

Spring 1979

Spring 1979

Valparaiso University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholar.valpo.edu/lighter_62-03



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Valparaiso University, "Spring 1979" (1979). *The Lighter, 1962-2003*. Paper 65.
http://scholar.valpo.edu/lighter_62-03/65

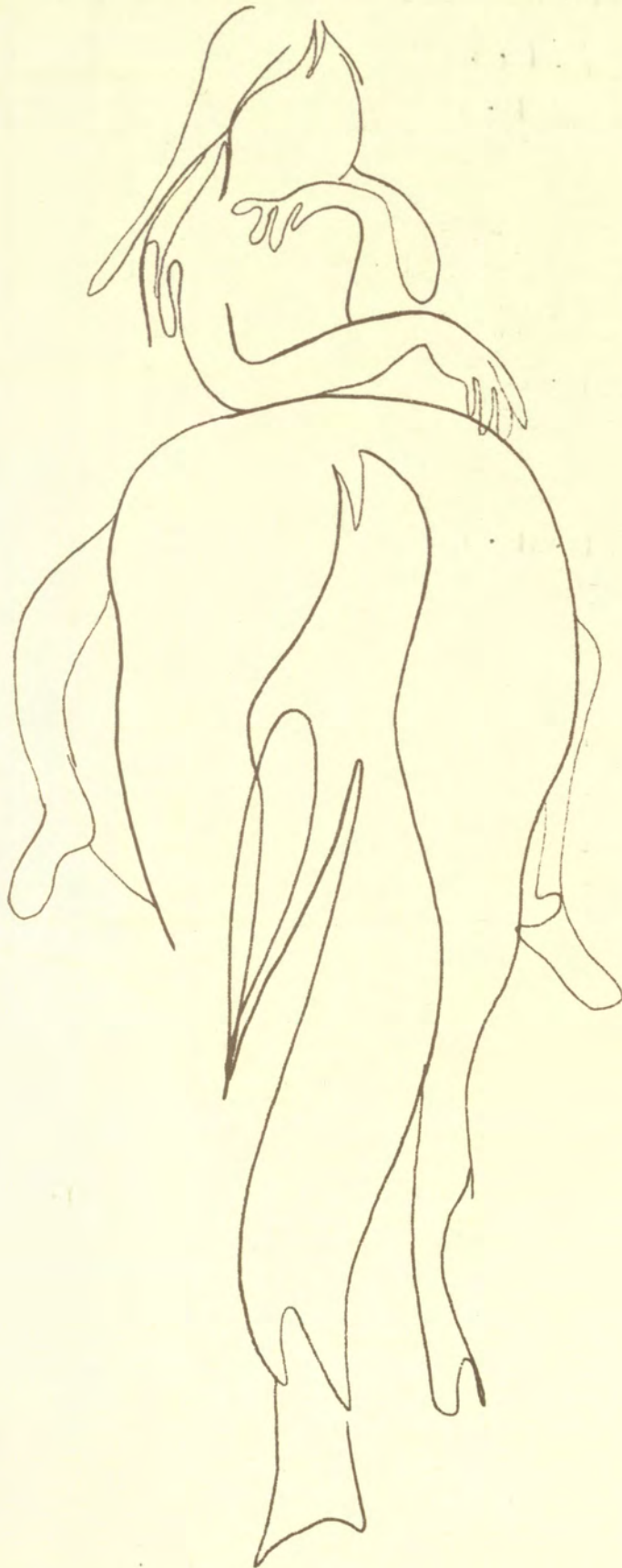
This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of English at ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Lighter, 1962-2003 by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at scholar@valpo.edu.

22
S
P
R
I
N
G
'7
9



THE LIGHTER

PROPOSITION 1



Coventry, England. On Wednesday, Leofric, Earl of Mercia, freed the town from all taxes, except those on horses. He had promised his wife, Lady Godiva, a reduction in the town's heavy taxation, if she would ride naked through the marketplace. She did ride unclothed through Coventry Monday. At Lady Godiva's request, the townsmen remained indoors at the time announced for the ride. Tailor Tom, who peeped out of his window, reportedly has been struck with blindness.

God, I've a
lot of respect for
Godiva.
No lewd nude,
bawd broad,
but the Earl's true lady,
she rode bareback bare,
appeared a sleazy rider,
a bare-faced doll
without any guise.

Tom sees only memories now:
"I eyed her, aye.
Ai, yi, yi!"
He at the naked lady peeped,
ogled her body,
boggled his mind,
He says she rode with amazing grace,
with a ravishing shape,
an unnoticed face.

She was au naturel,
without even stirrups,
astride her horse.
She did strip for that trip,
wore tresses for dresses,
and blushes, of course.

Take off your hat
to a modest nudist!
she cantered for a cause,
taking a clothing deduction
for tax reduction.

Bernhard Hillila

Life: what's it all about? What is yours like? What kinds of memories do you have? What are you living for?

The stories and poems in this issue show life from a number of different perspectives. We hope you can live through these authors' eyes, and think about who you can identify with. Who would you most like to identify with? (Some of it may be just fun reading. . .)

But what is quality life about, anyway?

SRH

THE LIGHTER

Spring 1979 Volume 22 Number 1 The literary-variety magazine of Valparaiso University

facing page	Bernhard Hillila: <i>Proposition I</i>	12	Jennifer Rau: <i>Linnea Allows a Laugh</i>
2	Lynn DeLand: <i>My Brother</i>	13	J. Alan Smith: <i>The Existentialist's Response. . .</i> George W. Adamczyk: <i>(Thank You)</i>
3	William C. Heerman: <i>Three-Minute Egg</i>	14	James Clifton Hale: <i>The Hopeful Agnostic</i>
4	J. M.: <i>The Wait I Was</i> Jill Harper: <i>Thataway</i>	16	D. G. Purdy: <i>Excaliber</i>
5	J. LeMunyon: <i>A Special Theory of Relativity</i> Steve Pera: <i>"Arise!"</i>	18	Kim Hieber: <i>Grandmother</i> Julie Garrison: <i>Storm</i>
6	Jeff Koehler: <i>Caricature</i> Charlease L. Bobo: <i>Visions</i>	19	William C. Heerman: <i>Sleeping Pill</i> Jeff Koehler: <i>Did Socrates Have a Bitchy Wife?</i>
7	Su Holman: <i>Bruce</i> W.C. Heerman: <i>Twenty-first Birthday Rhyme</i>	20	Susan Holman: <i>Marila's Journal</i>
8	David Ruisard: <i>Through a Child's Eyes</i>	28	Anne Guida: <i>A Meeting with John Gardner</i>
10	Lisa Collin: <i>Morning</i> J. M.: <i>In the Fall. . .</i>	30	Charlease L. Bobo: <i>Ghost Dance</i>
11	Mary Young: <i>Lord, I Saw Myself Today</i>	31	Darsha Swenson: <i>September Heat</i> Susan K. Day: <i>Autumn Dance</i>

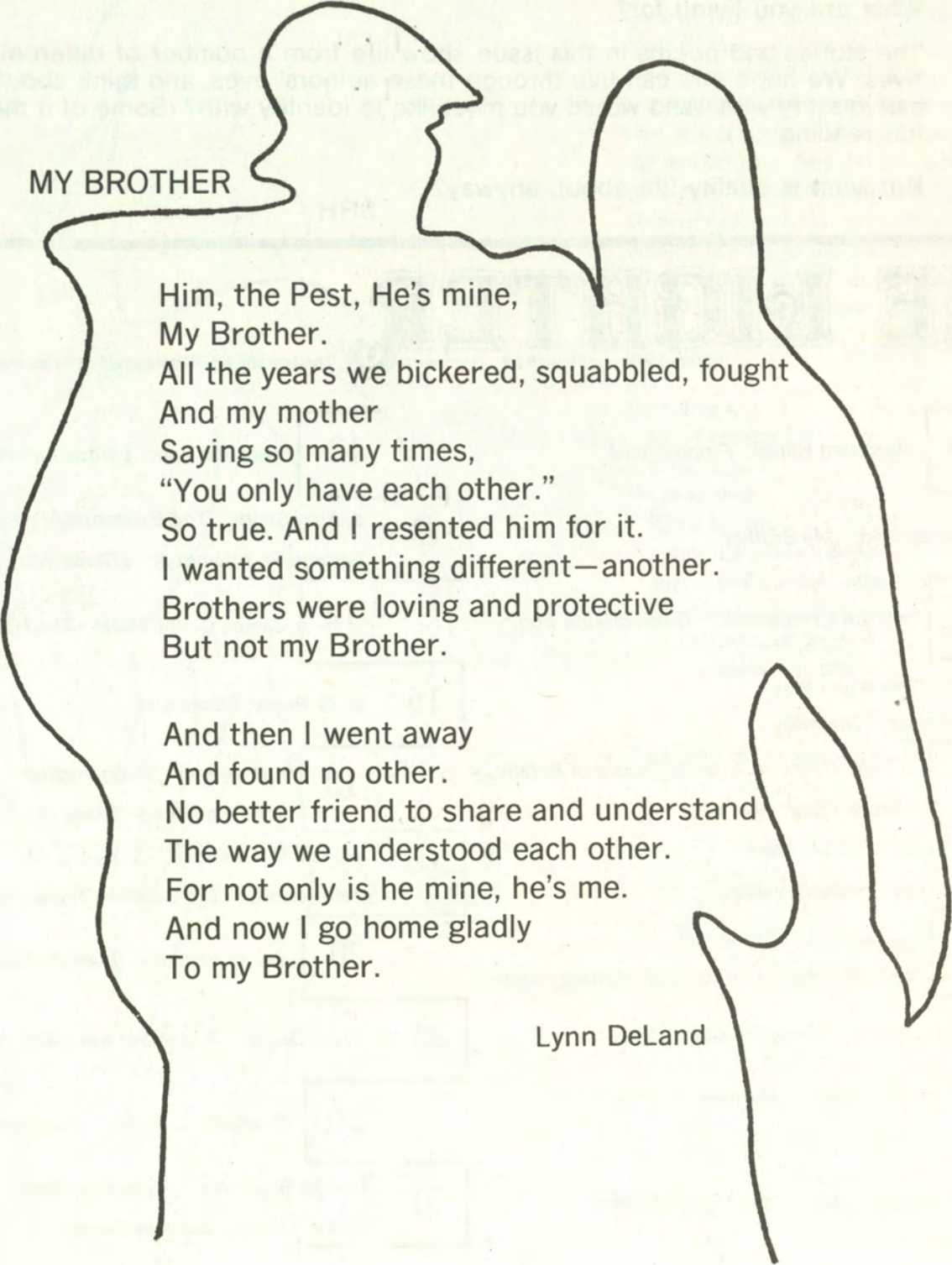
Editor-in-chief: Susan Holman
Assistant Editors: Anne Guida, Sue Bailey.
Staff: Kim Hieber, Jan Larson, Rich Novotney.

Graphics: Norman Doering: pp. 14-15; Linda Feldmann: pp. 8-13; Diane Jennings: pp. 6-7, 18-19, 30-32; Douglas Olson: inside back cover, pp. 20-27; Robert E. Potter III: pp. 0-3, 16-17, 28-29; Deb Redman: pp. 4-5, front cover.

Advisors: Richard Brauer (graphics), Marshall Harvey (copy)
 Copyright 1979 by Robert Schnabel

Image on page 3 based on a painting by Roger Huggsen, Atlantic Recording Co.

All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the publisher.

