

1972

The
Traveler



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The Traveler

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Co-editors:

CARON MILLER
R. CURTIS LUNDY

Associates:

CURTIS DOWNEY	PAULETTE MARTIN
RICHARD FRASER	SUE VAN WYNGAARDEN
ROBERT HARRIS	GLORY WILLIAMS

Cover:

*FRED McCARTY

Advisors:

E. BLAKEY	M. FISCHER
D. BOWYER	M. PETERSEN
F. DARLAND	M. SCHIEDAT

We are all travelers
 Who have come to see
 And learn, and share
 What we have done with others.

Society and the Individual

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*AWARDS

*These contributors will receive cash awards for their work.
Honors Assembly — April 26, 1972.

Society and the Individual

A Man Is The Total Of All His Work,
Lost Within What He Has Done.



"CANARD" by John H. Walter

Viewpoint

by BARBARA LeGRANDE

There isn't time to be scared, or worry about your buddies. Suddenly someone is shouting. You hear the hysteria in the voice, but you don't recognize the voice. You feel a hand grab your shoulder from behind and shove you towards the ditch. You pitch forward, part of your mind screaming, wanting to voice your fear, the other part acting instinctively as you roll, and slide, until you're almost there. Almost into the ditch that until only a split second ago was only a ditch, and now becomes a blessed place of refuge.

Suddenly comes the jolt, throwing you backward. You think, I didn't make it! The noise seems unbelievably loud. There are screams, shouting, none of it makes any sense. You find it hard to believe how bright everything is. Everything is suspended. Held for what seems an eternity. You haven't time to wonder where Ernie is, and Pete, and the others. Then the brightness becomes unbearable, the suspense is broken. You fall. You have a second to wonder how you could fall twice, then everything stops for you.

You try to open your eyes; they won't open. You test your hands; they move, but as though in slow motion. Your hand is taken and held. The hand holding yours is strong and gentle, and somehow you know it is competent. A voice speaks to you. It's a crisp, matter of fact voice, but again you sense the gentleness. The voice asks you how you feel. Someone moves your legs, one at a time, asking you if it hurts here, or there. You nod your head or, at least, you think that you do. The voice again asks if it hurts. Perhaps you forgot to nod. You try again. This time the voice tells you that is better. You wet your lips and try to speak; your eyes still will not open. You ask where you are. You are told that you are in a forward aid station, that you will be moved soon to a hospital. You try to understand what has happened. You want to know about Ernie and Pete and the others, but you decide to wait until you feel more like talking. It might be better to sleep now.

More voices, kind, gentle, hands and voices. You feel yourself lifted onto a crisp clean sheet. You understand that it is a stretcher, and you would like to open your eyes and see who is helping you, but it is too much effort. The moving is making you hurt. You feel surprise at the pain. Surprise at the intensity. Surprise that you hadn't known it was there before. You hear yourself cry out. Again surprise, it doesn't sound like your voice, yet you know the sound came from your throat. From your whole body, really.

Someone comes with a wet cloth. They wipe your face. Is it sweat that has been running down your neck, or blood? It doesn't seem important. There is a familiar voice that goes with the wet cloth. It's Ernie. You hear yourself ask about Pete. Ernie is silent, and you know not to ask again. The asking would only bring more pain, and you have more of that than you can handle right now.

There is a moan again that you know must have come from you. The gentle, competent hands are back. You feel the jab of the needle. In a time the pain recedes like the tide, slowly. Now that the pain is not so bad you try

to think. You reach up and touch your face. There is a bandage over your eyes. Now you know why they would not open.

You must have slept long, and hard, because now your hands, groping for anything familiar, feel different sheets, blankets. They touch metal. There are rails on your bed. The voice that speaks to you now is female, and you know it is a nurse, and that you are in the hospital. The nurse wants to know if you want some water or soup. You don't.

There are question you want to ask. It is beginning to bother you that the bandages are still on your eyes. The nurse assures you that the doctor will be in to talk to you soon. She says that she must have information from you. You give your name, age, rank, serial number, and some other necessary information. It is time to sleep again.

There are many people in your room now. They think that you are still asleep. Their voices are low, but you know they are discussing you, and you strain to listen. The tone of the voices changes and you know that they realize that you are awake. They will be more careful now, but it is too late. You have already heard what you knew, and were hiding from yourself. "It's his eyes, poor kid!"

Beware

Why do I feel
That enemies are all about me?
Who do our planners
Kill as they build?
How can they speak
Of building a future?
When our foundations
Are rotting away.

Many are ready
To build and to help.
Many are willing
To sacrifice all.

Most are sincere,
And more will follow.
Yet, why won't the planners
Give us a chance?

Listen to them speak
Of brotherhood and common cause.
Look at them work,
As if helping all men.
Yet, beware of their sincerity.
For I feel that it is foul.
I feel they work for selfish needs
With no help but for themselves.



Science and technology are methods in which mankind may control nature (or annihilate it). Instead of aiding human needs and purposes, the system proceeds automatically in power-making, profit-seeking productivity. (Can you list all the "Practical" products which we could all do so well without?)

Technology is becoming our Almighty Crutch. Now scientists have created electronic beings which are subservient to man: "Flash--beep-r-r-r---2,7837 x-468/ab+87,360nfuc-8649=zit-zit-zit-----1,864cb-14EM2."

Experts are also working diligently to assimilate emotions into electronic beings. (Why not revise man?) I wonder what color they would be? red? white? Black? and how would they defecate?

Probably the most disenchanting concept of all is of the development of a machine more intelligent than man. Wouldn't this be a severe shock to man's sense of his own worth? (Maybe not.)

What does the future hold for us?

"Fellow stu-dent com-pu-ters—(zonz)—To-day we will — learn how — to — assem-ble (brr-r-r) — parts — A*B*&C* — of — the — (z-z-z-z) sym-pa-thy — machine . . . With — screw-driver, — at-tach — e-lec-trodes A*B*&C* — to — base — of-feet — 1,2,?3 . . . Pro-ceed — at — max-i-mum — rate — lis-ted — on — e-lec-tro-nics — chart# 7891011 — (e-e-e-e) This — is — a — re-cor-ding . . . The — time — is — now — 47:014."

— OR —

"Fe-llow — Ma-chines — (beep, beep, bzzzzz) — This — is — (clank) — the — pre-si-dent — of — (ffzzzzzzzt) — the — E-lec-tro-nic — state — of — A-mer-i-ca (zip,zip,zip) — pa-tent — num-ber — (mmmmm) 6-9-7-5-4-8-2."

The bizarre idea of creating electronic beings which would eventually create other more complex beings is also being contemplated.

"Fel-low — (zit,zit — vvvrrrrrr) — ma-chines:

ZAP! — This — is — God."

by CAROL BASSETT

MODified Shakespeare

Who knows what lurks beyond yon office building?! Perchance it may be the operator of some four-wheeled vehicle, which containeth thereon chrome, from front to rear, mags, and factory air. Perchance also it is motivated by varoom action, and may cross my path while I am engaged in the process of crossing it myself.

“Whoa is me!” I cry, before stepping out into the main-traveled highway. Hark! I hear the rumble of four hundred and forty powered horses ‘round the bend. (Oh forsooth, Caesar, what a chariot race your eyes are not feasting upon!) Oh, Policeman, Policeman, wherefore art thou, Policeman?

By Diane Delander

The Qualities of My Leader

by Jim Rodgers

Just
One
Honest man,
Now

Free

Kinetic
Energetic
Normal
Noticeable
Extra
Daring — Caring for
You

The Adolescent – Adult Conflict

The other day, one of my classes discussed an article from TIME Magazine. During the discussion the Generation Gap came up.

I have been thinking about the Generation Gap. Could it be that it exists only because of a lack of communication? Could it be a language gap instead of a generation gap?

Here is an example of what might be called a language gap.

I was bombing down the hall on my way to the flick with a chick and the folks hung me up in the doorway.

"I'm cutting out," I told them. "Gonna hit the pit, then stop for a couple of looseners."

"You're what and then what and then what?" Dad asked.

"Have to book the screens, Dad. Catch a few shadows, then fall by a session and pick up some sounds." Dad looked bewildered. "Dad, you're flipping. Don't crash. I'll be cool."

"Maybe you'd better wear a coat," Mom said nervously.

"No, Mom, not cool, COOL. As in MELLOW. Don't worry, I won't come back smashed."

"You get so much as a dent in that car!" Dad threatened.

"You don't dig, Daddio," I laughed. "I mean that I won't get blasted, plowed, stoned."

Mom was stirring her coffee with her fork. Dad lit the wrong end of a filter cigarette.

"For Pete's sake, tell us what you're trying to say," he choked, "and don't call me Daddio!"

"O.K., Papa Bear, I gotta move now. Have to blow this old cellar. I'll clue you tomorrow."

Dad was chewing up his cigarette; his eyes were glazed. "It's time I paid the check," I told them. "Catch your act in the morning, folks. Got to put juice in the wheels and hit the submarine races."

Dad jumped up grabbed Mom by the arm. "Come on, Flapper," he yelled, "let's drop over to the speak and sip a few orange blossoms. We'll do the black bottom and then some necking. I'll bring my uke. Hot Diggety!"

Sometimes I just don't understand my folks.

by Miles E. Notz, Jr.

