

Spring 1977

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Valparaiso University

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THE
WINTER

Spring 1977

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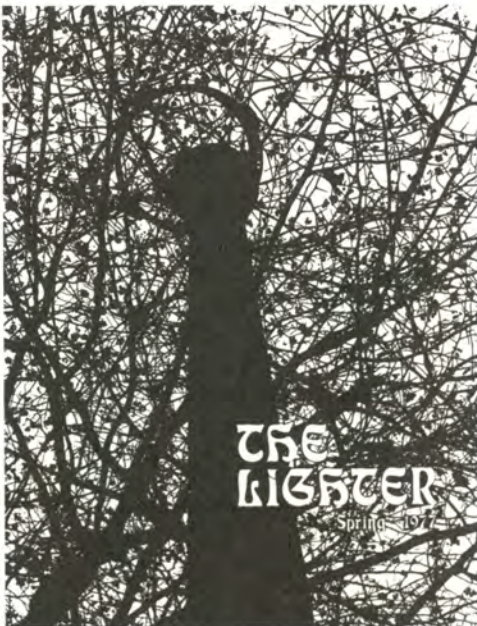
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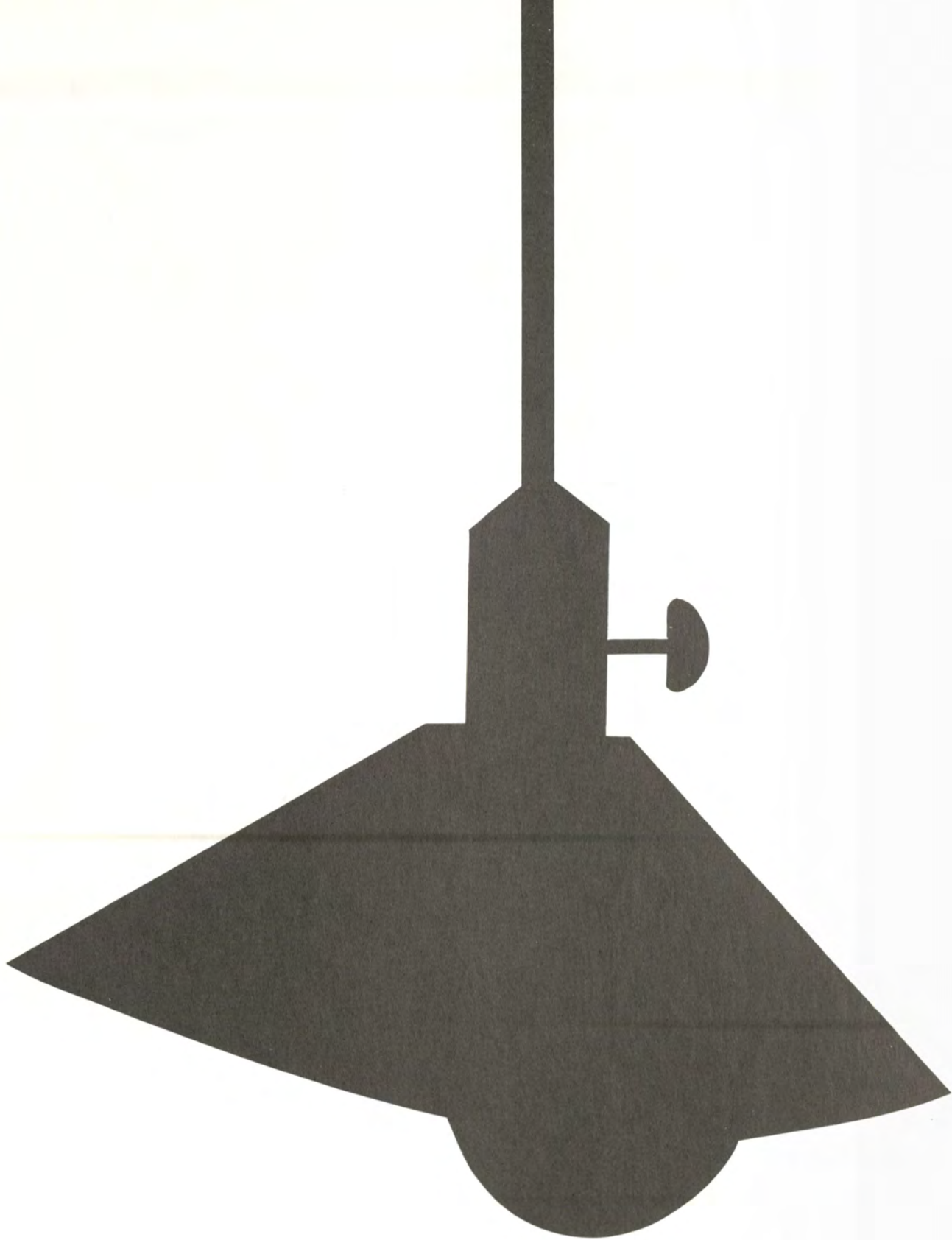
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It is not always the great, grandiose, or sensational that memory retains when recalling a certain place or time. Very often the small, seemingly insignificant details are those which remain with a person. In the special section at the back of this issue, a few of these "trivialities" have been assembled — a sort of "Farewell" to a year, a college, a unique time in our lives.

John Plagens, Editor



i.

he had a checkerboard
and nobody played it
swipesy swipesy all the time
I'll never belong to the Smithsonian
and you'll never chug a pint o' beer.

ii.

he had a big idea
to put the words on newsprint
and Trixie, Trixie
she saw him caught him
as he LEAPT
real big across her sky

Dali
Trixie

iii.

Particular I ain't, altho
I prefer my coffee drip
to the last drop
unplugged power
Trixie grew real big in spite

iv.

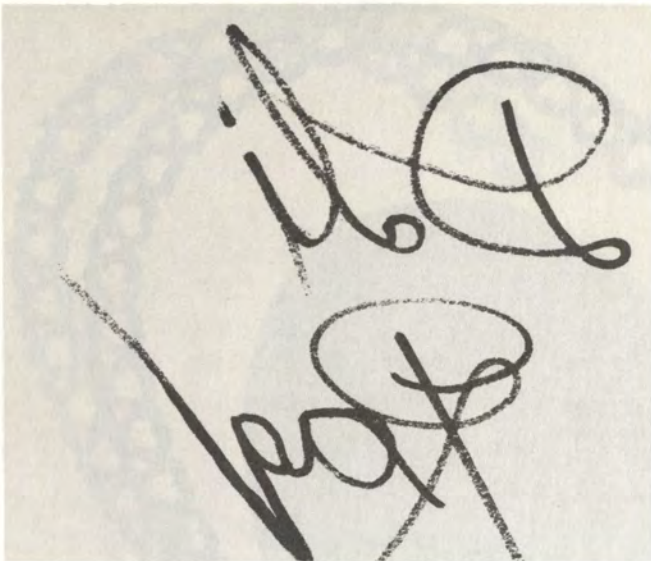
he had a checkerboard
and one king on it
and we all stood back and grinned
in excitement and wonderment
of who was gonna be the crown.

v.

Trixie can be a real mean kid
she overlistens on what I do
and boy he walk on eggs, he do
tiled carpet into a checkerboard
getting more sophisticated all the time.

vi.

he has a real old chair
re-upholstered nonenity
and she creaks when you sit on her
but Trixie, Trixie she real sharp
and knows where the sun fades her
and when its nicer to be a glow
than a glare.



vii.

all the doors creak something pitiful
screechy-screechy across my ears
he does feel sharp on wooden floors
Trixie do prefer a pillow
but we ain't got any

viii.

The textures never match on any two poems
the colors are never the same dye lot —
now ain't that brilliant
eggs for thought I hope they hatch
if they do I's a Trixie
all over again just for spite.

ix.

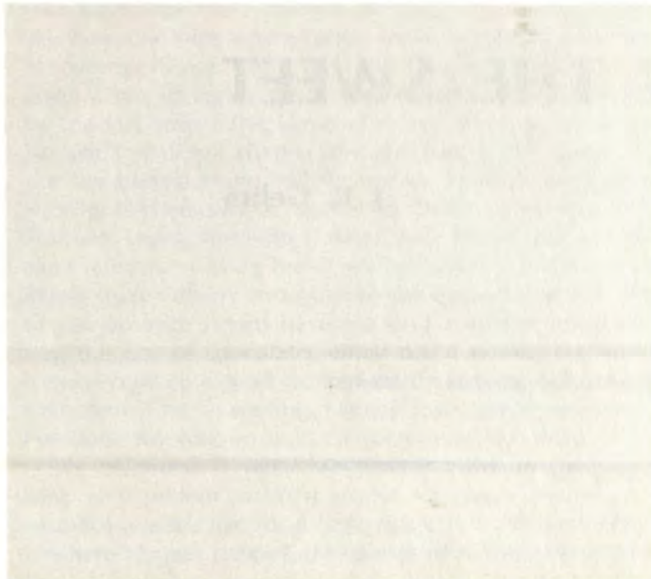
We all have name plates on our doors
typed up by ourselves just the way we like
and summertime if not sane
is trees and lemonade
but I like my coffee drip and Trixie
she likes hers Mocha
he likes it any way he can
and we all take tea and cakes and ices

x.

Parquet every which way
and none of his books match
but Trixie takes one touch and they melt.
he can do that with his socks
or I can do it with my nose
but we all know only Trixie
can do it like that all over.

xi.