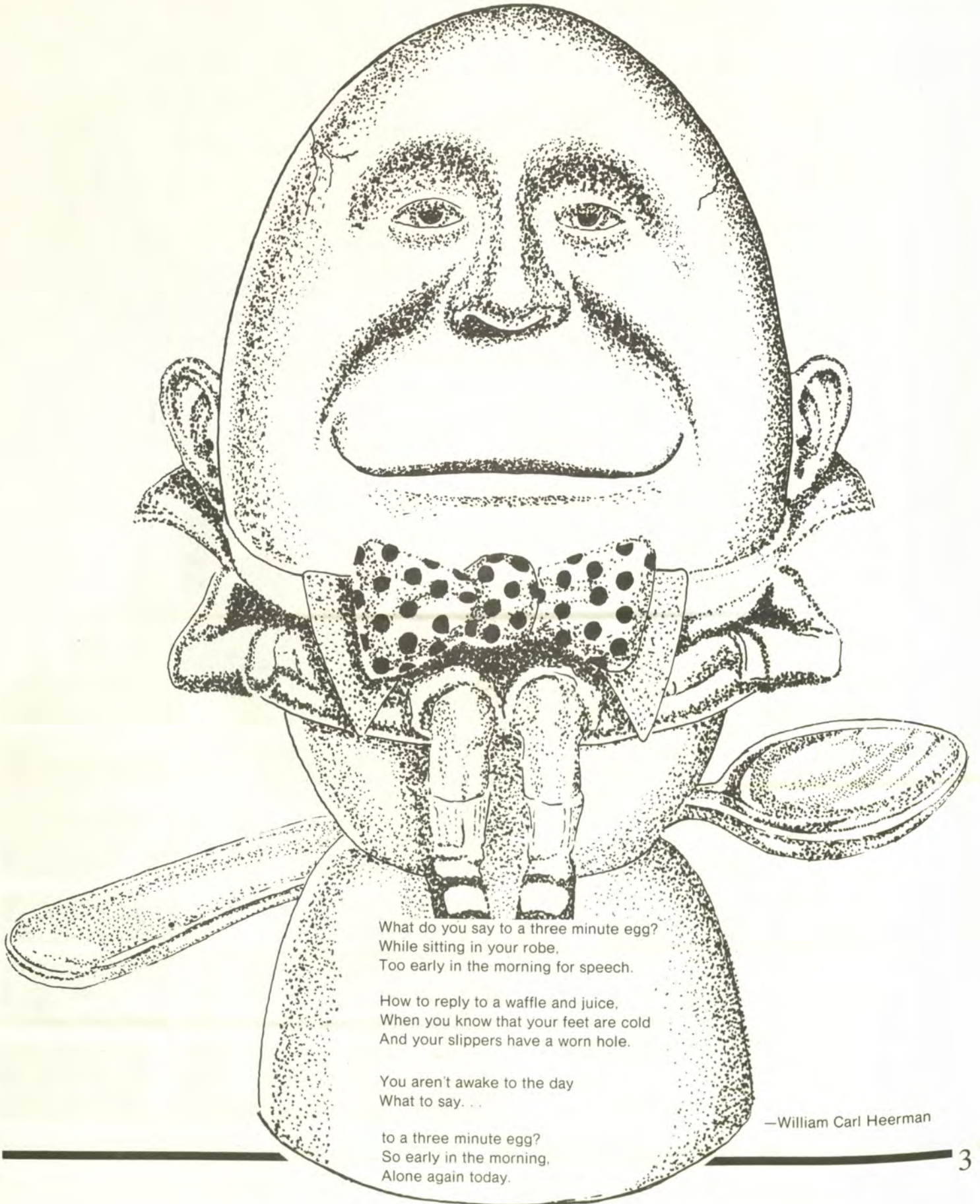


MY BROTHER

Him, the Pest, He's mine,
My Brother.
All the years we bickered, squabbled, fought
And my mother
Saying so many times,
"You only have each other."
So true. And I resented him for it.
I wanted something different—another.
Brothers were loving and protective
But not my Brother.

And then I went away
And found no other.
No better friend to share and understand
The way we understood each other.
For not only is he mine, he's me.
And now I go home gladly
To my Brother.

Lynn DeLand



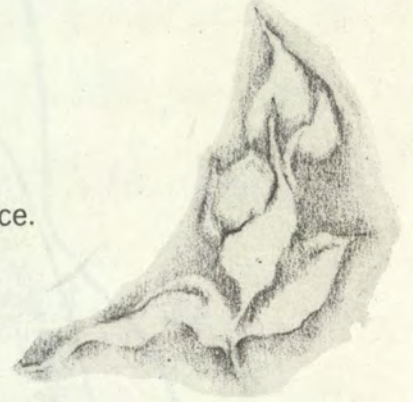
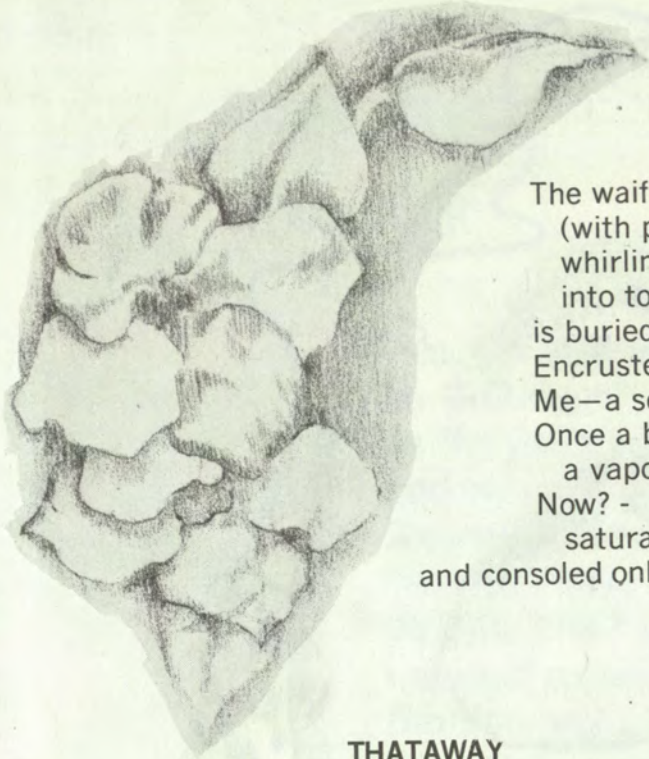
What do you say to a three minute egg?
While sitting in your robe,
Too early in the morning for speech.

How to reply to a waffle and juice,
When you know that your feet are cold
And your slippers have a worn hole.

You aren't awake to the day
What to say. . .

to a three minute egg?
So early in the morning,
Alone again today.

—William Carl Heerman



The waif I was
(with pockets full of posies,
whirling dreams into wishes
into tomorrow into yesterday)
is buried.
Encrusted with barnacles of experience.
Me—a sedimentary personality—
Once a boundaryless simplicity,
a vapor fused with life by wonder.
Now? -
saturated, condensed,
and consoled only by the continuity of my confusion. . .

—J. M.

THATAWAY

I want to go to THATAWAY
Where is it at? No one will say.
I understand that adults can play
In the town of THATAWAY.

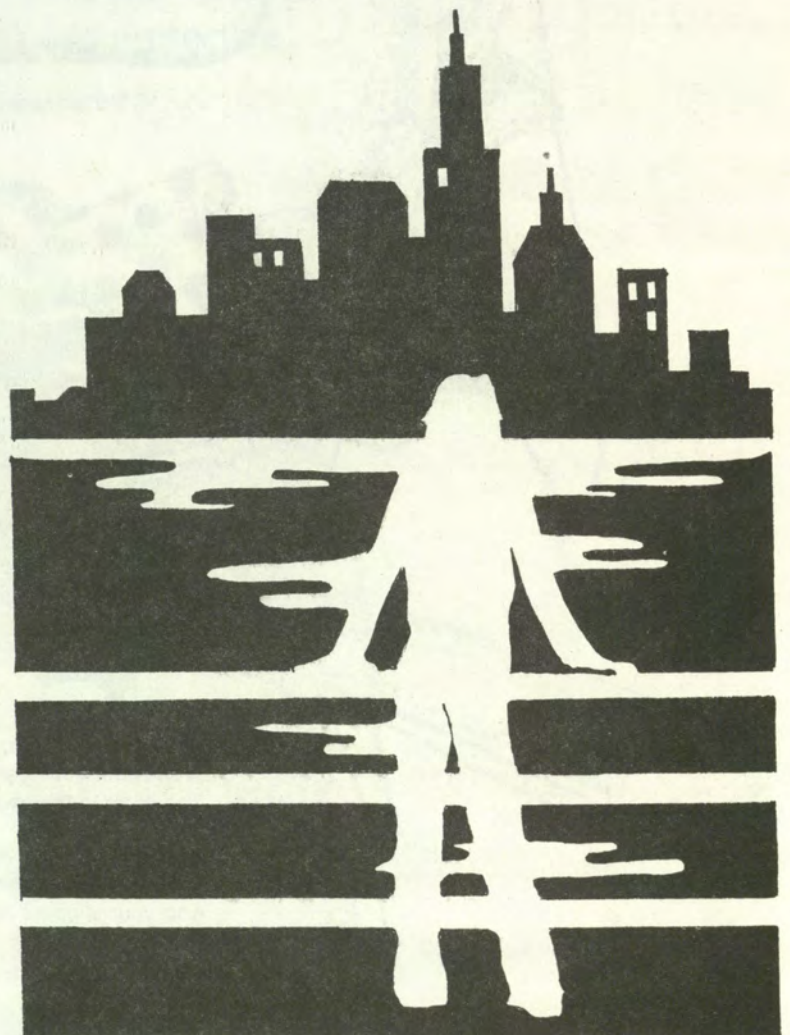
I want to go to THATAWAY,
find me a niche that seems okay
find me someone to spend the day
in the town of THATAWAY.

I want to go to THATAWAY.
Down by the water I'll wait by the bay.
Someone will get me and show me the way
to the town of THATAWAY.

I want to go to THATAWAY.
I'll ask my children if I may.
Yes, they say, if I can find my way
back from the town of THATAWAY.

I want to go to THATAWAY.
I hear the music, it's coming this way,
But I'll come back. I won't stray
Away from my home to THATAWAY.

—jill harper



"ARISE!" I heard, but remained sitting.
"Shine!" but I'd read it all before—
many, many, oh how many boring times before. . .
before that ol' two-edged sword stuck.
It was dull, my sword—
warped by my stubbornness.

"Arise." How dull.
"Shine." I didn't—
no more than a dusty lantern, empty.
"For your light has come."
but I've got light—
why, I'm surrounded by it. . .
lamps, chandeliers, fluorescents,
and candles, and, and even the sun!

"arise." I heard, but remained sitting.
"shine." but I'd read it all before. . .
except, except this time
when that ol' two-edged sword stuck.
it cut. . . through!

"Arise!" I heard, and in awe-filled comprehension,
stammered to my feet.

"Shine!" But, but with what?
I am empty.
I'm not good enough.
I have no light.

"For your light has come!"
MY light?

Wait. You mean *my* light is already *here*?
You mean I don't have to plea or search for it,
or fabricate it,
or wish it would come?

You mean I don't have to do anything
but allow that His light fill my empty lantern?

Oh, forgive my darkness!

Quick, Lord, clean off the dust of my idleness. . .and
stand me up. . .and
shine!

—Steve Pera

(*comprehended from Isaiah 60:1-3*)

A Special Theory of Relativity

Clouds boldly crawl through the sky
Which ones above are hospitable:
One, three, or nine?

The ground slowly spins along by.
What below is hospitable:
None, some, or time?

James M. LeMunyon



Visions

a sits sand. goes surf
lonely on The down, still
man the sun the sounds.

The come and and making in sky.
stars out twinkle glow pictures the

and at spot looking
he the beside for
looks bare him, her.

Oh, God, he asks, why?