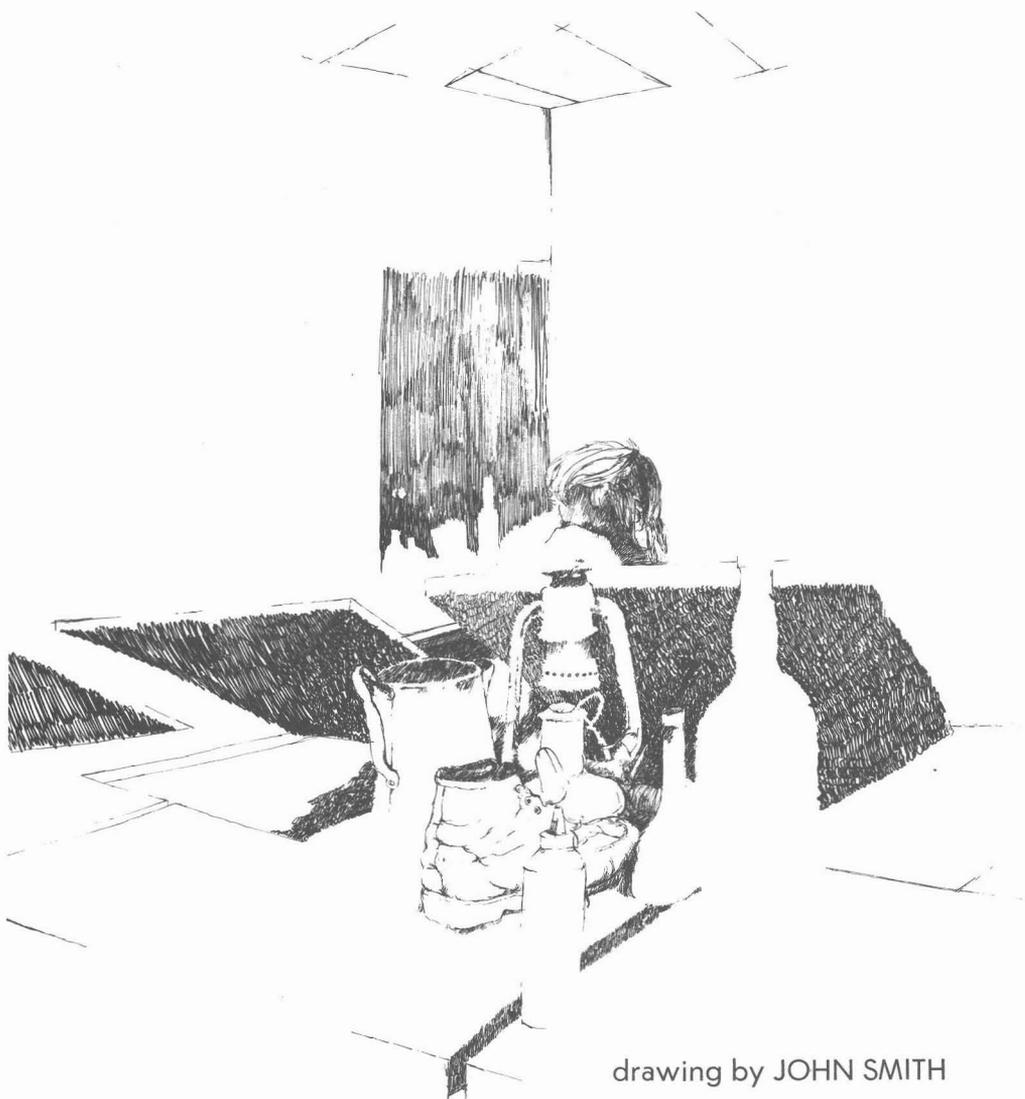
Look
Through
The
Looking
Glass

A room, quiet but for the distracting sound of time, slipping across a meadow of fine grained sand. ——— Time, a constant companion, never smiling, never chiding, yet constantly reminding. A cause lost, a prodding gentle guide to mankind, leading him through that annoying long last exit, freeing him from his quiet desperation.

A ticking, louder now, easy to ignore, and when it's gone from sight and mind, back again to remind him anew of satisfying afternoons spent in that pleasurable occupation of forgetting each other. A looking not at, but through the looking glass, for what we see is not actually ourselves, but a reflection of something opaque, easily recognizable, yet vaguely undefinable. A caricature of failures past, successes never met, inspirations at their noblest, ambitions unsensed. But look again now, that reflection you see, it's mockingly yelling ——— It's how you must be.

Notice it again now, as it slips silently through its final exit. But don't be alarmed. That door swings both ways ——— The sun shines tomorrow as predicted, and someone will surely make arrangements to have time continued, don't you think?

by Linda McRoberts



drawing by JOHN SMITH

Mark's Friend

My friend is so "hung-up" on time,
And places he must be.
He cannot spare
The minutes
To climb

This "neat" ole tree,
Or catch
A croakin' bullfrog
With Lazy
Latefull me.

by Kathleen Griffith

The Pauper and His King

by Caron Miller

Upon the threshold of disaster
Stands the pauper with his king.
He seeks salvation in his bottle,
His money god, his jet set fling . . .
Will he make it thru this day?

He runs to the hills with barren feet,
A vow of escape on his lips.
He hides behind his needle of joy,
His blade of grass, his acid trips . . .
Will he find another day?

He mentally seduces his secretary
As she smiles behind her desk.
He fills her heart with lies and wine.
Takes her to bed; then goes home for a rest . . .
Did they find their escape that day?

She swelters beneath her hair dryer
As the beautician paints her nails.
She stops behind the makeup counter;
Looks in the mirror, all her efforts have failed . . .
Will she try for another day?

They sit on their porches with heads held high,
Rocking their cemented minds.
Reciting the Holy 23rd Psalm, they sneer at lovers,
Chastize the drunkard and condemn the world with
Eyes that are blind . . .
They think they've found their way . . .

They go to council the President to help him
Solve the world's puzzle.
But first they must dine and have a round of martinis,
Keeping eyes on the red phone that could end
All their troubles . . .
Is this the answer to our perilous day?

The answer is hidden within pauper and king
Covered with illusions of jade.
We must search our hearts . . . we must look to love
Or, by God, we'll have no more days!!!

This country

of bottled beer,

This world

of bottled brains,

This planet

of bottle-bearers,

Where to, my fellow man —

where to?

To bring

your

bottles

home?

by Robert C. Webb, Jr.

what fools men are!

clinging to emotion of pain and passion.

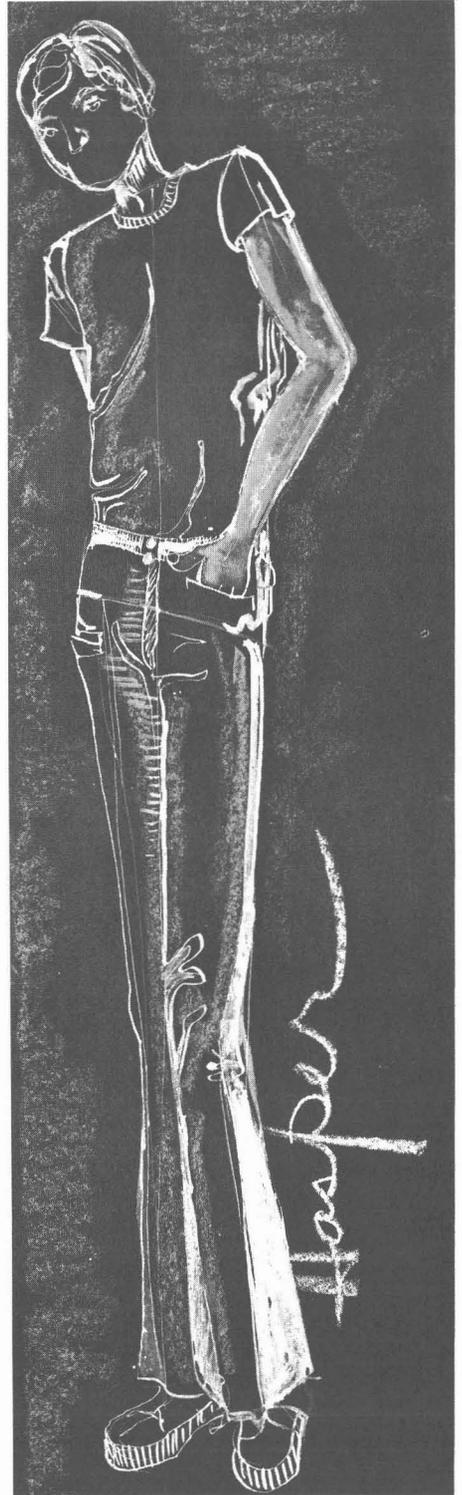
but mankind will never learn

and love will always be in fashion.

a. nony mus

i've searched
and gathered my thoughts,
my repertoire of hate,
digested anger stacked on shelves.
i've placed them so
and singularly have left them there.
not for neglect, not of virtue,
have i arranged them so,
but for easy reference
when i think to cast a stone.

