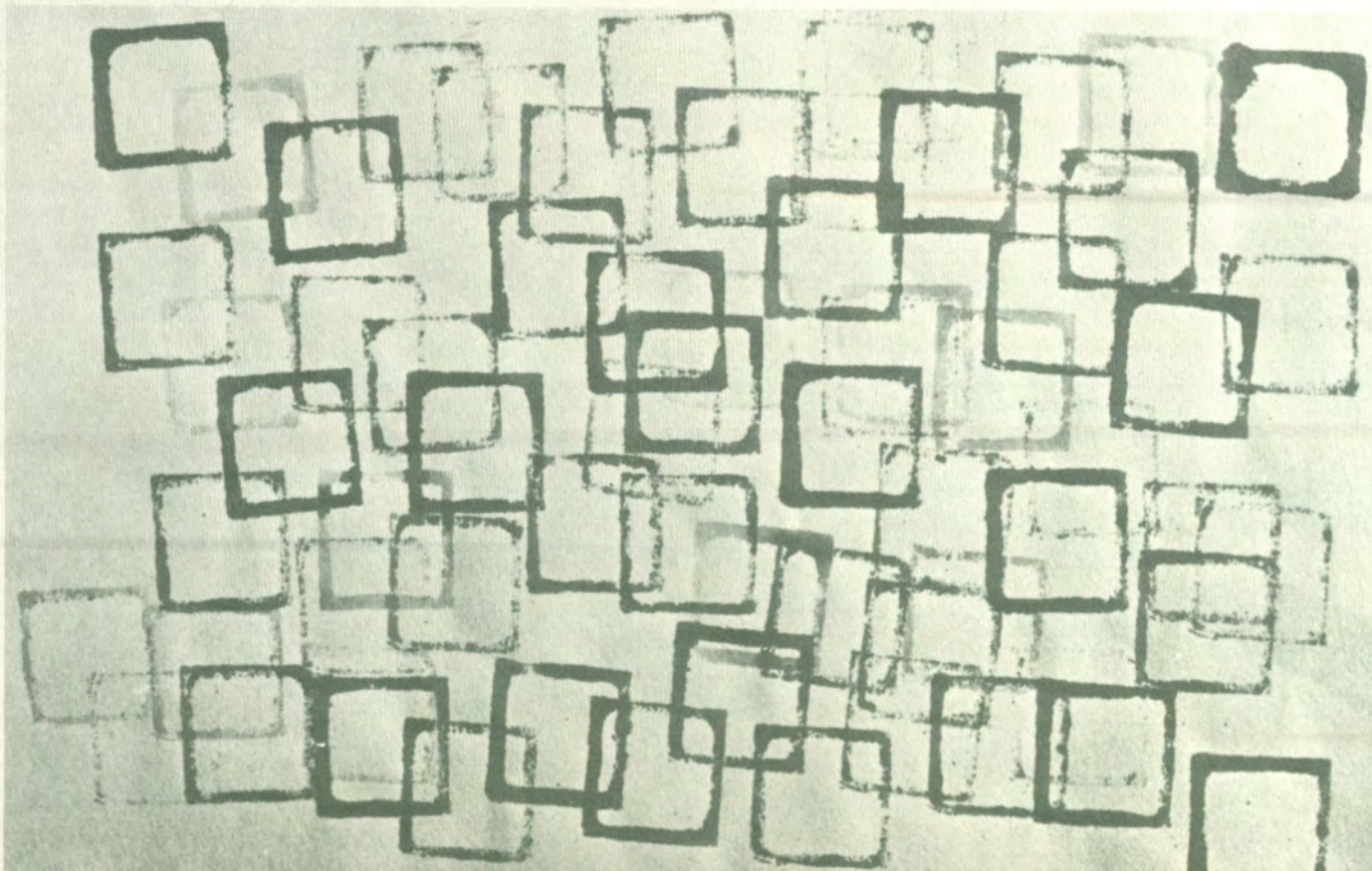


Del Jessen



Joan Lundgren

Angela Wenino



It was all green. An entire world of green.

He had never been there before, yet he knew it was real.