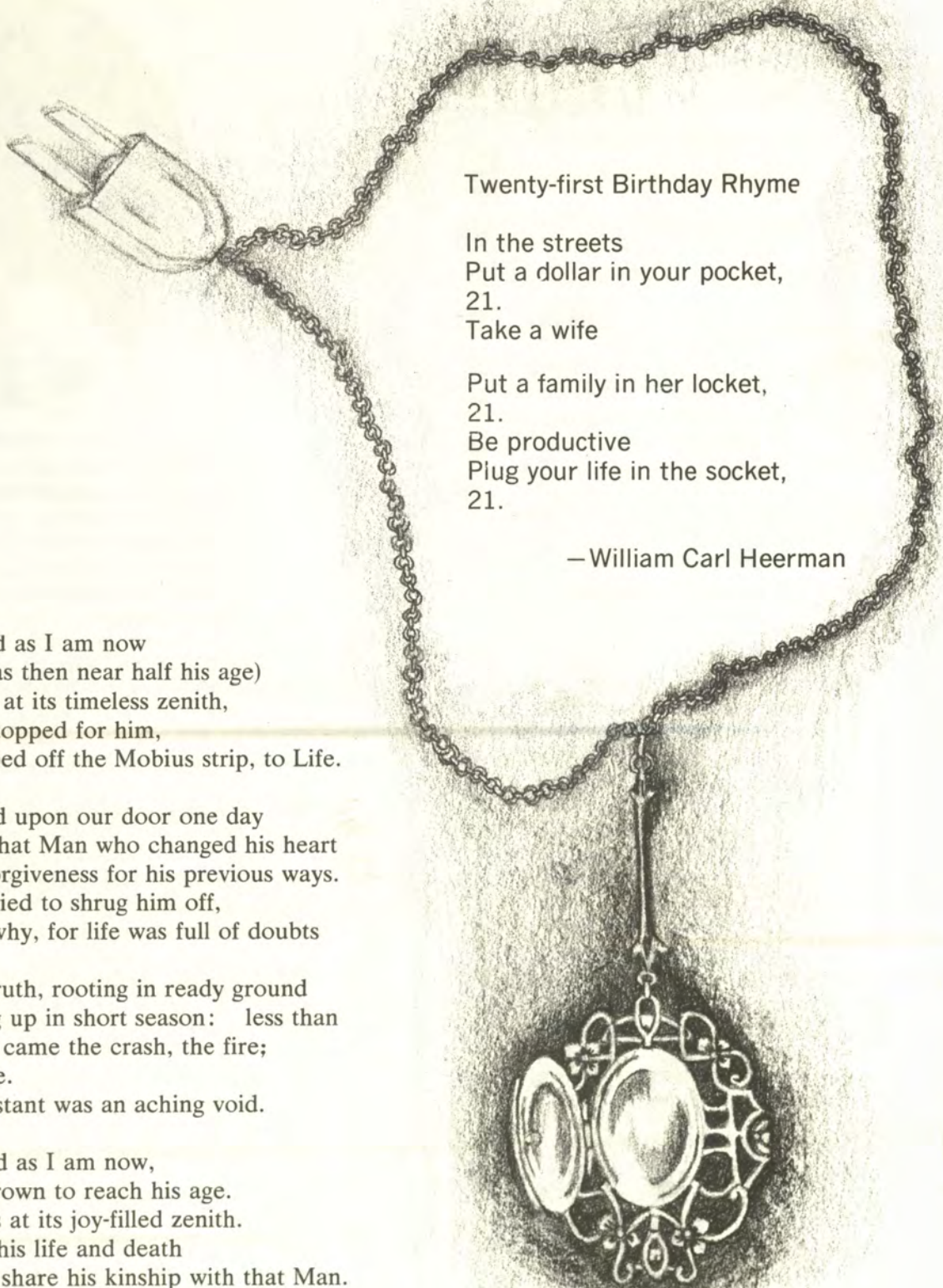
-Charlease L. Bobo



Caricature

Word Rhymes
Sometimes
Fun can be
If they are done
Absurdly.

-Jeff Koehler



Twenty-first Birthday Rhyme

In the streets
Put a dollar in your pocket,
21.
Take a wife

Put a family in her locket,
21.
Be productive
Plug your life in the socket,
21.

—William Carl Heerman

Bruce

He was as old as I am now
(Though I was then near half his age)
And summer at its timeless zenith,
When time stopped for him,
And he stepped off the Mobius strip, to Life.

He'd knocked upon our door one day
And shared that Man who changed his heart
And asked forgiveness for his previous ways.
The others tried to shrug him off,
But I asked why, for life was full of doubts

And he of Truth, rooting in ready ground
And shooting up in short season: less than
a year. Then came the crash, the fire;
Adamic curse.
And in an instant was an aching void.

He was as old as I am now,
For I have grown to reach his age.
And spring is at its joy-filled zenith.
For through his life and death
I've come to share his kinship with that Man.

—Su Holman

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

by David Ruisard



My family has been going to see Grandpa and Grandma every Sunday afternoon for as long as I can remember. It was called "Sunday coffeetime," although us kids did not go for the coffee. We went because—well, we had never thought of not going. We had been going ever since we were babies too small to care or even know the difference. Since that time I have become aware of many things. As a young man in college my interests have become many and varied. As a result I seldom make it to Sunday coffeetime at Grandpa's house. But that is what I feel I miss most about being away from home. Often I will travel home on a Sunday just so I can attend the coffeetime. It's not very exciting or eventful. But it is the place where things have been familiar for so long. My home has changed, as have my relationships within my immediate family. But my grandfather has always been old to my recollection. His humor has not changed. Their house is the same as it always was. The atmosphere of their house has been a still point in my transient world.

Upon that still point my world has opened up. Now when I go to the coffeetime it is like returning to a time that always was, and always will be. The effect is that I have a measure with which to measure my progress. The progress can be seen in many ways. I have grown in physical stature, causing the rooms to appear smaller. I have progressed from Coolaid and cake to coffee and rolls. I have moved from the little table to the big table. And I know that I have increased in awareness. My mind takes into account much more data than it once did, and yet there is a sense of unity as awareness becomes increasingly broader.

One time when I am about six years old my cousin and I get into trouble at Grandpa's during the coffeetime. In the basement is this big old coal-burning furnace. My cousin and me are having a great time pitching little chunks of coal into the furnace. I imagine the fire itself is the most fascinating thing I have ever seen, but we are pretending that we are in a train or a spaceship or something in order to draw out the game and give purpose to our fire-stoking fun. And then Grandpa comes down and makes us stop because the house is getting pretty hot upstairs. For me this is hard to figure out. It was not part of the game nor was it our inten-



tion for the house to get hot. So I get quite upset and act like a typically unreasonable six-year-old who feels he has been cheated. I did not get into trouble with the furnace anymore. And sooner or later I came to understand some of the expectations that were placed on me. But even today with my increased awareness of the world I do not understand all the expectations that I encounter. And sometimes I get just as frustrated now as fifteen years ago.

I remember all the ways all of us cousins would find fun and fascination around Grandpa's. We climbed to the top of the silo once. I knew it was perfectly safe but my mother disagreed. Still there were many other vehicles for the imagination to get on and soar. Picture eight of us up in an apple tree. But it's not just an apple tree, but becomes a whole other world. It is a jungle, a wilderness, and still just a tree. It offers us much more than just apples. The eight of us are a community. The tree is our common bond. That is when time plays tricks, and though the sun pretends that it has only been an afternoon, we know that it has been years. A decade later (according to the sun) I return to the tree. There is nothing there but the tree and a faint recollection of how it once might have been. The apples are full of bugs and the bark scratches my arms. I'm feeling ridiculous so I get down before anybody sees me. These days I try and stick to the things which are really fun. I am in organizations for community. Sports provide exercise. Books or intellectual discussions provide me with imaginative and mental exercise. These are perfectly acceptable for someone of adulthood and maturity. I wonder if they will prove to be as ridiculous as the apple tree. I feel that my awareness has increased in scope, but the focal point has remained the same.

Recently my awareness worked overtime and told me something very interesting. My Grandpa is an eternal grandpa. And I am his eternal grandson. As a child he was my confidant, always having a sympathetic ear and a loving heart. It was not his job to discipline me and train me. That

was my parent's job. Grandpa was not meant to pull me up to his level, but to live beside me. He was Grandpa, and I was grandson. Today he is Grandpa, and I am grandson. And even though he looks up to me because of my height, his eyes tell me that I am always his grandchild. And even though it was once him helping me walk, and now it is me helping him, we glory in each others' accomplishments. I am the eternal younger, and he the eternal older.

The relationship between us is changeless. I will never catch up to him or surpass him. Rather I will always find fulfillment and pleasure in serving him and being in his presence. He will eternally be my Grandpa through the time he is physically gone. For then I shall serve him in remembering him. And I shall reap pleasure as he manifests himself in that remembrance. Eternity is a subject that baffles the contemplative mind. But for a child it is quite simple. For grandparents do get old and leave, but their spirits remain just as real and vibrant as the first moment of closeness between the grandparent and child. As an awareness the sense of eternity is most certainly mysterious. Yet it is very, very real in the mind of the child and the twenty-one-year-old. At the coffeetime I perceive that he is just Grandpa, yet I feel that he is much more. Gray hair and tired bones are his characteristics. But I know that he is much more than he is aware of himself. He cannot know what he means to me. How can I know such things? It is far more than I can understand.

"Coffeetime is 4:00 p.m. on Sunday at Grandpa's and Grandma's house. . . It is the still point that has been present from the beginning of my awareness, serving to bring pleasure and security where understanding was not sufficient."

Coffeetime is just as it always has been. Except that now there is an extra. The generation after me is represented by the presence of my cousin's baby girl. I become fascinated as I behold the baby become a part of the coffeetime community. The baby is perfect. Crying, laughing, wiggling—all that a baby is expected to do. But that body is so small. And that little brain is so far removed from any comprehension of the significance of what is around her. Her understanding is so very limited. I wonder what is going on inside her head. She knows how to eat, and sleep. But she is not aware of her hands and feet and the way they move. She does not understand them yet participates in the joy that they bring. Her grandparents glory in her life and reap pleasure from her presence—as they always will. Her parents think about the long process of training and discipline. I am dreaming of her awareness. My uncle picks her up and makes faces and noises that give him as much pleasure as they do her. What does she understand? Does she know that he is her grandfather and will always serve her in a similar manner? Of course not! Does she know that smiling and giggling is the proper response? How could she? But she does! She knows how to acknowledge his very special gift.

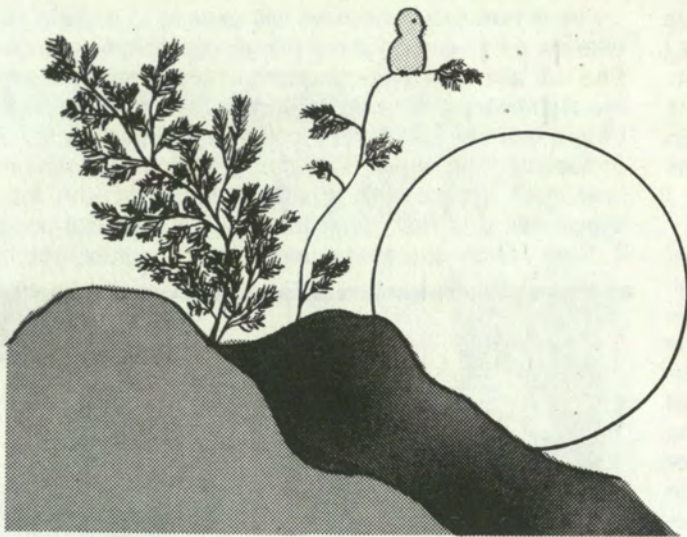
I think how her awareness will expand to include so much. Like me, she will find some things impossible to understand. She will also find understanding disquieting as it minimizes the significance of past awarenesses and apple trees. And I hope that she will find herself a still point like my Sunday coffeetime. The pleasure of that grandfather laughing in her face must not be lost. Whatever it is that she feels, she knows that it is real, even though she does not understand it. That which surpasses understanding must not be lost.



Since I do not get there very often, the Sunday afternoon coffeetime has become more special than before. Now when I go my senses are anticipating that special feeling which passes outside of time and understanding. Like an early morning walk at the peaceful beginning of a day, where the air is crisp, as it should be, and your body is eager to experience the magic of the morning. It cannot be explained, but it is very real, and just as it should be. Just so is the return to Grandpa's. It feels familiar. A pleasure wells up inside of me that causes a reaction just like the baby's smile and laugh. I sense some patriarchal essence laughing in my face. What can I do? I do not understand the peculiar purpose behind this mysterious source of mirth. Yet I feel the laughter and the pleasure. So, like the baby, I acknowledge. I participate in an almost overpowering feeling of pleasure and security. It is the still point that has been present from the beginning of my awareness, serving to bring pleasure and security where understanding was not sufficient. And now I know that it will always be beyond my understanding, just as it was beyond the baby's understanding, and is beyond my grandfather's understanding. But we all know that it is there. For it laughs in his face, and then he laughs in mine, and someday I will be laughing in some faces too, as we participate in the eternal that serves and gives pleasure to the community.

Do not presume that the subject has been merely Grandpa, or coffeetime. The special pleasure that I have found in a family tradition is an eternal one. It transcends what I can understand and merely manifests itself to me in the generations of a family. So that is how I present it to you.

Coffeetime is 4:00 p.m. on Sunday at Grandpa's and Grandma's house. I shall return to my eternal still point like a child in my grandfather's lap.



In the fall,
At eighty-five degrees,
I'm late for class
And barefoot in the chapel grass.

Toes and green
And sunny knees
Have not been seen
 all these chilly afternoons
 when the wind leans against me.
Now it softly brushes against my face. . .
 . . .a kitten. . .
 it ruffles my hair.

Drowning in the day
 like a warm bath. . .
 . . .sunshine soup. . .
 dazing me to sleep
 rocking me with calmness.