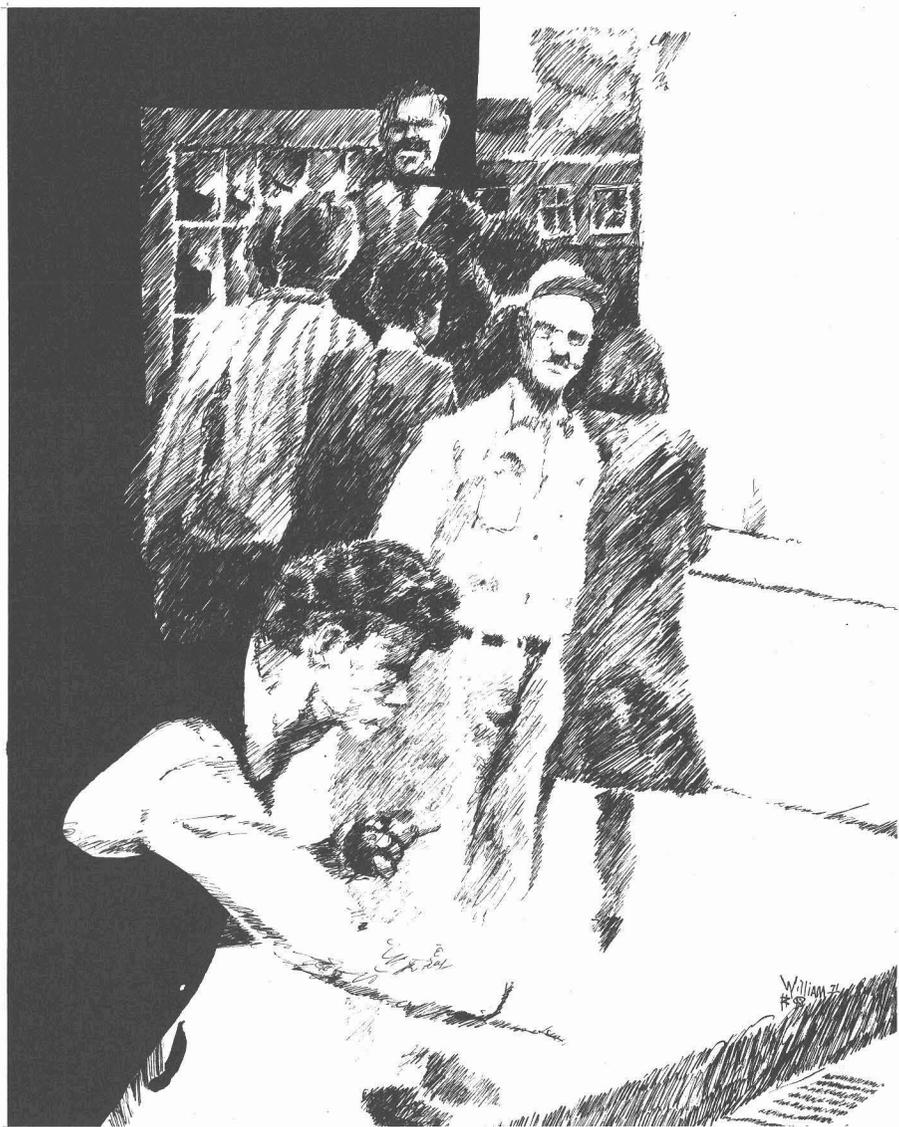
by David Reid



drawing by LINDA HASPER

Frustration and Happiness

IT IS ONLY MAN WHO WORRIES
AND HOPES FOR A FUTURE



drawing by JOHN SMITH

I Don't Know About War

by Chrisal Glynn

I don't know about war,
so I couldn't write about it.
I don't understand people,
so I can't write a good poem about that.
The only thing I experience is confusion
And if I wanted to write about that I wouldn't know where to start.

TODAY A MINSTREL

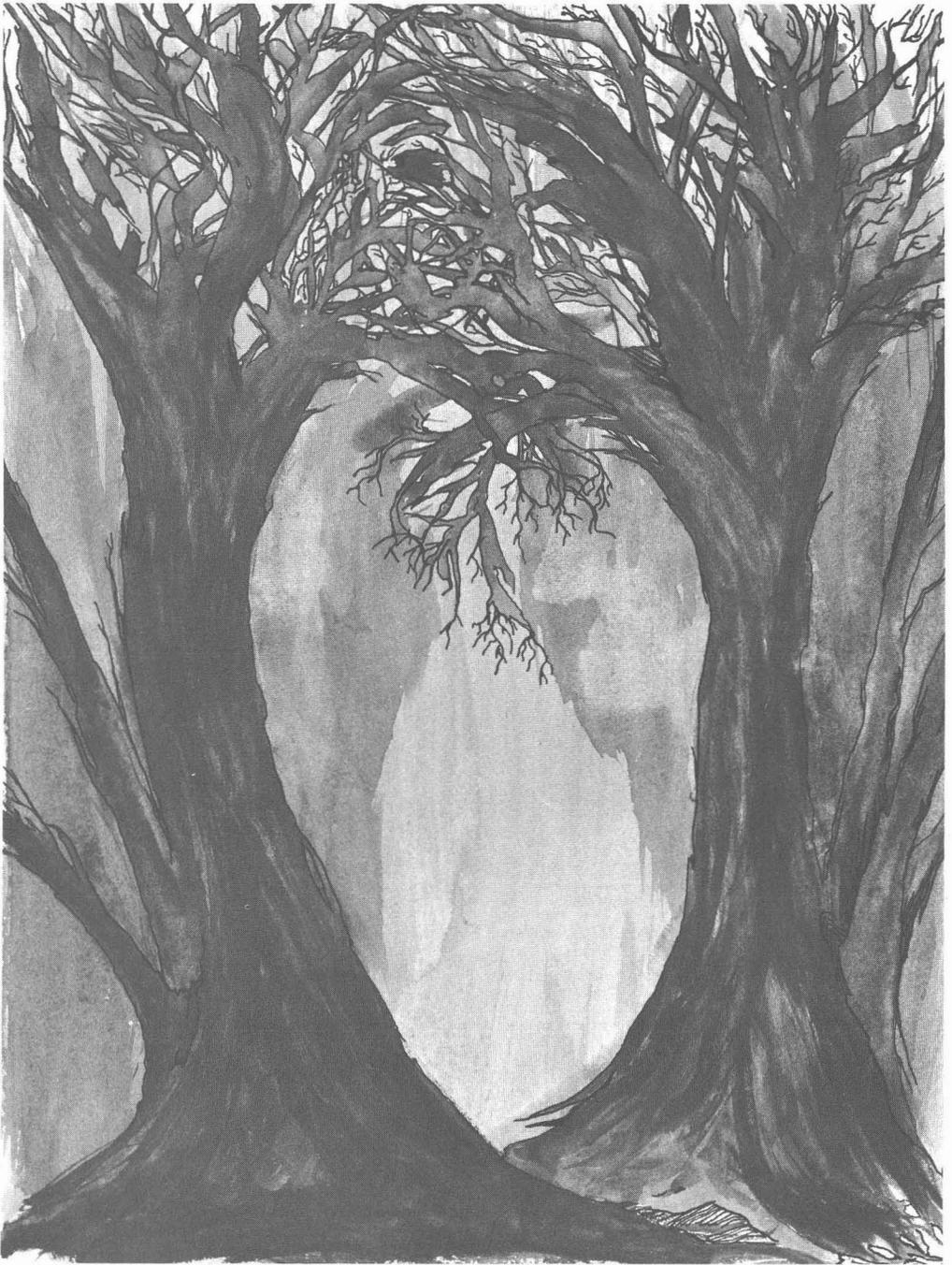
by Chrisal Glynn

Today a minstrel came to me;
He sang of life and his joys.
His song wailed with the freedom he felt.
Please be away with you sir,
For your joy is the fount of my sorrows,
Your victories the echoes of my defeat.

Many Ways

Many ways
In a maze.
Many thoughts
In a gaze.

by Elizabeth Barnett



by K. HARBAUGH

Hades

The four winds of night toss restlessly,
a forest of wailing trees.

The moon has fallen from darkened skies
and clouds drift confused by the breeze.

Time has forgotten to travel the minutes.
The world has forgotten to spin.
My steps are wandering the forest perplexed
by the hypnotic suspension I'm in.

My breath takes within me ominous visions.
The air is alive with unrest.

Slowly I walk down the hazardous canyon
seeking a refuge for rest.

No rivers with which to moisten my lips.
No flowers to soothe my eyes.

Only the branches from hysterical trees
Threatening me as I walk by.

My mind soon forgets to seek an escape.
Eyes become dazed as if blind.
Yet my feet continue their wandering travel
Not aware that my mind has resigned . . .

by Caron Miller

Don't Go Near the Door

by Robert B. Cordell

It had been a long drive and the flat tire hadn't helped. The town seemed empty at one o'clock in the morning as his was the only car using the main street. Weariness was pulling at his eyelids when he turned onto the side street leading to the old house.

He parked the car in front of the house and got out. A street light, nearly covered by the branches of the oak tree, shone its filtered rays onto the old, high-roofed structure. Gusts of wind moved the branches so that the light splashed on the house and quickly skittered away.

It isn't really that cold, he thought, so why was the little chill creeping up the back of his neck? A flash of light reflected for an instant off the side windows. "Is someone in there?" he asked himself. Surely he hadn't expected anyone. Then another flash made him sure that the street light and the wind were the only source.