The grass was thick and wet, and strong. Not one blade tipped or bent in the breeze. No horizon. Soft, strong grass spread endlessly, then curved upward to form green sky. He was enclosed in immense space; every step he took, in any direction, was uphill. He walked with grace and ease that startled him. Bright light came from nowhere—like the wetness which did not fall. He moved smoothly, with long floating strides, gracefully avoiding the dungpiles that spotted the lush grass. There were no cows.

JAMES

Stopping, standing unaware of his weight, he looked at everything—the vast space, the brilliant green, the small brown creamy piles with no flies—and believed it all. He turned slowly, glowing green smoothness gently gliding past, until jolted by a tiny, radiant red spec that pierced the green. Halting. Paralyzed. His stare captured by the red dot.

He knew this: that he must move toward the red and discover its shape. The journey would be long. But knowing how easy his movements, and how long his strides, there was no decision, and he began his upward journey across the grass to the place of the red spec far above him.

After countless strides the red became pink, and as he came closer, he saw his goal. A little naked boy sat in the grass and did not move until the man, his journey nearly ended, slowly approached.

“Good day, sir.” The boy’s head had turned without surprise. His hair was yellow, eyes were dark brown.

“Hello there *young man.”

“Grass.”

“Yes. It is.”

“Grass.grass, sir. Sit down, sir. The grass is cool and soft and damp. Sit with me in the grass. There is shit to play with. It oozes between fingers and soothes skin. Come. Sit down. Soon you must go, and time is never enough.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Of course you don’t.” The boy’s face angelic, his tone gentle.

With unwilling obedience the man squatted and sat in the grass. He regretted having sat facing the little boy, for the child made no attempt to shield his genitals, and the man was unable to refrain from glancing repeatedly.

“Where have you come from, sir?”

"From the other side of. . ."

"No. I mean where were you before you came into the green?"

"I was in New York."

"Oh." The boy's pink skin glistened in the brightness. His eyes were without threat. "What did you do in New York?"

Carefully missing the dung, the man moved to the boy's side, keeping unobvious distance. For the first time, the grass frightened him. He detected a stiff, sharp blade of grass underneath his leg. But reaching to locate and remove the blade, the man found only softness.

"Sir? What did you do in New York?"

"I worked."

"Yes. Of course." The boy's smile was serious. "And how did you happen to come into the green?"

"I don't know."

"You mean you don't remember."

"Yes. Well, no. I mean if I can't remember, then how can I know?"

"But sir. How will you remember how you will have gone?"

"What's that again?"

"When you have gone from the green, how will you know why you went?"

"I don't know." Pondering. "Why must I go?"

"You must."

"Why?"

"Because you will."

The man laughed. "Look, son. Even though I don't know where I am, I may decide that I like it here and stay."

"But not forever," the boy's voice calm and sure. "Someone will take you away when you least expect it."

"Who?"

"You will, or I will, or someone else, or fate, or force, or hate or love."

"What if I refuse to go?"

"You will die."

The man again laughed loudly but became quiet upon looking at the boy. The gentle pink face became hard, and the soft blond eyebrows lowered upon the new pure black eyes that peered into the back of the man's skull. Not weakening, the man met the stare. For the first time, his mouth showed

skepticism, striving for power. "Who are you?" The boy's stare continued in unresponse. "Where are your parents?" The entire green was silent. "You will answer me. You will answer me!" Pain streaked through the man's leg, throwing him on his back, wincing, clutching his leg, aware of wet warm blood between his fingers, he frantically searched for the pain's source, now laying on his side, he found a blade of grass coated in red protruding from the side of his thigh and with great effort, pulling with all his strength, he extracted the blade, feeling its tip slowly retreat from the core of his leg, until he held the entire limp, blood-soaked piece of grass in his hand. Gasping, "I I'm sorry. . . ."

"Sorry for what?"

"How. . . why did you. . ."

"I did nothing sir."

"Please. . . I'm bleeding. . . I'm. . ."

"You are not. The blood has turned to green. Soon it will be cool and soak into the ground. Your wound has healed and you are in pain no more."

It was true. The man felt his thigh but discovered no incision. He climbed to his knees, looking around him. Nothing had changed. The green was glowing, soft, comforting. He sat in the grass and reached to wipe his forehead only to find his brow dry, his skin smooth. Lowering his fingers past his eyebrows, he massaged the bones surrounding his closed eyes. "Kid, will you please tell me what the hell is going on?"