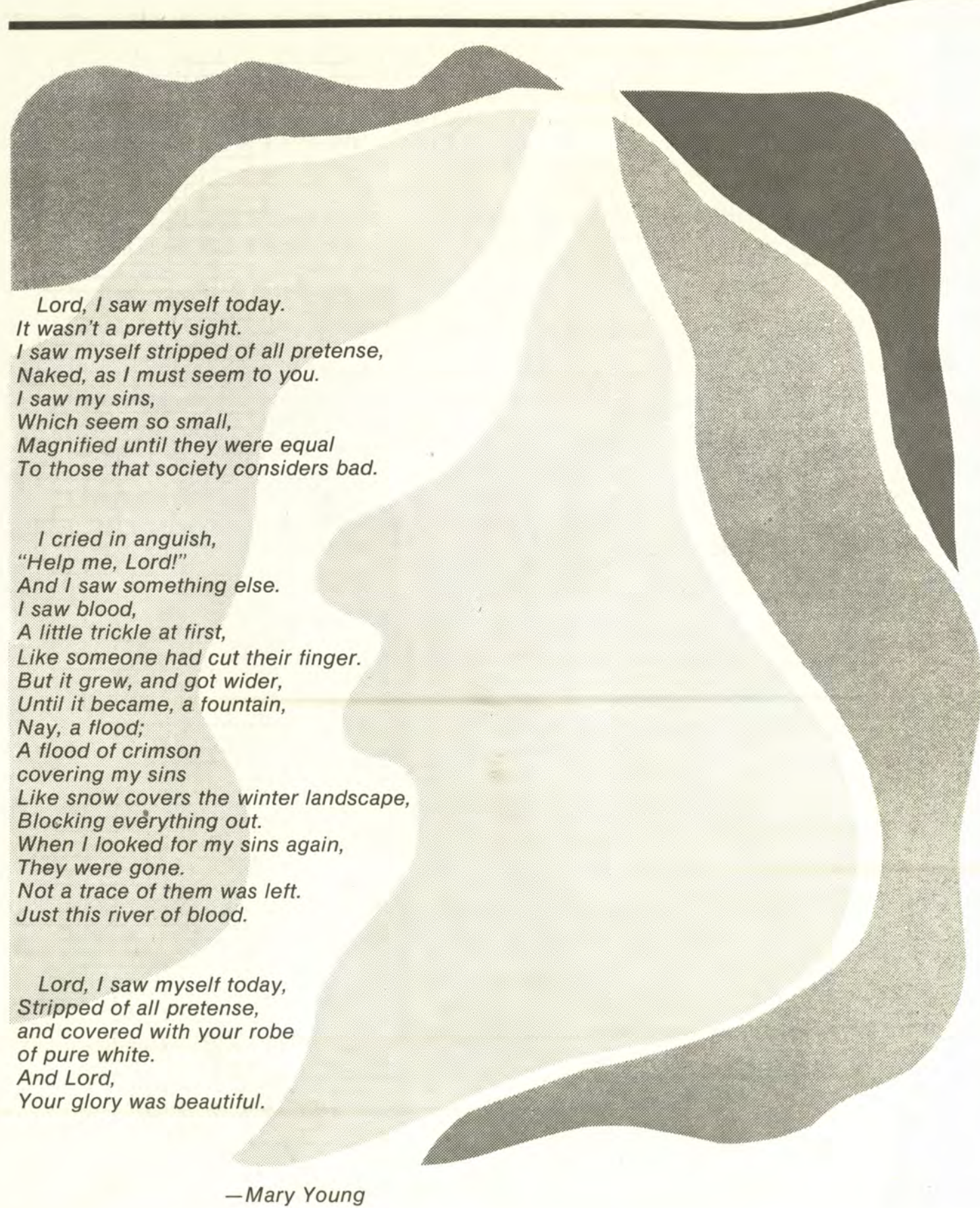
The breeze breathes
 a certain memory,
And hazy pictures drift
 lazily in time.
I'm missing your hand in mine,
 your mind at hand.

—J. M.

Morning

*Silence in the crest
of mountains as the sun
surges
and the farmers rise
to timeworn plows
and weathered overalls
to begin and
 end
to the ripples in the wheat
and the fine lines
in their hands.*





*Lord, I saw myself today.
It wasn't a pretty sight.
I saw myself stripped of all pretense,
Naked, as I must seem to you.
I saw my sins,
Which seem so small,
Magnified until they were equal
To those that society considers bad.*

*I cried in anguish,
"Help me, Lord!"
And I saw something else.
I saw blood,
A little trickle at first,
Like someone had cut their finger.
But it grew, and got wider,
Until it became, a fountain,
Nay, a flood;
A flood of crimson
covering my sins
Like snow covers the winter landscape,
Blocking everything out.
When I looked for my sins again,
They were gone.
Not a trace of them was left.
Just this river of blood.*

*Lord, I saw myself today,
Stripped of all pretense,
and covered with your robe
of pure white.
And Lord,
Your glory was beautiful.*

—Mary Young

LINNEA ALLOWS A LAUGH;

she wants the world's greatest joys.

It fades apologetically.
Prone in timidity,
anxiety engulfs her again.
She withdraws to the shell
that cups her spun-glass self-esteem.

'So hard,
hard to venture,' she mourns

While the latticed sun spends
the afternoon upon the wall
each letter she pens is
sealed with signs,
that old friends may not forget.

Sipping tea, she crouches at the sill at dusk
wondering at the hermit gentleman next door
whose lampshade glows contentedly
through icy stalactites.

He may have walked these streets
seeing the difference
between the mirror on the wall
and the looking-glass of
faces, frosted aloof
as they wended their way
in protective loneliness
about their creative anthill.

Linnea weeps
—those faces—
are they that unkind
or are their owners just as
fragile as she?

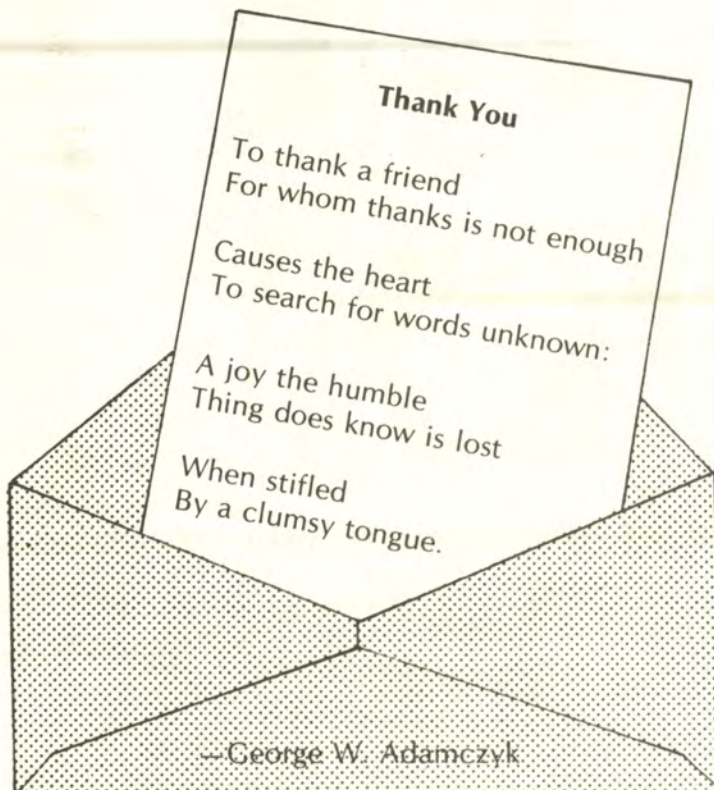
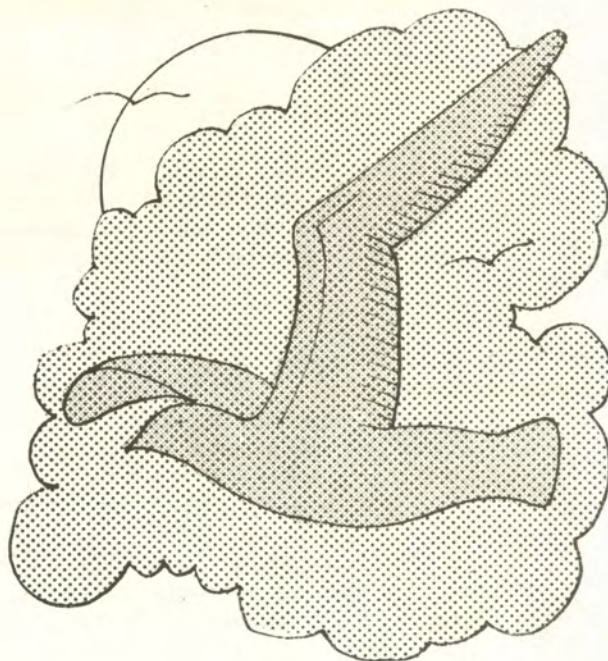
Linnea longs to melt the
crystal cages enclosing hearts.
She wants certainty of the feeling
that the glow she finds in
eyes regarding her
is not a mere reflection
upon vacant windows

by Jennifer Rau

**THE EXISTENTIALIST'S RESPONSE
TO SHAKESPEARE'S SONNET XVIII
(for J.L.C.)**

Shall I then neglect comparisons
'Twixt thee, and that which in time's course is still'd?
As over time the track of nature runs
So over time is life for man fulfill'd.
The soul can ne'er then disregard the dearth
Of perfect days with no impending trim;
But thankfully: Were heaven realized
Too soon, its later joys perforce would dim.
And even heaven's essence lies in days
Drawn from a summer sought and seen in life,
And that, though ever real and close it stays,
Yet finds its grace in following colder strife
Of seasons in which temporal joys are met:
The kind that you in me, through life, beget.

—J. Alan Smith



The Hopeful Agnostic

—by James Clifton Hale

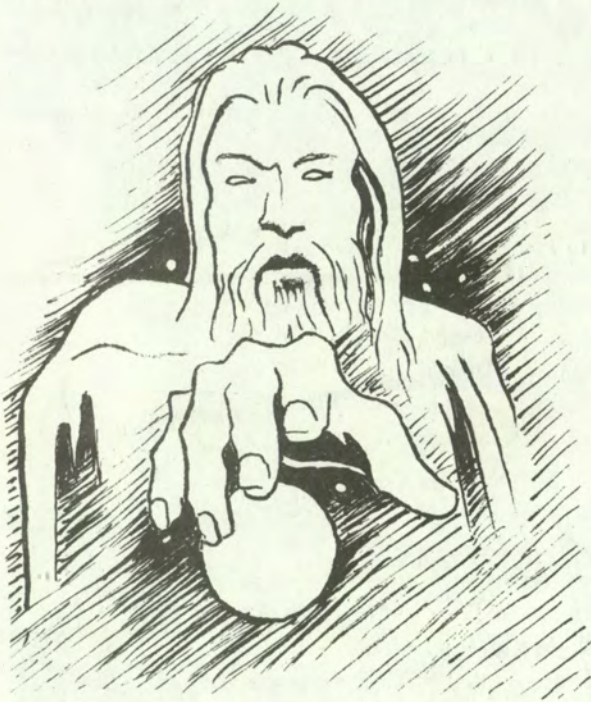
I. Temptation

Inflammatory hauteur made a poet compose madness,
Rhyiming dreams of living fire with his hopes of starry dawns.
Vestal valkyries lit in him mystic flames of distant Hope
'Til at last I made to find and taste the Apple of the God.

II. Symbiote Lord

A single grain of granite sand
Could pulverize a man or world
If it in holy righteous wrath
By God's white hand of Fate were hurled.

The raging fire of a sun
Is but a flashing in His eyes,
And, hoarse, a growl deep in His throat
Could bring a cosmos down to die.



What pointless pomp his power were
If not power over someone.
With not a planet circling 'round,
What is the glory of a sun?

Although all power rests with Him,
Faith's ties bind both across the Rift.
Man is a Stone that God hath made
Too heavy for Himself to lift.

III. The Span of Shadows

With dying hope and hopeless tears
Man, he of shadows, stands apart
And searches for his darkened heart
Within the shallow pond of years.

With heartless faith and faithless wiles
We ghosts of being kneel next to
And cast our searching gazes through
The mist upon the path of miles.

With scowl and smile and sacrifice
The God of heartless men sits back
And hopes for good despite Man's lack,
But does not move. Is he of ice?

I do not know the form of Him;
I do not recognize his fame.
I feel the fire of his name,
But hot and bright, his face is dim.

The spatial deeps, the depth of time,
The pulsing of insensate stars
(Atoms dancing in prison bars),
These things reflect his holy rhyme—

But He exists in deeps beyond
The deepest existential sea.
Not in the world, nor all in me,
He is no mere-god of a pond.

No, I will find him outside space
Where winds of time can never blow.
I'll find him where I cannot go:
I cannot catch him. Is this Grace?