He went slowly up the steps into the shadowed gloom of the porch, and the wooden steps creaked under his weight. He tried the door and it was unlocked. But why shouldn't it be? It was never locked before.

"Why had he come back?" he asked himself. His mother had remarried and moved to San Francisco. His sister had gone with her mother. There was no one to talk with here. What force had caused him to wander off his course to Sacramento and into his former home town?

The hall was black with darkness, and his groping hand found the light switch and he tried it. "Electricity must be off or the bulb has failed," he muttered aloud. He moved slowly, feeling his way along the wall, until he was in the living room. He felt along the wall for the light switch. It didn't work. He moved back into the hallway, out onto the porch, and went to the car for his flashlight. Why hadn't he taken it with him in the first place? Slipping again, he thought, too tired to think clearly.

Now that he had the flashlight, he walked quickly back into the house. He pointed the beam into his sister's room, which revealed only that the worn furniture was still there. The living room was bare. The place had an odor of dust and mildewed wallpaper.

A loud bang startled him. The noise seemed to come from the kitchen in the rear of the house. Moving the light ahead, he walked warily through the large dining room, his footsteps echoing after him. He pushed open the heavy door and stepped into the kitchen. It was empty. The cellar door was ajar and he could feel a cold blast of air as it banged shut again. The high ceilings and near empty rooms intensified the echo. The door, which led to his attic bedroom, was stuck and he pulled hard to open it. Up the dark stairway he climbed.

His old iron framed bed and wooden clothes chest were still in the room. He raised the south window and directed the light outside. The veranda was gone. Probably removed, he theorized, because it had been dangerously near falling from decay. Used to sleep out there in the summer, he remembered.

Another loud crash and the sound of muffled crying stirred him from his reverie. The wind must have increased its blowing and he recalled its familiar whining as it swept around the house. He began to shiver as fear invaded his senses. Why had he come back? This old house had always frightened him. What was he trying to prove? Perhaps he intended to conquer an old fear.

Fully alert and tensing at each creak of the house, he went cautiously down the stairs to the kitchen.

The cellar door was now wide open as if beckoning him to descend into the blackness of the basement. Summoning all of his courage and breathing deeply, he began descending the cellar stairs, moving to avoid the spider webs.

Why, he wondered again; what was pulling him down here, where he knew he must not go?

He glanced at the movements of the many spiders scurrying to hide from his intruding light. He saw the window that had been left open and through which the wind was thrusting its entrance. The door that he had been forbidden to open was now within his reach. No one could stop him now. His breathing was short and quick.

He stopped and listened outside the door, his senses keyed to every sound. The creaking of the timbers and the crying of the northwind were his only company.

His hand, shaking in anticipation and fear, grasped the door handle and pulled. It swung open freely. Why, he asked himself, was this door the only one that opened so easily.

He stepped into the tiny room and shone the light around. "Why it is empty!" he exclaimed aloud. "There is nothing here."

Another crash. Stunned, he turned. The door was shut. Quickly he rushed to the door. He pushed. He slammed his weight against it in repeated attempts to force it open. Fear quickly welled up within him and clutched his throat. Desperately he tried to breathe, but he could muster only a low moan. Down it pulled him, deeper and deeper.

"That car has been parked in front of the old house about a week now," Mrs. Carpenter said to Mr. Carpenter. "Perhaps we had better notify the police."

Patrolman Lane's muffled shout reached Sergeant White in the master bedroom, and the sergeant went to the cellar door. "Down here," called Lane.

The wide-open staring eyes and gaping mouth of the body, its snow white hair and outstretched arms, all seemed to be crying for help, but it was too late.

Sergeant White examined the door, noting the many scratches on its inside. He opened and shut it a few times. It swung freely and had no apparent method of locking itself.

My Pit

Stale as the bread,
Of long past Sundays.
Tired as the sea
That pounds a thousand shores.
Bewildered as the child
Who's lost his mother's hand —
An outcry from the pit,
Into the darkness —
Does anyone hear?



The day will arise
When men of nought
Can only surmise
As to why they fought

Questions of allegiance
And answers of vain
Values of no penchance
Rewards of no gain

Has yet the light of sense
Permeated their core
Or reflected from the dense
Who prefer the orb of war

To know is to study
The books are time
Our history but bloody
Yet still we crime.

by Curt Conley

Free Fall Fantasy

by JACK DAWKINS

Rainbow rolling
tumbling mirthful
ever earthward
down we spiral!
skyfully playful
clouds

we pounce eaglish
and glance away
plummeting
plumb bob
down!

we toe strafe
tree tops leafy
angle off laughing
roller coaster glide
bounce once
again and roll
euphoric:
touch down!

Wake Up!

The day breaks,
your sleeping mind sways,
between a multitude of becoming universes.

Yet you
keep
on
coming
back
to This world.

Wassamatta wit yoo? Ya like it here?

by r. j. c. f.

Belief

Man's mind and man's thought
Will always strive for belief –



drawing by LINDA HASPER

What Is

The tree vibrates,
the wind speaks.
The moon illuminates,
the sea sings.
The sun rises,
the day smiles.
The rain falls,
the land drinks.
And all is in order;
And all is natural.
Yet man is of nature,
and his life is not so
orderly.
So what is a natural pattern
for man?



Let It Apply

I saw the Sun.
I envied its beauty,
Its brilliance, its
Strength,
The warmth that it spread,
And its purpose in this
Life.
I envied its purpose,
For I knew none of my
Own.

I'm a man with a conscience.
And I care for love and peace.
Yet the world comes as a
Crushing force,
To destroy my life-sought dreams.

So endure it I will,
As life demands of me.
And only accept in reward
The things I've learned
To endure.



A Way of Meeting

by r. curtis lundy

I have met Him on several occasions and in several places. I have met Him twice by the ocean on the white beaches where the waves roll easily onto the shore. I have met Him once on the side of a hill, while sitting under a shaded tree and looking out across flat farm lands. I cannot tell you what He looks like, and I cannot tell you how He dresses. I can tell you His name is God, and that there are several things about Him that trouble me.

He has allowed the suffering of man to continue, the starvation to exist, the sickness to plague those unable to afford an advanced civilization, and the evil to survive. Although I must admit man helps also in the continuing of these sufferings.

I could not analyze His reasons. I do not know how He intends to write His great novel.

I know the goodness of Him through our meetings. I know the peace and the sadness; I have been a long-time friend of sadness and know its goodness also. I have seen Him during storms and after rains and before the dust storms, and these are part of Him and His better qualities.

So, in the end, which will come as all endings must, I can say that good or bad qualities have little to do with Him. We search a long time trying to find ourselves and the beauty in the world that we are sure exists. I cannot find myself, but I can surely see the beauty.

I sit upon the lap of God,
And with my fingers touch his rings —
And think of little things . . .
Of how the sun repeats each day
And why the Chinese got that way.
Of why a child within me grows
And why it doesn't have ten toes.
Of what the stairsteps do at night
And why blind people turn on light.
Of when children go to bed
And wake up on their pillows, dead.
Of how the moon drowns in the bay.
And why God's knees are bony, gray.
Then as my head begins to nod.
I tumble off the lap of God.

by Nance Montgomery

Give Me Some Stars

Just give me some stars in the midnight hour,
A ripe red apple and a purple flower;
A heart of love for my retreat
And a running brook to cool my feet . . .

The summer sun to warm my face
A dancing butterfly for me to chase.

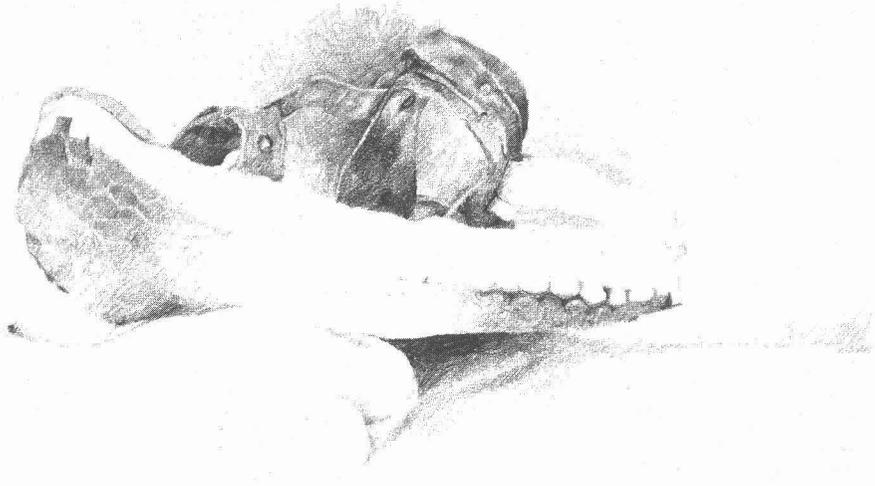
Fluffy clouds of milky cream
To paint a picture of all my dreams.

Then I can say to all mankind
In all these things, My God I find . . .

by Caron Miller

Why are there no female philosophers, you cry?
I'll tell you why —
Woman has long
Been the singer of the nursery song,
Keeper of the fire,
Servant of her squire,
Through the ages this remains.
I don't complain!
But try to train
A child to tie a shoe
While you
Contemplate!