"Look, sir. Look at what I have made." The boy had molded a castle out of the dung. Weary of confusion the man looked with indifference. "Look well, sir, while there is time, for soon the castle will fall—towers will slide into walls, walls will slide into the grass and the castle will once again be a pile."

"Maybe if you used sticks for reinforcement and had some kind of foundation. . ."

"Sir? You want to know what is happening to you?"

"Yes." Intently.

"There is nothing to know, for nothing is happening."

"But who are you?"

"I am nothing. That which exists is the grass, the light, the moisture, and the dung. But I am nothing."

"What should I do? What are you trying to teach me?"

"You should do what you must, you must be what you are."

With intense innocence the man gazed at the boy. "And what am I?"

"You are from New York."

"Yes."

The silence of the green was warm. The warmth reached into the heart of the man.

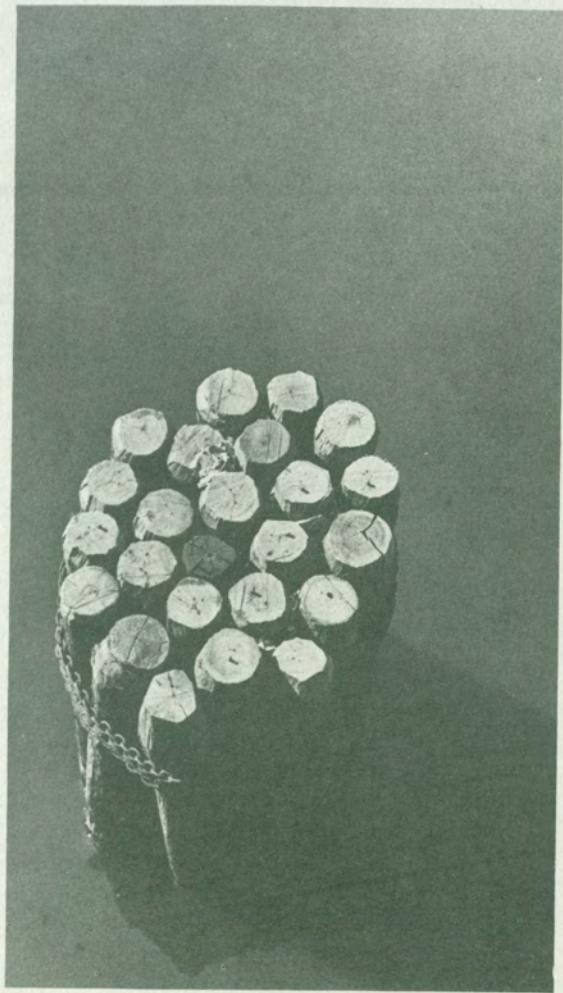
"I must go now, sir. Our time has been pleasant." The boy arose and began running, his strides becoming

longer and higher, his speed more graceful as he ran farther. The man watched him until he became once again a bright red spec on the far side of the green. The red became smaller, losing brilliance, until it disappeared.

The man arose with grace, delicacy, and hearing the silence around him, he whispered. "I am from New York." With amazing power, he leaped high in the air, rising higher, gaining dignity, and when at the peak of his jump, suspended in the radiant green, he shouted with complete affirmation, "I

am from New York!" Slowly, very slowly, he began to fall, arms outspread, fingers floating, falling faster and faster, whirling, spinning, glorious, plunging to the surface, to the grass, directly into the very largest and the only pile with millions of flies around it.

BRAUN



Joan Lundgren

100-100

Phyllis Root

I thought that death came only once
but I have died a hundred times
and mourned that I could die
(so young, I said
so fair, so full of life
and yet so dead)
I stood beside the coffin of my days
and wept to see me as I now must be
forever frozen in a look of bastard peace
(so calm, I said, so happy to be dead)
and folded up my hands
around a lily
and smoothed my dress one final time
and felt the pale coldness of my skin
(how small she looks! how thin)
and watched the clods of earth
conceal my coffin
and touched the tombstone one last time
and watched the other mourners drift away
(a fine day for a funeral)
as I waited
for another dying dawn.



(Remember c-a-l-i-g-u-l-a)

I lost you
knowing neither when nor where.
Songs have passed
marking the growth of among other things death.