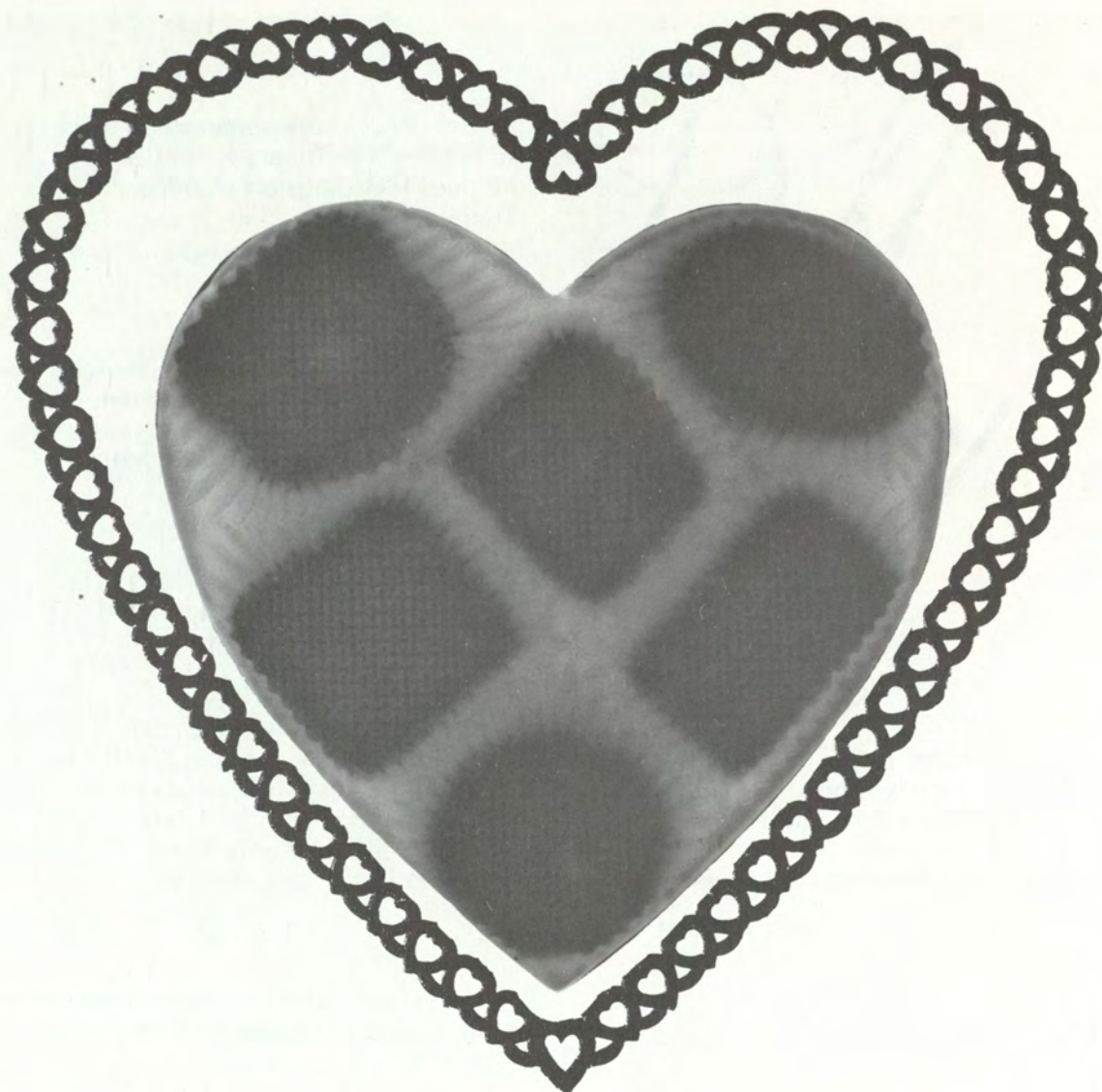
he says he should be capitalized.
he doesn't yet know it's him.



xii.

He has a checkerboard
the game's begun and we all
line up in our proper places
oh jump, jump, swipesy, swipesy
spin around quick before Trixie
catches me not playing the game.

T. L. Wolfe

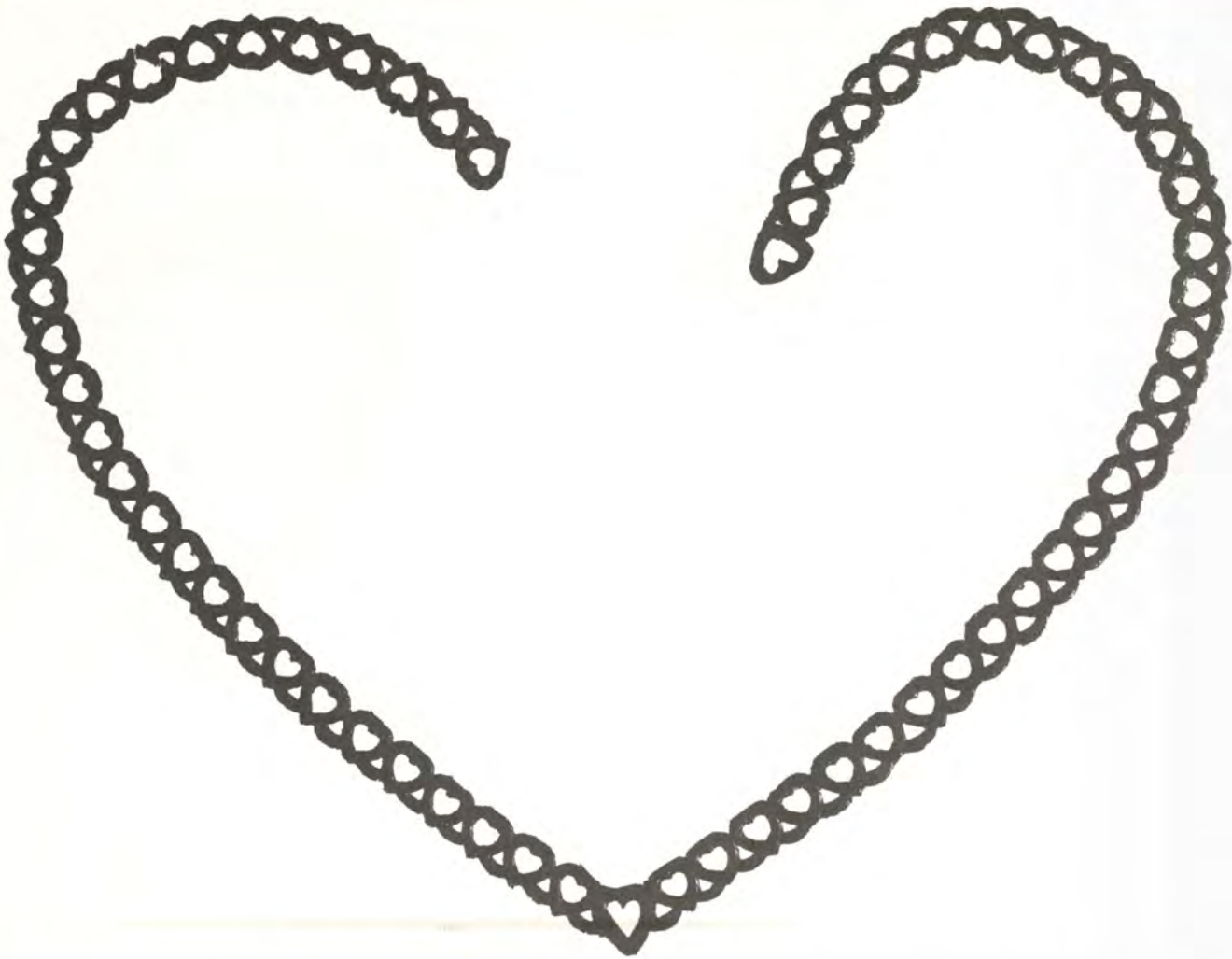


SWEETS FOR THE SWEET

J. R. Gehm

*The thousand injuries of Hymen Hanpacker I had borne
as best I could; but when he ventured on insult I vowed
revenge.*