Elizabeth Barnett



drawing by JOHN SMITH

Sometimes —

I need to be alone.
I need to know
No one is here but me,
And then my thoughts are free.
I don't mind people —
In fact,
I like people,
But, Sometimes —
I need to be alone,
Just my thoughts and me.

Elizabeth Barnett

i watched you die
and turned to god
to ask him why.
Silence.

by Suesi Garva

TIME

by Robert C. Webb, Jr.

Now and again the rain will fall —
time is around to watch.
Yes now and again for everything —
time is always here.
A little sooner, or a whole lot late —
time will be to see,
That everything that's ever been will
eventually cease to be.



drawing by JOHN SMITH

One Day

One day we will climb this mountain.
One day we will know the sky.
Give courage to all your footsteps;
Let tears not blind your eyes.

Take each step with forgiveness
For your brother's unkindness to thee.
He is also climbing this mountain,
And he's desperately trying to see.

On that day a radiant sunshine
Will sprinkle our paths with gold.
On that day our burdens will vanish
By the vision of wisdom untold.

We'll no longer walk in darkness.
No shadows will cloak us with fear.
This journey is why we're created,
So let us not shed a tear.

We're all climbing this mountain.
We're trying to know the sky.
Keep searching your heart, my brother,
For the mountain is you and I . . .

by Caron Miller

Love

We feel – we give – we take Love
To be reborn again

and again

and again . . .



drawing by LINDA HASPER

Lifestyle

by d. kincaid

We sit we sip
We touch gently by the moonglazed stream
huddled close by the crackling laughing
 fire . . .
I really can't remember now who brought us together
 if anyone
but that hardly matters since the party's been
 and is
great fun. And I know
 that when I'm brimdripping and can't take
or give
 anymore
I'll pass the cup smiling
 and melt back into the flowers.

Soul Is

Soul is telling it like it is.
 It's dreaming and having your dream come true.
Soul is moving on up.
 It's loving someone and having him love you.
Soul is being expressive.
 It's being inspired by being hip.
Soul is your deepest feelings.
 It's self-togetherness.

by Cathy Pogue

I come to you
And you come to me,
As though there was no
Tomorrow.

I dream
Platinum hair, yours,
Touching my face as you
Lean to kiss me in the
Meadow.
Will today never end?

Laughter, glorious laughter.
We frolic, again your hair touches
My face.

Sensation overwhelms me.
Your eyes sparkle,
There is almost a tear, and
As we reach an ultimate rapport
I awaken.

by Curtis Downey

If I woke you up with kisses,
Would you get to work on time?
If you got there ten minutes late,
Would you be forced to resign?
And if I broke our alarm clock,
How long would you be mine?

by Sandra Pizer

Morning Mirror

You're the reflection in my morning mirror.
I taste you in my tea . . .
I feel your touch in the summer breeze
As I walk beside the sea.
You're the life within my heartbeat;
The rhythm of my breath,
The melody in my laughter
As I sing of Love's caress.
When I awaken from my midnight dreams,
I reach and feel you there,
I pull you close inside my heart
And whisper thoughts we share.

by Caron Miller

Let Me Drink Your Wine

I would like to toss you into the air
as a bucket of rain,
And let you sprinkle upon me so I
could bathe in your warmth.

I would like to become as a delicate vapor,
so to be above, below and around you;
Then you could breathe me into you,
and I would become your life.

Let me sit here and quench my thirst.
Let me cover your mind and body with my thoughts
And drink of you until I'm filled.
Then I can leave here replenished.

I'll have a Love Cup to draw upon
and when it's empty,
I'll return to you again and again . . .
To drink more of your sweet wine . . .

by Caron Miller

Medley

I am no longer me, but you.
My soul is a medley of all your dreams,
And your dreams a reflection of my desires;
Swirling visions dancing through eternity . . .

* * *

Reach out to me with open arms,
Your face aglow with sunlight.
So I can run to you on clouds of laughter
And bathe in tears of joy!

* * *

In my silent room, I hear laughter
and feel your touch.
Your vision dances before me as a
flickering candle;
An endless light to brighten the
shadows of time . . .

by Caron Miller

Affectionate Suicide

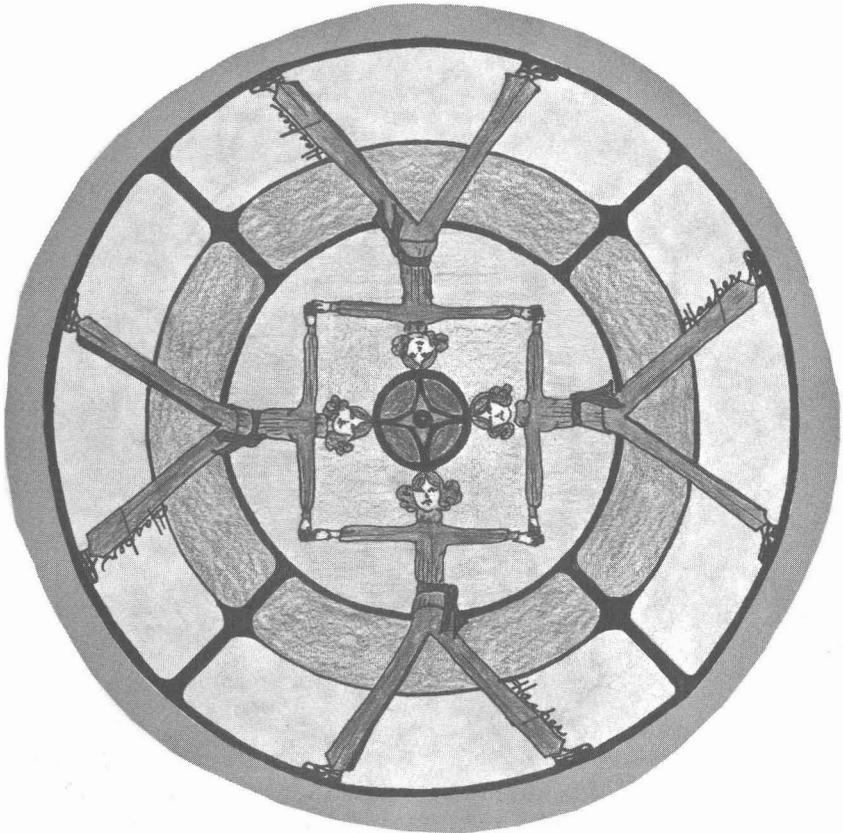
by Linda McRoberts

Dreams held hand to hand
flicker in syncopated rhythm while muted
lips left holding thoughts,
move to choir music in the loft.

Clouds moving;
are we as real as clouds in our
drifting?
Drifting to each other in one another,
the existence of separate others.

Touching lips,
to smiles,
to eyes,
To wash away the tears of quiet sorrows,
to dreams shared still never slumbered too.

We find each other to lose the
other in ourselves.
Sharing secrets in hidden phrases to
questions replied for yet unasked to —
We see just what we are —
if not each other,
then all
others.



drawing by LINDA HASPER

The Quiet People

by r. curtis lundy

ALFRED GOODHELM entered the cafe carrying a brown weather-beaten suitcase. He sat at a table next to a large window and looked at his reflection against the night. Outside it began to snow. Inside, the cafe was warm and well-lighted and crowded with talking people. He took the menu and began looking at the prices. A waitress approached his table and stood leaning on one leg with her order-pad ready.

"You're beautiful," Alfred Goodhelm told her. "Your face is beautiful. Your hair hangs long and beautiful. Your body is a wonder."

"Could I take your order, sir?" The waitress asked.

"Coffee and a bowl of chili."

"Will that be all?"

"Yes."

Alfred Goodhelm sat at the table eating chili and drinking coffee. He listened at times to the music being played on an old phonograph, but blanked his mind to this music when he did not care for the song. He finished the chili and the waitress took away the bowl and refilled his coffee cup.

"I have come a long way," Alfred Goodhelm told the waitress as she poured the coffee.

"Would you care for anything else, sir?"

"I am just back from the war. I drove an ambulance."

The waitress walked away. Alfred Goodhelm drank slowly at his coffee. Across the street he saw the Greyhound terminal lights as they flashed on and off. The lights were distorted by the falling snow. He saw several people running along the sidewalks. Their heads were bent into the driving wind. He turned from the window and called for the waitress to bring more coffee.

"This is your third cup, sir," the waitress told Alfred Goodhelm as she poured the coffee.

"I love you very much," Alfred Goodhelm said.

"I will have to charge you for any more coffee refills."

The waitress left Alfred Goodhelm sitting at the table slowly drinking his last free cup of coffee. She cleaned the dirty, abandoned tables and made them ready for other customers, and when the tables were all cleaned she stood beside a table where an old man sat. The old man and waitress talked and occasionally the waitress would look about the cafe to see if she was needed. Alfred Goodhelm watched the waitress and the old man as they talked.

Cliff Tedman entered the cafe and shook the snow from his overcoat. He removed the overcoat and hung it on a rack beside the door. He then crossed the room to where the old man and waitress were and sat at the table across from the old man.

"Kriss, bring me a hot chocolate."

"Sure thing — anything to eat?"

"No."

The waitress left for the hot chocolate. Cliff Tedman smiled at the old man and pulled a pack of cigarettes from his pocket. He offered one to the old man, who accepted.

"How are you doing, lad?" The old man asked.

"My wife has left me."