If I ever find you again

(Does God know?)

Perhaps on a cold-wind shoal,
or Perhaps behind a piano,
or Perhaps in a snow-covered park,
or Perhaps in a graveyard. . .

Chances are I won't know what to say
(By then words may well be irrelevant).

If I am King

(Precluding the end of human existence)

I shall survey my kingdom

(No one exists, though everyone is alive)

Perhaps I shall pardon myself

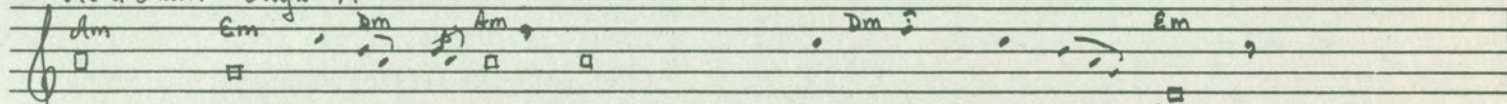
And, I beg your indulgence,
take my pills without emotion,
but MayBe with a little brandy.

(Dave Stechholz)

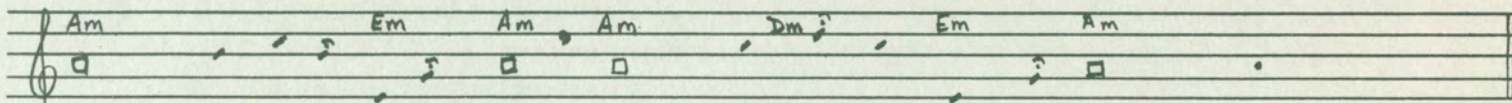
Winter

Bitz

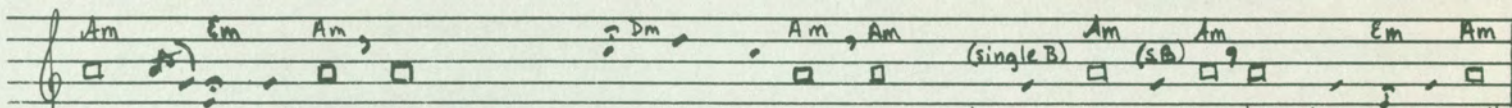
As a chant - slight 3/4



i wait for steps i know so well, but the pavement black and empty stays



the dust of winter colding still, betrays my fears and white remains.



Gone so long, yes gone, but the mem'ries still remain. My heart won't say farewell to what it knew so well.

2. Yawning faces with glare-white teeth
search out the form I know so well;
The whitened sidewalk empty stays
and looks for his kiss to break the way.
Chorus

3. Hearing his voice, I see him move,
Blacker than starless night he comes,
Comes to call my drowning soul,
above the waves of tears I know.
Chorus

4. Waiting for steps I know so well,
I rush to impressions in the snow.
But whiteness meets my longing gaze,
I'm once again alone, alone.
Chorus

Celebrate!

moderate 4 - rhythm + voices only

Blitz

The musical score is written on six systems of two staves each. The first system contains the title and tempo. The second system is the first line of the chorus with lyrics. The third system continues the chorus with lyrics. The fourth system continues the chorus with lyrics. The fifth system continues the chorus with lyrics. The sixth system is the second line of the chorus with lyrics. The music is in 4/4 time and features a simple melody with square notes and rests. The lyrics are written in a cursive, handwritten style.

Chorus: Kiss the sidewalk! Beat the roadway! Dance to the drum that you know!

Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia Al - le - lu - ia!

Dark the path-way to the pain-ful valley. Dance to the drum that you
Eyes un - bri - dled by the chains of emelty. Dance to the drum that you

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

Hear the rebels with their gift extended : freedom to hold in your hand!
Know the marvel of a new star's burning : LIFE is to be for your own! [Chorus]

luia! Al - le - lu - ia!