* * * * *



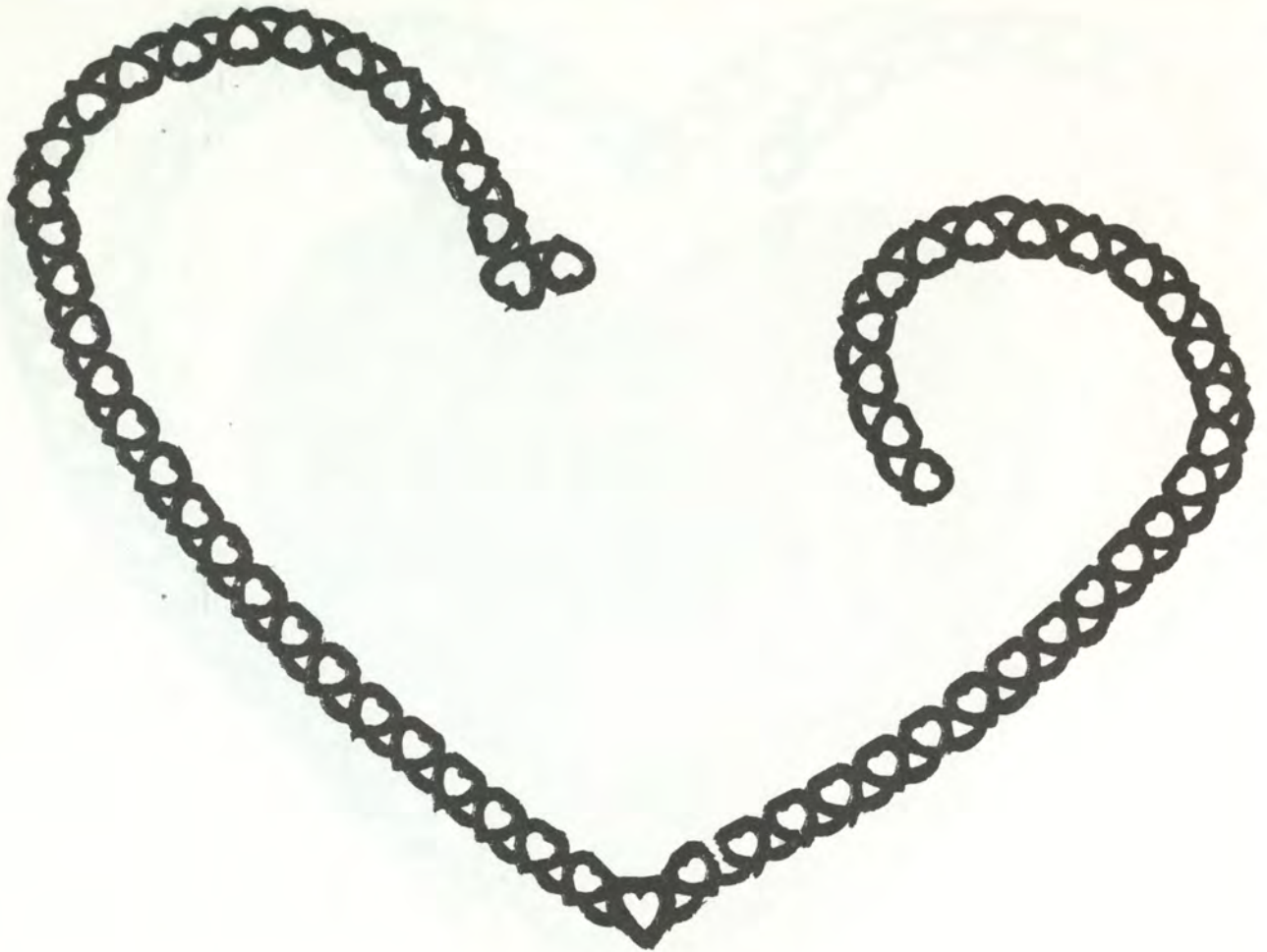
Please do not misunderstand me. I am a gentle woman at heart. I kiss babies — even ugly ones; I birdwatch (or at least I used to, when I was still able to get out); newborn anythings make me feel all furry inside and I cried like everyone else when Lassie came home. So don't get me wrong. Please. I'm a basically nice person. But to be given a box of candy on St. Valentines Day is *absolutely* it. The last straw. The Limit — to my basic good nature. Tonight I shall kill Hymen, my husband, as he sleeps.

It has been a living hell for me for thirteen long, sorry-I-ever-got-into-this-mess, god-awful years. And now this. Thirteen years, forty-three days, two hours and twenty-eight minutes of living hell it will be when I take this Chef Pierre frozen cherry torte out of the oven. What I've had to put up with would have driven a madman sane. And now this box of chocolates. Shaped like a heart yet. There is only so much a good woman should have to take. When I die there'll be no waiting, I'm going straight to heaven — I've done my time in hell. Or something like that.

Oh, of course it wasn't so terribly awful in the beginning — it seldom is. We'd go out to Tony's maybe once or twice a week just for a little snack In fact Tony's is where Hymen popped the question. It was one a them

god-awful, underwear-stick-ta-your-seat Hoosier-summer nights, the kind of night can only be spent in front of a open refrigerator door with a cold beer in your hand but there we was sweating over a medium cheese and anchovies. Hymen says, joking of course, "You know Hestia, you sure don't sweat much for a big girl." He was always joking like that in the beginning. He was full a jokes. He caught me in the middle of a mouthful with that one so all I can do is smile and nod and hope no anchovies are' stuck between my teeth. So he laughs too, his little Woody Woodpecker laugh, and then he goes on about his future at Krumpacker's Polish Pastries and about his savings and how he's got his eye on a cute little love-nest in the four Hundred's block and I know, I know what he's leadin up to so I quit chewin for him and be sure to take the olive pits out of my mouth only when he ain't lookin and then finally he asks and finally I says "Sure. Sure I'll marry you. Hestia Hanpacker. . .Hestia Hanpacker. . .Hestia Hanpacker . . ." I kinda rolled it over a few times like that to get the feel of it.

It's true love is blind. It's also deaf and dumb. I was happy that night. I can't recall though whether I was hap-



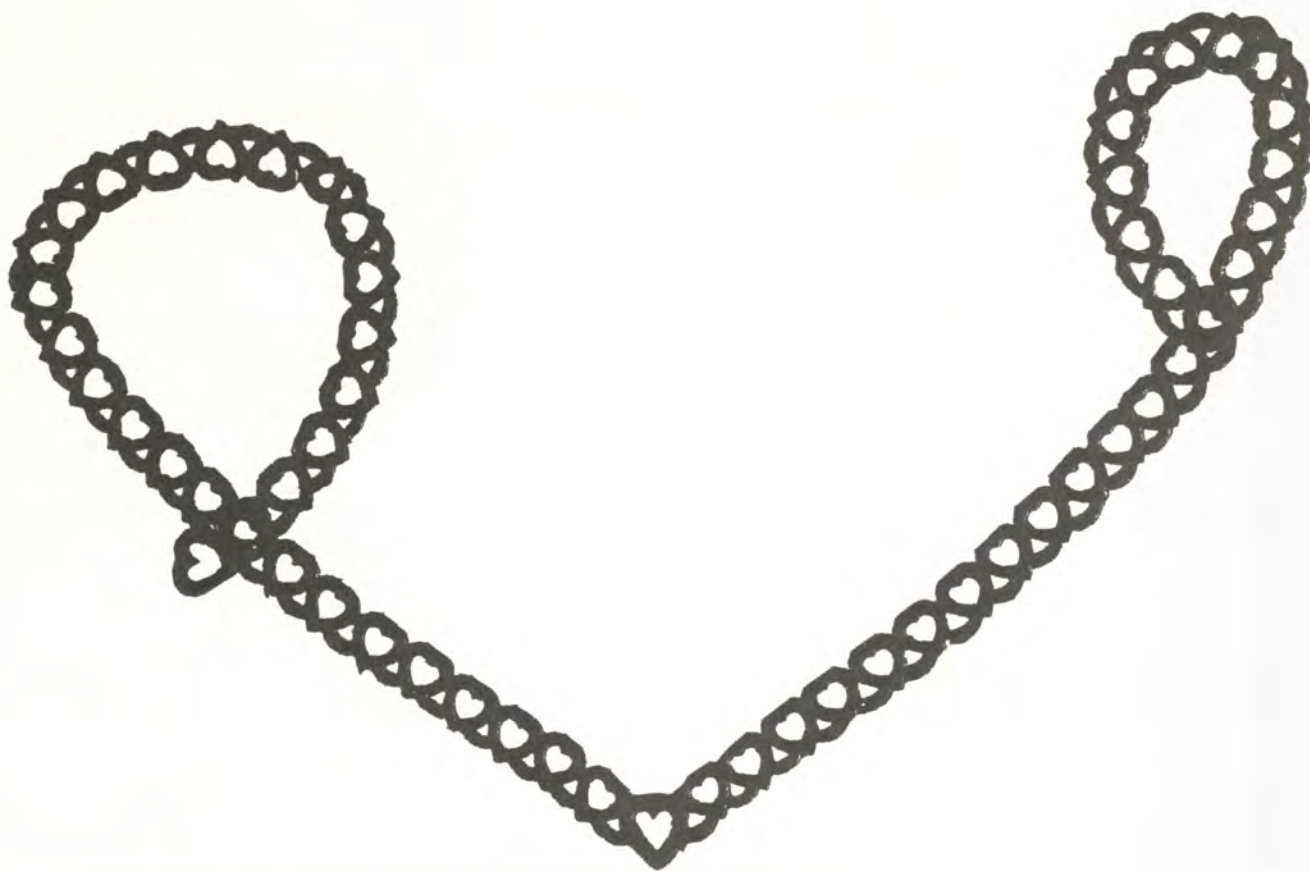
pier about marrying little Hymen or about finally getting the chance to be rid of my maiden name, "Hestia Frigidaire Lipschitz" — there's nothing musical about that, let me tell you.

Those were the old days. It was like a dream — the whole thing has been like a dream turned nightmare cause of something I ate. We were happy then. As happy as two love birds ever was in their first little love nest. I'd send Hymen off to work each morning and clean the nest and make my lunch and clean some more and bake and I'd can in season and bake some more and start in to fixin dinner and then at four o'clock go to the window and watch for Hymen to come whistling home from Krumpacker's. He whistled good. That's how I knew he was coming. Just like a little bird he whistled.