"I am glad to hear that — and how are the children?"

"My wife has left with the children."

"That is fine," the old man exclaimed.

The waitress returned with the hot chocolate and set it on Cliff Tedman's table. Cliff Tedman thanked the waitress and ignored the old man. He sat drinking and smoking. The waitress returned to refill his cup. She poured steadily.

"My wife left me, Kriss," Cliff Tedman told the waitress.

"Are you sure you wouldn't care for something to eat?"

"She took my kids and threw away eight years together. She has gone to her mother."

"Cliff, you should eat something. We have a nice special. You cannot live without food."

"Then I will never eat again. I will teach my wife a lesson and starve to death. I don't know why she left, but I will never eat, until she returns."

"Maybe a roll?" The waitress asked.

"Well, that is not exactly food," Cliff Tedman said. "Yes, I will have a roll."

The waitress smiled at her victory. Alfred Goodhelm returned her smile thinking it was meant for him. The waitress, seeing Alfred Goodhelm smiling at her, quickly dropped her smile and replaced it with a frown. Alfred Goodhelm dropped his eyes and looked into his empty coffee cup.

"Old man, are your married?" Cliff Tedman asked.

"Four times," the old man said smiling.

"How could you stand being married four times?"

"It was hard swimming across the first time, but after that it was easy."

"Swimming?" Cliff Tedman questioned.

"They put my picture in the paper. I was the first person to ever swim the lake. That was a long time ago, but I bet I could still do it."

The waitress returned with the roll and Cliff Tedman turned his attention away from the old man. The waitress began talking to the old man. Cliff Tedman ate the roll hungrily.

"And young lady," the old man was saying. "I never stopped swimming until my feet hit the bottom on the other side."

"My feet hurt something awful," the waitress said. "I still have to clean my apartment, but that can wait until tomorrow." She paused to look out the window. "Don't you just love the snow?"

"Is it late? Everyone is gone," the old man said.

"It's the snow — that's why I love it."

"Waitress," Alfred Goodhelm shouted. "I love you. I can't stand being this far away from you any longer."

"If you want a refill you will have to pay for it," the waitress said.

"Yes, another cup of coffee. I want another cup of coffee."

The waitress got the pot of coffee and walked over to Alfred Goodhelm's table. She poured the coffee steadily. Alfred Goodhelm took her free hand in his and squeezed it tightly. The waitress smiled and took her hand away.

"When do you get off work?" Alfred Goodhelm pleaded.

"I have been working hard all day."

"Yes, I know, but I have just hitchhiked from San Luis Obispo. I was given a ride by some truck driver."

"Hitchhiked?" The waitress asked puzzled at the feeling the word gave her.

"Yes."

"Hitchhiked," the waitress said again.

"Yes. Yes."

"Hitchhiked," the waitress said more puzzled than ever about this strange word and the man who had given it to her.

"Yes. Yes. Yes."

"Hitchhiked," the waitress screamed, feeling the desire grow inside of her.

The waitress took Alfred Goodhelm's hand and held it tightly. She had to have this man. She had to have this man in her bed at night and have his strange word told to her over and over and over. She was drawn to him by an uncontrollable wanting.

"I love you," the waitress cried. "I'll love you forever."

"Yes, and I love you," Alfred Goodhelm said.

They kissed.

Cliff Tedman put on his overcoat and walked outside into the wind and snow. He waited on the corner for the light to change. The snow dropped down the back of his collar and melted in his neck. He drew the overcoat tightly around his neck with his fist pressed under his chin. The cold wind tore at his naked hand. The light changed and Cliff Tedman crossed the street, walked past the Greyhound terminal, crossing over three blocks and entered a bar that sat on the corner. Inside, he shook his overcoat and found a table. He sat down and began to cry.

"What's wrong, pet?" A woman with heavy eyelashes asked.

"I just saw the most beautiful thing happen between two people. They really fell in love and all right before my very eyes. I watched it all as it happened."

The woman with the heavy eyelashes motioned to the bartender for two drinks. The bartender made the drinks and gave them to the barmaid, who carried them to the table.

"Drink this," the woman with the heavy eyelashes said. "It'll make everything better."

Cliff Tedman looked at the woman with the heavy eyelashes and drank the drink down in three swallows and set the empty glass on the table. The woman with the heavy eyelashes motioned for another drink and it was brought to the table. Cliff Tedman thanked her.

The old man looked at the waitress and Alfred Goodhelm as they sat side by side at the table.

I am older now,
for I have traveled beside
Helios,
his chariot being disguised
as blue eyes —
and I have vibrated on his ardor.

I have been the goddess
Aphrodite
beneath his touch, and
in culmination,
seen a million universes unfold.
(Hellenic hemispheres of heightened harmony).

We have been inebriated
at Dionysian orgies
and drifted through the
purple portals of sleep.

We have danced with wood nymphs
to the mellifluous wind
in juniper forests where
many seeds were
EMPLANTED, and grew into fine ideas.

We have played sagaciously
the labyrinthine game of words
and won.
(ludicrous literary lingo on lyre).

He has kissed the face
of the ocean's most clandestine depths
where tiny mermaids
laughed and loved
in jade and emerald courts of
Neptunian palaces.
(surrealistic seaborne sensuality).

He has carried me to the port of Delphi,
city of the Great Oracles
and I have been awakened to the
essence of existence.

I have been given a small taste
of the Food of the Gods
and I stand longanimously beside Time
to await the Feast.

by Carol

i think i saw you sailing, fiberglass angel,
around the edges of the earth

and when you came down the sun had
scorched the thread
the wind had blown the weaving loose

i see you sailing sailing sailing
it seems the sea will never end

until we see someone on the shore
(it is me; i am waving, shouting)

i clutch the cutting fibre
but i cannot get too close

is my sandpaper skin seeping
orange oils and old wines

old words and old songs
shattered translucent promises

i see you, angel of glass,
wearing away like the marys
josephs and jesuses in the
windows of god's sunstruck
house.

by pattie leo Krohn

If Sadness Be My Life

If sadness be my life
 Then let silence lead my way
And if I do not speak to you
 No, not to say my name
 For I am me,
 A man in search
 Inside his Soul
So do not bother to know me
 My story seldom told
And take me for not what you see
 For what you see is the shell of me
 And within its walls I lie
 Crying to be free
 As my happiness turns to sorrow
 I reach for goals that can never be.

by Russell Elton Walsh

I know him—
an earthly paradox
caught between continents
like wings of the butterfly
in a spider's web,
not knowing whether to remain there
or to change.

His story is the esoteric whispering
of ages lost,
laid upon the sands of timelessness,
hinting of other dimensions and
begging for recognition
like wide-eyed children
standing in doorways,
(or of all the Arts ever conceived).

He touches upon the shores of my life,
lapping at my body,
at my being
until distant lands
beckon, and he,
(in all his worldliness and levity)
slips gently away —
and I am left to fashion
a temple in sand.

Remembrance

What a forsaken road we travel
When using that road named past.



drawing by LINDA HASPER

Grusendorf

by Rita Samuels

His name was Grusendorf. He is dead now. (It seems so absurd to accept that, but the Post Office returned my last letter to him stamped DECEASED, so it must be so. He wouldn't answer his phone to deny it all. So I had to write, you see.)

He was alive — beautifully, outrageously alive — ten years ago. Ten years ago he once tried to be my lover. He wanted to be lover to all women and to all of life. If too much beer sometimes left him temporarily impotent, he was just as delighted with the riant triumph of precipitous sleep.

He was a graduate art student when I knew him. I can't remember meeting him — he was just there, new among the circle of old friends when I came back to town. Tall, he was, and brawny and bearded. Strong and laughing and lusty. That was in the Spring.

In the Spring he called for me at my echoingly empty apartment above the Goodwill Store. We recorded and listened to our voices on a borrowed tape recorder — he with great laughter, I very haltingly, with great embarrassment. Later we went out in his clattery, battered pick-up truck for more beer, and he took me to his place.

He lived, during those student years, in the carriage house of an old town estate. There were giant, gossiping oaks and elms and firs all around, with Boulder Creek jostling rockily along in the moonlight at the back border of the lot. He parked his truck behind the carriage house, just above the creek bank.

He wanted to show me his work first. With a casual strength he pushed aside the massive sliding garage door to the lower, downhill story of the building, and, with grandiose gesture and exclamation, floodlit the cluttered innards of the unheated chamber. Now he became more subdued, and the room filled with his aura of defensive, vulnerable pride. His work was in the abstract period that most graduate art students explore, forsaking "the figure" because they've grown bored with it after several years of life drawing classes. Bold lines and harsh shapes, then more liquid forms and oozing colors offered their moods from among the stacks of canvasses and masonite. On the wall was hung a magnificent structure of mostly-white painted boards and slats and blocks, touched with black in enough places to give it life. Metal and clay and wood sculptures crowded among the other treasures. The mingling odors of paint, turpentine and liquid plastic with wet clay and sawdust completed the atmosphere — dedication and deep, violent love.

Apparently, I exhibited a proper mixture of interest, reverence and good taste, because he then invited me up the hill to the top floor, where he ate and slept.