O God must death bring me to thee?
Why did you then give me this life,
This steep, pain-butressed bridge of strife?
Can I find you ere you find me?

O God! Where are you? Answer! Tell!
I search my Garden for Belief;
You hide Yourself in the fig leaf.
Will my poor quest keep me from Hell?



IV. Centaur Messiah

**It is a fell and blasted bogland where stand pale the horses of the dead,
A land not 'fore or 'yond the trembling, lasting veil, not good or bad—but red.
Here seep and stand the seas of weeping blood the Christ of all the Earths does bleed,
Whose gentle hands are pocked by all the spikes of manly hate and Godly need.
His blood does suck beneath and 'round the vague and shadow hooves of horses' ghosts,
The blood which saves, and paves the riders' way toward the Lord of Hope and Hosts.
He dies each breath on ev'ry world that lives and flies upon the starry course,
But none save God knows whether he is doomed or driven, rider, corpse, or horse.**

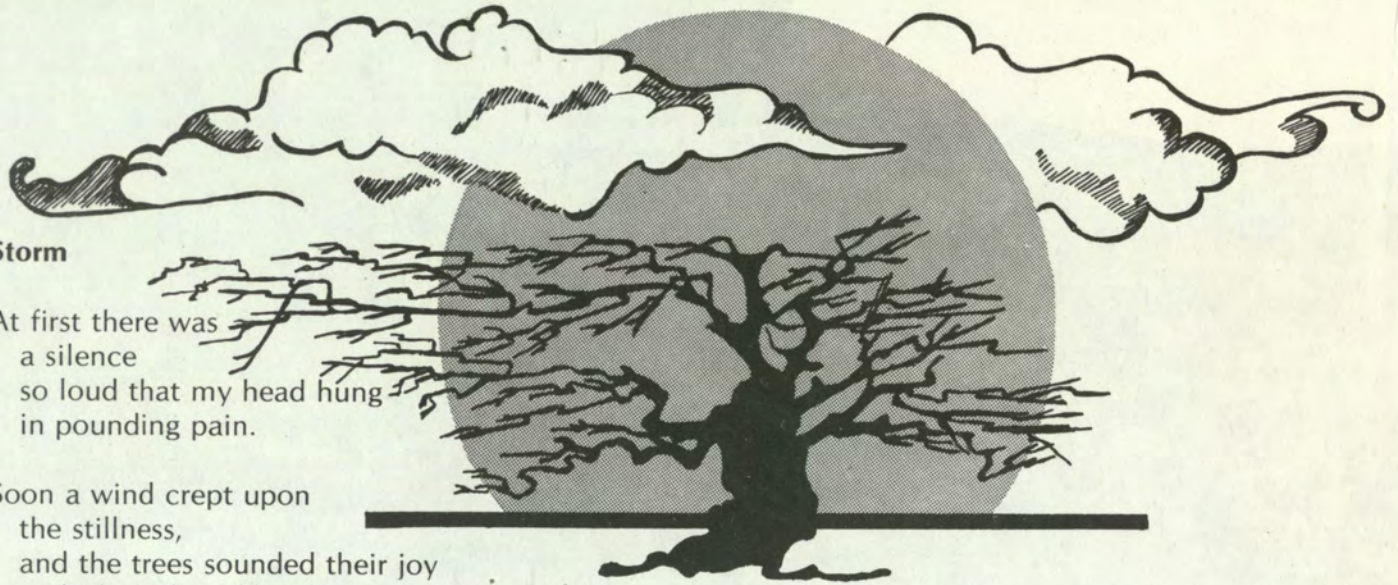
EXCALIBER:

*Before the dawn you will see
 A thousand horseless Riders
Pounding the sand for the
 Bravura of Freedom
And they know strong well
Deep within them
They are right
With the Light came the sword
 And the battle. . .
This is a world of war
For them surrender is a word only
 And victory is inevitable
 As is their unceasing onslaught*

*Then there are those who
Stand and watch dispassionately
As if all was well
And life was only their sphere of tranquillity
Which they know not
Will fade as the hands on the dial
Sweep in never ending circles
Always forward
Toward Eternity*

—D. G. Purdy





Storm

At first there was
a silence
so loud that my head hung
in pounding pain.

Soon a wind crept upon
the stillness,
and the trees sounded their joy
with the gales of leaves.

Next, an atramentous cloud slid onto
the vast horizon
and produced fireworks
of lightning, thunder, and rain.

Within moments the orange ruptured upon
the earth
and the ground swelled
in glorious praise.

—Julie Garrison



Grandmother

*Grandmother's raised hands
grappled lovingly around my waist
during methodized farewells
which concealed the isolated fear of growing old.*

*She understands that quietus
is claspng at her time.
Greedy, I disregard the message,
for the thought of grandmother's departure
leaves me depleted.*

—Kim Hieber

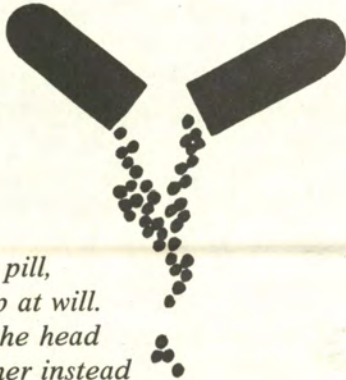


Did Socrates have a Bitchy Wife?

Did Socrates have a bitchy wife
as told in song and fable?
If he did, are there things in life
With which no man is stable?
Can a shrewish woman haunt the soul
Of one as great as he?
Does it not help, nor the man console,
To drink hot hemlock tea?


—Jeff Koehler

Sleeping Pill



*I wish that I could take a pill,
That would alleviate sleep at will.
To put a pillow beneath the head
Wastes your time, I'd rather instead
Be awake for those hours that I'm asleep.
(It's such a bother counting sheep.)
But if I without this pill may chance
To try to stay out of the Sandman's trance,
I find I haven't the strength to do
Any of the things I wanted to.
When I stay awake all night and day,
Tomorrow's not worth it anyway.
So now I lay me down to sleep,
Or I will fall into a heap,
And rested I will look once more
For this pill to relieve the snore,
Meanwhile, close to bed I'll stay:
I need eight hours sleep 'fore every day!*

—William Carl Heerman



"Behind her, in the forest, was her witch-doctor father, and the love who had rejected her. Ahead of her, 200 miles across the plains of the Kingdom, lay the Royal Mountain, Tyana. And between them? Open sunshine and a Story."

MARILA'S JOURNAL

by Susan Holman

WELL, I AM FREE, finally. Free of the village free of Reuel, free of Father, free of their gods, free of death itself it seems. Twice I have not been allowed to die. So I have decided to live.

The Arnon flows quietly tonight. Often it is so turbulent one cannot cross. The mountains rise up high around me, but I cannot see them in the darkness. To be this free is wonderful, that for once I cannot see beyond the darkness. If I had a god to thank for it, I would thank him.

But I have no god, though Reuel's god would be nice to have. Reuel would be better—but I am not to think about that. I must be free: to travel, to sit here as long as I like, to once more try to die and watch myself be revived again. It seems that I am not free to die. So there are limitations to this freedom?

I need never go back, to suffer Mother's hounding, nor Noemai's teasing. But I cannot go back: there is that limitation as well. Father will put a curse on me; no doubt he has. Well, I must put one on him to ward off his a bit. But that will mean calling up gods; then they will be mine and I want none. Let his curse stay,

then. In the name of no god I will curse him. And Reuel too, though perhaps his god does not allow cursings to be fulfilled. Still, I must curse him. Tears no longer come, but cursings—in the name of no god—they are free. And I am free.

Father cannot say that. With all his power, all his black devils serving him, even he is afraid of the worst things: I have seen that fear in his face on nights when he thought They had more power. He is afraid They will kill him someday. And he was afraid the day I told him of Reuel and his god. There were many curses made that night, yet Reuel is safe.

But I must not think of Reuel or of his god. They have rejected me and sent me out from them. They do not want me. No god wants me. So I am not free to have a god? Methinks there are more limitations to this freedom than are true freedom. But I am free to leave here, to be rid of the forest with its clawing darkness and midday shadows; to be rid of the hidden and hiding places. And that is for now enough.

This is the 26th day of Ceandor, and the night is warm. I am Marila, daughter of no one, and I will travel to Tyana: far to the southwest, over 200 miles. How beautiful a name it is: Tyana; where there are multitudes of people living and working. Where the King is. I will travel across the Valley, where it is open, where nothing is hidden, where the sun glows all day and none can shield it. The peasants will not know me. From what I have heard, they are mere beasts.

1 Satonni

Yesterday, following the river, I arrived here, high in the mountains. Below, the flat land, without forests, stretches as far as the eye can see. It is summer in the Valley. To the southwest there are low mountains, except for that peak, of Tyana. A lone summit seeking the sky, it reaches high with its sharp snowy peak, though it is small from here. Perhaps I will never again see the Valley as well as I do now. I can never forget this sight.

I must travel down to it on this side of the Arnon, and cross when I arrive on the plains (for there are miles of vast plains before the land turns truly green). Later, there will be another great river to cross, though it is only a strand from here. To the east, I can see a village where the two rivers meet.

Everywhere there are ripe berries to eat and the wind is cool. Last night I set the curse on Father and Reuel. They can die in their tracks and I will only laugh. Why must the world have such beauty? Why cannot it be just grey, to make it easier to remember hatred?

4 Satonni

I have walked for 3 days. The mountains are but hills in the distance, and only to the north is there even a hint of forest. I have seen no life here but that of wild animals and high-soaring birds. Around me is only wild, yellow grasses, short, but tufted long here and there. The beasts let me pass peacefully. This morning as I wandered along the Arnon, the village got closer and I can see the habitats of people. I have only heard distantly of towns; yet here I may experience one if I choose. But I must choose, else how can I cross the river?

There is a wild grain growing in the marshes, but it is hard to get much. But I am strong enough to walk, and when that strength goes, I shall be in ecstasy to just lie and watch the sky.

I never knew it stretched so far. I never knew the sun was so bright, and even the night stars—so inexpressible.

I think of Reuel's family a lot these days. Somehow the beauty reminds me of them. It is as if everything has been designed to fit and be beautiful in its place: the marshes to feed, the stars to light the night. Reuel's family is like that too: at peace, each in the place they belong, and beautiful. Reuel says their god gives them such peace. He contends that his god has a beautiful plan for everyone's life who will serve Him. Can it be? Would he not rather punish them for what they do, and see that revenge is carried out? Reuel says his god created all things. What about the god of my father. I cannot believe that Reuel's god created my father or his god. Reuel says his god only creates good. Yet I am not good. I almost wish there were a god like that, though, even just one. It cannot be so, or things would not be as they are. Perhaps he once existed and created, but was destroyed by Father's god. Yet this beauty still exists and there is peace as well as power in Reuel's religion. Father's god would never allow that.

6 Satonni

The village is called Penalksen. I am there now as I write. The people speak the same tongue as we, but with a strange inflection. From Penalksen, there is a large, flat walkway that leads to every town in the Kingdom: what wonders! Wheeled vehicles go upon it, with loads of all sorts.

The huts are made of mud, or sod and grasses, with straw roofs. The largest huts in the town belong to a marketplace that has little to sell as early as this, a mill which has no grain to grind as early as this, and

a weaver's shop, that is very busy cleaning, drawing out, spinning, weaving, drying and selling the wool that has just come in. I watched them for a long time.

Everywhere I smell fish. They are sold wherever I turn, and are much in demand. Young children return from the river with vines of them. I begged for a piece of old, rotten fish for bait and have been fishing all afternoon. Even raw they taste good after berries. There are vehicles out in midstream fishing with nets. They are flat with boards to give them a side wall of a few inches or so, and are poled around the water. They are so different from our hollowed-out logs, I wonder that they float.

Tomorrow I must cross the Arnon and follow the Vyrcania (that is the name of this valley, and this other great, winding river) south, across the bridge, I must travel between the river and the road. It seems a narrow strip, and far too visible. But what have I to fear, I who refuse to fear? I shall cross the rivers tomorrow.

? Satonni

I am unsure of the date, except I have discovered it is the 10th year of the reign of Merari. Now I know the name of the man who rules that Mountain: small care. He does not reign far beyond that, I now know. Here in the Valley, his name is just a name to use for sons, a name to separate the years with: a name with no power.

The next town is Roenasen, they say. It is a long way off.