I was funny
In my dream
 where the wind stood solid
 and I bent it
Ripped from the edges of stagnancy
I oozed from the crevice
 and spawned
 into the melting sewer
A giggling horde of one-horned credibles

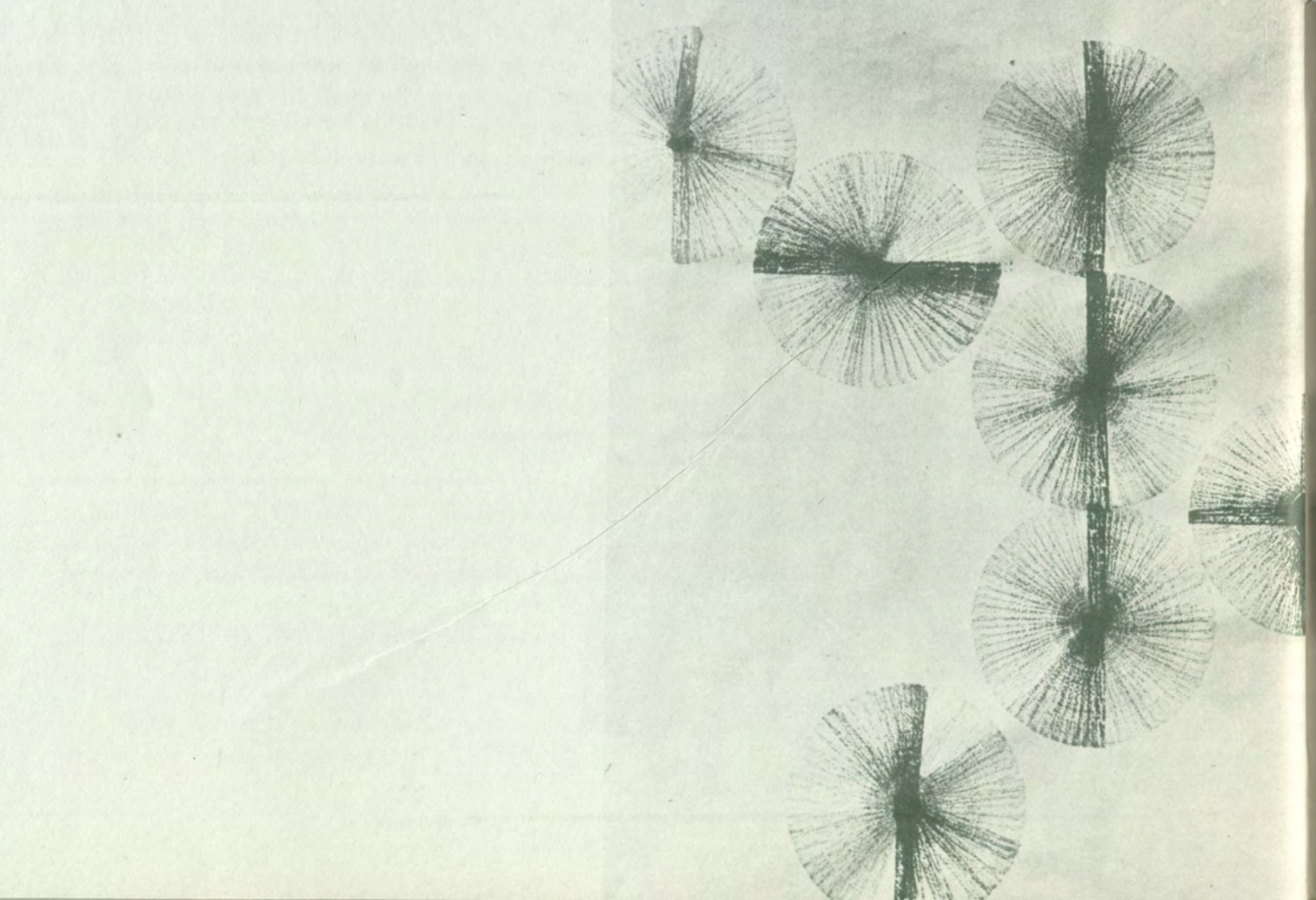
In my funny world
Groping between curtains of segmented time
Slithering up the sink of space
 Crawling through the drain
 Emerge— into
Goreless fathoms of the Empty

Writhing numbness
Until it all begins.