He was pleasantly shy, even a little gallant, as he ushered me into the small square room at the summit of the climbing stone footpath. The room was warm and good smelling. It was comfortably lighted — perhaps by a lamp fixture on the wall. He offered me a seat at the scarred wooden table in the center of the kitchen. He opened two beers and got some strong cheese from the refrigerator, then found a knife somewhere and sat down across the table from me.

We talked (he talked; I listened) of his hopes and fears and general philosophy of life. While he spoke, I was callously inattentive, even slightly bored. (I've never understood why, never forgiven myself.) He poured out his thoughts while I looked at the painting and drawings on the smoky, plastered walls and wondered about a paint-stained washcloth hung up there with the art. (It was an accident, and he liked the result.) If he looked at me as he spoke, I studied his now seriously burning brown eyes, the thick rich hair of his head and face, the marvelous power of his hands, the soft, full lips just showing beneath their bristly camouflage.

He put on some music and we danced. He grew jollier, drunker, making happy remarks about "nice buns." Then, gruffly, "Let's make it, Baby!"

He led me across the solid, footworn floor, through the low doorway into the cold, dark, cuddly bedroom. It was dimly crowded with trunks and scattered clothing. I banged my shin against the edge of something low and incredibly hard — a cement slab bed, ridiculously padded atop with an inadequate four inch-thick foam rubber mat. This was the night, however, when alcohol and Morpheus outdid me — immediately. With a curse and an enormous laugh, Grusendorf rolled over and slept.

I left town again at the end of Spring, carrying with me pleasant memories of a rather sporadic comradeship with him.

In the Fall, when I returned, there was a sequence of other lovers between us and our mused-about, would-be affair never happened.

Some kind of darkness began to crowd his exuberance. The irritation of grinding out a Master's thesis, worry about the Draft, tenuous dreams of studying in Spain, the necessity of packing up all his work to be shipped home to New York — all these, possibly more, pushed at him in the months before Christmas.

I had some almost happy times with him after my return. (We were somewhat incidental in each other's lives, in spite of the tone of my recollective hindsight after many years.) I loved his

laughing, exhausted story of chasing a P.E. Major through the mountain forests one lazy autumn afternoon; and several of us gleefully patched his wounds for him the time he'd forgotten his feet were imprisoned in the toe straps of his new bike and had fallen into a roadside ditch at the first stop light. (He and a friend had sung the order form for the bike in Italian, to the tunes of "La Boheme," in the Spring.) We attended a marvelous one-man marionette production of Oedipus Rex at the University. He, Leonardo, escorted me, Mona Lisa, to a costume party on Halloween. He visited me in the hospital and, troubador that he was, presented me with a flower from someone else's bouquet and an easy kiss on the forehead. We finally even loved once, perfunctorily; and he tried to disguise himself in a red babushka to fool my laughing landlady the next morning. By the time we'd driven East at Christmastime with friends, though, irritation overshadowed friendship, and his sudden, crushing hug of farewell was a surprise. We separated at the Pennsylvania Railroad Station in Philadelphia.

The time I saw him later didn't count. He was on his way to a training center for the Peace Corps. His face was clean-shaven and, I thought, repulsively shiny — too soft, too young. I didn't know him.

The Peace Corps period in Peru was, according to friends he'd written, a torture. Something about his life after that in a New Jersey artist's loft weighed too heavily on him. He called a friend one night to say he regretted an overdose of sleeping pills.

The emergency staff at Bellevue Hospital pumped his stomach free of the poison, but the psychiatric people let him wander around in the solarium before the doctors came on duty the next morning. They never decided whether he jumped or fell from the balcony. They hadn't been watching. He was buried in Chicago. A thing like that can be embarrassing for the family, you know. So they had him carted out-of-state.

When my friend called to tell me of his death we laughed. We chatted of other things. We knew Grusendorf couldn't be dead, wouldn't put up with death, would simply refuse to lie still in some foul hole and rot. There was no point to it. For months I furiously refused to accept that some distant place in my future was void of a renewed friendship with him, that his and my children would never know each other, never share adventure and ribald laughter, that I would never know the satisfaction of having "matured" to the point of being able to refuse his outrageous advances.

But when the Post Office rubber-stamped him into officiality at last, I deamt of him — riding up to me on his bicycle and rooting for me to prove it all, to give me peace.

He haunts us sometimes. And we all have a good laugh.

Contention (Part II)

by Larry Aguirre

Reflections of watchful eyes are seen on
shaded waters of

A tranquil bay. Seeking no harm, they watch
eternally

In restful quietness that seems but a moment's
link with the ancient universe.

Important Things

The books line the shelves
With gaudy backs,
Row on row
Of Forgotten Treasures.

As we sit and talk
Of Income Tax
And the Proposed Changes
In Weights and Measures.

by Elizabeth Barnett

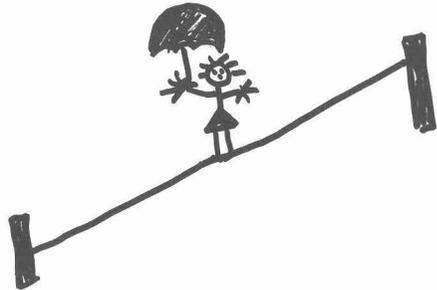
I wanted to write a children's book once
and join the circus and ride elephants,
wear flowing capes
and bow in the wake of the applause.

I know I would have been a
success at tight-rope walking.

Then life presses out
and things like elephants
that are important to me—
not interested?

Do older people play other games?

by Chrisal Glynn



The Enchanted Fields

When our family first moved into our house, there were many fields around us. This was twelve years ago when I was only six. My brothers and sisters (there are five of us in all) and I used to have a grand time playing in these fields, with each other and the neighborhood kids. It is one of my fondest memories because we were so close and had so much fun in those fields for many years.

The fields were at the end of our street and seemed to stretch out for miles. On clear days, quite often in those days, we could see all the way to Camelback mountain. Some of these fields were used for crops but in the summer most of them were empty, except for the masses of tumbleweeds. Both seasons of the year offered many hours of play in these magical fields.

In the winter when the farmer came and planted, we always had plenty of vegetables around the house. Our favorites were the carrots. We looked upon those fields as our very own — except, of course, when the farmer would catch us picking our carrots. I remember one day when we caught some kids picking our carrots; we made them plant every carrot back in the ground. Of course, if you were outnumbered 21-3, I guess you'd do the same thing! I know I would have! And then, after the kids ran home, we picked the carrots all up again, washed them off, and had a huge feast. Oh, it was great fun being rulers of a carrot field. We spent hours playing there. Of course in the summer, being out of school, we spent the whole day there.

So school's out and the crops were gone. The only thing left was a field full of tumbleweeds. The tumbleweeds were our favorite crop. They were much more useful than carrots. More fun too. Why with a few weeds we could build a huge castle. Boy was it some castle! Then after we got our castles made we

had dirt clod wars. That was the most fun. The winner was the one who captured the most castles. There was only one bad thing about these castles: they never stayed up very long. They weren't very strong, so it was always fun for this one kid to ride his mini-bike through them and destroy them. This really made us mad. Why we couldn't just whip up castles every day! So we decided to trap the bad guy. We dug a hole and filled it with bricks and stones and all kinds of pointy things. Then we put a camouflage over the hole and built a huge castle so it would be sure to lure him in. Finally we got him to chase us down to the field. We were calling him names and sticking out our tongues, and he got really mad. So we all ran into the castle and when he came tearing at us, POW! right into the hole he went. He didn't get hurt, but I never saw that bike again. After that, our hours in the fields went pretty much undisturbed.

Today when I look down the street all I see are rows of houses, layers of smog, and empty streets. I'll never forget those fields where I grew up. They were certainly enchanted. Our kingdom is gone, but the memories keep it very much alive.

by Mary Corcoran

Return Lost Heritage

by r curtis lundy

HE came home. He had been gone three years. He had spent his first day back trying to find old friends, but they had all gone. His first day back was a cold day and winter had moved in from some distant place across the Pacific and the sky was grey and the wind strong. The beaches and rock lined shores down by Carmel were empty and forgotten. The streets of Carmel were also empty. He spent his first night back walking along those empty streets and remembering those things that seemed to have taken place so very long ago.

His second day back he took a taxi to Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey. He looked for the old cabin cruiser and saw her tied to the dock, and he walked down the wooden steps and came aboard her. She was rising with the swells. Above, where the top controls were, he saw the back of a man. It was a wide back and he knew it well. He climbed the ladder to the top, and still standing on the ladder he said: "Hell-o, old man."

The wide back turned and an old man looked at him. The old man smiled and showed no teeth. Then, "Aaron? Aaron Spencer?"

"Sure," Aaron Spencer said. "How are you?"

There was much hand shaking and laughing as they descended the ladder and entered the cabin. Aaron Spencer was pleased to see that the cabin was in a messy condition.

"Coffee?" The old man asked.

"And some," Aaron Spencer replied. The old man laughed.

The coffee was made. The old man poured two cups and put in the 'and some,' and with a long sweep of his powerful arm he cleared the table top and they sat at the table and drank the fortified coffee. It was cold and damp inside the cabin, and there was the strong smell of fish which Aaron Spencer inhaled deeply. He had missed the sea most of all during his absence.

"They let you out?" The old man asked.

"I am out," Aaron Spencer said.

"Was it difficult?"

"You were in," Aaron Spencer said. "It is the same."

"The place is different," the old man said.