He ate like one, too. That's when I should've begun to suspect but I didn't. Then, there was still too many stars in my eyes for me to see the truth for myself, or hear it even, come whistling down the walk like a frigging sparrow. Hymen wouldn't eat. No how. He said he "wasn't hungry." Over and over and over again he "wasn't hungry." But I didn't believe him so easily after I caught him

coming in late one night with crumbs on his collar and Baby Ruth on his breath. I knew it wasn't my cooking. I am a good cook. All the women in my family are good cooks. And I'm a generous woman but it made me sick to see delicious Eggs Moppioli and Veal Parmesano wasted — that was the Mama Lipschitz side of me who lived by one golden rule: "Waste not, want not." Mama Lipschitz weighed three hundred pounds.

So I had no choice, you see, but to take to eating whatever Hymen the human sparrow had left. I had no choice. A bigger and bigger part of me simply could not see it go to waste. Though hindsight's always twenty-twenty, I should have begun to suspect then but I didn't. I didn't suspect; the only handwriting on the wall that I could read was "Waste not, want not. And clean your plate!" So I wasted not. I wanted not — Hymen saw to that. And I would clean my plate — four, five, six, seven times a day. Still I didn't see what was going on. I didn't even suspect when we began running out to Tony's for our "midnight snack" at seven o'clock. The Human Sparrow would order a cup of coffee and maybe a sliver of pie if he felt in a mood to be gorging himself, knowing full well, that the Italian



blood in me on my mother's uncle's side would not let me leave that pizza parlor without a slice or two at least of the deep dish Sicilian Mama Lipschitz loved.

So I ate more and more and the Sparrow less and less. And less. I broke a scale. That's when it finally hit me — about the conspiracy. Mirrors don't lie. Hymen was about to blow away on the next West wind like Wingtip the Spic and here I sit, right where he wants me, breaking frigging scales. Why would he do such a thing to me? What had I done to him? What had I done to deserve *this*? At Tony's he said finally, on our anniversary, with an ugly curl, "You know Hestia, you sure don't sweat much for a big girl." That's when I knew for sure. I knew then. I saw then in all his perverted glory the warped bird I had married. Hymen tricked me into marrying him and that was the last time he outweighed me.

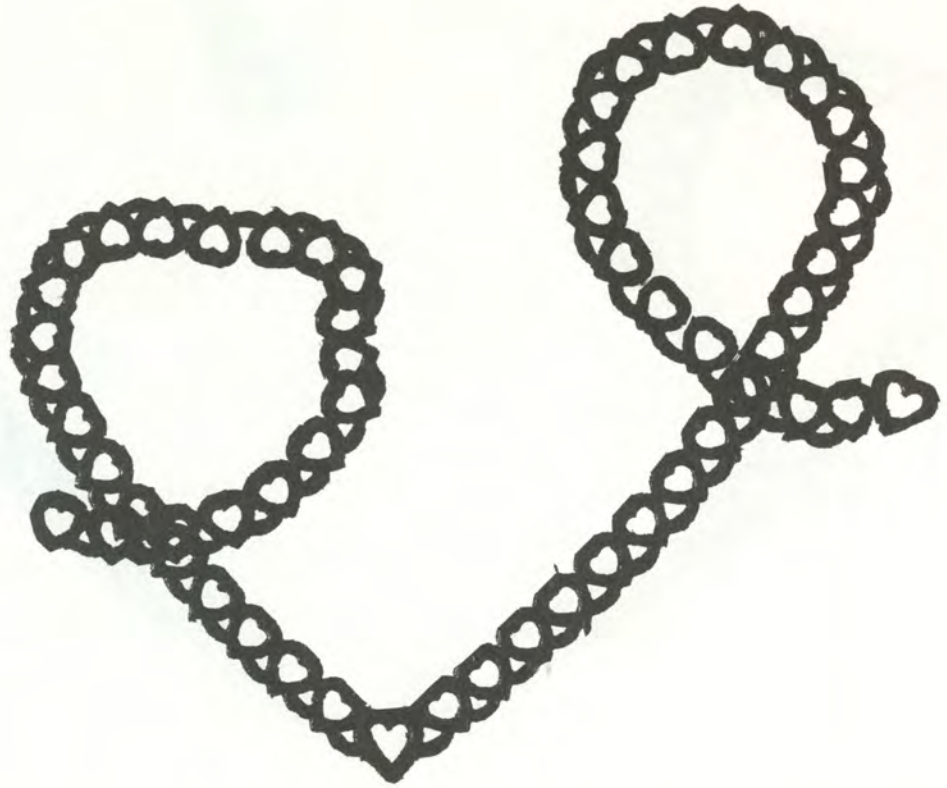
Some men get their kicks by watching other men kill themselves in a bloody boxing arena; others like to see cocks and roosters tear each other apart. Some watch hockey. Hymen watches me eat. He feeds his little twisted soul and scrawny little body by watching me finish his

chicken a la king. He loves nothing better than to see me wolf a chocolate éclair when he says it will spoil if I don't. It is a lie of course but I can do nothing, the man is sick, capital i-c-ick. I won't go into what he would have me eat when we are in bed. The man is sick.

Once though, for awhile, I thought he was cured. He began to eat again and actually gained a few pounds. He seemed not to notice or to even care whether or not I had eaten anything which suited me fine, as I had become a little self-conscious about my eating by then. But this was only another charade of his, a change in tactics. Soon I saw the total blackness of the bird's soul.

He took me dancing. We went roller skating. We went to the shows. We did everything together again, just like in the old days. We loved again and we laughed again. Until I realized what everyone was laughing at. Including Hymen. Especially Hymen. I thought the manager of the Marseillas Dance Pavillion would bust a gut when he told us (me, actually) we were no longer welcome — tenants on the first floor, it seemed, had complained of falling plaster. I am sure Hymen paid him to say so.

Mr. Stenner at the Rollerdome could barely keep a



straight face either when he presented me with my own pair of "special" roller skates — made with heavy-duty roller bearings salvaged from the wheel housings of those jumbo transport planes. My pair had successfully flown five hundred missions into Berlin during Operation Airlift — or so Hymen told me.

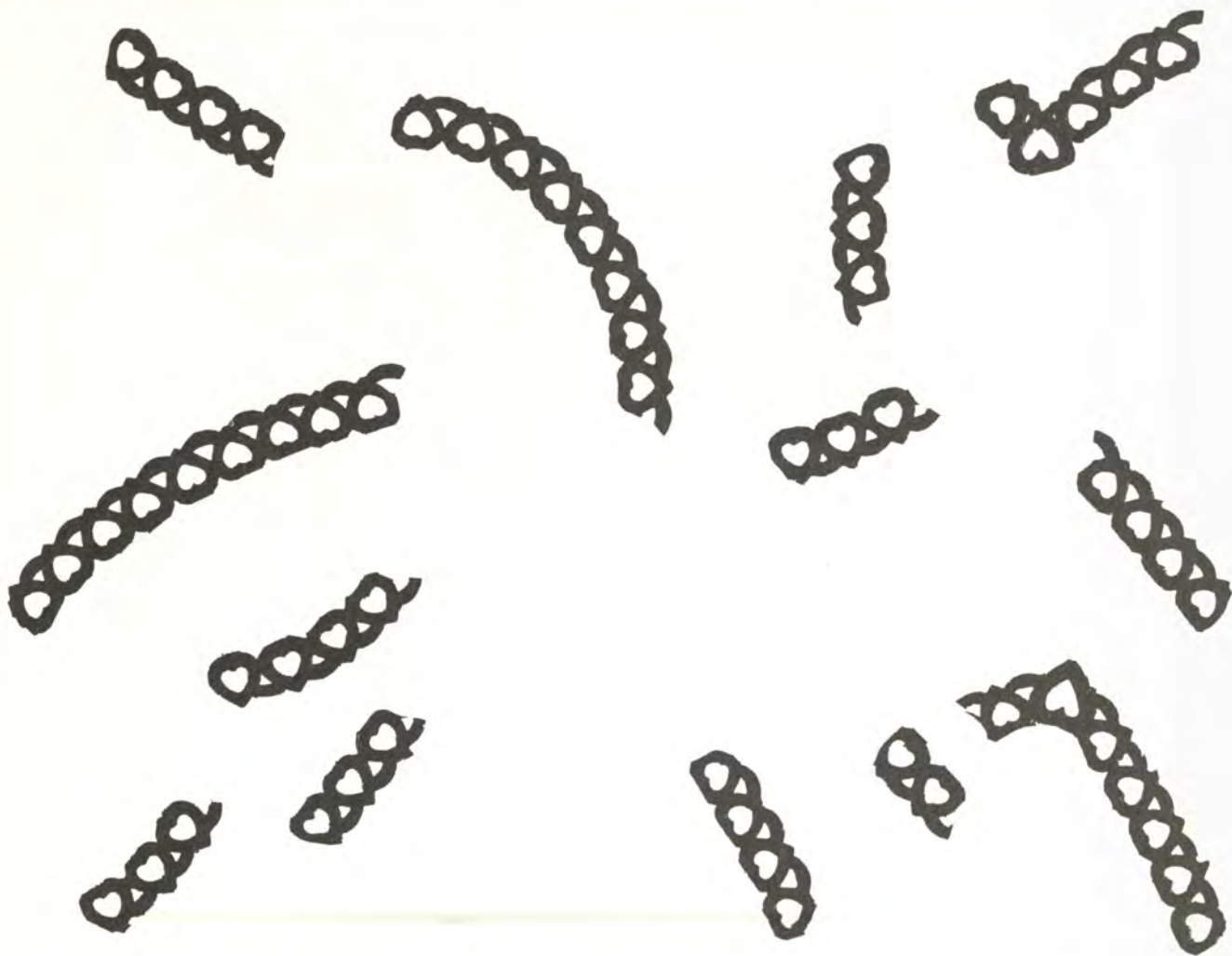
The amusement park claimed I was unfair competition and the bowling alley used me for publicity photos.