I have met travellers along the way, and their ways are different from ours. They seem kinder. They hurt in subtle ways. Many come off the road to camp at night. Many are dressed all in fine green and are called Melo or Limani. They guard the kingdom and see that justice is done in each town. That is what they say, but their actions are not just. They are like the priests of the forest: they know only their own justice. I have not been badly wronged, but people are strange here.

Few travel on foot, and fewer travellers are women. I have met a priestess of a temple in a distant town, and another traveler who said little of herself. She was different even from the peasants. Her hair was long, too (while theirs are short) and her eyes very dark. She spoke with a strange inflection, and told me only her name: Edna. She was with me when the Limani came. That was two nights ago. She seemed glad to have me by her, even with him there. Yesterday she left me and went on toward Penalksen. It was good to talk to a girl who was also a traveller: were it not for the Limani, she would have made me

less bitter. But he was cruel in his way and it renewed my hatred.

? Satonni

There was a great storm last night and the river overflowed. It was very cold. By the morning light, I could see that some shepherds' tents downstream and across the stream were pulled down. The storm was good to me: the scroll stayed dry in the sack. Were it not for this writing, I would have stopped caring.

Even now, the rain is dripping a bit, though the tree I sit under is so branched that it is dry here. Since Penalksen, I have taken food from the fields of ripening crops, plenty to satisfy a small appetite. The water of Vyrcania is sweet, and I have even caught fish in it many days.

There is no one travelling in the rains, so I am left alone, for once. It is good. Since the Limani, I have been afraid—I who had refused fear for so long. When I see people far off, I turn another way. It is foolish.

Why am I? No one cares for me. Even in Netophah it was so. I do not mind, but why am I here if it is so? God—is there a god? Is there only the evil one? Is there no god who is kind, as Reuel says, who will take me and give me a purpose? Kind god, do you exist? But who am I to speak to a god?

? Satonni (next day)

The sunrise this morning: oh, how I wish it had not been so magnificent. It will be hot soon, I know, but the dawn! The sun came through mist, with all of its colours mixed. As it arrived above the mountains—oh! A moment before, all was dark and misty, then, suddenly, all was blended into brilliant colours. The peak of Tyana twinkled like silver, and the Valley around me was all a misty green, blending into yellow. The sky was clear and shining blue with a few stars still glistening from it. They are gone now, but the air! It is so new, so cool. Water glistens from all the crops, from the straw roofs of the peasants' huts, and on the sheepskins of the shepherds' tents. I felt so happy with the morning. I did not want to. Even rain brings beauty such as this? Why?

My feet have toughened. I travel mostly by the riverside, perhaps several huts' distance from the water. Tyana is still ahead, far to the east. Soon I must leave the river.

Perhaps the road will lead to Tyana. Except for the snow capping it, the mountain is as black as night in Netophah. Yet it is not a forest, but stone, I hear,

pure stone, carved out into a Kingdom centuries ago. Perhaps on Tyana they will need those who can write. The script here is different, but I can learn. Few of the peasants are literate, but the Limani could write, and it was his writings I saw as he slept. It talked of slaves—of children from villages; children whose parents will sell them at the Festival of Galiadri. Such children go to Tyana to work.

So it is children who go, and they are forced. Do not many wish to go and work?

18 Satonni

Last night I spent in a peasant's hut. They saw me taking some of their crops and, instead of chasing me away, invited me to spend the night with them. The farmer, Joram, has two wives, as do all the peasants and shepherds I have met. Most of them are quarrelsome beasts, squabbling over prices in the marketplace, over their children, their husband, their shares and their food. Yet these two have not fought at all. Their children (they have eight of them) peered silently at me through the flaps last night, and this morning were very friendly, wanting me to play with them. The oldest is about seven.

There is something about them that reminds me of Reuel. His memory does not hurt so, now. After the first sun-meal, they invited me to stay and celebrate Sabbaiah with them, tomorrow, but I said I must go. They asked me where I was going and I said Tyana. Joram is wise for a shepherd, for he told me there was much danger for a girl going to Tyana who knows no one along the way. I know not how he knew.

"What are you hoping to find?" he asked.

"Nothing." I said. "I must have a goal to live. And I seek news of a god."

"Why seek to know of a god unless he is a good one?" asked Chaelithia, the wife from whose garden I stole. I told them of Reuel's god and asked if they knew of him. They were very quiet, and looked at me. After a long time, Joram said.

"I have met this god. He has more power than the temple gods. His name is Lumvyalik, but he has another name also. Perhaps many." I asked him how he had learned enough of him to satisfy. He said "I am always joyful of Him, but never do I feel I know enough." He learns of him by talking to him. Who are we to speak to gods? I asked him this, and he said he did not know why, but this Lumvyalik can be spoken to, and still he is God and we are miniscule. I told him Reuel's words of this god creating all things good. Joram and his wives became happy.

Joram said to be wary in the Valley. There are many who do not want this god worshipped. "Yes, it is so in Netophah too." I said.

"You are from Netophalsen, then?" they asked.

"No, the forest of Netophah, by the Arnon." I answered. I regret saying it, for they changed. They were not afraid, but more guarded. Soon I told them I must go. The other wife, Noyel, gave me bread and cheese for my pack, and a skin of water. She hugged me when I left. Her dress was very ragged, faded green with a worn, orange, leather cinch and an apron, but her face was beautiful. I will not forget them.



2 Quabh

I have left the road and am travelling southeast. The land is flat, covered with grasses and gardens and farmland. The trees look strange, as they stand alone here and there. The land feels as if it stretches on forever, yet all around, far distant, are the rims of many mountains. Tyana is easy to go toward. She stands higher than the rest, and darker. I write this at the foot of an old tree, by a little stream. My water bag is ever full. One has only to leave it open at night for an inch of dew.

4 Quabh

He came to me last night, as I slept in a field. I woke with the dark sky and stars all around me and I knew He was there. There were sheep not far off, but He was not there for them.

All around me, I knew happiness. How strange, I thought, and the past did not seem even to matter.

How do I write it? There is a good god. It is true; it is strange. It is wonderful. I awoke, and the evening was warm. I smoothed my dress but I could not rise. One does not stand before a god.

The sheep were watching. Could they see Him? I could not. For that I am glad. He was terrible, and yet I yearned to get close to Him, to know further His breath, His protection around me.

He is still with me, even since the sun appeared. So I know that He is Lumvyalik, and that He is real. I no longer fear; it is very strange.

I do not hate Reuel anymore. Perhaps he was blind to my care. That he would be so blind angers me, but not with hatred. Perhaps Reuel is not perfect either. How can this be? Is Lumvyalik not perfect? What is perfect? Yet He is far better than I: He is righteousness in its rightness. All that I learned when He met me.

What more is there? There must be much. I ate this morning meal by the tent of a shepherd (the owner of the sheep I slept among), and asked him if he knew of a god Lumvyalik. He knew of none. I must ask until someone can tell me more.

Everywhere are fields of gardens, of fruit trees, vegetables, and, here and there, treed-in fields where sheep graze. The tree-barriers are the first I have seen, and they are strange, standing straight and in such set patterns in the green fields.

6 Quabh

I have actually earned some money, two small cop-

per disks.

Roenasen is behind me, and here there are no more sheep: only fields of growing plants and flowers, and the yellow tents of the farmers. The tent leathers have been inscribed and painted by the women with many different and bright designs, and among the acres of flowers and vegetables they are pretty.

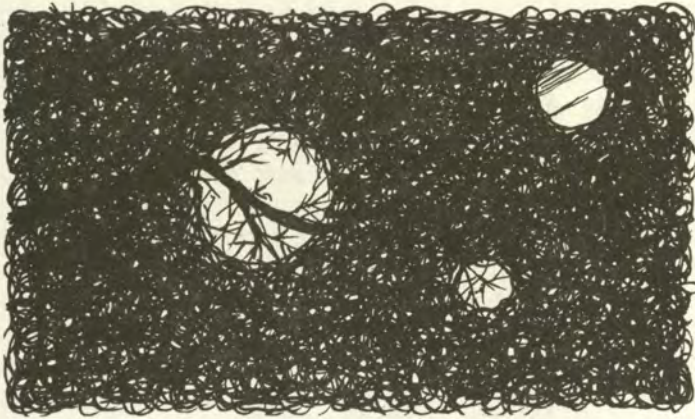
Much of the food in the fields I don't recognize or know how to eat. So last night I stopped by a tent and asked to do work in exchange for supper. The farmer himself came and spoke to me. "Do you know sheep?" he asked.

"Yes, but mostly just from speaking with shepherds and sharing the fields with them." I said. He said that was good enough.

His name was Obisel, and his wives Lina and Tomosi. They only had two children, one still an infant. Obisel spoke to me strangely, in a monotone. I wondered at it. His sheep needed shearing of their baby coats, and no one else around knew how. It calls for nothing but a steady, patient hand.

They asked me briefly of myself, and I told them I was travelling in search of news of a god. "The gods are only evil," they said, so I told them of Lumvyalik, but they only stared back at me, as if deaf and blind. It was a stare that might have scared me, but once





again I knew Lumvyalik's presence around me, and I could not fear. Obisel said they would worship no god—it was the gods who killed five of their children of plague last winter. Then I thought I understood their silent ways.

In the morning, I spoke of how silent their infant was, and Lina smiled. "Yes, he is a very good one," she said. The sheep were shorn by evening: they are brown sheep and the wool will bring a great price. They gave me supper and asked me to spend another night, but I felt an urging to go on. Obisel put these two coins in my hand, and thanked me, still in his strange voice. His eyes were very dark.

"If your god is so good," he said, "and so powerful, then come back when you learn more, and tell me of him."

"I am glad you too want to know," I said. He turned away from my smile.

As I left, Lina was returning from the garden with a small form wrapped in skins at her chest. I asked if I could see the child and she turned it toward me. At night in the tent there was a curious smell and then I knew it came from the child. It had been dead at least a week.

I fled from there. If Lumvyalik were not there with me, would I too have died in the tent? Were they themselves alive? I have seen many strange people involved in death, but none such as they.

Why is Father's god still here, if Lumvyalik has more power? Yet, if He destroyed all evil and imperfections, I would die too.

13 Quabh

I have travelled seven days through these plains. Tyana claims most of the eastern sky. Far in the distance is a road I will probably meet tomorrow evening. I have had work, and have stayed in as many tents as days. And I have learned much that is good.

I have heard a Story for the first time, and now I know that Lumvyalik is indeed far greater than I ever thought. One evening, many were gathered together for the harvest, talking and feasting and singing. This was five nights ago. And a woman named Lethia, "wife of Nicanor, who grows many turnips and plums" told us the story, after I shared with them what I knew of Lumvyalik.

She and her family had heard it from a man who was being chased from Tyana for his telling of it, and his worship of Lumvyalik, also called Lorne. It was a story of pain and of beauty. It was a story of how Lumvyalik became a Man.

Now I understand how I can rest before him, imperfect, and seeking. Now I understand his awe-fullness, and his love.

"This is the news I have been seeking." I said to Lethia. "You can never know my deep gratitude to you."

"Serve Lorne always," she said. "Pay your gratitude in this way." I bowed my head. We began to sing songs after that. The next day was the reaping of vegetables.

The evening of Sabbaiah I spent in another tent nearby. They had been in the tent to hear Lethia's story, and had chosen to worship only Him. They wondered about the crop offering at the Temple during Galiafdri. They will no longer offer gifts to the temple gods. But they wonder how they can offer them to Lorne.

The day of Nicaea I spent reaping petals from fields of flowers to be made into wine. At supper that evening, a meal of acorn bread, turnips, parsnips, and a crushed fruit drink of sweet red berries, we were joined by another peasant who asked if I would come and tell his family the story of this god. We soon departed and he paid me well for the peach harvest I did, both in hospitality and coins.

That was yesterday. I spent last evening by the tent-fire of Sudias, and told him and his family what Lethia had told us, and what I knew. He said he had heard of the word, Lumvyalik, and that it meant a great, selfless love. He was joyful for such a god.

As the moon rose, I left them and turned southwest. There are many pasturelands here, and strange, peaceful beasts who dwell here. Sudias told me of the road, two days' journey from his tent that leads east to Tyana and to the city at its feet, Tiranisen. I know not why, but these have ever been my goals.

The huge darkness and snow-covered peak are the whole of the eastern sky. This morning was clear, and, looking far to the west, I could see the sunlight as it lit the western part of the Valley and grew closer.

Until perhaps an hour short of noon, I could not see my shadow, but instead was in the shadow of Tyana.

I sit now, within a copt of trees. The land rolls more here than in the Valley, and it is very warm.

I can just see the road over several hills. I wonder what it is like. Will it be busy? Tomorrow I will reach it.