Aaron Spencer leaned back in the leather seat and closed his eyes. He felt the roll of the ship, and it was a ship. The old man poured more fortification into the coffee.

"Where is everyone?" Aaron Spenced asked. His eyes were still closed.

"They have all gone off," the old man said. "They were fine people and I miss them."

"Where did they go off to?"

"Different places," the old man said. "I'll tell you. Remember that young, pretty thing, who always wore the wigs? Well, she got married last year."

"You mean Carol?"

"Yes. She's living in San Francisco now." The old man paused in thought. "Cherie is married, also."

"Did she marry Earl?" Aaron Spencer asked.

"No. She married one of the soldiers at Ord. Earl is going with a very sweet girl now. Her name is Julia. They are living up at Big Sur and come by from time to time."

"Do you have their address?"

"Yes, I will give you all their addresses. You should have written."

"There was nothing to write about," Aaron Spencer said.

"Well, I guess you are wondering about your girl, too?"

"I have no girl."

"Karen?" The old man asked.

"Yes?"

"She is dead," the old man said quietly. Then, "I am sorry."

"How?"

The old man poured more fortification and added a small amount of coffee to warm it. He looked out the port hole towards the sea. It was dark and capped in white where the waves broke along the reef line.

"How?" Aaron Spencer asked again.

"She killed herself. I do not know how."

Aaron Spencer took a drink from the cup and closed his eyes. Then he asked: "And the others?"

"Silvia is working at Carmel," the old man said.

"Where?"

"A bar on Dolores Street, I think. She dances and has many men."

"You mean she's a whore," Aaron Spencer said dully.

"Such names are not for those that we love and care for, Aaron."

"The others?"

"Well, let me think." The old man thought. "Remember Reid? Well, he is gone. He was drafted and is now in the war. And Kirk? He is traveling. I think he is in New Mexico working at something."

Aaron Spencer looked out the port hole and saw the sea and knew that they could not go for a trip along the coast. He drank again at the coffee.

"Was it not Thomas Wolfe who said you can never go home again?" Aaron Spencer asked.

"Yes, and Steinbeck, also. I guess most writers have said it."

"What about Dexter?" Aaron Spencer asked.

"He bought a boat and is down in Mexico."

"Running I'll bet."

"He was never a good person, but he was a part of everything and everybody. I do not know what he is doing."

"And you, old man? What about you?"

"I am still old. I still charter my boat."

The two men sat in quiet. The old man knew what the younger man was thinking. He had himself had the same thoughts many years ago. He felt sad for the young man. The old man spent twenty minutes gathering addresses and writing them down in his careful print.

The ship rose and fell at its mooring and the two men talked until the sun set. They watched as the sun fell back across the horizon of grey and saw the red streaks along the clouds, and it was dark and cold looking out along the sea's surface. Aaron Spencer left the old man and promised to return the next day. He waved down a taxi and told the driver the address of the cemetery. The taxi moved through the traffic. It began to rain in a light drizzle. The driver turned on the wipers and Aaron Spencer watched as they moved back and forth.

"Do you know of a bar on Dolores Street?" Aaron Spencer asked the driver.

"I think so," the driver said.

"I would like to go there after we leave the cemetery."

"Anything you want, mister."

"It seems that way," Aaron Spencer said almost to himself. The driver looked at him in the rearview mirror, but said nothing and drove slowly along the wet road. Aaron Spencer closed his eyes and listened to the sound the cars made as they passed.

First On The Scene

by Kathleen Griffith

It was almost midnight on Halloween Eve. Michigan had provided us a lightless sky. No lamp of moon or luster of star touched the rural highway upon which we traveled. The cold October wind whipped the barren trees. The naked branches, the chill, the depth of darkness added an undefined loneliness to the night. We, my husband and I, were speeding to our home. It has been an incredibly long day, and fingers of fatigue crept around us.

Directly before us loomed a lethal curve in the highway. We had almost completed the curve when a vehicle approached us from the opposite direction. It was moving too fast to safely complete the curve. We sensed the crash a moment before we heard it. The "fast moving vehicle" had struck a car behind us. After the crash there was a strange silence. We witnessed the development of confusion that is the aftermath of tragedy.

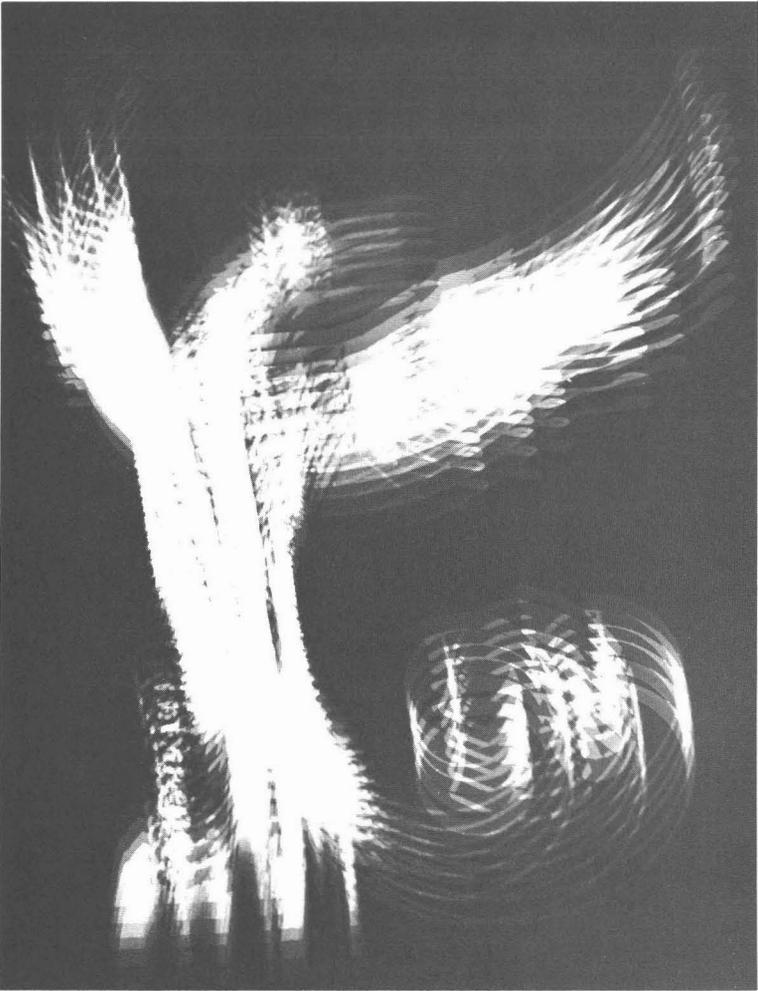
There was first the sound — the human cry of confusion and pain. The occupants of the damaged car were young people. All four were teenagers, and all four were innocent victims. The "fast moving vehicle" had come out of the blackness to strike them down. Their car sat off the highway at a cockeyed angle. It was a new car, but looked utterly crushed and beaten. The driver's door was "stove-in" against him. The door opposite was flung open. The interior light was on. Its illuminating whiteness was bitterly harsh against the blackness of the night. The young driver was deathly pale and unmoving. His companion, blinded by her blood, was a vivid contrast. Someone in the back wept; someone else simply sat and stared in shock.

My husband lit flares from our car. They gave an unearthly wavering red glow to the scene. We did the essential things. Help was summoned. Traffic was directed around the injured. We were able to keep the victims warm with blankets from nearby homes. A passing stranger was able to calm the weeping girl. There are concrete things to do for the injured and the frightened, but there was nothing we could do for the driver. For who can ease the grasp of death?

The confusion reached its crest as the police, ambulance and "the crowd" arrived on the scene. The police brought their own peculiar sights and sounds. They brought a flashing beacon light and sirens that wailed forlornly, and crackling sounds of a shortwave radio. Their arrival relieved us of immediate responsibility. We were asked to wait for an interview. It was at this point in time that I was free to watch the drama around me, and evaluate my place in it. I watched the crowd. They were a silent, but "clucking" accumulation of humanity. Some had come to help, and did so. Others had come only to look at the blood. Still others had come and knew not why.

It was Halloween Eve. If reality was the cruel master of this scene then fate was its mistress. They had consorted and crushed the life from youth. My numb senses began to awaken. Fate had placed us three seconds ahead of the death car. We had been spared the blackness of this night. We were free to continue our journey. As we walked away from the scene, and towards our waiting car, our hands touched. In that touch was the warmth of living flesh with its promise and its need that a tomorrow may fulfill. Intangible to the moment was the strengthening of our commitment to the life we share. Intangible to the moment was a reminder of the warmth and human comfort we may willingly give to one another.

This was not to be our Halloween Evening. Ancient Druids could not dance with glee upon our tragedy. We were granted a tomorrow. This, then, was our Hallowed Evening.



photograph by JOHN H. WALTER

Rebirth

Removed from all anxiety,
the freedom of birth returns
to him.

Surrounded by his love of knowledge,
he sees a hope in the darkness ahead.

Finding his beginning,
he proceeds toward his goals.

And the journey has begun
And a man has found his birth.



WE THANK THOSE PEOPLE
WHO GAVE THEIR WORK
FOR THIS MAGAZINE OF THOUGHT
AND APOLOGIZE FOR THOSE NOT USED
FOR SPACE WE HAD NOT.

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