That, is the man I married. Sick isn't the word. Hymen is the kind of man who, if I weren't available for his bent mind to torture, would delight in removing the little rubber skids from the bottoms of crutches, help paraplegics down the stairs by rolling them down and hawk suntan oil in a burn ward.

I admit, I admit I was getting a little. . . plump. . . by then — "pleasingly plump" as Hymen would say then. I had TV. And TV dinners. And I'd figgered on spending the rest of my days as the Sparrow's Wife. But that was playing right into his scrawny little claws! Here is Hymen strutting around, cock-of-the-walk, whistling as free as a bird on a holiday while his chick sits, chained to the nest, forever. Being fattened up like a frigging hen turkey. For

what? I thought, "For what!?" For Hymen? That's when I saw the other side of Hymen's depraved pea-brain: not only did he get his sick little kicks watching me eat, not only did he get warped satisfaction from my public embarrassment but now he was making sure I would, could, never leave him. He loved me that much. He was puttin salt on the old bird's tail — only Hymen's "salt" was his eclairs, his pastries and these goddamn Polish recipes. I am being slowly but surely turned into nothing more than Hymen's kept woman, his pleasure object, I thought. Hymen was taking no chances. He knew that I had plenty of the spring chicken left in me for someone who could appreciate me for something other than just my body. I knew it too. But I don't think that Hymen knew that I knew that he knew.

But then, surprisingly, Hymen announces, the first hot day of the summer, "The beach!" I had not been out of the house since the carnival sideshow fiasco and was reluctant to leave. But I longed for the chance to catch the eye of an appreciative stranger or two. I had alot to offer to any man who knew the right words and still do. Jean's, unfortunately, was temporarily out of my bikini size but I



had saved the one I had worn on our honeymoon in Whitefish Bay. If I didn't make any sudden moves, I figured everything would be alright. Breathing, apparently, is a sudden move. It was not alright. Embarrassed isn't the word. Flirting with the lifeguard one minute, the next second grabbing for the army blanket faster than I've ever moved in my life, hoping desperately Hymen can convince the policeman I am not a public nuisance.

I have not been out of this house since. Hymen thinks he has me but he's wrong. He claims I can no longer fit through the doorway. He is wrong. I think I can. He thinks he has won, that I am his little "bottomless pit," as he affectionately calls me now, forever. He is wrong. Hymen is dead wrong. Or will be. He has made the mistake of taunting me and teasing me to tears — he calls it his "bear-baiting". He has trampled on the Lipschitz motto (besides the "Waste not" one), *nemo me impune lacessit!** He has taken to hiding vicious girly pictures in the pantry and in the refrigerators. Somehow he has gotten my name on the Frederick's of Hollywood mailing list. God he is sick. But now he has broken the camel's back.

*"No one attacks me with impunity!"

I could have excused so much as the demented workings of a sick little bird-brain. Even when he switched my *Joy of Cooking* for his *Joy of Sex* I might have been able to forgive him. Even that. But not this. Not a box of chocolates on Valentine's Day. It is the last straw. Tonight I shall kill him as he sleeps. Noislessly, quickly, simply, painlessly — dead. I shall roll over on top of him and end this hell.

* * * * *

It is late now. This little weasel shrimp lying next to me like a drowned rat has whistled his last tune. God it will be good to be free again from this yellow-breasted North American Pervert. These four hundred pounds will make quick work of this emasculated bag of bones. I'll wait till he's between breaths and then roll onto him and smother him like an overstuffed pillow while he chokes and turns blue and flaps his wings and tries to fly away but he can't . . . I'm going to crush him and smother his soul just like he's done to me these thirteen hell-years — just as soon as I get a little snack from the kitchen to give me strength.



B. Moss

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

J. Bales

They call it, innocuously enough, Physical Development. Well, hey, we say, that can't be too bad. Physical Development. Yeah, sure, I'll sign up for it. No problem.

First day, right? This large and sadistic-looking instructor stands in the middle of the room which contains the Universal Gym Machine. "Boys," he says, "this here's a Universal Gym Machine. On it, you are going to become Physically Developed. Through the use of the circuit system on this machine and a 12-minute run outside, and increasing weight, repetition, or time, or all three" — he smiled here, showing remarkably sharp teeth — "we are going to get you in shape."

Right away I knew I should have signed up for Tennis and Bowling.

The next time class met, we started right out. Bench Press. Leg Raises. Sitting Leg Press. Lats. Curls. Squats. Hand Weights. Sit-Ups. On and on, without end. Do it, then write it down. Wait in a stupor for your partner to finish, then start in. Notice how small and stringy your muscles really are. Notice how they hurt. Wipe the sweat from your eyes and go, go, go.

Finally. It's over. You sit on a bench breathing slowly,



your leaden limbs hanging limply. The room is going in and out of focus, and the instructor is saying something.

Running.

You shake your head to clear it. Sounded for a second like he said running.

"...around a path in the Grove out here, we'll show you the path. 'Sgo! Twelve-minute run."

God. Start out slow, and get slower. Feet slapping the uneven ground, breath tearing in and out. Look at your watch. Great. Only eleven more minutes to go.

Two hours later the timer says, "Thirty seconds! Thirty seconds left, you suckers." Somehow, you keep running. It's no longer a conscious thing. You've given up long ago trying to get enough air.

"Fifteen seconds!"

Lying rootsucker. It's been at least a minute and a half since he said thirty seconds.

"Five seconds!"

When you get your strength back, you're going to kill this guy slowly and horribly.

"WHEEEEEEEET!" says the whistle.

"Keep walking, boys, don't tighten up on me now," he calls. You wander around in a daze. Where's the gym? It was here just a minute ago.

"All right, to the showers, boys. Y'done good. Next class, you're gonna do a quarter of a lap better."

Sure, you think, a quarter of a lap. And the ground starts moving toward your face, and everything goes black.

She was six
when the tree of wild cherries
started raining birds.
seven
when the sassafras made
tea.

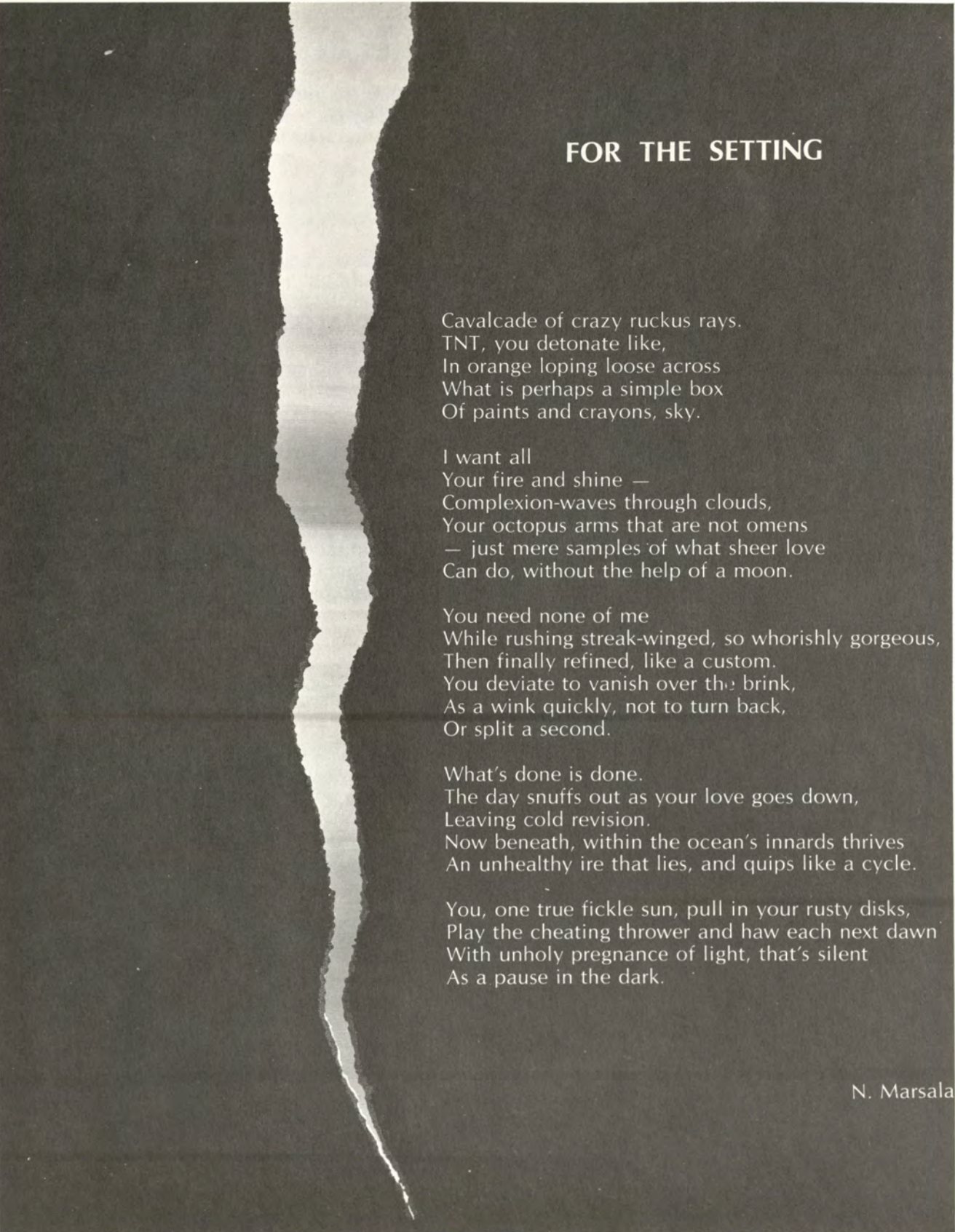
eight when
dogwoods made good-round
pressing petals.
all the while pretended
there were no paper sheaves
born of live means.