17 Quabh

The road was quiet when I reached it, for it was Babolaish, the day of rest, and few travellers break the traditions among the peasants. It was further than it looked. That was the day before yesterday. I walked all day, and all day again. Yesterday there were many on the road, some in wagons, and others on beasts. Many wore the green of the Limani. No one glanced at me, and I am glad for my raggedness.

18 Quabh

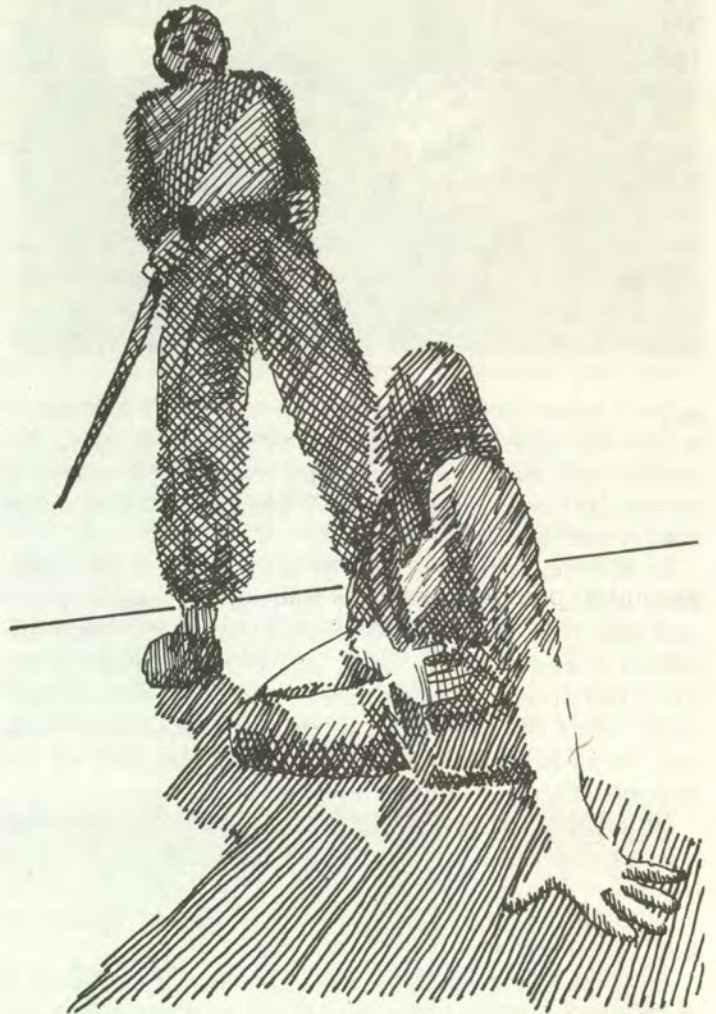
As I sat writing yesterday, so near to the city, and yet off the road, a Limani approached me. "Peasant, how do you write?" he asked.

"From childhood I have known how," I said. He asked to see my writing, and when he saw it, he bristled. He took a paper from his pack.

"Write your name on here," he said. So I wrote 'Marila, servant of Lumvyalik.' He told me to stay where I was, and marched off. I did not know what he was, so immediately I gathered my packs and fled toward the city when he was just beyond sight. Keeping to the side of the road, I ran.

I passed a field on my left, and there were many buildings and pillars as I got further on. I passed a road on my right, with baked clay bricks around it. Soon there was another road at my left and I wondered at so many. A cry came from behind me and I saw the Limani coming, with others in green, so I ran into this second street and down it to a place where the road went both right and left ahead. All around me were buildings and tents. I kept thinking, 'I am in Tiranisen' but it didn't mean anything with a Limani chasing me! There were more buildings along the right road, so I ran there and wondered at my energy. I could hear their following cries behind me. Soon there was another road crossing my path and I ran down it. I don't remember direction after that. There were many tents and many roads. Soon, I was out on a large road again, and all was quiet.

It was a very great road, and across it were pillars and huge buildings. On my left were tall hedges. I peeked through them, to the long gardens, shadowed by many trees and stone walkways and stone build-



ings, and marvelled. But then I hurried on, afraid someone might see me. Only once before have I been chased, when they chased me away from home because of Reuel. Had I been caught then, I would have been killed. This time I knew not what my pursuers wanted, nor even why I fled. But I am glad I fled.

After a long time, there was a great crossroads. Everywhere were tents and stone, two-level buildings, and people all around me, crowding, chattering. One could drink the richness of it. There were many men and women with dark blue tunics, their hair held around the forehead by a white band. There were men on beasts who wore both green and blue, with cuffs of white, and boots of brown sheepskin. They wore copper jewelry such as I have seen only on Father. There were women dressed thus also, as well as the crowds in the Valley colours and styles of

orange and yellow, of dark green, rusts and brown, with the cloth gathered on round rings at their neck, and long, dirty aprons. I saw some young women in a wagon dressed in violet and pink robes, with red stones set in gold around their necks. I could only stare. Everywhere was the smell of dust and offal, leather dye and baking food. The latter made me hungry and I reached for a peach, but my sack was empty of food. Whether the rest was stolen or fell out when I ran, I don't know.

Suddenly a beast appeared carrying the Limani, and a moment before he saw me, I began to run again. There was a road on the right and I ran down it and began once more to run behind tents. It was a road of shops, of cloth being sold, and looms and threads and yarns and such. At one moment, I turned the corner of a tent, and tripped and fell, for an old woman was doing her wash behind the tent.

Her clothes were now in the mud and it brought me to my senses. "I am sorry," I said, and began to help her and to plunge them back into her buckets.

"First wash yourself, child," she said, and she went for more water from the street-wells.

Her name was Fieln, and when everything was clean, she thanked me, and asked what I had run from.

"I don't know," I said. "A man was chasing me."

"You aren't from Tiranisen, are you?" she asked, probably from the difference in my speech.

"No, I have just arrived." I asked her where I could find work.

"What is your skill?"

"I can read and write." She was surprised, and showed me a page of their strange, block-type script. I could just discern it.

"You do not read very well."

"We write our letters differently, but I am sure to learn your ways quickly." She asked me to show her my writing, so I wrote my name just as I had written it for the Limani. Inside the house, she called her husband, and asked him to show me a "Lornian" book. He looked very startled, but took a scroll from the shelf, which was in our script, and I read it easily. I wondered how he came by it.

They asked me to sup with them. During the meal, they asked me of the gods that I worship. I told them of Lumvyalik called Lorne, and of his coming to us as a Man. Always I felt they were testing me.

At the end of my speaking, they were silent for a long time. Then Eleazar, the husband, began to speak. "There are many in this city who worship Lorne," he said, "and they are called Followers or Lornians. There is great persecution against them. The King

sees them as traitors, since they will not give to him their crops through the temples. We do not fear the priests, or those on Tyana, but we are in great danger."

He asked me about my pursuers, and I said yes, that they had seen my writing. "The writing is really only an ancient form of our present, common writing," Eleazar said, "but now it is used only by Lornians and Dejians. The latter are those of a sect which the temple priests come from and work for. To be found in possession of the script, a person such as you or I is killed." I shivered.

"How did you know to come to us?" Eleazar asked, and his wife and I laughed.

"I did not know," I said. "And in coming here I have made your wife do her washing over again. Lumvyalik has taken care of me since the beginning of my travels." They asked me where I was from, and I told them my story.

It was dark when I finished, and Fieln put all food away and lights out. "There is a meeting now," she said. "And you may come with us. You will meet many Lornians and perhaps someone will be able to give you work."

We walked along back streets, all through the weavers' section of the city, and stopped by a vast stone house. Inside it was warm and light, and crowded.

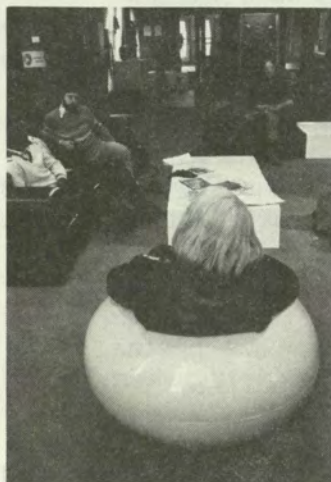
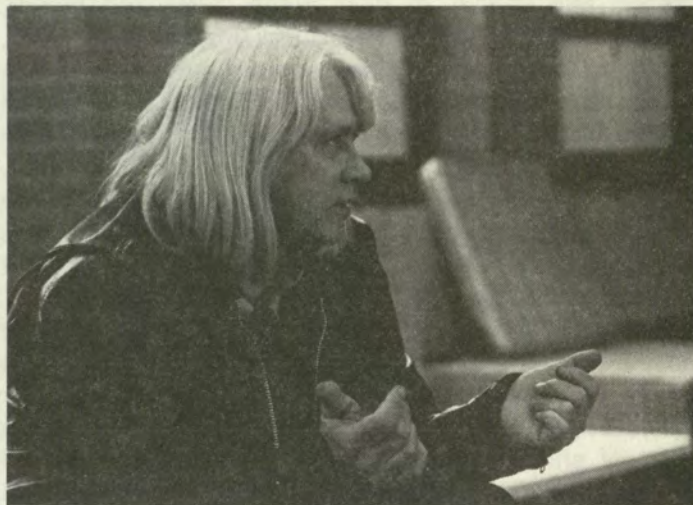
Whether it was the house or the meeting that brought me such awe and joy, I do not know. But everyone there was willing to risk death to meet. It was a great house.

This is the greatest wonder of all: they read from a scroll that was written when Lorne was here as a Man. It tells of Him, of things He did and said, and how he died. It even tells of how he came alive from death and what he did and said after that. When they told me of it and began to read aloud, I could not contain myself for the joy.

As I write, it is long after midnight, and I am in the tent of a scribe named Gaddur and his wife, Mishael. They have agreed to take me on as an apprentice to make paper and ink and writing for their customers. Much I am to do is for the Followers only. The greatest is to make copies of the Great Book in the script of the people, and help to spread it in the city and on Tyana. My hands quiver as I think of it.

At dawn it will be Sabbaiah, 19 Quabh, and, at last, for the first time in my life, I will be able to truly rest and feast with my whole heart, knowing I have come to where I was being sent. I can do naught but praise Lumvyalik, even knowing the hardest adventure has only begun.

A MEETING WITH JOHN GARDNER



The evening of April 5 was undoubtedly the focal point in that week of V.U.'s "Wordfest: A Conference on Writers and Our World," as it was the night that John Gardner, one of America's finest contemporary fiction writers, spoke to a large audience on his writing and his philosophy.

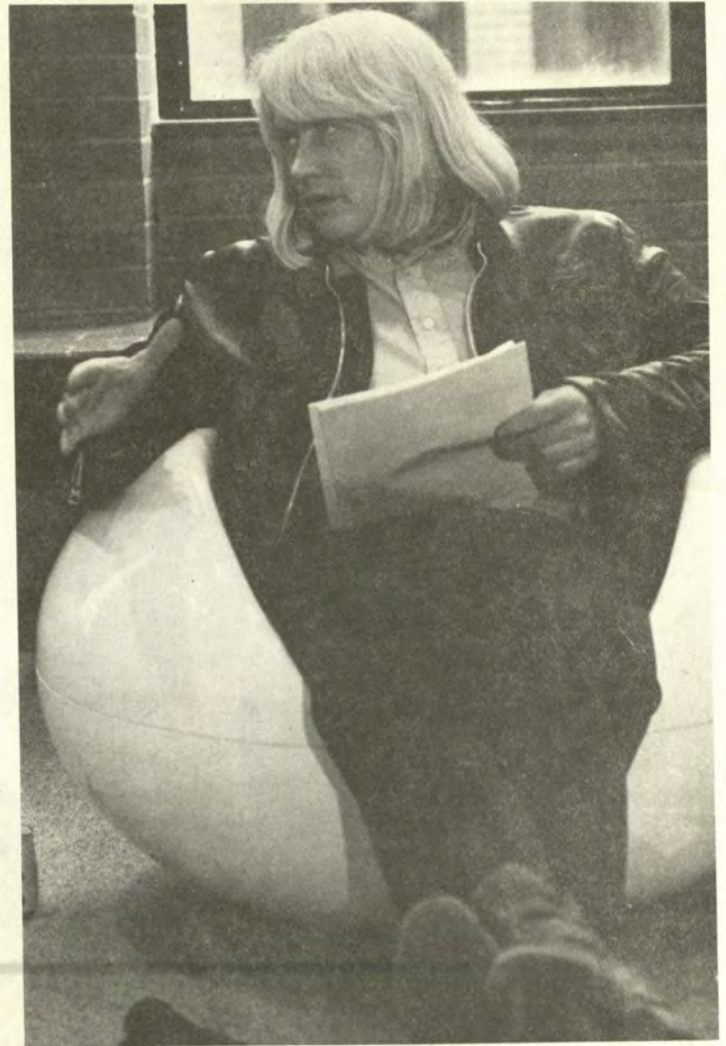
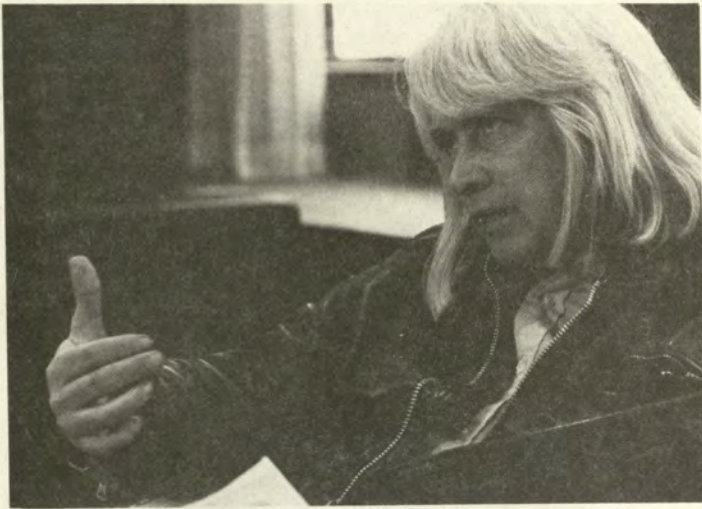
I have always enjoyed reading Gardner's works, and was looking forward to this opportunity to meet him. Inside the Great Hall, where the Symposium was being held, I found a seat and began to search for the face that would reveal the mind behind such modern fantasies as **October Light** and **The Sunlight Dialogues**. As he approached the podium, applause, mixed with slight murmurings,