Diane Ramey



Marilyn Schleicher



The revolving door gyrated around—and around, and around. A boy in faded blue jeans stood under the “A” in “LACEY’S,” intently watching the people proceeding into the whirling plates of glass. Some were carrying packages, and as his eyes followed them, he pictured the worker ants he used to watch, with the occasional hard worker lugging a white crumb half its size and marching into the tiny black hole in the ground. His eye was caught as a woman tall orange hat carrying two boxes in one arm and a large white purse in other walked briskly up to the door, hesitated as she skillfully elbowed herself into one of the angled divisions, and was gone. As the door slowly swung to a stop, the boy shifted his feet, but continued to fix his eyes to the door.

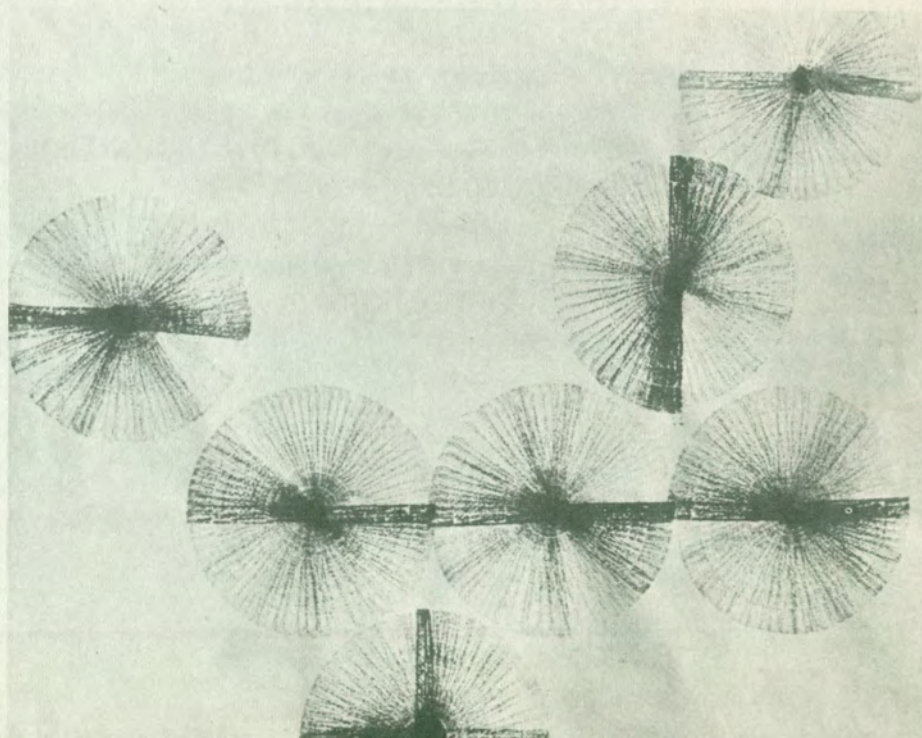
At seven, he was beginning to lose the pug nose of early childhood, replacing it with one of a little more dignity. His darkening hair still showed an occasional glint of yellow when he tilted his head in the sun. His hands were stuck deep in his pockets, an attempt at mock adulthood.

He looked up as a fat man carrying a black umbrella lumbered across the sidewalk from the street. Easing into the door, he shot a pudgy hand against the glass in front and shuffled around the circular track. The boy was almost tempted to follow the man, and walked forward several steps, but stopped abruptly. He thought back upon the few times he had entered the turning doors with his mother. There had been a dizzying array inside—of airplanes and trucks and ships sitting temptingly just beyond the gleaming showcase. He could almost feel the cold glass against his palms. He focused his eyes on the door again. It only led in, he knew. Once he entered, he might never find the other door beyond that led out, and he would wander among glass counters.

He turned at the sharp sound of heels on concrete, interspersed with a light pattering, and turned to see a mother dragging a small child by the hand. Looking down upon the bright blond head of the little boy, he straightened his shoulders. His eyes dropped to the tiny plaid sneakers, and then shifted toward his own.

The sharp clicking of heels quickly drowned as the doors devoured the pair, but he knew they would magically appear on the other side. Taking his hands out of his pockets, he walked unsteadily forward and dived into the mouth of the still whirling door.