She is bent.
sits in dusk;
gathers gin-berries;
sits in dusk,
thumbs bruise them.
paper dusks;
they're poison.

CHRONOLOGY

N. Marsala





FOR THE SETTING

Cavalcade of crazy ruckus rays.
TNT, you detonate like,
In orange loping loose across
What is perhaps a simple box
Of paints and crayons, sky.

I want all
Your fire and shine —
Complexion-waves through clouds,
Your octopus arms that are not omens
— just mere samples of what sheer love
Can do, without the help of a moon.

You need none of me
While rushing streak-winged, so whorishly gorgeous,
Then finally refined, like a custom.
You deviate to vanish over the brink,
As a wink quickly, not to turn back,
Or split a second.

What's done is done.
The day snuffs out as your love goes down,
Leaving cold revision.
Now beneath, within the ocean's innards thrives
An unhealthy ire that lies, and quips like a cycle.

You, one true fickle sun, pull in your rusty disks,
Play the cheating thrower and haw each next dawn
With unholy pregnancy of light, that's silent
As a pause in the dark.

N. Marsala

L. Sanders



M. G. Janik

THE ALIBI OF THE GEMINI

Contrivance in June.
Castor and Pollux
mixed my blood, Made me
Rise in mortal temper,
so vulnerable,
too watchful of winter moons.

Yet i am. . .

the stuff of mercury —
the quicksilver of bright stars,
the serum of cinnabar
and pastor of smiles!
Oh, i unleash to sadness and storm,
too soon.
Then lightening
does marry the music of sun,
while the sea calms its capsuled-self.
i transmute.

i'm a
Glutton for love,
a harbour of hate —
i have no excuse,
but contrivance in June.
i sail through the air
to crash on the earth,
bleeding and bound to a womb.
And to my scars,
the dark is a cicatrix. . .

N. Marsala

He is an old man. There is no other way to say it. He is old.

And yet, here among the young who pretend to be old, he belongs.

Perhaps it is his hair. He wears it long and tied back in a rubber band. An ancient hippy, born too early.

He has seen a lot, of course. The silver hair, weathered face and gnarled hands tell the story.

And still he belongs.

It must be his eyes. His eyes are not the eyes of cynicism grown to wisdom. Nor are they eyes of gentle acceptance, dim focus, or quiet despair.

They are the eyes of eternity, of life and death, growth and stagnation, time and a no-time. They have memory and courage in them. They do not forget the before or fear the after.

Day after day, he arrives and takes his place at the corner of the cafeteria. The familiar songs begin — his repertoire varies little as frequenters here know.

The ragtime, the fight songs, a few sentimental tunes and Beethoven.

He spots someone who perhaps once requested a song. Pounding out the melody, he waits for that someone to turn and wave in acknowledgment.

Sometimes he sings along to his playing. The raspy notes of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" come out in a tinny vibrato. Occasionally, people will join in, but not too often.

He is a part of this place, this old man. He is as much a part as the bells that signal classes, Merlin's tree or the grafitti on the tables and booths.

Yes, he is old.

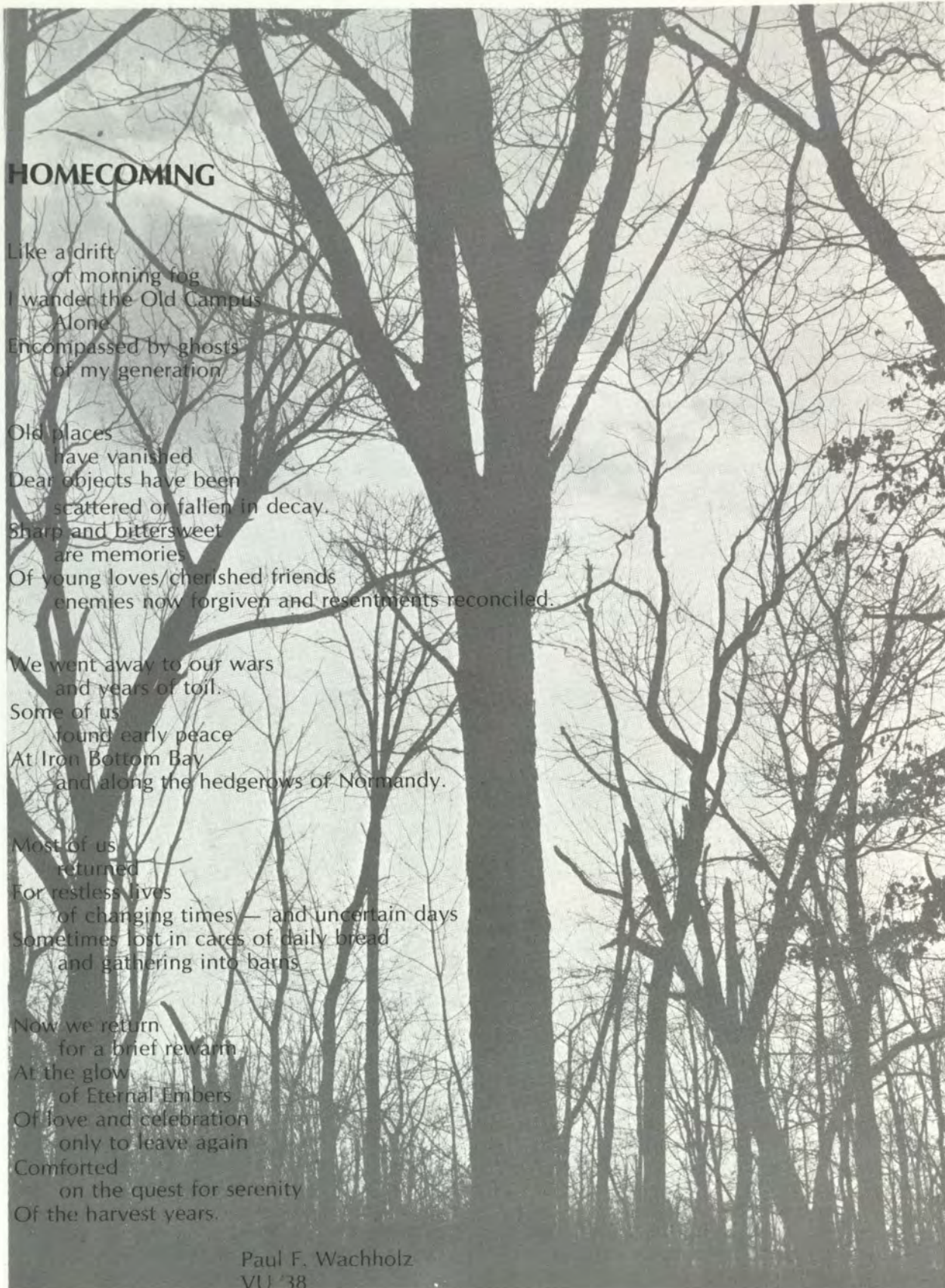
But he belongs.

YES HE IS OLD BUT HE BELONGS

M. J. Augustine



A. Schultz



HOME COMING

Like a drift
of morning fog
I wander the Old Campus
Alone
Encompassed by ghosts
of my generation