filled the room.

Outstanding is his long shock of gray hair, parted on the side and spilling over the collar of his black leather jacket. John Gardner is not overly tall, about 45 years old, a distinctive man, an informal and individual man.

He began to speak, and it was his voice that held my interest, and his words. He started by reading a new short story, "Amram," and then answered questions from the audience. Then he shared from his experiences as a writer and his writing techniques.

Like many authors, his writing has been an ongoing process since childhood. He alluded often to James Joyce, and there are in Gardner's works hints of this influence in his life. His success today is rooted in a collection of



American fiction including **The Resurrection**, **The Wreckage of Agathon**, **Grendel**, **Jason and Medeia**, **Nickel Mountain**, and **The King's Indian**. He has also authored **On Moral Fiction**, a critique of modern fiction, and, through it, modern culture. His books can be picked up as light reading, but for the one who seeks deeper, to draw out Gardner's philosophies and basic assumptions, there is a troubling challenge, a strange world that is strangely familiar. It is here we see a common thread with Joyce, though the thoughts are undoubtedly Gardner's own.

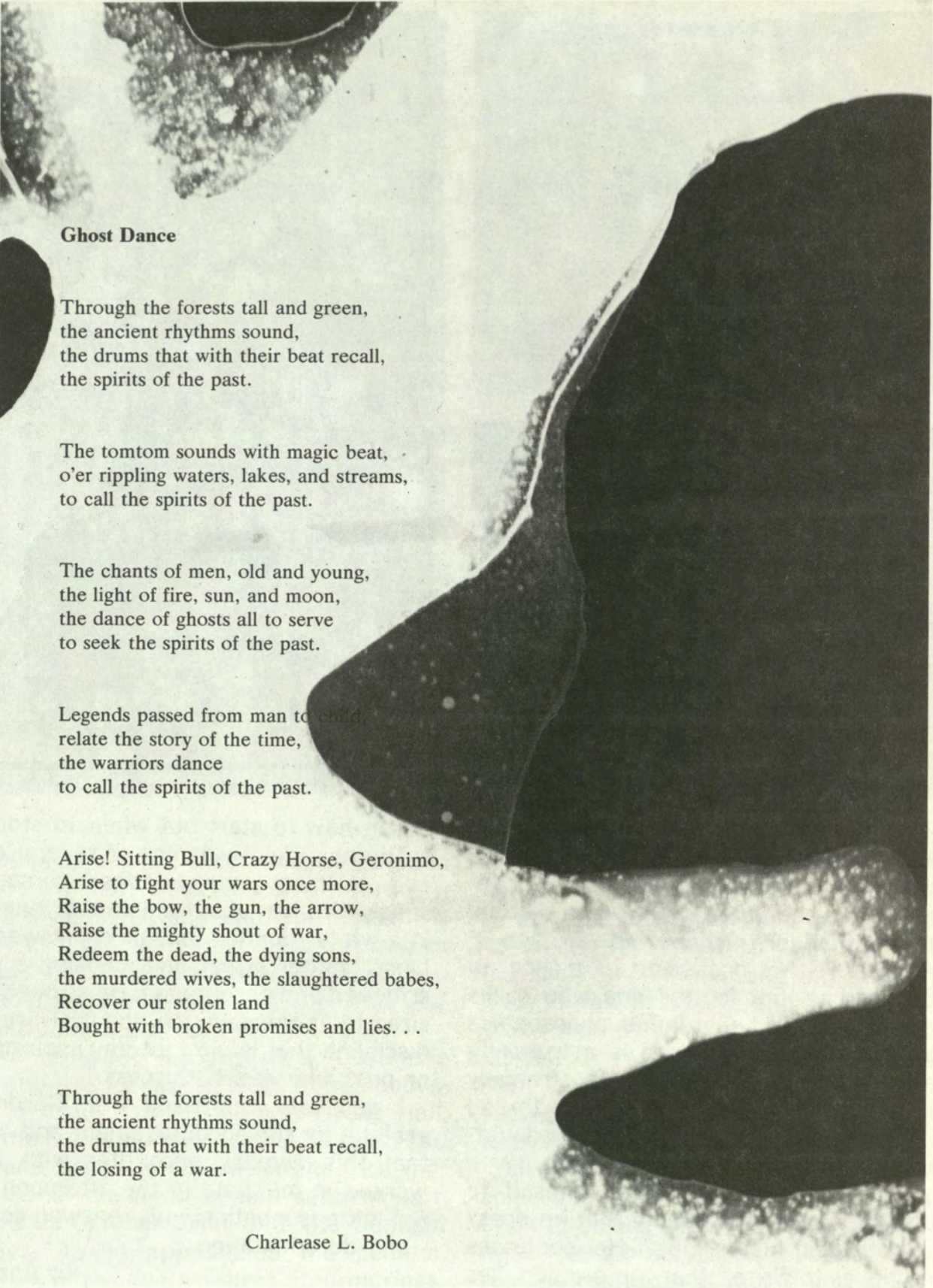
How does Gardner discipline himself to produce the quantity of quality that he does? What motivates his writing? He confesses that he "loves to write," that the problem lies

not in how to start but when to stop.

The next day I was one of several students able to meet with Gardner personally, to speak with him about my own writing. Seated in a white rounded, plastic chair, wearing his black leather jacket and smoking a pipe, he critiqued and encouraged. He strongly emphasized to us the devotion, the patience and the discipline that is vital for any aspiring author or poet who seeks "success."

I was very impressed with Gardner, and grateful for the encouragement and challenge that this two-day encounter with him has worked in me. Late in the afternoon of April 6, I left our meeting with renewed confidence and determination.

by Anne Guida



Ghost Dance

Through the forests tall and green,
the ancient rhythms sound,
the drums that with their beat recall,
the spirits of the past.

The tomtom sounds with magic beat,
o'er rippling waters, lakes, and streams,
to call the spirits of the past.

The chants of men, old and young,
the light of fire, sun, and moon,
the dance of ghosts all to serve
to seek the spirits of the past.

Legends passed from man to child,
relate the story of the time,
the warriors dance
to call the spirits of the past.

Arise! Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Geronimo,
Arise to fight your wars once more,
Raise the bow, the gun, the arrow,
Raise the mighty shout of war,
Redeem the dead, the dying sons,
the murdered wives, the slaughtered babes,
Recover our stolen land
Bought with broken promises and lies. . .

Through the forests tall and green,
the ancient rhythms sound,
the drums that with their beat recall,
the losing of a war.

Charlease L. Bobo

September Heat

Hot day.

Leaves curled under and away from the sun.

We shield our eyes, we shade our backs from the sun.

Nothing moves.

We dare not move.

Only heat-resistant humanoids

move carefully from one

air-conditioned public place to the next.

The heat blasts even them.

Coke furnace heat.

Red hot steel heat.

They leave sweaty imprints on public trains.

We, longingly, recall last night's gin and tonic.

Too hot for bed sheets

or conjugality.

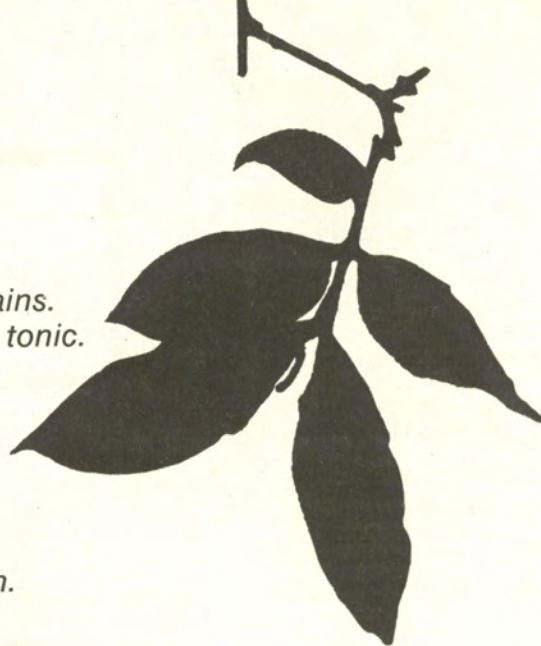
Too hot for flies to bite

or the dog to bark.

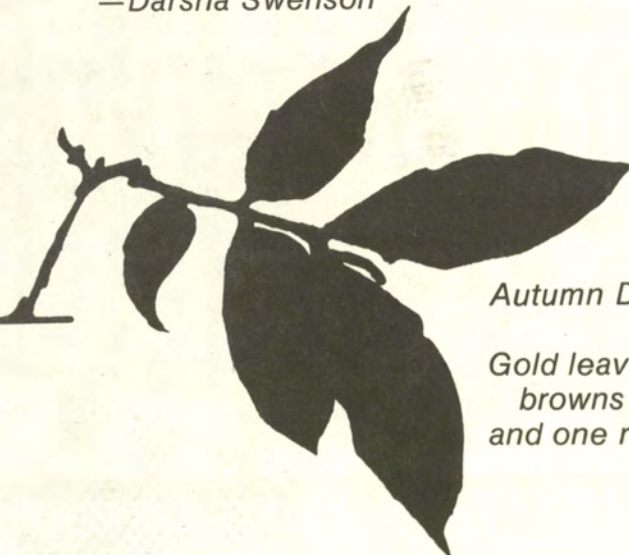
Corn roasting in the field.

Vegetables fresh-baked from the garden.

Hot day.



—Darsha Swenson



Autumn Dance

Gold leaves pirouette;

browns perform their tourjétés;

and one red leaf leaps.

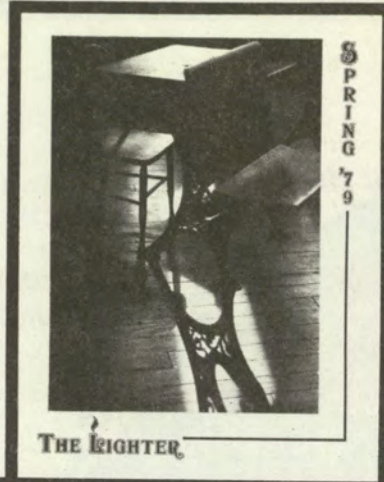
—Susan K. Day

Von Tobels LUMBER & HARDWARE

KITCHENS
PAINT
WINDOWS
PANELING
ROOFING
FIREPLACES
CARPETING
ELECTRICAL
PLUMBING

256 S. WASHINGTON
VALPO 462-6184

769-4007
Lake County Residents



We need your support
If you think the Lighter is worthwhile,
please tell your local student senator.



OPEN DAILY 7 A.M. - 11 P.M.
CLOSED SUNDAY

NORTH ON 49 IN VALPO

FOR QUALITY AND SERVICE