Ruth Huddleston



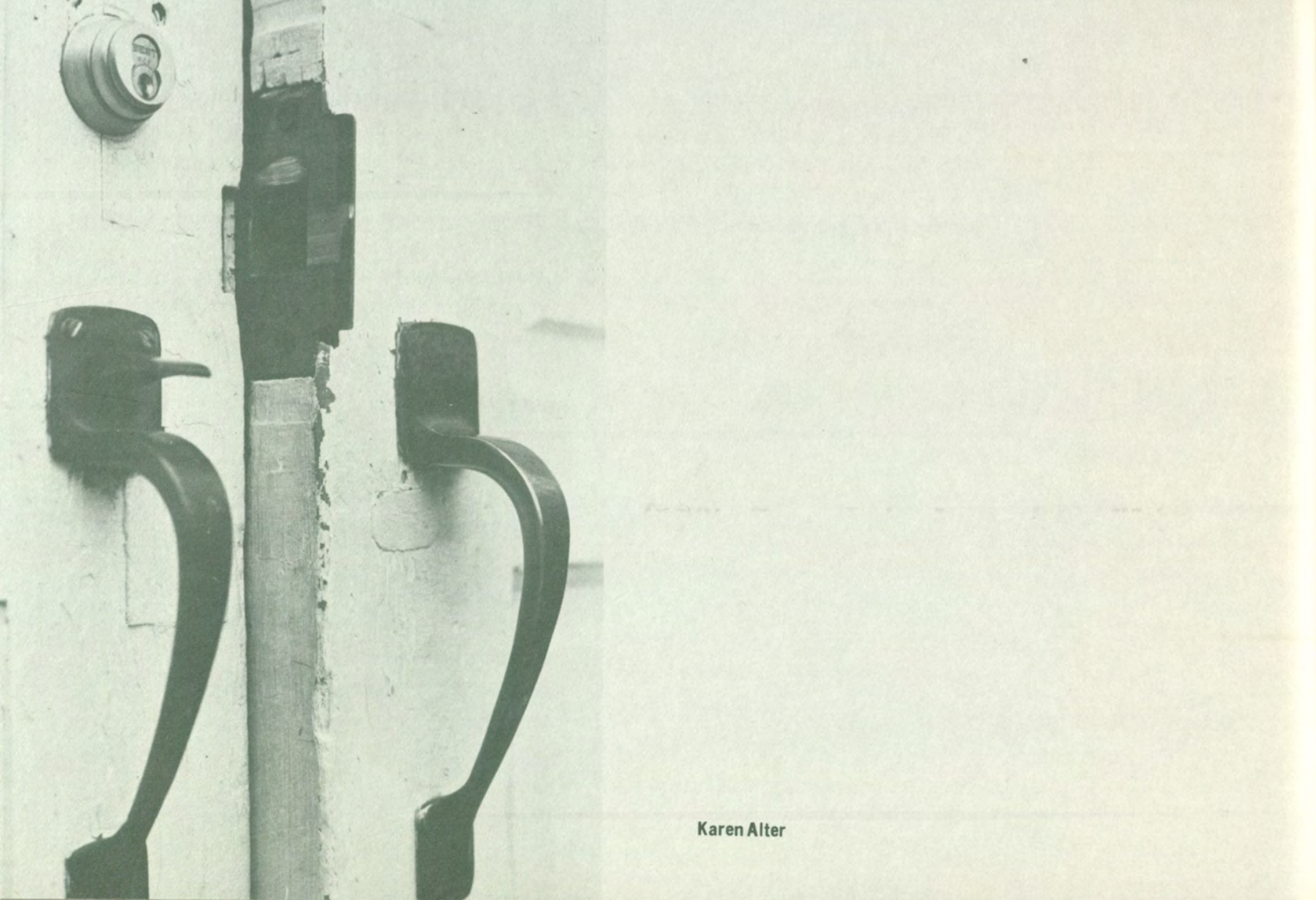
War at Reminiscence Point

On the nose of this hill
I sit,
While his craggy jaws
Cause pebbles to rumble.
O God, don't be tumbled by
"When I was a boy."

But I have won,
I say,
And halt their threatened landslide
With the commonwealth of my body,
Or at least with my sovereign foot.

King of the hill,
I sit,
And throw horseshoes,
Ringers 'round the rings of Saturn,
And watch
As they
Fall
Through

Steven Suppan



Karen Alter

and go to the well
and find the water and dust
fill the buckets.

Sheryl Jones

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