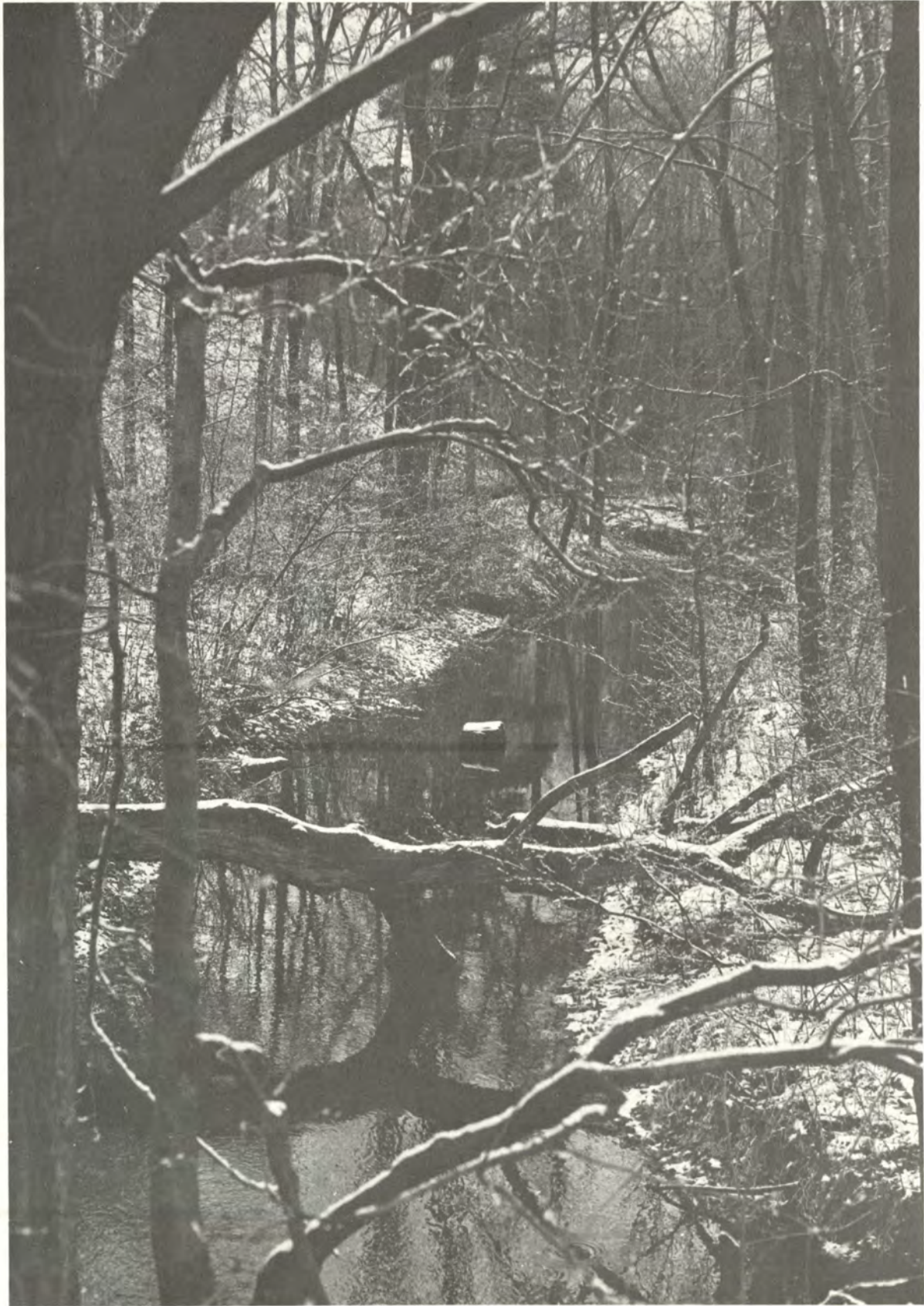
Old places
have vanished
Dear objects have been
scattered or fallen in decay.
Sharp and bittersweet
are memories
Of young loves/cherished friends
enemies now forgiven and resentments reconciled.

We went away to our wars
and years of toil.
Some of us
found early peace
At Iron Bottom Bay
and along the hedgerows of Normandy.

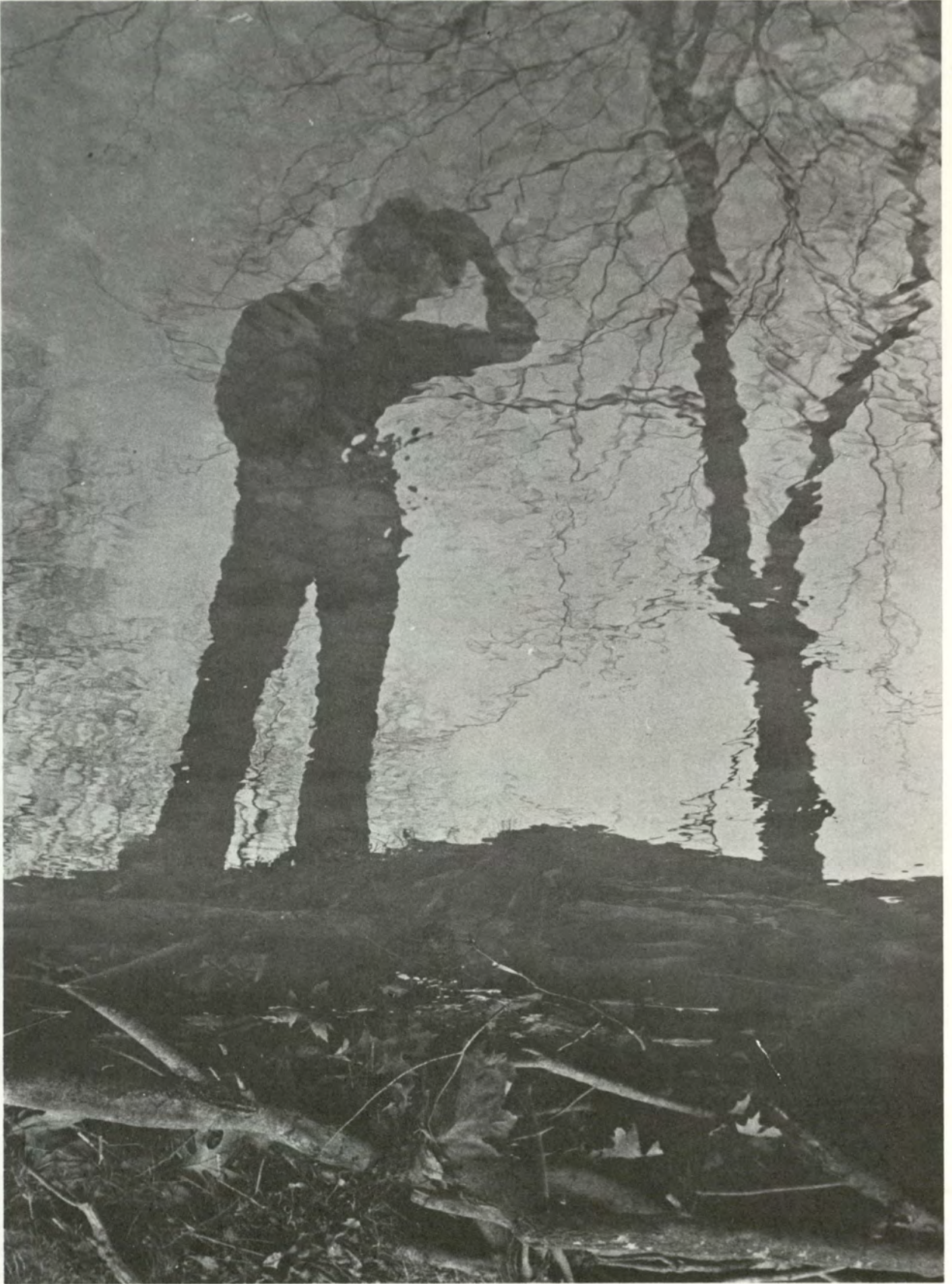
Most of us
returned
For restless lives
of changing times — and uncertain days
Sometimes lost in cares of daily bread
and gathering into barns

Now we return
for a brief rewarm
At the glow
of Eternal Embers
Of love and celebration
only to leave again
Comforted
on the quest for serenity
Of the harvest years.

Paul F. Wachholz
VU '38



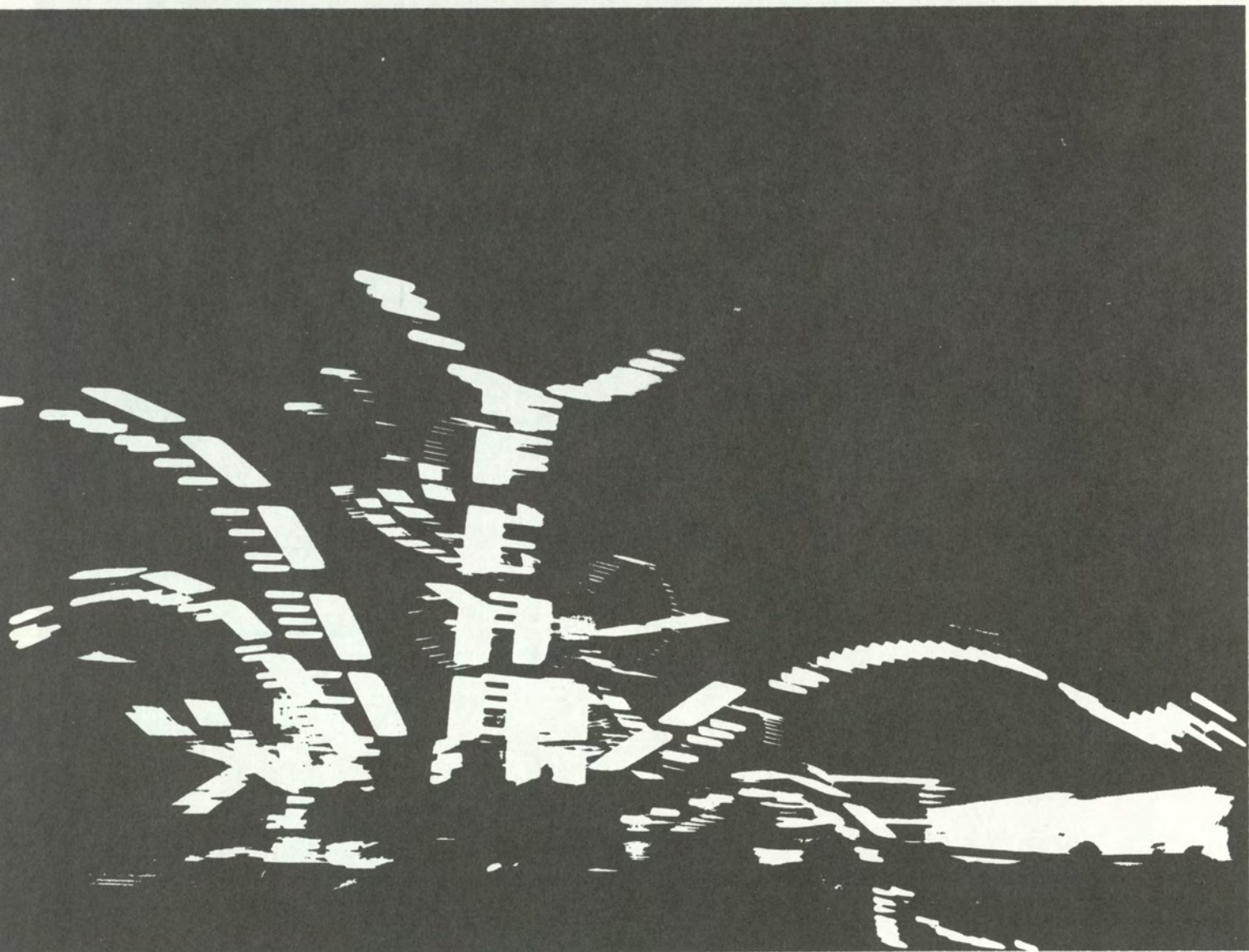
Les Chapman



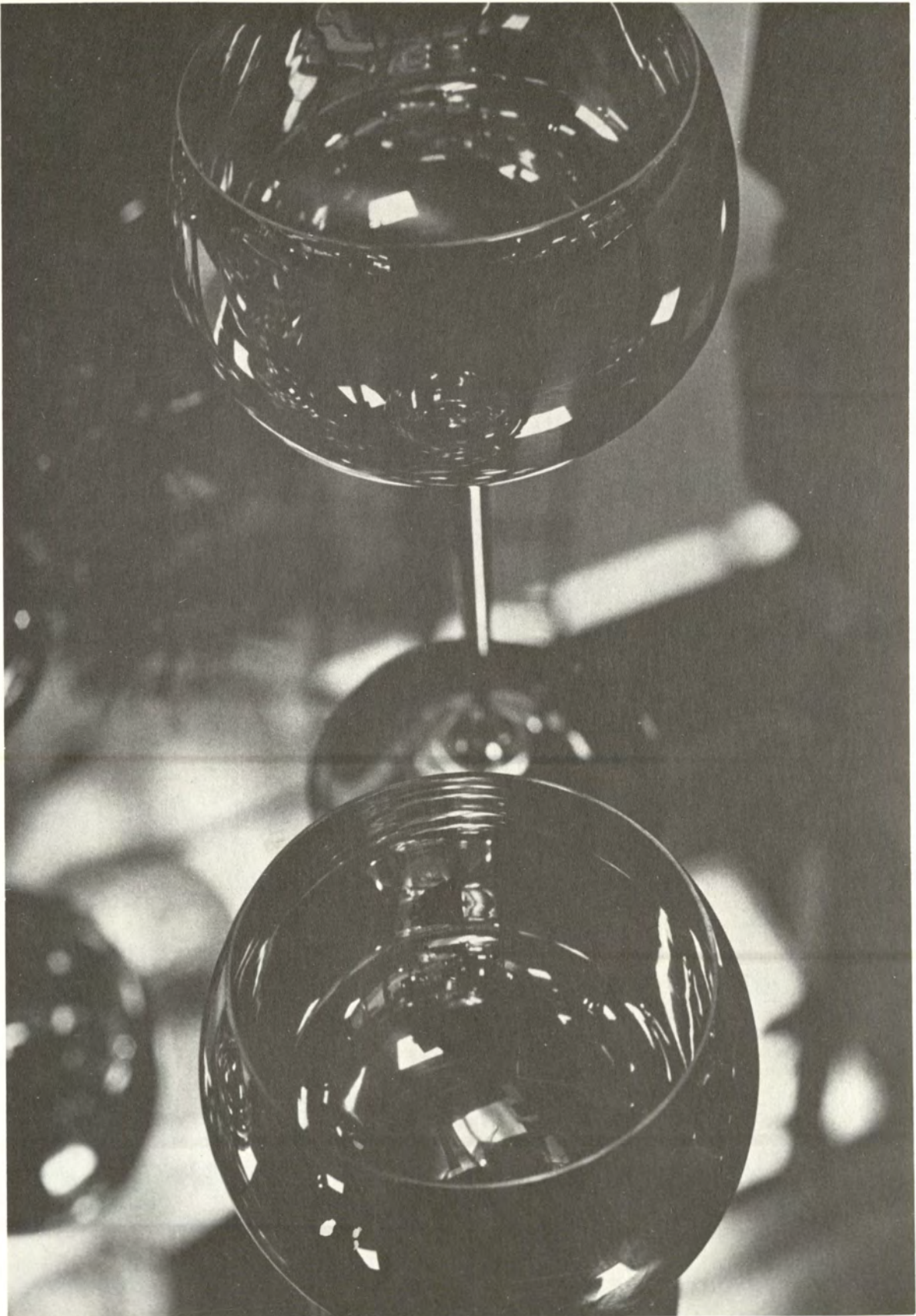
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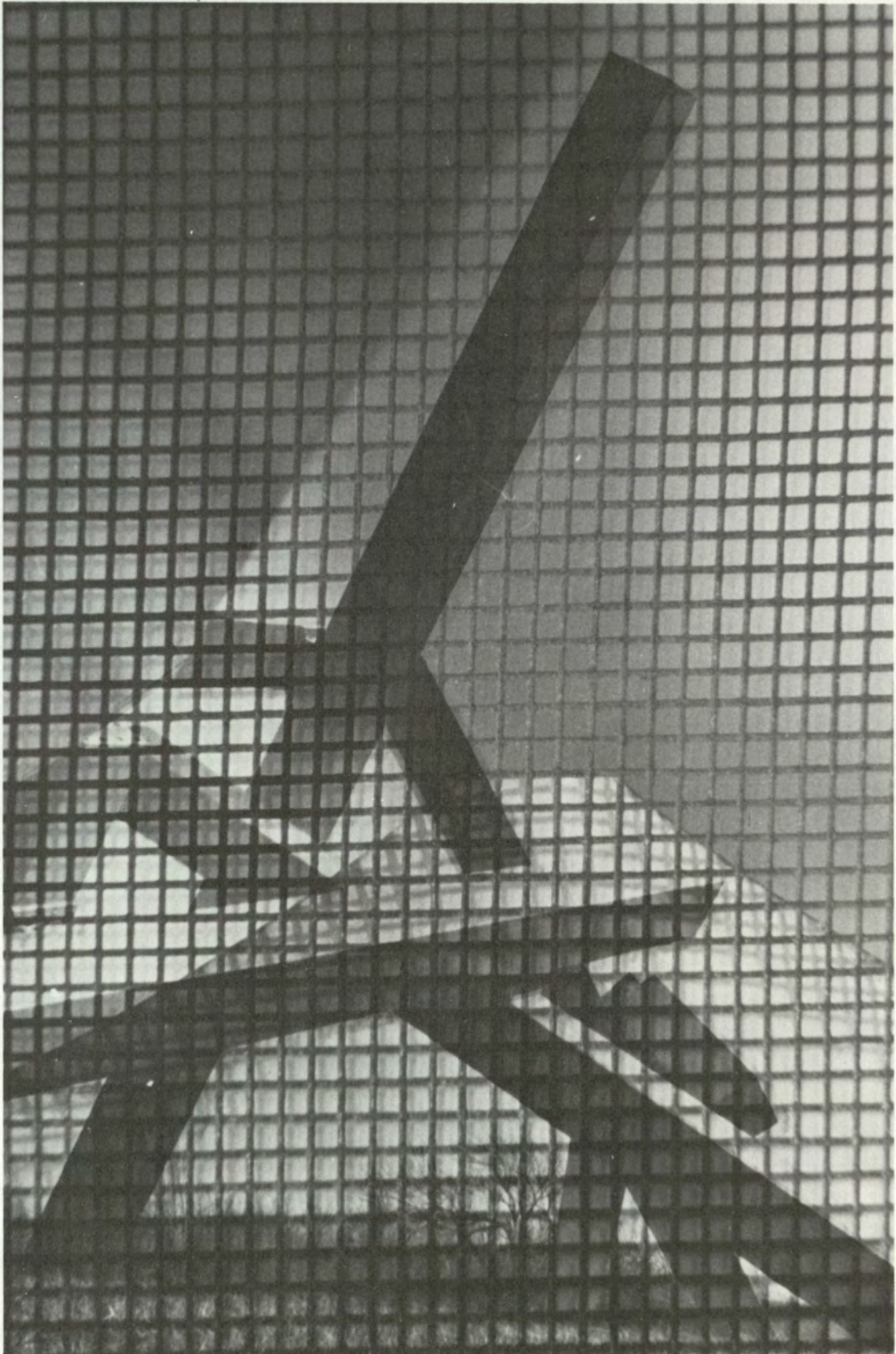
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